

# VIDEOCAMP<sup>TM</sup> CAMP

## PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR MODERATING DISCUSSIONS

BRINGING TRANSFORMATIONAL FILMS TO PEOPLE  
WHO WANT TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD, **CREATING  
AN ENVIRONMENT OPEN TO DIALOGUE AND  
UNDERSTANDING:** THIS IS VIDEOCAMP'S GOAL

A movie can have an impact and serve as a mobilization tool, especially if the person screening it goes beyond “just” showing a good film to a group of people. Our goal with this guide is to invite VIDEOCAMP's exhibitors to promote a dialogue after the movie in which everyone can express their impressions of the content screened, and where there is room to discuss possible paths for action. To facilitate the mediation of these conversations, we received some guidance from the psychologist, psychotherapist and founder of São Paulo's Escola de Diálogo (Dialogue School), Arnaldo Bassoli and created a **quick guide with 6 simple and efficient steps.**

## STEP 1

# REFLECT

- Start at the beginning: plan to watch the film ahead of time (VIDEOCAMP grants you access to the film 72 hours prior to the screening).
- Think about what the content mobilizes within you. What do you think about the issue at hand? Are you prepared to hear opinions different from yours during the discussion with the audience?
- Know right now that you won't have to agree or disagree with anyone during the discussion, nor will you have to make people agree with each other.
- Your crucial role is to create an environment open to exchange, not to lead the group to a consensus or a foregone conclusion about something.
- There are also some practical questions to deal with right now: will you have enough time after the screening to conduct a discussion on the issue?
- Could the content be put to better use if it was presented in parts?

## STEP 2

# INFORM YOURSELF

- In order to enrich the discussion, research some concrete facts from reliable sources about the issue related to the film.
- In some cases, it can be good to invite specialists to participate in the conversation with the audience. If possible, invite people who present different or complementary views of the issues raised in the film.

## STEP 3

# SCREEN THE FILM

- You've had time to reflect and researched complimentary information, but avoid presenting the objective data you've discovered in your research before screening the film. It is better for the process if the audience comes into contact with the work in a more raw manner, with no preconceptions that can be created through statistics or other information.

## STEP 4

# OPEN UP SPACE FOR DIALOGUE

- After the screening, ask each person present to describe what they felt during the movie.
- A good strategy is to give everyone two or three minutes to write down or reflect on their impressions before the discussion. This way we can offer a deeper analysis compared to when we are asked to speak point-blank.
- Before opening up the room for the talk (people don't need to hand in what they wrote down), make it clear that the goal is not to judge what is right or wrong, but to find out each person's impressions. Explain that discussions about actions that can be taken will come later.
- To avoid generalizations and encourage people to describe their own experiences, suggest a rule: everyone must speak in the first person.

## STEP 5

# PRESENT THE DATA

- After hearing people's personal views and experiences, present the concrete facts you researched before. You can write them on a board, post note cards with the most significant numbers, project something on a screen...
- This is a good moment to invite the specialists, if there are any, to speak about the technical aspects of the issue at hand.

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### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DIALOGUE, DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

A lot of people think these three words are synonymous, but they're not. They each represent different types of conversations. A dialogue is an exchange that enables reflection. It's the moment in which a person expresses the meaning a given fact has for them and then listens, without judgment, to the meaning the same fact has to another person. A discussion is a moment to raise several possibilities, analyze them collectively, and then try to choose the best solutions to a given issue. A debate is a conversation where someone

comes out a winner, usually by defeating someone else's argument, like in electoral debates.

Our suggestion in this guide is that the post-screening conversation should start with a dialogue, which will help the group become connected, and then move on to a discussion of proposed actions. It is worth considering if a debate could be a better option for the occasion. If it is conducted in a levelheaded manner, the presentation of conflicting ideas can help the audience reach their own conclusions about the issue.

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### WHAT TO DO IF THE DISCUSSION TURNS INTO AN ARGUMENT

If the mediator makes it clear from the start that this is a space for exchange, and not to reach a single, absolute truth, it is harder for arguments to arise. But they can still happen. In this case, you need to bring the conversation back to the level of a dialogue or discussion, depending on the moment. Say something like, "Ok, we understand that's your point of view, but it doesn't disqualify your colleague's point of view. Let's finish listening to what they have to say."

## ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION OF ACTIONS

- After offering concrete facts, now is the time to encourage collective thinking in order to raise proposals for actions that can be taken.

- Keep in mind (and make this clear to the audience) that there is more than one possibility. You won't always arrive at a consensus, but the exchange of ideas has a transformational power in itself.

- You can write down the proposals that arise and separate them into "categories." For example:

a) **"Immediate actions"** What can we do in our community to change something related to the issue raised in the film? For example, if the movie is about sustainability, the group can think of proposals to reduce waste in that school, neighborhood or business.

b) **"Going deeper into the issue"** Where else can we find information on the issue being discussed? How can we share the new information we find in order to keep the discussion alive? Should we set a new meeting to analyze other aspects related to this issue, maybe with the presence of experts from other areas? Where and when can this meeting happen?

c) **"Public authorities"** How can we demand a stance from authorities in relation to the issues raised during the discussion? What is the best way of reaching these authorities? Who can take responsibility for finding this path and sharing it with the group?

## HAVE A GOOD SCREENING AND GOOD EXCHANGES

We hope these tips help enrich the discussions about the film you are going to screen, and that they encourage the audience to reflect and mobilize for action. This is VIDEOCAMP's reason for being.

Don't forget to send us a report with the number of people present at the screening, as well as photographic documentation that shows us the event happened. If you wish, you can share with us an account of how the screening went, what worked, and what could have been done differently. Also tell us if the participants thought the experience helped broaden their understanding of the issue presented, this will help us perfect this guide and all of our work.