



NINE

TO

NINETY

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A SCREENING & DISCUSSION GUIDE

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About the Film

Nine to Ninety is not your average love story. But it is a story for our times.

In this award-winning documentary directed by Alicia Dwyer and produced by Juli Vizza, we meet Phyllis and Joe Sabatini. At ages 89 and 90, they live at home with their daughter Sarah and granddaughter Jacqueline. But as the family struggles to make ends meet and the grandparents' health problems escalate, they are forced to make a difficult decision. Determined to free Sarah from the burden of caring for everyone from "nine to ninety," Phyllis decides to move 3,000 miles away to live with her other daughter, Angie. But this means parting from Joe, her husband of 62 years. The choice leads them all to consider: What does it take to live, love, and die with dignity and grace in the modern age?

To learn more, visit: www.ninetoninetymovie.com



A Note from the Filmmaker

Dear Friend,

Nine to Ninety is one of several documentaries I have directed that center on family dynamics. The first was related to my own family's arguments about religion. Through that experience, I discovered how powerful it can be for viewers to have the opportunity to explore a theme intimately through the eyes of a set of characters. *Nine to Ninety*, about a family grappling with how to age with dignity, carries this forward. As with my other films (visit www.veracityproductions.com), it strives to get up close and personal by sharing the intimacy of this family's experience—the challenges, the love—as their story unfolds.

Producer Juli Vizza (featured in the film) came to me with the idea for a documentary about her own closely-knit, Italian-American family. When we began filming, I quickly realized that her grandparents, Phyllis and Joe Sabatini, were the heart of the story. Phyllis is charming, plainspoken, and a firecracker. I was struck by how actively engaged she was in trying to make very difficult decisions about her life—a life deeply entwined with that of her husband and their younger family members. As this beautiful family ages, they each face deep questions related to love, dignity, responsibility, burden, loss, and grace. And as Phyllis embarks on this heroic journey, she makes a surprising decision that can be deeply unsettling for some viewers. And yet, it is her choice.

It is my hope that this story can help to inspire personal conversations and decision-making around aging, end-of-life choices, death, and caretaking in our own families. Fifty million Americans live in multigenerational households—40 percent more than in 1990. With life expectancies increasing, our aging population is growing at historic rates at the same time that most families in the U.S. are losing ground economically. I hope our film brings into focus what this means for real people like Phyllis Sabatini and her family—and that we can follow her courageous lead when she exclaims, “We’ve got to talk about it!”

Together we can work to envision the society we want for those facing the end of life, and contribute to a sea change of policies, resources, and support that enables all of us to age with dignity.

I am indebted to Juli and her family for letting us be with them with a camera at such a difficult time, and to cinematographer/co-producer Michael Dwyer for his incredible eye as well as his passion and discernment. Filming with Michael and sound mixer Jesse Dwyer, my brothers, is a particular joy for me. From beginning to end, this was a family affair. Love also to brilliant editor Kate Amend and composer John Kirby for bringing the film alive with us in post-production.

—Alicia Dwyer, [Director](#)

How to Use This Guide

We are facing an unprecedented moment in our country's history: The U.S. population is about to be older than it has ever been. While it is good news that people are living longer, there is now a greater need than ever to plan ahead as life expectancies outpace the infrastructure of our healthcare, economy, and other support systems. Whether it is about independence, money, health, caretaking, death, or family relationships, how we care for our loved ones at the end of life is something not enough people are talking about or preparing for. And it's never too early! This is where *Nine to Ninety* comes in.

***Nine to Ninety* can be a powerful catalyst for productive dialogue and learning around a range of issues related to aging and dying.** This guide is designed to help viewers use the story to prompt discussion in a variety of settings. Here are just a few ideas:



- Break the ice in **family discussions** at home or in senior centers.
 - Inspire **dialogue and planning** in faith-based and other community settings.
 - Spark conversations in **caregiver support** groups.
 - Develop kick-off **trainings** for social workers, nurses, or mental health providers.
 - **Influence policymakers** and their staff at VIP and other public screening events.
 - Spark **intergenerational** dialogue on campus and in relevant academic programs.
- (See also: Discussion Guide for Educators: www.newday.com/film/nine-ninety)

For Informal, No-nonsense Discussions

Skip to the Discussion Prompts (page 7) to select the questions you feel will be most useful to the discussion you would like to have:

- **Conversation Starters** (page 7) is the best place to begin. This allows space for audience members to process their immediate reactions to the film before getting too deeply immersed in the issues.
- **Talking About Death** (page 8) offers a valuable way to spark planning discussions.
- **Walk in Their Shoes** (page 13) allows for exploration of the various experiences and perspectives featured in the film.
- **Digging into the Facts** (pages 9–12) covers a range of themes, including the gender divide, generational differences in aging, and its financial implications.

Supporting research is included throughout this guide to offer further helpful context.

For Larger or More Formal Events

If you are putting together a more formal event, be sure to check out the Logistical Planning Checklist (page 14) to help you **plan ahead**. And remember, *Nine to Ninety* is a half-hour film, so plan for at least a full hour in order to have a productive conversation.

It is important to always **consider people's sensitivities**. For larger or more reactive groups, read through the tips and ground rules to the right and below. They can help you keep the conversation productive and on track.

Whether your group is small or large, formal or informal, this is your chance to **encourage people to take the next step** in their planning or to get more involved. The exercises on pages 9 and 12 are designed to help kick-start planning, and the suggested resources and reading on pages 15–17 can help direct people to action. We recommend printing these pages and handing them out so people leave with tangible action items and ideas.

We hope you'll find in this guide everything you need for a deep and productive conversation about one of the most intimate issues we are all touched by today.

Considerations for Sensitive Conversations

Conversations about the end of life, money, family dynamics, health, independence, and caretaking can be difficult and often trigger strong emotional reactions, especially when they are most needed. But as 89-year-old Phyllis says in *Nine to Ninety*, "We've got to talk about it!" To do so successfully, it is important to create a space that allows participants to feel safe. If you are facilitating the discussion, consider the following tips.

BASIC GROUND RULES

Discussions are most productive when people feel safe, comfortable, and challenged. That balance can be difficult to achieve when the topic is as personal and emotional as stories related to the death of loved ones. Setting guidelines can help. Consider these suggested ground rules:

- **Step up, step back. Make sure** everyone has a chance to speak.
- **Pass if you must.** Everyone has the right not to speak.
- **Keep it close.** Privacy matters. Everything said in the group should remain in the group.
- **Listen to others.** Don't interrupt while others are speaking.
- **Use "I" statements.** Avoid putting words in other people's mouths.
- **Suspend your judgment.** As the [Conversation Project's Starter Kit](#) notes, "A 'good' death means different things to different people." (see page 16)
- **Ask questions.** Don't be afraid to ask for more information.
- **No question is stupid!**

Before the screening

- **Watch the film at least once before showing it to the group.** Ensure that you've processed your own feelings in advance so you are fully available to help participants process their own.
- **Build in time for small groups,** especially if your audience is larger than 20 people, so everyone has a chance to process out loud and be heard.

At the screening

- **Explain the purpose of the conversation** so participants know what you hope they'll get out of the discussion.
- **Set ground rules.** This can help keep things on track and ensure that everybody feels comfortable offering their thoughts (see page 5).

After the screening

- **Take a moment to reflect.** As the lights come up and emotions are still raw, give participants a chance to reflect and speak from their hearts before digging in. The Conversation Starters (page 7) can help create that space.
- **Connect it back to the film.** To move through emotions and keep the conversation going, acknowledge how personal the issue is, then connect back to the film, which offers more neutral territory. Breaking into pairs can also help.



Discussion Prompts

Pick and choose from the sections below to tailor your conversation to your group's needs. We highly recommend you start with the Conversation Starters to get the discussion going.

Conversation Starters

- What is your immediate reaction to what you just saw?
- What specific scene or moment in the film stood out to you and why?
- Which of the people in the film did you relate to the most and why?
- Does this story have a happy ending? Please explain why or why not.

General Questions

1. Phyllis is still active and independent at 89 years old. "Always keep your mind occupied," she says, "because if you don't use it, you lose it." How does her approach to life and aging appear to differ from Joe's? How do those differences affect each of them and their family? Please explain.
2. In one scene, Phyllis shares with her granddaughter, Juli, how nervous it makes her that Joe has not been caring for himself, bathing, or brushing his teeth. "I'm not going to do that to my kids!" she exclaims. In your opinion, what are the fears and concerns that Phyllis may be experiencing in that moment? Please explain.
3. Based on what you saw in the film, what appear to be the various responsibilities that Sarah must manage to care for her parents? What other related responsibilities might she also have that do not appear in the film? Consider your own life and parents: If you had to begin caring for them right now, how would this affect your life and other commitments?
4. At the doctor's office, we learn that Phyllis needs an ultrasound and that Joe is experiencing a decline in liver and kidney function and needs dialysis. The news has a big impact on the family.
 - What options do they consider to navigate the situation?
 - What are the various issues they must negotiate?
 - How do you think your own family would manage a similar situation?

DID YOU KNOW?

Dialysis is a treatment that takes over one's kidneys' functions—such as removing waste, salt, and extra water—when they can no longer take care of your body's needs. It often requires the creation of an access (entrance) into your blood vessels via minor surgery to your arm, leg, or abdomen so your blood can be cleaned by artificial means. The process is time-consuming and expensive.

From the National Kidney Foundation
www.kidney.org/atoz/content/dialysisinfo

5. “I feel like there is no right decision,” says Juli in one scene. Why does she say that? Do you agree? Why or why not?
6. What does decision-making look like in the Sabatini family? In your opinion, how well did the younger members of the family respect the wishes of their elders? Consider your own family: By whom and how are decisions made around care for aging parents, children, or other dependents? Is it optimal?
7. “I’m sad to leave my husband,” says Phyllis. “I love her, and I’m going to keep on loving her,” says Joe. Despite their feelings, the decision to live apart appears to be one they both agree on. Why do you think that is the case? What appears to matter most to each of them that might be underlying this decision? Please explain.

Talking About Death

Talking about aging and dying is not easy, but it is critically important. According to a 2013 national survey by The Conversation Project, **“90 percent of people think it is important to talk about end-of-life care,”** and yet **“less than 30 percent have actually done so.”** The Center for Disease Control reports that “70 percent of people say they prefer to die at home,” but the same percentage actually end up dying in a hospital, nursing home, or long-term care facility.* This means that most people’s wishes are not being met. The following questions can help you work through some of the obstacles to these important discussions.

- When Phyllis asks her daughter Angie if funeral arrangements have been made, Angie doesn’t want to talk about it. “We’ve got to talk about it!” exclaims Phyllis. Do you have worries or fears of your own around end-of-life conversations like this? What are they? How can we make conversations about dying less scary?
- Phyllis begins to give away her jewelry to her family, initiating the process of saying goodbye while she is still living. Have you ever had a similar conversation, or would you like to? What could you or your family have done—or can do now—to start that conversation?
- “Is this her passing-away ceremony?” asks nine-year-old Jacqueline. “But she’s not dead yet!” How much do you think Jacqueline understands about the situation? How do you think young people like her should be included in family decisions and discussions like this?



* To learn more, visit The Conversation Project: www.theconversationproject.org

- Is there someone who knows what matters most to you with respect to your end-of-life wishes? If so, who is it, and how did that conversation go? If not, to whom would you like to reach out about this?

BONUS ACTIVITY: ARE YOU READY TO TALK ABOUT IT?

The Conversation Project Starter Kit: “What matters to me is _____.”

Following a screening of the film and a brief reaction time, ask participants to consider the following questions. If your group is large, break everyone into small groups of 4–5 people.

Part I: Ask people to silently consider the things that would be most important to them at the end of their life—whether that is now or later in life—and have them jot down their thoughts. What do they value most? What can they not imagine doing without? How involved do they want to be in every decision? How long do they want to receive medical care? How involved do they want their loved ones to be? Check out the Starter Kit website (URL below) for added context and prompts to help participants measure how much they care about a variety of issues on a scale of 1–5. (10 min.)

Part II: Ask participants to discuss their thoughts with the group. Encourage them to consider culture, family dynamics, finances, healthcare decision-making, etc. (20–25 min.)

Adapted from The Conversation Project Starter Kit. To download and print the full exercise:
www.theconversationproject.org/starter-kit/intro/

Digging into the Facts

The prompts below cover a range of themes and issues related to the end of life. Information in the boxes provides research and context to help broaden the picture. Select the questions that cover the themes you care about most.

- The family jokes with nine-year-old Jacqueline that she will have to support them all when they get older. Do you think this is something they really worry about? Is it something you worry about? Why or why not?
- What kind of pressure (financial, emotional, etc.) does having multiple generations living in one home appear to have on each of the members of the Sabatini family? What appear to be the benefits?

DID YOU KNOW?

The Sandwich Generation refers to a generation of people—nearly half (47%) of adults in their 40’s and 50’s today—who are caring for an aging parent while also raising a young child or financially supporting a grown child (age 18 or older).^{*} It is a newer trend based on longer life expectancies and a poor economy that forces older children back home (dubbed the Boomerang Generation^{**}). As a result, a record 57 million Americans, or 18.1% of the U.S. population, lived in multi-generational family households in 2012. That is double the number who lived in such households in 1980, and that number continues to rise.^{***}

From the Pew Research Center

^{*}www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/01/30/the-sandwich-generation/

^{**}www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/03/15/the-boomerang-generation/

^{***}www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/07/17/in-post-recession-era-young-adults-drive-continuing-rise-in-multi-generational-living/

DID YOU KNOW?

The financial implications and responsibilities of end-of-life care can be daunting. According to a study by the AARP and The National Alliance for Caregiving, on average caregivers spend 24.4 hours a week providing care to their loved one(s). Six in ten caregivers report being employed at some point in the past year while caregiving and, among them, 56 percent worked full time.*

While the median income in the U.S. is \$52,047,** the average annual cost of an in-home health aide is \$45,760, the average annual cost of Adult Day Care is \$17,904, the average annual cost of an assisted living facility is \$43,200, and the average annual cost of a semi-private room in a nursing facility is \$80,300.***

*From *The National Alliance for Caregiving*
www.caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2015_CaregivingintheUS_Final-Report-June-4_WEB.pdf

** From *The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*:
www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/median-annual-income/

*** From *Genworth*
www.genworth.com/corporate/about-genworth/industry-expertise/cost-of-care.html

- Consider your own family: Do you have multiple generations living in your home? Where do you fit in, and what is your experience of the benefits and challenges?
- Do you expect to support your parents or an older loved one at some point in your life? How do you think it will affect your future, financially and otherwise?
- Phyllis announces that she wants to go into assisted living, but this option is way too expensive for the family. This leads to a decision to split up the grandparents. Consider your own family and situation: Would you respond similarly or differently? What resources would you—or could you—draw upon?
- What role should local, state, or federal government play in the care that is needed for aging people?
- Phyllis worries about Sarah. “You have enough going on as it is,” she says. How do you think “caregiver fatigue” plays into family dynamics? In your opinion, when and how would it be okay to step back from caregiving? As a caregiver, how would you create space for self-care?



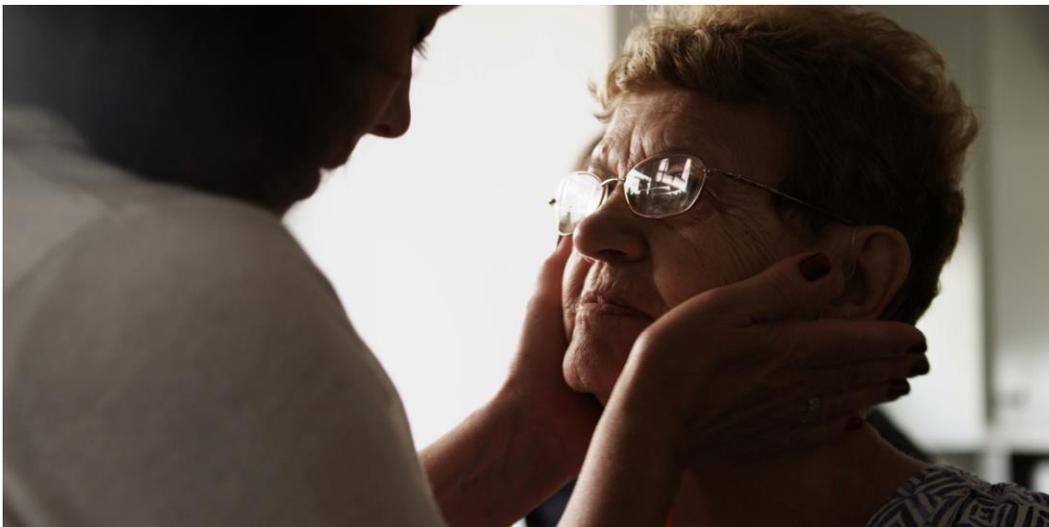


- Consistent with the national statistics, the women in the Sabatini family are the primary caregivers to their parents. Do you think this is a choice or an obligation? What's the difference between the two? Why do you think women tend to take on caretaking roles?
- Consider your own family: Who bears the brunt of the caretaking responsibilities? How is your situation similar to and how is it different from the Sabatinis? What are the benefits and challenges to how things function in your family?

DID YOU KNOW?

There is a gender divide in caregiving. According to The Family Caregiving Alliance, about 66 percent of caregivers are female. In fact, the average caregiver is a 49-year-old woman, caring for her 60-year-old mother, who does not live with her. She is married and employed. Although men also provide assistance, female caregivers may spend as much as 50 percent more time providing care than male caregivers. It is estimated that the financial value of this informal care that women provide ranges from \$148 billion to \$188 billion annually.

From the Family Caregiving Alliance www.caregiver.org/women-and-caregiving-facts-and-figures.



- The Sabatinis are an Italian-American family. Did you notice any ways that this cultural background may have influenced how the family approaches care-taking and end-of-life decision-making? If so, what were they? Please explain.

- Consider your own cultural background: How does it influence your thinking and planning around end-of-life issues for you or your family?

- What role does the Sabatinis' culture play in their relationship to self, healthcare, dying, and decision-making? What steps can they take today to prepare themselves and their families for end-of-life conversations and planning?

DID YOU KNOW?

Culture is a major factor in shaping a person's relationship to the end of life. It is the sum of "beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society, group, place, or time."* According to the California HealthCare Foundation, there can be a mismatch of perspectives related to time, information, and empathy that connect to cultural differences. It is, therefore, important that doctors and patients have conversations to align understanding and decisions around end-of-life care that account for these cultural variations.

*From Merriam Webster www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture



BONUS ACTIVITY: WHAT IS YOUR NEXT STEP?

- **Talk About It!** Check out the resources on pages 15-17 to help you start talking with doctors, loved ones, and even children about the end of life.
- **Start Your Planning Now.** It's never too early. There are tools to help you on page 15, from games to a finance calculator and more.
- **Be a Part of the Solution.** Support better policies and advocate for the rights of aging people and their caregivers. See the list of professional associations and networks on pages 15-17, and get involved. National Healthcare Decisions Day is a fun place to start! (See page 15.)
- **Inspire Others.** Did you take a first step? It's a courageous thing to do. So tell us about it! Snap a photo with your family, or capture them on video using your phone and upload it to: www.ninetyninemovie.com.

Walk in Their Shoes

Together, the Sabatini family makes the decision to split up the grandparents—Joe on the West coast with Sarah, and Phyllis on the East coast with Angie. This brings up feelings of uncertainty for each family member. Take a moment to reflect on how you might respond to the situation and how it might feel from each person’s position and role within your family. What responsibilities, questions, feelings, and other issues might you each be grappling with?



PHYLLIS: “Where can I go where I won’t be a burden to anybody? It’s a hard decision to make, it really is.”

SARAH: “We grew up in a family where if somebody got old, they lived with you. You didn’t farm them out or go to visit them once a month.”



JOE: “Without her, I’m nothing.”

JACQUELINE: “Living with my grandparents is like a substitute for siblings...so it’s kind of nice. But, they act annoying like them too.”



JULI: “Separating them now, 3,000 miles, that’s a lot. What if my grandmother’s health deteriorates? What if she can’t come back? I don’t know that they—that anybody—has thought of that. I don’t know that I’ve thought of that. It just makes me sad.”

ANGIE: “Ugh, I don’t like talking about this.”



Logistical Planning Checklist

Screening *Nine to Ninety* and hosting a post-screening discussion is simple if you plan ahead. Review this easy-to-use checklist to ensure you've thought of everything. Many of the items below are intended for larger, public events, so not everything will be applicable if you are planning a smaller gathering. Consider your needs and customize accordingly.

Preliminary planning – at least 6 weeks in advance

- Book the venue and date for your screening, or identify the space and equipment you'll need. Be sure to confirm all of the basics:
 - Is the screen big enough for your audience?
 - Is there enough seating for your audience? Is the seating included in the venue rental?
 - Do you need a projector and a laptop? A DVD player and a TV? Speakers?
 - If you'll be setting up a panel or reception, are there mics, tables, and chairs?
- Recruit local organizations and groups to broaden your reach and provide support for the event; identify roles for each one (e.g., publicity, panelist coordination, reception planning).
- Identify a facilitator or determine your speakers, panelists, and a moderator.
- Create your flyer, email blast, and/or press release.

Logistical planning and initial outreach – 3-4 weeks in advance

- If relevant, get the word out electronically (Facebook, Twitter, list-servs etc.). Make sure to include a contact, your website, and RSVP information if you plan to collect it.
- Contact community calendars and speak with community leaders about your event.
- Important: Check the media (DVD, etc.) on the exact equipment you'll be using for the event.
- Secure food for reception (if applicable).
- Draft event agenda and vet with partners.

More logistical planning – 2 weeks in advance

- Reach out to media outlets—local papers, TV stations or radio programs—if you want to increase visibility for your event *and* there is a strong local hook.
- Post your flyer in high-traffic areas that you know your target audience will frequent.
- Confirm all details with event staff (caterer, venue, IT, etc.) and finalize agenda.

Final planning – several days in advance

- Test screen your media and equipment one last time to make sure there aren't any glitches.
- Send a reminder email blast to invitees.
- Make copies of handouts to distribute at the event (for example, the Resources on pages 15-17 or the Walk in Their Shoes section on page 13).

At the event itself

- Have a timekeeper so panelists/speakers remain within their allotted time.
- If relevant, as people arrive, ask them to sign up to receive updates from your organization.
- Important: Encourage people to take the next step. Help identify *clear* ways they can start their planning and have resources and materials available for them. See page 12 for ideas.
- Make sure attendees and partners know how they can get access to the film and share it: www.ninetoninetymovie.com
- Take photos!

After your screening

- Follow up with audience members, and be sure to keep them engaged, including sending them invitations to future events and activities.

Resources

Order *Nine to Ninety* at: www.ninetoninetymovie.com

End-of-Life Planning

AARP: Long Term Care Calculator

www.aarp.org/relationships/caregiving-resource-center

A membership organization offering information, advocacy, and service for people age 50 and over, including free tools, such as a Long Term Care Calculator and a Financial Planning Checklist. See more here: www.aarp.org/tools

Aging with Dignity and Five Wishes

www.agingwithdignity.org

Practical information, advice, and legal tools for Advance Care Planning, including the popular “Five Wishes” Advance Directive.

Caring Connections

www.caringinfo.org

Free resources to help people make decisions about end-of-life care before a crisis. Links to Advance Directives for all 50 states included.

My Gift of Grace

www.mygiftofgrace.com

A conversation game designed by Common Practice about living and dying well.

National Healthcare Decisions Day

www.nhdd.org

An initiative to inspire, educate and empower the public and providers about the importance of advance care planning.

POLST

www.polst.org

The National POLST Paradigm is an approach to end-of-life planning that emphasizes patients’ wishes about the care they receive.

Prepare for Your Care

www.prepareforyourcare.org

Walks people through basic steps in Advance Care Planning and provides prompts and videos to help them get started.

Caregiver Support

Caring Across Generations

www.caringacross.org

A national coalition of over 200 labor, consumer, advocacy, and policy organizations to advocate to transform the way long-term care is delivered in our country.

Family Caregiver Alliance, National Center on Caregiving

www.caregiver.org

Offers education, services, research, and advocacy around long-term care for loved ones.

White House Conference on Aging

www.whitehouseconferenceonaging.gov/happening/resources-caregivers.html

A listing of federal resources for caregivers.

Related Professional Associations

Alzheimer's Association

www.alz.org 24/7 Helpline 1.800.272.3900

Research and support from the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support, and research.

Assisted Living Federation of America

www.alfa.org

The largest national association exclusively dedicated to professionally managed, resident-centered senior living communities and the seniors and families they serve.

National Association of Elder Law Attorneys

www.naela.org

Legal support and advocacy around issues affecting people as they age and people with disabilities.

National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers

www.caremanager.org

Membership association for Aging Life Care Professionals™ through education, professional development, and the highest ethical standards.

National Institute on Mental Health

www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/older-adults-and-mental-health/index.shtml

Resources and information about depression and mental health concerns linked to aging.

Stanford Geriatric Education Center

www.sgec.stanford.edu/

Support around healthcare for elders from diverse populations.

Dialogue Resources

The Conversation Project's Starter Kit

www.theconversationproject.org/starter-kit/intro/

Dialogue resources and support for families and loved ones.

The Conversation Project: How to Talk to Your Doctor

theconversationproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/TCP-TalkToYourDoctor.pdf

Resources and support for discussions with a healthcare team.

Death Over Dinner

deathoverdinner.org

An online tool to help you plan a test dinner to try out talking about death with your loved ones.

Hospice

www.hospicenet.org/html/child.html

Resources to help you talk with a child about the loss of a loved one.

Further Reading

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FOR CHILDREN

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The Fledgling Fund
www.thefledglingfund.org

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting
www.cpb.org

The Filmmakers

Juli Vizza, Producer and Film Subject



Juli Vizza is an award-winning producer and editor. She won an Emmy Award® for editing the 2002 Winter Olympics at NBC and has since been working as a producer for non-fiction and fiction film, television, commercials, and music videos. Juli has produced films that premiered at the Sundance, Berlin, and Tribeca film festivals, and have aired on Showtime and PBS. At Sony Pictures Entertainment, she worked on publicity campaigns for *The DaVinci Code* for the U.S. and international markets, as well as the 2006 Cannes Film Festival, and for other films including *Stranger Than Fiction*, *Quantum of Solace*, and *Angels & Demons*. Juli co-produced and edited the feature-length documentary *Xmas Without China* and produced *Nine to Ninety*, both for PBS.

Alicia Dwyer, Director



Alicia Dwyer directed *Xmas Without China*, a feature documentary that premiered at SXSW 2013, which follows a Chinese immigrant who challenged an American family to celebrate Christmas with no Chinese products. Alicia's work appeared in theaters nationwide in the feature documentary *Bully*, (produced by The Weinstein Company) for which she directed key material with the main character. She was a director on *The Calling*, a flagship series of the 2010 Independent Lens season on PBS, and associate producer on the Academy Award®-winning feature *Into the Arms of Strangers*. Alicia helped start Veracity Productions, an independent company where she is producing the thriller *Pocha*, which won the Audience Award for Best Feature at the Los Angeles Film Festival and releases theatrically in 2016.

Michael Dwyer, Cinematographer & Co-Producer



Working as a producer/cinematographer at Veracity Productions in Los Angeles, Michael Dwyer bridges the divide between documentary and fiction filmmaking. His documentary work can be seen in *Short Game* (SXSW 2013), *Bully* (2012 theatrical release), PBS documentaries including *Xmas Without China* (2013) and *The Calling* (2010), and video components to Annenberg Space for Photography exhibitions. His narrative credits include the mystery-comedy feature *The Sound & the Shadow* (Heartland Film Festival 2014). Debuting his first feature as a director/cinematographer, Michael's taut thriller *Pocha* won the Best Feature Audience Award at the Los Angeles Film Festival and releases theatrically in 2016.

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