The Talk conversation guide

A six-minute film can end before the room has finished reacting. This guide is an invitation to stay with what the film reveals about assumption, maternal authority and the institutions meant to provide care.

WRITER / DIRECTOR Hila Cage Coppola	FORMAT Narrative short · Drama
RUNTIME 6 minutes, 4 seconds	COUNTRY / YEAR United States · 2025
PRODUCERS Hila Cage Coppola Christina Cannarella	CAST Kareem Zion · Jazmin Garcia Spencer McNish

Discussion themes

Racial bias in maternal and infant healthcare · parenthood · institutional listening · grief · advocacy · the ethics of care · cinematic restraint

QUESTIONS FOR THE ROOM

Begin with what *you assumed.*

01 What did you believe was happening in the opening moments—and what taught you to make that assumption?

02 How does the meaning of the father's monologue change when the setting becomes clear?

03 Whose knowledge is treated as credible in the film? Whose knowledge has to fight to be heard?

04 What does tenderness make possible here that anger alone might not?

05 Where do you notice restraint—in performance, framing, sound or dialogue—and what does that restraint ask from the audience?

06 What is the difference between hearing a warning and allowing it to change a decision?

07 After the final reveal, which earlier image or line do you understand differently?

08 If an institution wants to call itself caring, what must it learn to notice before harm occurs?

FOR PROGRAMMERS & EDUCATORS

A short film.
A room-sized conversation.

PROGRAM FIT

Care, authority, bias.

Use in programs about health, family, race, women's authority, social systems, listening and the consequences of dismissal.

STRUCTURE

Let the turn land.

Whenever possible, screen the film before explaining its reveal. The audience's first assumptions are part of the conversation.

FACILITATION

Observation first.

Begin with what participants noticed. Move from formal choices to institutional questions without requiring personal disclosure.

A SIMPLE 20-MINUTE FORMAT

01 **Hold the room for one quiet beat.**
Resist explaining the ending immediately. Give the final image and sound time to settle.

02 **Ask what changed.**
Invite one visual or verbal observation: What did the audience understand differently after the reveal?

03 **Move from story to system.**
Use questions 3, 6 or 8 to examine whose warnings institutions recognize as knowledge.

04 **Close with responsibility.**
Ask what listening would require before harm occurs—not only what empathy asks after it.

> Do not ask participants to disclose medical trauma, racial trauma or grief in order to validate the film's themes. A serious conversation does not require turning someone's private pain into evidence.

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