



Movie Night Conversation Guide

Movies have the power to change and connect us. They address important social issues, help us understand the world around us, and imagine different worlds. Through film, we can experience life in someone else's shoes. Unfortunately, not all movies are created equal. Sometimes, they address crucial social issues (like violence against women) in a thoughtful, appropriate manner, while other times, they do not. Use our conversation guide to talk with your loved ones about the movies you consume.

- ★ **Looking for ideas about what movies to watch?** Check out our Pinterest board of ideas for everything from Gaslight to Twilight: <https://www.pinterest.com/nnedv/movies-with-dv-themes/>

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- ★ Did you have any pre-conceived notions about this movie before watching it? If so, how did your actual experience live up to these expectations?
 - If you have seen this movie before, did you notice anything different this time?
- ★ What do you think is the overall message of this movie? Do you agree or disagree with it?
- ★ What part of the story was the most powerful to you? Why?
- ★ Who was your favorite character? Least favorite? Why?
 - Did you come to respect or identify with any of the characters in this movie? Who was it and why did you come to respect that character?
 - Were there any characters or scenes that you found inspiring or thought-provoking?
- ★ What did you find most memorable about this movie?
- ★ What role do women and people of color play in this film? Does this film pass the Bechdel Test,¹ the newly-coined DuVernay Test,² and/or the Mako Mori Test?³

¹ To pass the Bechdel Test: (1) There must be two or more named female characters, (2) who have an on-screen conversation, (3) about something other than a man.

- How important is it that women have substantial and established roles in film? Does a failure to develop a character contribute to dehumanizing her?

EMPATHY-BASED QUESTIONS

- ★ **[Select an action performed by one of the characters. Then ask.]** Explain why **[name of character]** took **[describe the action]**. What motivated him or her? **[You can then ask:]** What did this motivation have to do with the theme of the film?
- ★ What relationships (e.g., friends, lovers, co-workers, family members, etc.) are important to the story? How did these relationships contribute to or advance the story?
 - Which characters do you think had the most powerful relationship dynamic, positively or negatively? Why?
 - Did the characters in this movie have healthy or unhealthy relationships? Why?
 - Could you identify any “red flags” for domestic violence or an unhealthy relationship?
 - Did any of the relationship dynamics make you feel uncomfortable? If so, in which scenes? Why did it make you feel this way?
- ★ Was there any scene or circumstance that challenged your views in any way?
- ★ Was there any scene or circumstance that shifted your views on a particular issue?
- ★ Subconscious motives are often the most powerful causes of human behavior. Were there any major characters who acted on motives of which they were not aware? How did these motives affect the actions of those characters?

QUESTIONS RELATED TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- ★ Consider the phrase “violence against women.” In what ways do women experience violence, abuse, or harassment in this movie?

² To pass the DuVernay Test: (1) There must be two or more named characters of color, (2) who have an on-screen conversation, (3) about something other than a white person.

³ To pass the Mako Mori Test: (1) There must be at least one named female character, (2) who gets her own narrative arc, (3) that is not supporting a man’s storyline.

- Did the women facing violence, abuse, or harassment experience any challenges to addressing it?
- In cases of domestic violence, did the victims face any particular barriers to addressing the abuse or leaving the relationship?
- Did the movie romanticize violence against women or blame the victim for what happened to her?
- ★ Does the movie make references to violence against women (e.g., domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, technology-facilitated harassment, or other forms of violence)?
 - If so, were the references obvious signs of violence or were they more subtle?
- ★ Are the movie's messages about violence against women portrayed realistically and/or accurately? If not, what needs to be changed?

PROCESSING QUESTIONS

- ★ What emotions did you feel during the course of the movie? After it ended?
- ★ What effect did the violence, abuse, or harassment have on the characters that experienced it? What effect did seeing it have on you?
- ★ How would you support someone you know experiencing violence, abuse, or harassment similar to what was featured in the film? (See *resources below*.)
- ★ What systems and attitudes did you see in the movie that need to change in order to end violence against women?
 - How can communities work together to end violence?

RESOURCES

- ★ **If you are in danger, please call 911, a local hotline, or the U.S. National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 799-7233 and TTY (800) 787-3224**
- ★ Learn more about domestic violence from NNEDV.org
- ★ Learn more about technology-facilitated abuse, harassment, and harm from TechSafety.org
- ★ Learn more about laws and legal remedies from WomensLaw.org