

Discussion Guide

Film: *My Baby You'll Be*



Notes to the Facilitator

This film offers a portrait of how a relationship between two close family members can grow distant. While mother and child represents one of our most primal connections, the emotional core and special texture of the film make it resonate with viewers and elicit feelings about many other relationships in their lives. These relationships no doubt touch on the degree of support, social connectedness and essential intimacy viewers have or want in their lives.

Caregivers, many of whom care for family members, may have particularly strong reactions to this film, with its underlying subtext of love, loyalty and responsibility to kin.

Discussion Questions

The following discussion questions are offered to help you, the facilitator, open up dialogue and conversation among participants--to get their response to the film, particularly as it relates to their own challenges with important relationships in their lives and states of connectedness.

1. What did you find most interesting about the film? Did anything in particular catch your attention?
2. Despite the theme of connection and disconnection, the young man in the film (the filmmaker) seems to have a girlfriend, and a pet — in other words, a life with (seemingly) fulfilling attachments. Can you still feel lonely and depressed if you have these kinds of elements in your life?
3. If so, are these feelings hard to convey and make others understand?
4. Does your reaction to the film raise thoughts and feelings that surprise you?
5. This film has been called "A Love Letter to Mom." Do you think that's fitting? How would you describe the subject and theme of the film?
6. Does this film bring up relationships in your own life, past or present?
7. If the relationships are with individuals in your past, are they ones you want to reflect on and even possibly further resolve?
8. If not, have you ever felt the need — and perhaps avoided it — to share your feelings about what happened, either by talking to someone or through other expressive means (for example: writing, dancing, photography)
9. What would you say to the mother or son in the film?

Topics to Explore through the Film

Loneliness can take many different forms, which is why the Festival offers viewers five theaters reflecting the experience of particularly affected groups as well as those of us navigating everyday obstacles of connecting meaningfully with others:

- Family Relationships:
 - How they change through life
 - The influence of family history in creating new families or friend-family groups
- The Role of Technology — positive and negative — in relationship building and maintaining
- The Artifacts of Connectedness: home movies, voicemails, letters, journals

About the Film: *My Baby You'll Be*

When Charles' mother asked him to help her transfer home movies to her hard drive, his reaction was, "What home videos?" Watching the 20 hours of family memories and realizing he had 38 unopened voicemails — many from his mother—lead him to realize the extent to which the two, once so undeniably close, had grown apart. He realized, too, that with the videos and the voicemails he had the perfect media with which to explore the situation creatively.

"I watched every clip, end to end," he said. "I cried, I laughed, and then I wondered, what happened? Why aren't we as connected as we used to be?"

Many ask Charles about his mother's reaction to the film. And the answer involves tissues and unconditional love.

"She urged me not to be so hard on myself!" And told him he'd been there for her and she knew he always would be.

The film has received accolades at Festival viewings around the country and received the Creatively Connected Online Film Festival Spotlight Award, selected by guest juror Mike Paseornek of Lionsgate Films.

About the Filmmaker: Charles Frank

Creatively Connected *Live!* was thrilled to discover this young filmmaker. His cinematic grace and particular sensitivity to the qualities of distance, closeness and yearning in our relationships to each other and to our larger communities were so striking that we selected three of his films for our festival, each of which captures a very different theme and aspect of loneliness and isolation.

Charles grew up in Western Massachusetts, in a tiny town a couple of hours outside of Boston. Recollecting his boyhood, he says "Besides making trick shot videos, I was a dishwasher for a summer and an avid member of the A2Z Yo-Yo Team. I studied in a rigorous academic environment and spent my free time making corny short films, and at 16 I worked on my first feature."

After a gap year in Portland, Oregon, he planned to attend NYU Film School but ended up taking a position with a production company before co-founding Voyager Creative, a Brooklyn, NY enterprise with a range of corporate and personal projects rooted in documentary, verite approach.