

Jennifer Krause: Hi, good afternoon everyone. We have such a rich conversation to get to today. So I want to very briefly introduce, uh, my esteemed panelists here. Um, their lengthy bio's are accessible by the app. So I'm just going to hit a very few highlights. Perri Peltz is a journalist and documentary filmmaker amongst her many accomplishments, uh, is bringing Axios a documentary series to HBO in the last year. Perry has done that with Matt O'Neil. Uh, also a documentary filmmaker Perry and Matt Together, uh, worked very hard to bring you the film that you're going to be treated to seeing a bit of today. And that brings me to Deleaua Shannon, who, uh, is a subject of today's film and you will get to know her as we have had the privilege of doing. And, uh, that in and of itself. Uh, believe me, if you didn't already feel like you were in the right place, you will 100% know for sure that you are in the right place today. Uh, without further ado, uh, we'd like to share a just a bit of the film alternate endings, uh, with you. So if you turn your attention. Okay, so we're all on the same proverbial page to start, but tell us how did you come to make a film about death?

Perri Peltz: It's a great question. Um, and actually this film started as a film about longevity and it was going to be about all the things out there that are keeping people alive longer. And I'm the executive producer at the time, a woman named Sheila Nevins who ran HBO Documentary Films About Three Months in, called us and said, stop, we, we have it all wrong. We are so focused as a society about staying alive longer that we've all forgotten the fact that we're all going to die. And what emerged out of that process is a film about the ways that people are embracing the end of life.

Matthew O'Neill: And I think that, I mean there's been some trepidation that we first approached this whole topic because documentary already had a reputation as being the, the medicine of cinema, right? Is that the people will always sort of dread being lectured to or talk dat or made to see the worst things in the world and feel worse about the world they live in. And what we discovered through this is that death can be an important part of life. And if not, uh, uh, a part of life, uh, like you can still mourn the loss of life, but it's something that we're all going to face. And over the course of this project and the moon over the course of the people that we spent time with and the people we film with, we have felt empowered and maybe even inspired by the ways in which people are confronting the end of life and changing the way we confront the end of life.

Jennifer Krause: And, uh, so we have Deleaua here who is a subject of this film, but how did you find the people who were willing to share their stories with you and how did you choose the stories that you wanted to share?

Perri Peltz: You know, I think first of all, it's worth mentioning, and it's obvious, it's obvious in some ways, but documentary films, especially about difficult topics don't get made without a very generous spirited people to who agreed to participate in these films. And Matt and I, you know, just cannot say enough, first of all that Deloitte is here with us and her family will Corbett and Deseret Corbett as well. Um, who you'll come to know a little bit in a little bit. Uh, so we thank them for doing that. And it's hard. It's hard to open your life up. It's hard to open your life

up when somebody is following you with a camera at. But that is how these stories get made. And as far as how we selected the stories,

Matthew O'Neill: uh, it was a range. I mean, we, we started at a funeral convention. That first scene is actually the first thing that we shot to see what was changing. The overriding theme that we kept on returning to was control and ownership and change. You know, like a really embracing, uh, death and changing the way we acknowledge death. So when everywhere from funeral conventions to religious leaders to organizations involved with medical aid and dying to, uh, arising profession of death doulas, um, that, that sort of midwives a of a the end of life. And um, tried to find the right people who are willing to open themselves up and allow us to be with them through the whole process of the decision making and the ideas and really understand their inspiration.

Jennifer Krause: And so really you're with entire families, entire communities of people who were deciding how they wanted, not just to end life but to mark and celebrate their lives. Um, tell us a little bit more about the, the stories that maybe particularly spoke to your, the most surprising, um, and your, your reactions.

Perri Peltz: I think surprising is probably an important word. We were looking as you saw in the open of the film, um, the death industry is being disrupted in a very big way. You saw that statistic that cremation is now more popular than traditional burials and people are looking for ways in which be and participate in what is the end of their

Perri Peltz: lives with their families. And it was an incredible exploration for us to go through. I think that when you, when you think about a film about death, you think it's going to be depressing and sad. And yes, there are moments that are, that death is that, and losing something when you look is horrifically sad, but the process is something that can be a little bit different. And we were looking for stories that, that kind of touched in on that theme. Excuse me. The other thing I would say actually [inaudible] that's how we looked for it. We looked for stories. We cast a very, very wide net. We met with lots of different families. We looked at lots of different stories and it took a while for us in this process, um, to find the stories that we would ultimately tell.

Jennifer Krause: So Deleaua in a moment, um, everyone here is, is going to see a, the part of the film that features you and your husband. Um, how did Perry and Matt find you? Well,

Deleaua Shannon: let me give you a little bit of background first. Um, Dick and I had gone to some alternative kinds of, um, death doula talks and so forth. In our little town. Uh, there is a group called full circle living and dying collective. And so, uh, we had gone to some of their meetings and, and so there was an interest there. Um, we had also, unbeknownst to us about three months before dick was diagnosed with cancer, we had gone down to the state legislature and testified in favor of the end of life options act. Um, and so when I, we got a call from folks who said they're from HBO and could they please film us after this was after Dick was

diagnosed. Um, we both looked at one another and thought, no way are they nuts and I'm envisioning lights and please move over here. And could you talk, here's the script we'd like you to do. Or could you say that two more times so that I get it just right? And I thought, no, this is, this is way out of our ballpark.

Jennifer Krause: What was the, so what was the turning point? Did we get from there? Tell us what they, how did you finally decide, I mean, you both were, were against, um, letting people into your story, but how did, what was that moment where, where you both said, okay, we're going to do this.

Deleaua Shannon: We said, no. They said, how about maybe and, and could we fly out from New York and talk to you? So we thought, sure, go ahead. And so they flew out, they talked to us for about an hour and as they were talking, um, first of all, my husband was thinking, oh, this is a really good way that we could, we could tell people that there is an option. And so that for him sparked an interest for me. I was looking for, can we still be a private this, can they still be a private time? Um, how would this film be made? What is the expectation from us? And once Matt and Paris kept reassuring me, you know, that it, there is no script. We do what we do. Um, however it turns out it turns out, uh, there's no prescribed ending to it. There's no all of that. Um, then I said, well, if the, if our kids and those families feel like that, all right, let's, let's talk with them. So they, um, then the next state over and talked with the rest of the family. And

Jennifer Krause: so you really got, we really, it was a family family decision

Jennifer Krause: because if the, if the family had said no, this does not feel good, we would have said no. Well, I think, I think the idea of it being a family decision really takes us into this, this next section of the film. Your section, Dick's section. Um, so let's all turn our attention again, uh, to, to the screen. Okay. Let's take a breath.

Jennifer Krause: Okay.

Jennifer Krause: Oh, right. First of all, thank you for being here with us. Um, as you can tell on that, the subject of the film and here because there couldn't be, and I, and I wanted to ask you, I mean for us, you are a, you are a subject, um, because of the exquisite thing that, that you did for Dick. Um, not just in really shepherding him and your whole family through this process. Um, but also by speaking to, not just to us but, but all of the conversations that you have started even that you've had since you've been here. Um, because we don't know how to do this. Um, so you have so much wisdom that you could share with us, but we realized that also comes not without an insignificant amount of pain. I wonder there was the moment where you said, we've said everything to each other that we to say.

Jennifer Krause: And before we watched the segment, you had mentioned that somewhat coincidentally that you and Dick had, um, participated in some advocacy, uh, before Dick even knew that, that he was, was terminally ill. Yes. Um, had you and Dick before you needed to, um, had you talked about what each of you

wanted, um, in death, had you talked about how you wanted to live your life, um, what you would consider dignified, what you would feel for yourself would be undignified or these conversations that you ever had before, you were in a place where you really needed to have them?

Deleaua Shannon: Not In the way, not, not with this kind of ending, we had filled out what's called a five wishes form, which was pages of how you'd like to be treated. How would you like music in the room, more of an in an environment and the amount of medical care that you might want. Um, we had never envisioned this. This came from Dick knowing that he was terminal from the very beginning. Um, what you saw there was after two years of treatment, uh, at Stanford, we made 18 trips to Stanford. Um, and they told him right from the beginning, um, you have six months to two years and we thought two years we'll go for that. Um, so we did any number of alternative things. We started researching and while Stanford was, he was doing the, the traditional chemotherapy for his cancer, but his cancer was a very rare cancer. Um, in surgeon said, there's probably 50 people in the u s that have that. So it wasn't, uh, he knew. So there wasn't that, that some cancer patients have where you think, if I just do this, you know, I'll, it'll be cured. Or the doctors get into a position, where am I cure yet? Is it gone yet? And so in this case, um, his surgeon said, you're going to die with this disease. Um, and so we thought, okay, well, if that's going to happen, let's have these do it the way we'd like to do it. And so then we started talking about, okay, how would we like to do this? What would we do?

Jennifer Krause: And you say very intentionally, you say, what would we like to do? Who started did, did, was that the way the conversation started was as a we or did dick already have some, some specific thoughts about how he wanted to die?

Deleaua Shannon: He did not. Um, I tended to be in, we were very much of a team throughout our marriage, and I tended to be, my role was, think of these weird things to do and let's go try him. Um, his role was more, uh, wait a minute. Let's, that's, let's think this out. Okay, yes, let's go look. Got it. Let's put, set a goal. Let's go do it. So we did, um, you know, he knew right away that he wanted to be cremated. So he said, you know, what do we know about being cremated? And with that we don't know anything. Why don't we do a family film, family field trip to the crematorium. So we call the mortuary and said, we'd like to do, we'd like to bring our family and come over and look at the crematorium. And they said, um, well, it's an unusual request, but, um, we could do it. It's an industrial area and it's not really set up for families, but if you'd like to do that. Um, so we did. We went over and looked at it and they showed us through the whole place and walked Dick through what would happen. And when we left he said, I'm really glad I did that. I feel more at ease with what's going to happen. I'm really glad that happened that way.

Jennifer Krause: It seems like so much also of this process, even what you just shared with us about taking a family field trip, uh, to, to see how create, how cremation takes place. Um, and even the response that you got when you phoned, they don't get a lot of call for that know that you really did have to be almost, um,

pioneering and, and ask the questions that nobody, nobody usually asks. Um, was there any point along the way where as this was becoming more of a reality and your role in it was becoming more of a reality, your family's role, where you express to diff or maybe just thought to yourself? Um, I don't know if, I don't know if I can do this.

Deleaua Shannon: No, I never thought that it couldn't, that I couldn't do it. I wasn't sure what Dick would end up doing and we kept, we kept that door always open. We kept saying, especially after HBO came on board, just because HBO is filming, you do not have to follow through with this just because we have the medicine up in the cupboard. You do not have to follow through. Um, you're welcome to, you know, in this however you would like to do it and we'll support you in that. But, um, we, in fact that was a of mine because I thought he's gonna Think, oh my goodness, you know, all these people are here. And we kept talking even the night before in the morning, I kept saying, are you sure? And he said, yes, I'm sure. Um, he had, Dick had always said, I do not want to be a burden.

Deleaua Shannon: That's his pain was not from the cancer. His pain was a mental pain of being helpless, of being unable to do for himself. Um, and that's what drove him is, you know, I don't want to be a burden. And so I want this to end on my terms and end before I get to the point where I can't swallow the medication or before it, I can't do that. And, and so we, that was when we started kind of laying out, what would you like, you know, how do we, how do we want this to happen? And the deals sort of in our family between Dick and I as always been, whoever, you know, Vince, your body, you get to choose. So at the beginning of our marriage it was about haircuts and you know, clothes, colors or something. As we went on, it became more serious until we got to this where Dick, um, said, absolutely, I'm doing end of life medication. And it was okay. It's your body, you know, you get to choose. So if that's what you want to do, let's do it. And my son in law always says, when we do things, we're all in. So with that, alright, let's learn everything we can about it. Let's figure out what we want to do. So we did, um, we had the, uh, death Doula of our area. Talk to us about how we could, what the options were after Dick died. Um, I had worked in the hospital and I had experience with people dying. And

Jennifer Krause: I noticed that by the way, that when, um, when Dicks, uh, breathing became labored, that even in that moment that you also were able to say to your family and everyone who was gathered, this is part of the process. And I had wondered how you knew that because I don't know how many people in the room have had this same experience, but I would venture to say very few of us. So I wondered how you knew that

Deleaua Shannon: we had read information. Um, read about what, what it's like to die. Hospice had information and they don't always give it out. But if you keep asking, you know, if you, if you say I'm interested in this,

Jennifer Krause: so you really had to push, even for that information pushed me.

Deleaua Shannon: I am not sure push is the right word. Um, express an interest and because a lot of people would rather not know.

Deleaua Shannon: And so hospice tends to be sensitive to what you want, but if you start asking questions, they're happy to fill it in. You just have to make sure you want to hear the answer. Um, cause sometimes that's hard.

Jennifer Krause: And I want to know you were there and just talking about how distanced most of us are from death. It's realities, um, from what it's like to be present in a room where a loved one exits, um, to be present with, uh, with someone who has exited. There's no way that you can make a film like this and not also be personally affected. What was it like to be there with Dick and Deleaua and the family, um, in this extraordinary moment?

Matthew O'Neill: I mean for, for both of us, and I think this is true for, for all of us, it became part, we are part of this period of time in an intimate way, uh, and it felt totally natural, um, and a privilege to be there because it was something that we had discussed so much and something that Dick had talked about so much. I mean, then you see the conversations. Uh, I'll just say just a few of them in the, in the car, like we understood the higher purpose, um, of being there. It was still, and I was sad, uh, that that day. Um, and uh, and, and sad to know Dick for a short time. Um, but the learned so much through the process and learn so much from him and from you. Uh, so, so that we were, we were, we were totally in it, um, in a, in a, as, as part of that moment.

Perri Peltz: You know, what I would add is, um, we didn't want Dick to die. We became to know Dick Pretty well and the family pretty well and became a part of this process. And [inaudible] talks about, and this is something I'm sure that a lot of people are thinking about. She speaks about the fact that he didn't, she didn't want them to feel any pressure because the two of us were there representing HBO. And I think that we can say with 100% conviction that Dick was very, very clear about what he was doing, about our presence being there and the fact that he wanted everyone in this room and everyone who will see this film to know that he was choosing to do this because this was the way he wanted to live his life. Dick didn't want to die. He loved his life. He, his family. And, uh, but he wanted to go out on his own terms. And I think that's something that Matt and I talked about a lot about the presence of a camera and what that meant and felt with absolute certainty that this was a choice that he was making very clearly.

Deleaua Shannon: And I can tell you that I had no concept of you guys even being in the room. I mean, it was like I had no, no concept at all.

Deleaua Shannon: The other piece that we haven't talked about, it was what we did afterwards because Dick said, um, after I die, do whatever you want, you know, because, and there are planning phase. I mean, that sounds flippant, but he was saying, I want to plan up to the time that I died beyond that. Um, and so I, I thought, you know, after being married for so long and, and, um, I could not, I couldn't have

the mortician show up an hour later and take him. I just couldn't do it. And so I said, what if, you know, I know that the death doulas talk about keeping somebody at home for three days. What if we did that, you think we could do it? And in California you can stay home for three days. Um, there is rules about after 24 hours you have to be iced. And the death Doula talked to us about how you would do that.

Deleaua Shannon: And we, we assigned somebody to go over to the grocery store and get dry eyes. Um, and so it was Dick's choice, first of all, to have the casket that he and will made in the living room on the coffee table. Um, when he took the medication, I said, you know, it wouldn't, it wouldn't you feel better if we moved at like maybe after you died? And he said, no, no, I want it right there. So we did that. So after he died, um, and you know, we all just took a breath and, and chilled for awhile. Um, we, we had put a sheet on the couch and under him, a black one, um, because he knew I'd be into the, the whole color thing. So we picked out the black, the black sheet. And so we all got around, carried an edge of the sheet.

Deleaua Shannon: And with the sheets still under him, put him into the casket, put other, um, fabric that we had over, um, the lower half. We gave him the silver dollar eucalyptus because that had meaning in our life, in our married life. Um, and um, and then we just had him there with us. And for me personally, that very, very helpful to make a transition to feel like, like he was there, but he really wasn't there and I needed that. I needed that transition time. And so at the end of, well we had, at first I thought, I'm not going to ask the community, we live in what's called a cohousing community of all senior folks. And so I thought, oh, I don't want everybody coming through. And then after about the second day, I thought, yeah, I'm ready to do that. So I put out an email to everybody, it, our neighbors. And so neighbors came and just stopped and kind of came in and talked and, and um, and then at the, we called the mortician and said, you know, we're ready tomorrow to, to do the cremation. And so, um, we had decided in light of the type of casket and the way our, our life is that, um, we were gonna take the casket to the crematorium. And, uh,

Jennifer Krause: so, and you all, you all took, you took the casket yourself?

Deleaua Shannon: Yes. So we put the casket on some of, I don't know, a Gizmo with wheels on it, a Dolly thinks and, and um, put it in the elevator. And we had died, had done a dry run, um, a few weeks earlier to see if it would fit into the elevator. And it did. So we put it in the elevator, we went down stairs. Um, everybody in the community was there with silver dollar eucalyptus branches and we'll played the, the, uh, the amazing grace. And, um, we pushed the casket out through the pathway, through the community and out to will's pickup truck. We put it in the back of the pickup truck and took it to the crematorium.

Jennifer Krause: It's the intentionality that that went with everything. And also thank you for sharing with us how you all chose. I think it's, it's wonderful that Dick then left to all of you to have your choice and how you are going to, how you are going to

begin your, your mourning process. I know that, uh, there, there have to be so many questions here. So I want to go ahead and, and, and open up, uh, to questions and answers. Uh, we have a question here. Wait for the microphone please. If you could just wait for the microphone please. So we can all hear you.

Audience Member: I don't want to ask a question. I just want to thank you on behalf of everybody.

Speaker 5: [applause]

Deleaua Shannon: I saw a hand over here. Okay. Thank you.

Audience Member: Hi. Thank you so much once Moreno for sharing your experience and your family's experience. Um, I guess I just, you know, you are an incredibly strong woman, which I think, you know, as a takeaway from this movie and, um, this film. I personally, you know, my grandparents are aging right now and I'm seeing them have a very hard time with the concept of death and dying and being 23 I don't have authority, you know, to let [inaudible] tell them, you know, how to age on their own terms would I, I do wonder, you know, how, what is the role of family and in death and dying and how do you practice this death and dying in your everyday life because you know, you obviously went through so much, you know, emotional and mental preparation for this and yeah. Again, thank you for sharing this.

Jennifer Krause: Sure. It's a wonderful question. How, how, how family plays a role. Your family just family is right here, right here. Oh, stuff's right and well, could you stand up and everybody thank you for, for sharing

Perri Peltz: your story. [inaudible]

Jennifer Krause: do you want to say something? Talk Loud. Can we get a mic here?

Audience Member: Thank you.

Audience Member: So we were very lucky growing up that we were raised to speak frankly. And I think that was huge in this whole process. We all spoke to each other, frankly about how we were going to handle this. And you know, my mom said right at the beginning that she wanted us on board before she would, uh, go along with HBO. And that was part of it. You know, we talked about it. Well, you know, dad's message is pretty important and we all knew that this legislation was very important to them. They went through the whole process of testifying before dad was even diagnosed. And the discussions about the aging and the death and dying, um, needs to start well before the death and dying becomes reality. That frank discussion amongst families is huge.

Audience Member: So that's, thank you.

Deleaua Shannon: The other thing, I think it's a very awkward discussion. I mean, when I was working so often, I was an occupational therapist. So often I would go into people's rooms and work with them and they would say to me, dear, I'm ready to die, but my family just won't let me go. And, and I thought how sad, you know, um, and I, and it's not that everybody's going to choose to use end of life medication, but at least if they could talk about death and dying and what, what you want and what you see and how much treatment you want. Um, you know, medicine nowadays will treat you as long as you way beyond what you, what you can tolerate.

Jennifer Krause: So just having the, just even giving, uh, giving someone the permission to talk and put aside your own feelings and your own discomfort. Yeah. Great.

Jennifer Krause: Okay.

Audience Member: Thank you again for your generosity. Certainly. Um, it's been a generous weekend, never more generous than today. Uh, can you, have you noticed anything different, uh, after this incredible family event about the relationships in your family as your family was already incredible? Have you noticed anything having done this together that, uh, is different than it was before?

Deleaua Shannon: Um, I don't know about different, I think it was a unique experience for all of us and that in itself brought us closer together. Um,

Deleaua Shannon: okay.

Deleaua Shannon: I don't know. I don't know if, if, if I've noticed a difference cause we still speak frankly about it. And, um, so I don't know that I could answer that. Will did, did you want to say something?

Audience Member: How are we working? Okay. So relative to that, what I would say is that for myself, um, I was sort of forced into this new, um, patriarchal role. What are we, what do we call it? He was, Dick was a leader of our side of the family obviously. And then now we're not. And so for me, there's a change there in terms of my feeling of responsibility, um, to are a little part of that family. Um, so maybe that's somewhat of an answer to what you're talking about, I guess. Yeah. Um, you know, I, I think it's important what you see in here is a great snapshot of Dick, but I think it's important to point out that this is a guy who, um, through his whole life was not going to be controlled or dictated by anybody but himself. And so it's the perfect ending to a life lived in that way.

Audience Member: Um, always took charge of his situation. Um, as his Deleaua that I commented, they were involved with, um, many, many organizations, activities, et cetera and so on. And they were always leaders in those activities and they were always leaders together as a team. So when you see them working and talking and her saying, we in the conversations on the film where they're talking about we, that was their life for 57 years and it's amazing example to my wife and I who were

together now about 35 years, married for a few less than that. Um, I was lucky enough to marry and doing a, you a credible family and the frankness that we, that you see was ongoing every day. Um, Dick and I had a, a great relationship. I always call him my second father. Um, we were extremely irreverent with together with each other.

Audience Member: So a lot of what you don't see in there is the really funny jokes around the casket making, et cetera. But it was, that was the way that we dealt with it. He and I dealt with it and everybody has their, their means of doing so. But to be able to participate in this process was one of the great, uh, experiences of my life. And, and I had no idea that it would be, um, until it happened. And, um, I worked as a firefighter for about 30 years and so I had seen a, my share of death, but I'd always seen it in a disconnected way. And so going through this process, uh, and seeing it up close and personal, actually, uh, I use this phrase once before, but it washed a lot of demons away from me that I had in my mind. Um, and so I, you know, I, I don't say I encourage people to take this option. I encourage people to make their own choice.

Jennifer Krause: Sure. That's right. [inaudible] yeah. Yes you are.

Audience Member: Thank you again for sharing your story. All of you. My question has to do with the legislation and the fact that this has only available in I believe, five states and does the film talk about that and do you all have any suggestions about how we start the process in states that don't have these laws in place?

Deleaua Shannon: I can, let me just give it a short piece and then you guys can pick it up. Um, much of the legislation is done with the guidance of a national organization called compassion and choices and they tend to be the group that, um, is a spearhead for this kind of, uh, the legislation. Uh, and I think more states have recently been added. Uh, so you might check that, but compassion and choices has the, uh, they actually have how to the recipe, what you need to do, what the process is and all that. But they don't advocate that they advocate choice, but they don't advocate that everybody take that choice.

Deleaua Shannon: No, I'll let you guys take it.

Matthew O'Neill: I think then there has been a number of states that have been added to that list. I think it's up to seven now, including the district of Columbia. And there's legislation in New York, there's legislation, Massachusetts. This is something, I mean, when the law passed in California, it was one of those moments where as California goes, so goes the rest of the country in some way because it's such a big part of, of our, our country, the film itself is not about the legislation. The film itself is about life. Uh, so we don't take a point of view on that, but I think it is important for, for people to, to touch death more in their lives. And if the film can be part of that and part of the thinking around how people consider this legislation, uh, I think it would be really useful

Jennifer Krause: and that much of just so that people who haven't had the benefit of seeing it, but absolutely all I know will, um, that a lot of the stories, the other stories are about, um, how we're marking the, the end of, of our lives.

Perri Peltz: Right. And I would add that the other five stories are not about medical aid and dying. So this is not a film about medical aid and dying. That was the piece that we chose to show here today. All of the pieces though, speak to some issue of trying to take control of the end of, of the end of life.

Audience Member: Well, let's be shown in the theaters or on their jobs.

Perri Peltz: I, this will be shown on HBO on, on, okay. A little promotion on August 14th. Um, and it will be the whole film, which is six ways, six different stories.

Jennifer Krause: Okay. Uh, yes. You had a question.

Audience Member: Again, thank you very much for sharing your story in making the decision both for the family and the filmmakers to take what is typically a very private and very personal family experience and choosing to make it available for a wide audience. What are your hopes and expectations for when people see this film? What are they going to take away from it or what are, what are your hopes?

Perri Peltz: Um,

Perri Peltz: there's a lot to it. There's a lot to say to that and I think that what we hope at the bare minimum is that this begins a conversation. Death is something that we in this country don't do particularly well. We don't talk about it. We'd like to push it away. And um, it is something where we all share that we're all gonna do that at some point in our lives. It is part of life. And so I think that we would like this to be something that starts at least starts a conversation about death.

Matthew O'Neill: Yeah. I think that's, that's the essential part. Like talk about it, talk about it with your kids, talking about it with your spouse, talk about it with your friends as well. No matter what part of the political spectrum you're from the religious spectrum, like in the United States, we don't do death all that well. And we have mediators we put between us and the process we have, um, a distance and a fear. And uh, you know, DiLulla and Dick and their family were like, just, I learn so much about how to talk and how to be frank and how to discuss these things. And it's led to conversations in my own family that I just know will be so much more helpful down the road. And it's something that's true throughout all the different stories in the film as well, is that these are people who are

Matthew O'Neill: trying to figure it out and trying to do death better. And I think that's what we need to do.

Audience Member: What is the meaning? Six ways to die?

Jennifer Krause: Let's just, I'll, I'll, I'll repeat your question or you'll repeat your question.

Audience Member: This title of this is six new ways to die in America.

Perri Peltz: Because there's six different stories. You've seen one of the six stories today. There are five additional stories all telling different ways that people have chosen, um, to experience the end of life.

Audience Member: Well, again, thank you for sharing this. It's a very brave thing to do.

Jennifer Krause: I think we will, we'll take one more question. There's a gentleman who's been waiting patiently. Yeah.

Audience Member: Really isn't a question. Uh, I'm a practicing clinical psychologist and I think I speak for everybody in this room. This is the most incredible display of love, strength, and dignity that I have ever, ever seen. And I thank you for sharing that with us.

Speaker 5: [applause]

Jennifer Krause: well, we had hoped that this would be a conversation, a conversation starter, and I think that we've accomplished both. Uh, thank you so much. Thank you to all of you and, uh, I hope you're leaving feeling empowered and inspired and comforted. So thank you for being here.