

Bush Theatre

THE P WORD

Self-care guide
& content warnings

What is this document?

This document contains information about ways to look after yourself before you watch, while you're at the theatre or after the play.

It also contains detailed information about the show in order to describe what you should expect when attending. This includes information about the content warnings, the space, lighting and sound, and further access information.

Please note that by discussing the content of the show, the below information will contain key plot points and descriptions of what happens in the performance.

We hope the information and resources in this document will help audiences experiencing the show, and support planning if you are concerned about your visit.

All of the information here was accurate when we put this guide together. As the production is in development, the details may change and we will update as soon as possible.

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What is self-care?

Self-care is a choice to listen to our needs and look after ourselves, so we are able to keep going and live our best lives, despite the difficulties we experience in life and how they make us feel.

Thank you to Clean Break for bringing their care practices, including Self-Care Guides, to the Bush Theatre during our co-production of Favour (2022) Clean Break is a theatre company working with women with lived experience of the criminal justice system or at risk of entering it. **cleanbreak.org.uk**

“The concept of self-care comes from the Black Feminist movement. Self-care is important because it’s about recognising that we experience discrimination and oppression because of how others react to who we are, or what we’ve experienced.” - Clean Break

In writing this document, we were inspired by recent approaches taken by several other companies, especially the Nouveau Riche and Royal Court teams.

About the show

The below information contains key plot points.
Skip this section if you want to avoid spoilers.

The P Word is about two gay Pakistani men – Billy (Bilal) and Zafar. Billy is from the UK and Zafar is from Pakistan but has had to leave and seek asylum in the UK because his partner Haroon has been murdered by his family.

Billy and Zafar meet during Pride in London and form an uncertain friendship until Zafar is detained as the UK government plans to deport him back to Pakistan where he could be killed for being gay.

The play looks at what it's like to grow up as a second generation immigrant and how that can affect your sense of self. It explores what it's like to be gay in cultures that either dismiss your sexuality or disown you, and how two people who share marginalised identities do not have a homogenous experience.

Through Zafar's story, there is an exploration of the harsh realities of the UK asylum process, miscarriages of justice, and the UK Government's 'Hostile Environment' policies that seek to make life more difficult for those seeking asylum seekers.

The show will last approximately 1 hours and 40 minutes, with no interval.

Content guidance

This show contains:

- Use of strong language
- Themes of and references to violence, including a homophobic murder
- Sexual references and descriptions of sex
- References to sexual violence
- References to alcohol consumption and depiction of drunkenness
- Themes of homophobia and internalised homophobia
- Continued themes and description of racism, including the use of slurs
- Intermittent themes of body dysmorphia, references to fatphobia and themes of disordered eating
- Infrequent references to physical injury
- References to mental illness and description of suicide ideation
- Discussion of grief and loneliness
- Description and depiction of arrest, imprisonment and the threat of deportation
- Extended discussion of the asylum process, miscarriages of justice and the UK's Hostile Environment policies
- There is sustained direct audience address and one moment of audience interaction

Lighting and Sound

This show may contain:

- Flashing and flickering lights
- Loud noises, especially low frequency sounds
- Haze effects throughout

Helplines & Support

Samiritans

Samiritans is a registered charity aimed at providing emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope or at risk of suicide throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland, often through its telephone helpline.

samiritans.org or 116 123

Micro Rainbow

Micro Rainbow provide safe housing, employability, and social inclusion support for LGBTQI refugees and people seeking asylum. **microrainbow.org**

Aashna

Therapists working to recognise the ways in which culture, faith, colour, background, sexuality, gender and neurodiversity affect people's experiences. **aashna.uk**

The Good Grief Trust

Run by bereaved people, helping those experiencing grief. Provides information and support on grief and bereavement, including a map of bereavement services.

thegoodgrieftrust.org

Ice & Fire

Ice & Fire explores human rights stories through performance. They put human rights at the core of everything they do to make accessible theatre for a wide range of audiences across the UK.

iceandfire.co.uk

Positive East

Positive East offer a comprehensive and holistic range of support services for people living with and affected by HIV as well as HIV and STI testing, prevention and outreach.

positiveeast.org.uk or 020 7791 2855

Self-care suggestions

Watch with someone

Bring a friend or someone you trust to watch the play with you.

Talk to someone

If you find the content distressing try talking to someone you trust, or try one of the organisations suggested above.

Breathe

Breathing is a great way to help you feel calm. Try breathing in for four seconds, holding your breath for four seconds, exhaling for four seconds and holding again. Repeat this for as long as you need.

Find some nature

Look out of the window or go for a walk if you can; experiencing nature can help us feel grounded.

Shepherd's Bush Green is only a minute's walk away, and the Bush has a terrace with outdoor seating.

Know if you need to step away

There is nothing wrong with deciding this isn't for you or it's too much.

Leave the auditorium, walk away, take a break. Do what feels right for you.

Self-care suggestions

Try a grounding exercise

Grounding exercises are things you can do to bring yourself into contact with the present moment.

There are many ways you can do this. Here are some ideas:

1. Notice five things you can see, four things you can feel, three things you can hear, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste.
2. Sit with your feet on the floor and back against your chair and either gently tap each leg or cross your arms and tap your shoulders.
3. Wash your hands or drink some water.



The performance space

This show will take place in the Holloway Theatre, which is the larger of our two performance spaces.

Access to the Holloway Theatre is on the ground floor and the floor is level. There is step free access to row A in all banks. A wheelchair space is available to book for every show.



Please note that due to the intimate nature of the performance space latecomers may not be admitted, and we cannot guarantee readmission once the performance has begun.



Access information

The Bush Theatre building has two theatre spaces – the Holloway Theatre and the Studio – as well as our Library Bar. There are two entrances to the building:

The first entrance is via the Bush terrace to the right hand side of the building, accessible via a ramp suitable for wheelchair users and buggies or via three steps. There is a red automatic double glass door.

From here the Box Office is to the left and the Library Bar and Gianni and Michael Alen-Buckley Script Library are beyond the Box Office around the corner. The Holloway Theatre entrance is just beyond the bar and to the right of the Script Library. The Studio is immediately to the right, down a corridor with floor-to-ceiling windows.

Access information

If you enter through **the front entrance** on Uxbridge Road through the porch up some steps, the theatre's Library Bar is straight ahead on the right, the Script Library is to the left, and the Box Office and Studio to the right. The entrance to the Holloway Theatre is straight ahead on the left.

The toilets are situated on the first floor and are accessible via stairs or the lift. These are non-gendered. There is a single-use cubicle on the ground floor which is accessible (right-hand transfer), has baby-changing facilities, includes a sink within the cubicle and has floor-to-ceiling walls.

The Bush Theatre aims to be as accessible as possible in everything we do. The whole building is accessible for wheelchair users, a hearing loop is available, and Assistance Dogs are welcome at every performance.

Discounted tickets for disabled bookers and free tickets for essential companions are available.



**If you have any
questions or
would like more
information, don't
hesistate to get
in touch with our
team:**

**email:
boxoffice@bushtheatre.co.uk**

**phone:
020 8743 5050**