

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL

DISCUSSION GUIDE

I LOVE MY BROTHER WITH ALL MY HEART BUT I FEEL A KIND OF HATRED FOR HIM TOO. I DON'T EXPRESS MY FEELINGS VERY WELL. I'M CRAZY. I HATE HIM BECAUSE I KNOW THE SITUATION WE'RE IN, BUT FOR ONE DAY, JUST ONE DAY THAT HE RESTS AND SAYS, "FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR, I'M YOUR FATHER. BUT TODAY I'M YOUR BROTHER."

Rocío, in *The Other Side of the Wall*

FILM SYNOPSIS

In Director Pau Ortiz' *The Other Side of the Wall*, siblings Alejandro (18) and Rocío's (13) relationship is challenged when their mother is imprisoned under dubious charges. Initially they promise to help each other care for their young siblings and keep their family together until their mother is released. But as undocumented Honduran immigrants their right to live, work and study in Mexico was already under threat. And soon, the prison wall that keeps their mother away gives rise to other emotional barriers that prevent the brother and sister from understanding each other.



CENTRAL FILM QUESTIONS

What is the meaning of “family”?

How does immigration impact families?

What are the social, political,
and economic factors that influence
families immigration decisions?

CREATING CONVERSATION AROUND *THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL*

Every audience member will watch *The Other Side of the Wall* with a different lens and set of experiences that inform how they respond to the film. As the host of a screening event, you can direct the tone and nature of your event to create a productive dialogue around the main themes raised in the film.

**Let your audience know
the purpose and intention
of your screening event,**

to learn from and explore the experience of relationships within this family, not to debate any specific immigration policies. If the conversation drifts, gently redirect to the film.

**Encourage audience members
to listen to and learn from
one another’s perspectives,**

rather than trying to persuade or change minds. It may be helpful to create group agreements by asking your audience to share their own ideas about guidelines that encourage this kind of listening.

DISCUSSING THE FILM

The Meaning of Family

**I LOVE YOU VERY VERY MUCH.
YOU CAN'T IMAGINE IT.**

— Alejandro

I LOVE YOU TOO.

Rocío —

**I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME THAT
WE'RE GOING TO MAKE THIS FAMILY
WORK TILL THE DAY MUM GETS OUT.**

— Alejandro

- ➔ What inspired Alejandro and Rocio to work so hard to keep their family together?
- ➔ What strengths and resiliencies did you see the family demonstrate?
- ➔ In what ways does their mom's incarceration impact the family?
- ➔ What kind of support do you think the family would need in order to thrive? From one another? From the surrounding community? From governments?

Learn More About Families and Resilience

[What Makes Families Resilient? ↗](#)

DISCUSSING THE FILM

Trauma and Its Effects

SINCE SHE WAS PUT IN JAIL I HAVEN'T BEEN DOING VERY WELL IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MYSELF. SOMETIMES I THINK, WHY AM I ALWAYS ANSWERING BACK TO MY BROTHER? BUT SOMETIMES I SAY TO MYSELF, IT'S NOT MY FAULT! IT'S OBVIOUS. I'M AT AN AGE WHERE I THINK I'M THE QUEEN OF THE WORLD BUT I'M NOT. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN HOW I FEEL I'M CONFUSED.

Rocío

- ➔ Discuss the impact that their mothers' incarceration had on Alejandro, Rocío, and the other children in the family.
- ➔ How do you think this period of separation might influence the children as they grow?

Learn More About Young Immigrants and Trauma

Mitigating the Effects of Trauma among Young Children

Immigrants and Refugees: The Role of Early Childhood Programs ↗

Helping Immigrant Children Heal ↗

DISCUSSING THE FILM

Walls That Shouldn't Exist

JUSTICE ISN'T FOR EVERYBODY. MAYBE BECAUSE WE'RE IMMIGRANTS, I HAVE TO PAY FOR IT. BUT THE TRUE CRIMINALS ARE OUTSIDE (THE JAIL).

Rocío (the mother) after her sentencing,
in *The Other Side of the Wall*

- ➔ What attitudes and assumptions about immigration and immigrants, particularly those from Honduras, became apparent in this film? How did those influence the lives of this family?
- ➔ In what ways do those attitudes and assumptions resemble and differ from those in your own community? Are there different ideas in your community about immigrants from different countries or regions? How do you think those ideas influence the ability of different families to thrive?
- ➔ How do you learn about the experiences of immigrant families in your own community?

Learn More About Myths and Misperceptions About Immigrants

Migrants are on the Rise Around the World, and Myths About them are Shaping Attitudes 10 Facts About Refugees - UNHCR ↗

DISCUSSING THE FILM

The Motivation to Migrate

ON ONE HAND, HOPE IS GOOD; BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, IT'S BAD. IF I HAVE HOPE THAT MY MUM WILL BE RELEASED, I'LL CLING TO THAT IDEA AND WON'T BE ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD. NO. THE SECOND OPTION IS TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES. OLGA, MY MUM, AND I HAVE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT IT. IT'S A BIT DRASTIC BECAUSE IT MEANS WE WOULD SEPARATE COMPLETELY. THE CHILDREN WOULD GO TO HONDURAS WITH AN AUNTY. OLGA AND AUSTIN TO PALENQUE. MY SISTER ROCÍO WOULD STAY HERE WITH A FRIEND.

Alejandro

- ➔ What factors did you see that motivated and/or discouraged the family to immigrate to Mexico? Why does Alejandro consider moving to the US?

Learn More About Migration from Honduras to Mexico

"We Live in a Crisis in Honduras" ↗

Rise in US Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras Outpaces Growth from Elsewhere ↗



COMMUNITIES AND DISCIPLINES TO SCREEN *THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL*

Politics

US History

Demography

Science

Economics

Law

Central
American
History

Ethnic Studies

Criminology

Psychology

Sociology

Immigration

Geography

UPDATE ON THE FAMILY

Some years after the film was released Rocío's mother travelled with Rocío and her younger children (David and Yami) across the border of the US, where they now live.

Rocío is now 20, she has a job and lives by herself.

Yami and David are now 13 and 11 years old, they live with their mother, and go to school in the US.

Alejandro stayed in Mexico where he lives with his wife Olga and their two children.

