

# A Lion in the House

a film by Steven Bognar & Julia Reichert

## Discussion Questions

### DOCTORS AND NURSES

**Warning to discussion leader:** The clips and discussion questions may cause strong emotional reactions in youth who have experienced, or are currently experiencing cancer in their families. It may be helpful to know which youth may be vulnerable prior to the viewing. These youth will be able to offer a deeper understanding of the issues. Sensitivity is required.

#### PRE-VIEWING

Who here has a favorite doctor or nurse? What makes this person so special?

Has anyone had the experience of a medical professional seeming to not understand you or your family? Has anyone experienced poor care? What was that like?

Does anyone here want to be a doctor, nurse, or other medical professional? What and why? (encourage thinking about a range of careers in medicine – including research, psychology, chaplain, etc.)

What does it take to be a doctor or nurse (or something student expressed interest in) ?

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#### POST-VIEWING

Describe Tim's relationship with his nurse Connie.

How is Connie important to Tim in various stages of his illness?

Is Tim important to Connie? How can you tell?

Describe Tim's relationship with his doctor.

Early in his treatment, why does Tim throw his medicine out the window and try to trick his doctor? (weight in coat)

Why does Dr. Balasa give Tim a choice in his treatment?

Why does Dr. Huang give Al no choice in his treatment?

How effective is Dr. Balasa at telling Tim about the seriousness of his illness? What do you think he is trying to tell Tim?

If you were that sick, how straightforward would you like your doctor to be?

How does Al feel when Dr. Huang doesn't let him go to camp, and how does Dr. Huang deal with those emotions?

What does Dr. Huang mean when he says that wants his job to be hard every single time because if it starts to get easy, he needs to pick something else to do?

(If youth express admiration for this attitude, point out that such passion and commitment can apply to any profession you choose.)

Did this clip give you any more insight into what makes a good doctor or nurse?

You can make a difference

"You know you are truly alive  
when you are living among lions."  
— Isak Dinesen