

## Post Film Screening Discussion Guide

A post film screening discussion can be an invaluable aspect of your event where participants learn from one another, find support, engage in meaningful conversations, and provoke further inquiry and contemplation. Whenever possible, bring in an expert to lead a Q&A session. Videos discussing health, diet, and other complex topics are ideal places for a nurse, doctor, or dietician to lend their expertise. Whether or not an expert is present, the following guide provides tips that will help create an enriching dialogue for the audience.

- Turn lights on after credits finish.
- Thank everyone for attending.
- Acknowledge that the film is powerful and elicits various responses.
- Have volunteers distribute comment cards and pens and request that attendees take a moment to fill them out. Allow 1-5 minutes for this. When people are done writing, volunteers can come by and collect the cards and give them to you.
- Open the discussion up by inviting reactions, comments, or questions.
- Allow for initial silence (approx. 10-15 seconds) and then if no one responds, you can offer something from your own experience to get the discussion rolling; your reaction when you first saw the film, reactions other people have shared with you, news about the film, etc.
- Look through the cards and share a poignant comment, pose a question to the group, or answer a question written on a card.
- As viewers begin to participate, it's important to repeat each question to ensure that everyone in the audience heard it.
- As the facilitator, you are welcome to respond to questions and comments but you do not need to be the only responder or have all the answers. You can simply acknowledge a question and put it back to the audience for a response. This technique encourages an open dialogue, exposes different perspectives, and expands participation from more viewers.
- Once the discussion winds down, thank the audience for sharing and being part of the discussion. You can also acknowledge their insight or something about the conversation that was positive.
- Acknowledge that many people who view the film wish to learn more about the subject and what they can do to help. You can provide website resources, inform them of any local organizations, and remind them of the free literature available.
- If serving food, inform the audience as to where that is happening.

## **Additional Moderator Tips**

**Allow for Silence:** Brief periods of quiet where no one wishes to speak are perfectly normal. People often need time to gain confidence to participate and develop their response. If after some silence, people are still uncomfortable speaking, ask if more time is needed to process their thoughts. If the audience seems to need additional time, allow a few more minutes and then initiate a discussion again. The comment cards suggested above can be very helpful in generating the flow of conversation.

**Maintain Focus:** When a viewer raises an unrelated topic, their question seems overly complicated, or a comment goes well beyond the scope of the film, acknowledge the question but suggest that you both discuss it one-on-one after the group Q&A.

**Listen and Accept:** It's natural for viewers to have a strong emotional response to a film. If someone shares powerful emotions, you can simply validate them by stating how common it is to experience a wide range of feelings. You can share a story of your own response to the film or reach out to the audience to see if others share similar feelings and invite comments. It would also be appropriate to encourage others to speak to a friend or loved one as many people will not wish to vocalize their feelings.

**Foster Peace:** Occasionally, someone may express annoyance or anger toward someone, raise an issue in an antagonistic manner, or attempt to dominate the conversation by interrupting repeatedly. Any threats to the respectful atmosphere you strive to foster can be handled in a number of ways. You can acknowledge their comment and offer to discuss it with you after the group Q&A. You can also remind him or her that others would like to speak, and with limited time, the discussion needs to proceed to another topic.

For even more guidelines and tips, visit:

[Do Something](#) (Scroll down to: *A Smooth Talk: How to Host a Discussion*)

[How to Discourage Dysfunctional Behavior in a Meeting](#)

[Tribe of Heart: How to Hold a Post-Screening Discussion](#)

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