

Post-screening Creative Activities

Film: *My Baby You'll Be*



Notes to the Facilitator

Here are four post-screening activities to choose from, suitable for groups, individuals or both, as indicated. Each activity includes an estimate of how much time to allow, as well as the required supplies.

The activities are described and introduced in italicized text; they are designed to be helpful to use in presenting contexts, concepts and methods to participants.

1. Connection Game

Participant Unit: Group (organized into pairs or teams)

Estimated Activity Duration: 40-60 minutes

Supplies: This is "everything but the kitchen sink" territory: office supplies, kitchen tools, items of clothing, you name it!

This game-like, creative exercise involves bringing together objects or ideas that seem very different or unrelated in order to create a new object or concept. It's actually a tool used by designers but can open any of us up to inventive possibilities and get us interacting and learning more about each other.

- Organize participants into teams or pairs.
- Have each individual select a random item from the supplies provided.
- Then encourage participants to simply start brainstorming about how these items might be used in conjunction and for what purpose. This can get silly, which is always good, but you never know... Make sure someone jots down the ideas and thoughts generated and/or sketches the possibilities.

2. Collage

Participant Unit: Communal or Solo

Estimated Activity Duration: 40-60 minutes

Supplies: Supports - Sturdy, heavy paper, multi-media or canvas boards that accept glue well; Scissors and/or exacto knives; Magazines, photographs, fabric, ribbons, construction paper, junk mail, flyers, of varied color and texture; Adhesives: Elmer's Glue, acrylic medium or 2-sided tape.

My Baby You'll Be offers a view of a young man's days and rituals in a kind of patchwork, or composite. The film fuses glimpses of his mornings,

evenings, mealtimes, and domestic routines, all of which can be thought of as a collage, albeit one with a strong theme and narrative through-line.

Collage, which comes from the French word *coller*, meaning "to glue," is a technique using a variety of materials — papers, fabrics, magazine or newspaper images, and more — to create a new whole picture.

It does not rely on any traditional drawing or drafting skills and offers an immersive way of finding a pattern or seeing the order or meaning in disparate elements, something many of us crave in the midst of the busyness of our lives and obligations.

- To get participants started, you can ask them to think of any images from the film that resonated with them and suggest that they look for similar images in magazines or films and cut them out. Or, you can ask them to think about the colors, shades or textures they observed and select materials that seem similar to use as the elements of their collage.
- Then encourage participants to start playing around with their selected materials, arranging and rearranging them to form an image or pattern or an abstract composition, before adhering them to make their final picture.
- Group variation: After some time and experimentation, have individuals put their collage-in-progress in the middle of the table then take another's work-in-progress and add their own contributions before returning to the middle of the table, once more.

3. Writing

Participant Unit: Individual or Group

Estimated Activity Duration: 30-40 minutes

Supplies: Stationery, Pens, Pencils, Stickers, Envelopes, and Stamps

Note: typewriters, a novelty to younger folks, long-lost friends to others, can provide a welcome alternative writing medium, one that can provide a little distance but that is still more tactile and visual than electronic writing.

This film has been called "A Love Letter to Mom." Sometimes we forget how powerful and creatively fulfilling the act of putting down our thoughts to someone in a letter — on actual paper — can be. This holds true whether it's a letter we might actually put a stamp on and send; one we know will never reach a recipient; or a letter to our self — now in this moment, a past self or one we imagine in the future.

- Ask participants to decide whether they want to write a letter to themselves — in this moment, in the past, or at a future time they can envision — or whether they want to address a former friend, a relative, a co-worker or neighbor.
- Then, using some of the stationery and supplies, ask participants to take a few minutes to express their feelings, share news, or ask after the person to whom they are writing. They can even jot down their sentiments in verse or a doodle!
- Invite participants to read (or they may want to ask another participant to read) their letter to the group.

4. Resilience/Resistance

Crayon Etching/Scratch Art

Participant Unit: Individual or Group

Estimated Activity Duration: 30-40 minutes

Supplies: Paper support (medium weight drawing or construction paper); Crayons (ideally ones that leave heavy, waxy color on paper; make sure there are plenty of black ones) OR: Oil pastels, e.g., Cray Pas. (These may be easier for 'older hands' or those with arthritis to use.) Black poster paint; Toothpicks, paper clips or thin bamboo skewers to 'scratch'; Stencils of nature forms, e.g., trees, ocean waves, the sun.

Sometimes the surprise of creating reminds us of our rich inner resources. One art technique that many of us may remember from our childhoods has something of this quality. It involves making a drawing by scratching through a layer of black crayon which has been laid down over a multi-color under-layer. The unexpected brightness and richness of the colors revealed under the unified dark is enlightening!

(Combining this technique with an image from nature that symbolizes resilience may reinforce this intrinsic message.)

- Have participants lay down bright random blocks or sections of different colors, filling the entire page.
- Then, using black crayon or black poster paint, have them completely cover the colored sections.
- Using a toothpick, bamboo skewer or paper clip, have participants draw a freestyle sketch, doodle or, image into/through the black, or suggest they use the provided "nature form" stencils for their picture.