Your community can increase awareness of Alzheimer’s disease and reduce stigma by hosting a screening of one or more films about dementia, followed by a facilitated discussion or panel.* Such an event allows community members to learn about dementia, have conversations about the disease and also learn about community resources.

Considerations Before You Start

Before deciding to host a film screening, you should:

**Consider costs.**
- Costs may include license fees (for the movie/film), venue costs, refreshments, marketing and stipends for the facilitator or speaker.

**Discuss the screening event particulars.**
- How long do you want your program to be?
- Will you have a facilitated discussion among audience members, guest panelists or a presenter?
- Do you want to serve refreshments before, during or after your screening?
- Do you want a resource fair/table to accompany the screening?

Action Steps

**STEP 1**  
Plan and Select Film(s)

**STEP 2**  
Secure License(s)

**STEP 3**  
Select Venue

**STEP 4**  
Train Facilitators

**STEP 5**  
Promote Event

**STEP 6**  
Host Screening

*The tips in this guide are based on the experience of the ACT on Alzheimer’s Twin Cities Jewish Community Action Team. They hosted a three-part film series titled Love, Loss, Dementia and Family Relationships at Adath Jeshurun Congregation in Minnetonka, Minnesota.*
Step 1: Plan and Select Film(s)

Form a committee of Action Team members to assist with the planning, logistics and audience recruiting for your screening. Discuss your objectives. Develop a list of potential films, determine selection criteria, review select films and determine final choices.

Examples of films include:
• Alive Inside (2014)
• Away From Her (2007)
• Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter (1994)
• His Neighbor Phil (2016)
• I Remember Better When I Paint (2009/2013)
• I’ll Be Me (2014)
• Iris (2001)
• Memories of Tomorrow (2006)
• On Golden Pond (1981)
• Still Alice (2014)
• The Alzheimer’s Project (2009)
• The Forgetting: A Portrait of Alzheimer’s (2004)
• The Genius of Marian (2013)
• The Notebook (2004)
• The Savages (2007)

When selecting the film, consider the theme/message/focus you want the movie to speak to and then select the best fit. Cost may be an important factor; documentaries are generally less expensive than commercial movies. Film selection criteria may include:
• Provides an overview of the disease
• Covers family relationships
• Positive tone
• Engaging and of good length
• Good for family viewing
• Fosters a specific conversation at the event and at home
• Cost

Once films are selected, preview them as a team to validate your choice. Begin thinking about post-screening questions for discussion.

Step 2: Secure License(s)

Public screenings, even by nonprofit or educational organizations, are not allowed unless you have purchased a film that comes with public performance rights (PPR) or have obtained a public performance license (also referred to as a site license, umbrella license, or blanket license).

Obtaining a public performance license for a film is relatively easy and usually requires no more than an email or phone call. Fees are determined by such factors as the number of times a film will be shown, how large the audience will be and so on. While fees vary, they are generally between $200 and $400 per showing.

To obtain a public performance license:
• Identify who has the USA Theatrical Rights. They may know who handles the licensing.

On the website www.imdb.com, type in the film title and select it from the search results. Scroll down to “Company Credits” and click “see more” at the end of the production companies.
• Check with the copyright holder directly regarding licensing.
• Check with the distributor to see if they have the authority from the copyright holder to grant licenses. (This is a good method for documentaries.)
• In the case of major feature films, you can use a licensing service. Note that services vary in the types of licensing offered and the particular studio or title represented.

Public domain films:
To find Library of Congress information on films in the public domain, go to: http://www.loc.gov/rr/mopic/pubdomain.html
Choosing the right location for your film screening event depends on who you want to attend and what environment you want to create. If you are promoting the event to the wider public, think about a place that will accommodate your anticipated audience demographic and size.

If you will encourage your local public officials, health professionals or other community leaders to attend, select a location appropriate for them. Other venue factors to consider include ease of parking, access to public transportation, and the distance your guests must travel to get there.

The centerpiece of the evening is the screening, so find a location with proper screening capabilities: DVD projector, screen, microphone and speakers, etc. Otherwise, you will have to furnish these.

Depending on the location, you may have to make a reservation or pay a fee to use the space.

Determine where you will hold the post-film discussion. Will it be in the same room where the film was viewed or another room at the venue? Round tables set for 8-10 people work well for the discussion.

When selecting a date and time for the screening, consider other events in the community (check the city calendar), upcoming holidays and other known social gatherings.

Plan how you will facilitate the post-film discussion. Hold a training for the facilitators prior to the film event. Review post-film discussion questions and, if helpful, have a mock discussion using the questions.

Also, review general procedures facilitators use to manage an event:

- Introduce yourself; give your credentials as a facilitator.
- Articulate the framework of the discussion.
  - Be respectful of others
  - Be clear that no one should repeat another person’s stories in public (what happens in the room stays in the room).
- Provide each person a name tag.
- Make sure everyone has signed in.
- Review film discussion questions. Use the questions as a starting point for conversation; people may take the discussion in another direction. The questions can refocus the discussion to a safe conversation.
- Do not allow one person to monopolize the discussion.
- Consider how to re-direct if the discussion becomes too personal or inappropriate.
Step 5: Promote Your Event

- Who will be responsible for event promotion (all committee members, a lead person to oversee)?
- What promotional materials do you need (flyer, online promotion content)?
- What outlets will you use to get the word out (emails, newsletter articles, posted flyers, local newspaper, social media)?
- When possible, ask people to RSVP for your event online via Facebook or other on-line registration.
- Identify one person on your planning committee to take questions by e-mail or phone.

Step 6: Screen the Film

- **Prepare the location.**
  Make sure the seating arrangements will accommodate the number of guests you expect to have. Set up a table with the sign-in sheet and materials you prepared so guests will see them when they arrive. Tip: Have the film ready before guests arrive so all you have to do is press PLAY.

- **Start the screening.**
  Welcome guests and thank them for coming. Discuss what made you decide to host the screening and be sure to describe the context of the film you are about to show. If you’d like, give guests a couple questions to think about during the film.

- **Discuss the movie.**
  For the post-film discussion, have a health care professional with expertise in dementia available to provide a “Hollywood reality check” about the disease and dispel any inaccuracies portrayed in the film.

- **Ask the audience about their reactions.**
  Discuss major themes and be sure to talk about why the film is relevant. Examples of post-film discussion questions used by the Twin Cities Jewish Community Action Team are below.

- **Have a wrap-up presentation.**
  Invite community service providers to share community resources for people with dementia and their caregivers.

- **Thank your guests.**
  Be sure to thank your guests for coming and find out who is interested in future events. Distribute evaluation forms (see an example on page 6.)
Examples of Film Discussion Questions

Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter
In recounting her attempts to come to terms with her mother’s advancing Alzheimer’s disease, Deborah Hoffmann explores the relationship between mother and daughter, parent and child, and the tenacity of love.

- What change did you see in the daughter’s reaction to the dementia during the film?
- How would this relationship have been different if the daughter’s evolution had not taken place?
- In what ways did the film display constructive communication tactics in Debra’s communication with her mother?
- Did you notice any positive changes in the relationship between Debra and her mother that may not have happened without the dementia?
- How was humor a positive force between Debra and her mother?

Is it any less devastating for others with dementia?
- What can we learn from what happened when John put Iris into the care facility? Would it have made a difference for either of them if he had admitted her earlier?
- The couple in a sense created their own cocoon, consciously or unconsciously limiting outside help. Should friends and family try to break through the cocoon? How much do you push your way in, and how much do you respect what they want? How do friends deal with their own discomfort?
- In your experience, how does one reconcile the person who was with the day-to-day frustrations of relating to and caring for the person with dementia?

The Savages
A sister and brother face the realities of familial responsibility as they begin to care for their ailing father.

- As we see family member(s) coming to grips with a “loved one” suffering from dementia, what strikes you as most telling in this movie? In what sense does the storyline of the film ring true? In its depiction of Lenny? And of Wendy and Jon and their differing responses to their father? In its presentation of their relationship to each other? In what ways does Lenny’s decline and illness shape, alter, highlight, exacerbate his relationship to his children, theirs to him, and theirs to each other?
- How does one navigate sibling and family connections so that dementia does not end up taking the “life” of the family?
- The film implies that Lenny’s eventual death is, in some ways, “liberating,” enabling Jon and Wendy to reach each other on a different level. For many family members who have struggled with dementia, death can bring “release,” even a sense of “deliverance.” Yet how do we reconcile that feeling against the “need” to grieve and lament?

Iris
This film portrays the true story of the lifelong romance between novelist Iris Murdoch and her husband John Bayley, from their student days through her battle with Alzheimer’s.

- Caregivers may feel a range of emotions that can be difficult to separate: Frustration and anger, sadness, guilt, and more. What did you see in the movie? What about in your own experience? Did the experience of the anger bursts of the couple in bed and in the kitchen ring true to you?
- John attempts to do everything for both he and Iris, with less and less success. Did that ring true? At what point do you think adult protective services and/or a social worker would have been useful? What are the consequences of refusing to accept the counsel and resources offered?
- This is a couple with a complex and enduring love for one another. How might the complexity and the depth of love make it both more difficult and easier to navigate this situation?
- Awareness, lucidity, language—for an author whose life revolves around the craft of language, the loss is devastating.

- What change did you see in the daughter’s reaction to the dementia during the film?
- How would this relationship have been different if the daughter’s evolution had not taken place?
- In what ways did the film display constructive communication tactics in Debra’s communication with her mother?
- Did you notice any positive changes in the relationship between Debra and her mother that may not have happened without the dementia?
- How was humor a positive force between Debra and her mother?

- Is it any less devastating for others with dementia?
- What can we learn from what happened when John put Iris into the care facility? Would it have made a difference for either of them if he had admitted her earlier?
- The couple in a sense created their own cocoon, consciously or unconsciously limiting outside help. Should friends and family try to break through the cocoon? How much do you push your way in, and how much do you respect what they want? How do friends deal with their own discomfort?
- In your experience, how does one reconcile the person who was with the day-to-day frustrations of relating to and caring for the person with dementia?

- As we see family member(s) coming to grips with a “loved one” suffering from dementia, what strikes you as most telling in this movie? In what sense does the storyline of the film ring true? In its depiction of Lenny? And of Wendy and Jon and their differing responses to their father? In its presentation of their relationship to each other? In what ways does Lenny’s decline and illness shape, alter, highlight, exacerbate his relationship to his children, theirs to him, and theirs to each other?
- How does one navigate sibling and family connections so that dementia does not end up taking the “life” of the family?
- The film implies that Lenny’s eventual death is, in some ways, “liberating,” enabling Jon and Wendy to reach each other on a different level. For many family members who have struggled with dementia, death can bring “release,” even a sense of “deliverance.” Yet how do we reconcile that feeling against the “need” to grieve and lament?
Which film screening(s) did you attend? (check all that apply)

_____ Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter  _____ The Savages  _____ Iris

How did you learn about this film series?

What was your reason for attending?

Do you see yourself primarily as a:

_____ caregiver  _____ concerned family member  _____ other

_____ person with dementia  _____ concerned community member

Scale: 1 = Not Informative; 5 = Very Informative

How informative was the film Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter? (circle one)

1  2  3  4  5

How informative was the film The Savages? (circle one)

1  2  3  4  5

How informative was the film Iris? (circle one)

1  2  3  4  5

Scale: 1 = Not Effective; 5 = Very Effective

Was the format of presentation, film, dinner, and discussion effective? (circle one)

1  2  3  4  5

Scale: 1 = Not Well Facilitated; 5 = Very Well Facilitated

How well did the facilitated table discussion work? (circle one)

1  2  3  4  5

Would you be interested in learning more about:

_____ Jewish values and traditions regarding dementia and families

_____ Alzheimer’s and dementia

_____ Caregiver support

_____ Family relationships

_____ Other:

Would you be interested in joining a caregiver support group?  ____ Yes  ____ No

Optional

Contact information (name, address, telephone, email address):

Other comments welcome: