

## THE FRANK RIDGE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION, INC.

### Recommended movies and television shows.

I personally endorse the following movies and television shows. I feel that they are accurate and compassionate depictions of various mental health conditions. They are organized by condition and updated regularly. I have recommended only movies and television shows that I have viewed. Julie Ridge, LCSW-R, President and Founder. (last updated July, 2018)

### multiple mental health conditions

The following films and television shows depict a variety of mental health issues, often concurrent and/or mental health conditions triggered by life events.

#### film:

- "All That Jazz," 1979. Early childhood trauma turned to creativity, substance use, depression & brilliance, based loosely on the life of Bob Fosse.
- "Call Me Crazy," a Five film, 2014. Scenes depicting bipolar, schizophrenia, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Fiction based firmly in accurate clinical diagnosis.
- "Charlie Bartlett," 2007. Abuse of psychotropic medication and non-traditional therapeutic intervention. Fiction.
- "Dad's in Heaven with Nixon," 2010. (documentary) Tom Murray lovingly presents his autistic brother Chris Murray (1960- ), through Chris's relationship to his family members, their father, who died when Chris was about 20, to various jobs, through his success as an artist. Chris has lived on his own for more than 30 years, navigated public transportation, is affectionate with his mom and brother and is certain that his father is in Heaven. Chris's creations are cheerful landscapes of New York buildings, meticulously done in multi-media. He likes his life, just as it is. Tom depicts a history of mental health conditions in family members with addictive disorders and bipolar disorder.
- "David & Lisa," 1998. Starring Sidney Poitier, Lukas Haas and Brittany Murphy. This fictional tale is set on a psychiatric ward. David, a withdrawn but apparent near genius, who fears being touched (probably autism) meets Lisa, a young woman seemingly suffering from split personalities who speaks only in rhymes and withdraws from anyone who doesn't speak to her likewise. The unlikely pair work through their issues with the connect care of compassionate psychologist Sidney Poitier. Fiction.
- "Girl Interrupted," 1999. Set on a mental health ward, based on the book by the same name, a true story.
- "Heaven is a Traffic Jam on the 405," 2017. Directed by Frank Stiefel about the life and work of inspired artist, Mindy Alper, who lives well with anxiety and depression. WINNER of the 2018 Academy Award for best documentary film short. A 2018 TOP PICK.
- "Hidden Pictures," 2013. (documentary) Directed by Delaney Ruston. A global overview of mental health.

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- “It’s Kind of a Funny Story,” 2011. An uplifting comedy, based on the novel of the same name by Ned Vizzini, about finding sanity in the most unlikely of places, a Brooklyn psychiatric ward. Focus is on teen anxiety, depression and suicide. Tragically, author Vizzini killed himself in January 2015. He was 32 years old.
- “King of Hearts,” 1966. When WWII is raging, who’s crazy? The people inside the asylum or those waging war outside? Fiction.
- “K-Pax,” 2002. Starring Kevin Spacey and Jeff Bridges. Featured player suffers from psychosis induced by severe trauma. However, this touching film is set on mental ward where many other conditions are explored. Fiction.
- “Manic,” 2003. Starring Don Cheadle and Joseph Gordon-Levitt. This fictional film, shot in documentary style, is set in an adolescent residence for violent teens and demonstrates aggressive behaviors sometimes associated with bipolar disorders. Eating disorders, trauma, extreme anxiety and more are also explored. Fiction.
- “Mary and Max,” 2010. From Academy Award winning writer/director Adam Elliot comes the hilarious and moving ‘clayography’ feature film about the pen-pal relationship between two very different people: Mary Daisy Dinkle (voiced by Toni Collette) is a lonely 8-year-old in the suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. Max Jerry Horowitz (voiced by Oscar winner Philip Seymour Hoffman) is an obese 44 year old with Asperger’s living in NYC. Over the course of 20 years, their unusual journey of friendship explores autism, alcoholism, stuttering, agoraphobia and social anxiety.
- “My Life as a Zucchini,” 2017. Directed by Claude Barras, a stop-motion animated feature film. Barras says “This film is an homage to neglected and mistreated children who do the best they can to survive and live with their wounds. Zucchini, our hero, has been through many difficult times and, after having lost his mother, he believes he is alone in the world.” Healing begins when Zucchini meets a kindly policeman, starts a new life in a foster care center, finds a group of friends he can rely on, falls in love, and learns what it means to be happy. Adapted from the book “Autobiography of a Courgette,” by Gilles Paris. [A 2017 TOP PICK]
- “Oc87. The Obsessive Compulsive Major Depression Bipolar Asperger’s Movie,” 2012. Autobiographical documentary film by Bud Clayman.
- “Patch Adams,” 1998. Starring Robin Williams. Fact-based story, not a documentary.
- “The Road Within,” 2015. Starring Kyra Sedgwick, Robert Sheehan, Dev Patel, and Zoe Kravitz. Director Gren Wells is an anorexia survivor. Set in a non-traditional residential program, the fictional film profiles 3 lovable young actors who give extremely accurate portrayals of OCD (Patel), severe Tourette’s (Sheehan) and anorexia (an illness actress Kravitz has struggled with). Tons of research was done. They’ve proven that you can be accurate about the medical mental health conditions and not sacrifice entertainment value. The movie is funny, sad, moving and triumphant. Fiction. [A 2015 TOP PICK]

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- “Shadow Voices. finding hope in mental illness,” 2009. (documentary)
- “Short Term 12,” 2014. Starring Academy Award winner Brie Larson. Told through the eyes of a young supervisor of a group home for troubled teens, this feature touches on issues of childhood trauma, attachment and disruptive behaviors. Fiction.
- “The Snake Pit,” 1948. Childhood trauma manifests as psychosis. This post WWII film, based on the novel by the same name, also depicts an historical overview of mental asylums. Fiction.
- “Stonehurst Asylum,” 2014. Based on an Edgar Allen Poe story and set in 1899. A chilling depiction of European asylums for the wealthy. Fiction.
- “2e twice exceptional,” 2015. “2e” follows the personal journeys of a unique group of high school students in Los Angeles who have been identified as ‘twice exceptional’ - gifted or highly gifted kids with learning disabilities or differences. among them may be the next Einstein, Mozart or Steve Jobs ... if they can survive the American school system and their own challenges. (documentary)
- “Wild,” 2014. Starring Reese Witherspoon. Maladaptive response to loss and trauma, expressed through depression, substance use and eventually a 1,100 mile healing journey up the Pacific Crest Trail. Based on the true story of Cheryl Strayed.

### **television:**

- “Bull,” starring Michael Weatherly, now in it’s second season on CBS, profiles numerous episodes featuring correct diagnoses of mental illnesses.
- “Crazy Ex-girlfriend.” 2016 Golden Globe winning star and co-creator is open about her personal struggles with depression and anxiety. Her TV alter ego demonstrates behaviors not uncommon in bipolar, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety. Comedy series.
- “Law & Order” and “Law & Order SVU.” Numerous episodes demonstrate compassionate treatment and understanding of mental health issues. Fiction. (note: while I endorse “Law & Order” as well researched portrayals of numerous mental health conditions, the police officers depicted on L & A are generally better trained and kinder than those we experience in real life.)
- “Rise.” NEW in 2018. A working class high school theater department and the students come alive under a passionate teacher and family man whose dedication to the program galvanizes a town. Characters meet the challenges of teen alcoholism, living in foster care, autism spectrum and Downs Syndrome. Fiction.

### **anxiety & obsessive-compulsive disorders (includes hoarding):**

#### **film:**

- “The Aviator,” 2004. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Cate Blanchett. Obsessive-compulsive disorder. A biopic of the life of Howard Hughes.

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- “Elling,” 2001. Norwegian Academy award nominated film is based on a best selling novel. It is a loving, funny and warm portrayal of agoraphobia and mild cognitive disability. Fiction.
- “Finding Forrester,” 2000. Starring Sean Connery. Agoraphobia lovingly called reclusiveness in the context of the film. Fiction.
- “Heaven is a Traffic Jam on the 405,” 2017. Directed by Frank Stiefel about the life and work of inspired artist, Mindy Alper, who lives well with anxiety and depression. WINNER of the 2018 Academy Award for best documentary film short. A 2018 TOP PICK.
- “Hello, My Name is Doris,” 2016. Starring Sally Field. Hoarding. Fiction.
- “It’s Kind of a Funny Story,” 2011. An uplifting comedy, based on the novel of the same name by Ned Vizzini, about finding sanity in the most unlikely of places, a Brooklyn psychiatric ward. Focus is on teen anxiety, depression and suicide. Tragically, author Vizzini killed himself in January 2015. He was 32 years old.
- “The King’s Speech,” 2010. Winner of four Academy Awards including Best Picture and Best Actor, based on the true story of King George VI of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, his impromptu ascension to the throne and the speech therapist who helped the unsure monarch overcome his social anxiety and stuttering impediment to become worthy of position.
- “Little Miss Sunshine,” 2006. This humorous tale of a family determined to get their young daughter into the finals of a beauty pageant and their cross-country trip in their VW bus, features a family member with selective mutism (lovingly portrayed by Paul Dano as Dwayne). Fiction.
- “Mary and Max,” 2010. From Academy Award winning writer/director Adam Elliot comes the hilarious and moving ‘clayography’ feature film about the pen-pal relationship between two very different people: Mary Daisy Dinkle (voiced by Toni Collette) is a lonely 8-year-old in the suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. Max Jerry Horowitz (voiced by Oscar winner Philip Seymour Hoffman) is an obese 44 year old with Asperger’s living in NYC. Over the course of 20 years, their unusual journey of friendship explores autism, alcoholism, stuttering, agoraphobia and social anxiety.
- “Oc87. The Obsessive Compulsive Major Depression Bipolar Asperger’s Movie,” 2012. Autobiographical documentary film by Bud Clayman.
- “The Perks of Being a Wallflower,” 2012. This funny, sad, coming of age story is about an introvert freshman with extreme social anxiety who is taken under the wings of two seniors who welcome him to the real world. Fiction.
- “The Road Back,” 2012. A short film (:32) produced by AWARE, a group of High School students in Maine. View film at: [acadiatheroadback.org](http://acadiatheroadback.org).
- “The Road Within,” 2015. Starring Kyra Sedgwick, Robert Sheehan, Dev Patel, and Zoe Kravitz. Director Gren Wells is an anorexia survivor. Set in a non-traditional residential program, the movie profiles 3 lovable young actors who give extremely accurate portrayals of OCD (Patel), severe Tourette’s (Sheehan) and anorexia (an illness actress Kravitz has struggled with). Tons of research

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was done. They've proven that you can be accurate about the medical mental health conditions and not sacrifice entertainment value. The movie is funny, moving and triumphant. Fiction. [A 2015 TOP PICK]

- "2e twice exceptional," 2015. "2e" follows the personal journeys of a unique group of high school students in Los Angeles who have been identified as 'twice exceptional' - gifted or highly gifted kids with learning disabilities or differences. among them may be the next Einstein, Mozart or Steve Jobs ... if they can survive the American school system and their own challenges. (documentary)
- "Unstuck: an OCD kid's movie," 2017. Documentary.
- "Unstrung Heroes," 1995. Written by journalist Steven Lidz, this account based loosely on Lidz' childhood tells the tale of his unhappy home life following his mother's illness and his subsequent move to live with his two 'crazy' Uncles. There he changes and gets closer to his Uncles, but his parents want him home even though he is finally happy and popular. His uncles demonstrate accurate portrayals of obsessive-compulsive disorder and hoarding.

### television:

- "Crazy Ex-girlfriend." 2016 Golden Globe winning star and co-creator is open about her personal struggles with depression and anxiety. Her TV alter ego demonstrates behaviors not uncommon in bipolar, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety. Comedy series.
- "Monk." Asperger's, OCD and germaphobic. Fiction.

### attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD):

#### film:

- "Mommy," 2014. The adolescent in this French Canadian film is reportedly diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity (AD/HD). However, as the film progresses it is clear that his diagnosis came after the 'window' of onset for AD/HD and is more probably the impulse control disorder known as conduct disorder, as a result of post-traumatic stress disorder. Fiction.
- "2e twice exceptional," 2015. Follows the personal journeys of a unique group of high school students in LA who have been identified as gifted, with neurodevelopmental disabilities. Documentary.

#### television:

- "The Fosters" - portrayed in the character Jesus Foster. Fiction.
- "Parenthood" - Season 4. Fiction.

### autism spectrum:

#### film:

- "Adam," 2009. Accurate portrayal of Asperger's. Fiction.
- "Autism in Love," 2015. This documentary follows the story of four adults with autism spectrum disorders as they search for and manage romantic relationships. Directed by Matt Fuller, written by Ira Heilveil.
- "Autism is a World", 2004. (CNN documentary)

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- “Autism: the musical.” 2007. (documentary)
- “Dad’s in Heaven with Nixon,” 2010. (documentary) Tom Murray lovingly presents his autistic brother Chris Murray (1960- ), through Chris's relationship to his family members, their father, who died when Chris was about 20, to various jobs, through his success as an artist. Chris has lived on his own for more than 30 years, navigated public transportation, is affectionate with his mom and brother and is certain that his father is in Heaven. Chris's creations are cheerful landscapes of New York buildings, meticulously done in multi-media. He likes his life, just as it is. Tom depicts a history of mental health conditions in family members with addictive disorders and bipolar disorder.
- “David & Lisa,” 1998. Starring Sidney Poitier, Lukas Haas and Brittany Murphy. This fictional tale is set on a psychiatric ward. David, a withdrawn but apparent near genius, who fears being touched (probably autism) meets Lisa, a young woman seemingly suffering from split personalities who speaks only in rhymes and withdraws from anyone who doesn't speak to her likewise. The unlikely pair work through their issues with the connect care of compassionate psychologist Sidney Poitier. Fiction.
- “Dr. Temple Grandin: Careers, opportunity for growth,” 1995. Live interview with Temple Grandin.
- “Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close”, 2011. Accurate depiction of Asperger’s. Fiction.
- “The Human Camera,” 2013. Documentary of the extraordinary life of Stephen Wiltshire, autistic savant who draws perfect renderings of complex cityscapes from memory. Available online.
- “I am Sam,” 2001. Starring Sean Penn and Michelle Pfeiffer. Autism and neurodevelopmental disorders. Fiction.
- “The Imitation Game,” 2014. Set in WWII, based on the life story of English mathematician and logician, Alan Turing, Asperger’s.
- “The Judge,” 2014. The youngest brother in this film starring Robert Downey, Jr. and Robert Duvall has autism. Without ever specifying autism, the actor gives a compassionate, loving and pitch perfect rendering of an individual living with autism, coping with the unkindness of others and the loving support of his family. Fiction.
- “Keep the Change,” 2017. Feature film, multiple neurodevelopmental disorders including autism and learning disabilities. [A 2018 TOP PICK]
- “Life, Animated,” 2016. Documentary based on the best selling book by Ron Suskind. [A 2016 TOP PICK.]
- “Mary and Max,” 2010. From Academy Award winning writer/director Adam Elliot comes the hilarious and moving ‘clayography’ feature film about the pen-pal relationship between two very different people: Mary Daisy Dinkle (voiced by Toni Collette) is a lonely 8-year-old in the suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. Max Jerry Horowitz (voiced by Oscar winner Philip Seymour Hoffman) is an obese 44 year old with Asperger’s living in NYC. Over the course of 20 years, their



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unusual journey of friendship explores autism, alcoholism, stuttering, agoraphobia and social anxiety.

- “Off The Rails. the Darius McCollum Story,” 2016. Documentary.
- “The Other Sister,” 1999. Starring Juliette Lewis and Diane Keaton. Severe end of the autism spectrum. Fiction.
- “Rainman,” 1988. Autistic Savant, neurodevelopmental disorders. Fiction.
- “Spectrum, a story of the mind,” 2016. Documentary. [A 2017 TOP PICK]
- “The Story of Luke,” 2012. Autism spectrum. Fiction.
- “Temple Grandin” HBO Special, 2010. Starring Emmy Award winner Claire Danes. Biopic based on the life story of Temple Grandin.
- “Through the eyes of Autism,” 2005. (documentary)
- “2e twice exceptional,” 2015. Follows the personal journeys of a unique group of high school students in LA who have been identified as gifted, with neurodevelopmental disabilities. Documentary.

### television:

- “Monk” - Adrian Monk - Aspergers, OCD and germaphobic. Fiction.
- “Parenthood” - portrayed in characters Max and Hank - Aspergers. Fiction.
- “Rise.” NEW in 2018. A working class high school theater department and the students come alive under a passionate teacher and family man whose dedication to the program galvanizes a town. Characters meet the challenges of teen alcoholism, living in foster care, autism spectrum and Downs Syndrome. Fiction.
- “Young Sheldon,” 2017, CBS.

### bipolar and depressive disorders:

#### film:

- “20/20 bipolar disorder in children,” ABC, 1/19/2000. (documentary)
- “Amadeus,” 1984. Bipolar, based on the life of Mozart.
- “Bipolar and Living Up/down,” 2011. Bipolar. (documentary)
- “Boy Interrupted,” 2009. Bipolar & suicide. Documentary created by the parents of a son who died by suicide.
- “Dad’s in Heaven with Nixon,” 2010. (documentary) Tom Murray lovingly presents his autistic brother Chris Murray (1960- ), through Chris's relationship to his family members, their father, who died when Chris was about 20, to various jobs, through his success as an artist. Chris has lived on his own for more than 30 years, navigated public transportation, is affectionate with his mom and brother and is certain that his father is in Heaven. Chris's creations are cheerful landscapes of New York buildings, meticulously done in multi-media. He likes his life, just as it is. Tom depicts a history of mental health conditions in family members with addictive disorders and bipolar disorder.
- “Darkest Hour,” 2017. Starring Gary Oldman. Oldman won an Academy Award for his portrayal of Winston Churchill during this dark dark hour in the history of

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WWII. Churchill suffered severe depression throughout his lifetime. [A 2018 TOP PICK.]

- "Depression: out of the shadows," PBS series, 2008. (documentary)
- "Don't Change the Subject," 2011. Suicide. (documentary.) Note: This is a *funny* movie, but may not be everyone's sense of humor. The overriding theme is to celebrate the life of the individual who has died and to keep the conversation about suicide alive.
- "Heaven is a Traffic Jam on the 405," 2017. Directed by Frank Stiefel about the life and work of inspired artist, Mindy Alper, who lives well with anxiety and depression. WINNER of the 2018 Academy Award for best documentary film short. A 2018 TOP PICK.
- "Frances," 1982. Starring Jessica Lange, directed by Graeme Clifford. Bipolar. Based on the life of Francis Farmer.
- "The Humbling," 2014. Starring Al Pacino. Depression and suicide. Fiction.
- "I Smile Back," 2015. Starring Sarah Silverman in a stellar portrayal of a woman in the throes of major depression. Fiction.
- "Infinitely Polar Bear," 2015. Starring Mark Ruffalo. Director Maya Forbes pays loving tribute to her brilliant bipolar father in this fictional film. Ruffalo's performance is spot on, courageous, triumphant, funny, touching and true.
- "Intimate portraits, Debbie Reynolds and Carrie Fisher," 2011. Bipolar & substance use. (documentary)
- "It's Kind of a Funny Story," 2011. An uplifting comedy, based on the novel of the same name by Ned Vizzini, about finding sanity in the most unlikely of places, a Brooklyn psychiatric ward. Focus is on teen anxiety, depression and suicide. Tragically, author Vizzini killed himself in January 2015. He was 32 years old.
- "Lincoln," 2012. Directed by Steven Spielberg, starring Daniel Day-Lewis and Sally Field. Depression. Based on the life of Abraham Lincoln.
- "Loving Vincent," 2017. Nominated for an Academy Award for best animated feature.
- "Manic," 2003. Starring Don Cheadle and Joseph Gordon-Levitt. This film, shot in documentary style, is set in an adolescent residence for violent teens and demonstrates aggressive behaviors sometimes associated with bipolar disorders. Eating disorders, trauma, extreme anxiety and more are explored. Fiction.
- "Men Get Depression," 2008. (documentary)
- "Michael Clayton," 2007. Starring George Clooney, Tilda Swinton and Tom Wilkinson. This film is about law firm who brings in its "fixer" to remedy the situation after a lawyer has a breakdown while representing a chemical company that he knows is guilty in a multi-billion dollar class action suit. Tom Wilkinson's portrayal of bipolar disorder is compassionate and accurate. Fiction.
- "Mind/Game: the unquiet journey of Charmique Holdsclaw," 2015. "Mind|Game" chronicles both Holdsclaw's athletic accomplishments and personal setbacks,



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including her decision, despite public stigma, to become an outspoken mental health advocate. Narrated by Glenn Close and directed by 2-time Academy Award nominee Rick Goldsmith. (documentary)

- “Mr. Jones,” 1993. Starring Richard Gere and Lena Olin. Extremely accurate and compassionate portrayal of bipolar, both the dangerous manic end and the life-draining depressive end. Though boundaries trespassed in patient/doctor relationship are unprofessional and grounds for loss of licensure, issues raised and Gere’s performance make this film well worth viewing. Fiction.
- “The misunderstood epidemic: depression,” 2010. (documentary)
- “More Than Sad [teen depression]” 2009. Recommended for anyone who works with, cares for and loves adolescents. This excellent short documentary shows signs and symptoms of depression and multiple ways to help. (note: the acting is not very good — non-professionals were used in the making of the film.)
- “My Depression my ups and downs and ups again,” 2014. HBO 30 minute special by Elizabeth Swados, starring Sigourney Weaver as the voice of Swados. Excellent, easily relatable illustration of the depths of depressive disorder.
- “No kidding me too!” 2009. Bipolar. (documentary)
- “No Letting Go,” 2015. When a young boy begins to struggle with anxiety, depression and bipolar disorder, his mother goes on a desperate quest to help him. Based on this mother’s true story. Feature film.
- “Of Two Minds,” docudramafilms, 2013. Bipolar. (documentary)
- “Ordinary People,” 1980. Depression and suicide. Fiction.
- “Pollock,” 2000. Bipolar. Based on the life of Jackson Pollock.
- “Prozac Nation,” 2003. Bipolar and depression. Based on the book and life of Elizabeth Wurtzel.
- “Silver Lining’s Playbook,” 2012. Starring Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence. This entertaining picture demonstrates accurate and entirely loving portrayals of bipolar. Fiction.
- “Two Days One Night,” 2014. Depression. Starring Marion Cotillard.
- “What Dreams May Come,” 1998. Starring Robin Williams. Depression and suicide. Fiction.
- “Wishful drinking,” 2010. Bipolar and substance use. Documentary by Carrie Fisher.

### **movies that capture altered time perception that is not uncommon during bipolar psychosis:**

- “Alice in Wonderland,” 2010. Fiction.
- “Altered States,” 1980. Fiction.
- “The Butterfly Effect,” 2004. Fiction.
- “Cloud Atlas,” 2012. Fiction.

### **television:**

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- “Crazy Ex-girlfriend.” 2016 Golden Globe winning star and co-creator is open about her personal struggles with depression and anxiety. Her TV alter ego demonstrates behaviors not uncommon in bipolar, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety. Comedy series.
- “General Hospital.” Bipolar depiction in the character Sonny by actor Maurice Bernard. This portrayal is all the more accurate and compassionate because actor Bernard lives well with bipolar disorder himself. He is a strong advocate with the National Mental Health Association in his efforts to assist others in learning what bipolar looks like and how to live well with it. Fiction.
- “Homeland.” Bipolar. Fiction.

### **disruptive behavior disorders (including oppositional defiant, intermittent explosive, conduct, anti-social personality), sociopathy & psychopathy: film:**

- “America’s Serial Killers, Portraits in Evil,” a 10-part journey into darkness from Mill Creek Entertainment, 2009. (Documentary) This film includes the stories of Jack the Ripper, Albert Fish (the Vampire of Brooklyn), the Boston Strangler, the Zodiac, Son of Sam, Charles Manson and Jeffrey Dahmer.
- “Bullied,” 2010. This documentary centers on the powerful story of Jamie Nabozny, a gay teenage boy, tormented for years by classmates. Jamie fought back, not with his fists but in a courtroom. Narrated by Jane Lynch.
- “Bully,” 2011. (documentary)
- “Catch Me if you Can,” 2002. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio. Psychopathy, based on the life story of Frank Abagnale.
- “Conviction,” 2010. Starring Hilary Swank. Based on a true story.
- “Disconnect,” 2012. Fiction.
- “Foxcatcher,” 2014. Starring Steve Carell, Channing Tatum and Mark Ruffalo. Sociopathic-like behavior. Based on the life story of John Dupont in his later years. Note: Apparently a lot of Hollywood license was taken with this film. Reportedly, the relationship with Dupont’s mother was warm and loving, unlike the portrayal in the film. And Dupont’s father, while generous, was distant. In his early years, Dupont was a tremendous supporter of swimmers, pentathletes and was a pioneer in the sport of triathlon.
- “The Hoax,” 2006. Starring Richard Gere. Based on the life story of Clifford Irving.
- “Kalifornia,” 1993. Starring Brad Pitt, Juliette Lewis and David Duchovny. A tale of a journalist duo who go on a tour of serial murders with two companions - unaware that one of them is a serial killer himself. Chilling fiction.
- “Manic,” 2003. Starring Don Cheadle and Joseph Gordon-Levitt. This film, shot in documentary style, is set in an adolescent residence for violent teens and demonstrates aggressive behaviors sometimes associated with disruptive behavior disorders. Disruptive behaviors, bipolar, depression, eating disorders, trauma, extreme anxiety and more. Fiction.

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- “Mommy,” 2014. The adolescent in this French Canadian film is reportedly diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity (AD/HD). However, as the film progresses it is clear that his diagnosis came after the ‘window’ of onset for AD/HD and is probably conduct disorder, as a result of post-traumatic stress disorder. Fiction.
- “Monster,” 2003. Starring Charlize Theron. Sociopathy. Based on the story of serial killer Aileen Wuornos.
- “Moonlight,” 2016. Starring Mahershala Ali, Shariff Earp and Duan Sanderson, directed by Barry Jenkins. This movie is a timeless story of human connection and self-discovery. Three actors play a single character, Chiron, at various stages in his life – from his vulnerable youth on the rough streets of Miami, to crucial life decisions made as an adolescent, to his adulthood as a street-toughened drug dealer. The film demonstrates the intricate interplay of environment, opportunity and role models in the development of attachment and conduct disorders. Fiction. “Moonlight” won the 2016 Academy Award for Best Picture and Best Supporting Actor (Ali). [TOP PICK 2017]
- “My Life as a Zucchini,” 2017. Directed by Claude Barras, a stop-motion animated feature film. Barras says “This film is an homage to neglected and mistreated children who do the best they can to survive and live with their wounds. Zucchini, our hero, has been through many difficult times and, after having lost his mother, he believes he is alone in the world.” Healing begins when Zucchini meets a kindly policeman, starts a new life in a foster care center, finds a group of friends he can rely on, falls in love, and learns what it means to be happy. Adapted from the book “Autobiography of a Courgette,” by Gilles Paris. [A 2017 TOP PICK]
- “Nightcrawler,” 2014. Starring Jake Gyllenhaal. Psychopathy. Fiction.
- “Short Term 12,” 2014. Starring Academy Award winner Brie Larson. Told through the eyes of a young supervisor of a group home for troubled teens, this feature touches on issues of childhood trauma, attachment and disruptive behaviors. Fiction.
- “Ted Bundy,” 2002. Documentary from Biography of A&E television, chronicles Bundy’s four year reign of terror as he brutally raped and murdered dozens of women across the country, becoming one of the most notorious serial killers in U.S. history.
- “SOS Summer of Sam,” 1999. Directed by Spike Lee, starring John Leguizamo and Mira Sorvino. Based on the story of Son of Sam, serial killer.
- “Valentine Road,” 2013. (documentary.) On February 12, 2008, in Oxnard, California, 8th grade student Brandon McInerney shot his classmate Larry King twice in the back of the head during first period. Larry died two days later. This is the true story of the deceased (an effeminate gay youth) and the murderer (a budding neo-Nazi). The film connects the human wreckage of Larry's and Brandon's troubled lives-both physically abused, both from broken homes, and both searching for a sense of belonging.

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- “We Need to Talk About Kevin,” 2010. Based on the award winning novel by Lionel Shriver, this fictional film is a stunning piece of work and a crushing discussion on the impact of nature vs. nurture. Movingly directed by Lynne Ramsay, it features stellar performances from Tilda Swinton, John C. Reilly and Ezra Miller.
- “The Wizard of Lies,” 2017. HBO special starring Robert Di Niro, directed by Barry Levinson. An introspective look into Bernie Madoff.

### television:

- “The Blacklist,” fiction.
- “Law & Order True Crime: The Menendez Murders” based on the true story, starring Edie Falco as attorney Leslie Abramson.
- “Law & Order SVU.” fiction.
- “Madoff,” the 4-part mini-series. Psychopathy. Based on the life of Bernard Madoff.

### Dissociative disorders (formerly known as split or multiple personality disorders):

- “David & Lisa,” 1998. Starring Sidney Poitier, Lukas Haas and Brittany Murphy. This tale is set on a psychiatric ward. David, a withdrawn but apparent near genius, who fears being touched (probably autism) meets Lisa, a young woman seemingly suffering from split personalities who speaks only in rhymes and withdraws from anyone who doesn't speak to her likewise. The unlikely pair work through their issues with the connect care of compassionate psychologist Sidney Poitier. Fiction.
- “Fight Club,” 1999. Starring Brad Pitt and Edward Norton. Fictional story of an insomniac office worker, looking for a way to change his life, crosses paths with a devil-may-care soap maker, forming an underground fight club that evolves into something much, much more... Fiction.
- “The Three Faces of Eve,” 1957. Starring Joanne Woodward, David Wayne and Lee J. Cobb.
- “Split,” 2016. Starring James McAvoy, directed by M. Night Ahyamalan.
- “Sybil,” 1976. Starring Sally Field, Joanne Woodward and Brad Davis. A young woman whose childhood was so harrowing to her that she developed at least 13 different personalities. Based on the life of ‘Sybil’ (not her real name).

### eating disorders (including anorexia, bulimia and binging):

#### film:

- “Men, Women and Children,” 2014. Anorexia. Fiction.
- “The Road Within,” 2015. Starring Kyra Sedgwick, Robert Sheehan, Dev Patel, and Zoe Kravitz. Director Gren Wells is an anorexia survivor. Set in a non-traditional residential program, the movie profiles 3 lovable young actors who give extremely accurate portrayals of OCD (Patel), severe Tourette's (Sheehan) and anorexia (an illness actress Kravitz has struggled with). Tons of research

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was done. They've proven that you can be accurate about the medical mental health conditions and not sacrifice entertainment value. The movie is funny, sad, moving and triumphant. Fiction.

- "Thin, if it takes dying to get there, so be it." HBO documentary, 2004. This compelling documentary is set in the Renfrew Center, a residential facility for treatment of women with eating disorders. It follows the lives of four young women (ages 15-30) who have spent most of their lives starving themselves, often to the verge of death. "Thin" is a powerful, sometimes painful portrayal of a disorder that kills approximately 20% of those afflicted.
- "The WEIGHT of the NATION," HBO documentary, 2012. Obesity.

### neurocognitive disorders (includes dementia and Alzheimer's):

#### film:

- "Alive Inside," 2014, by Michael Rossato-Bennett. This documentary "is a joyous cinematic exploration of music's capacity to reawaken our souls and uncover the deepest parts of our humanity. Rossato-Bennett chronicles the astonishing experiences of individuals around the country who have been revitalized and awakened by the simple act of listening to the music of their youth."
- "Amour," 2012. Fiction.
- "Away from Her," 2006, starring Julie Christie, Michael Murphy and Gordon Pinsent. Fiction (earned 2 Academy Award nominations)
- "The blind boys of Alabama: How Sweet the Sound," 2015. The Blind Boys of Alabama first met in the 1930s at a segregated state-run vocational school. Friends since childhood, these men comprise the last of the great Gospel quartets. Shot over ten years, with current and archival performances, this extraordinary film examines the past, present and future of the group. The majority of the gentlemen featured are in their 70's and 80's. Thanks to music, faith and a life filled with purpose, none experience dementia. (documentary)
- "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," 2008. Starring Cate Blanchett and Brad Pitt. Fiction.
- "Iris," starring Judi Dench and Jim Broadbent, 2001. Based on the true story of the romance between novelist Iris Murdoch and her spouse John Bayley. Broadbent won the Academy Award for Best Actor for his depiction of John Bayley. Judi Dench and Kate Winslet were nominated for Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress, respectively, for their portrayals of Iris Murdoch.
- "Monster in the Mind," 2017. Documentary.
- "The Notebook," 2004. Fiction.
- "On Golden Pond," 1981. Fiction.
- "Robot and Frank," 2012. Fiction.
- "The Savages," 2007. Starring Laura Linney and Philip Seymour Hoffman. Fiction.
- "Still Alice," 2014. Starring Julianne Moore and Alec Baldwin. Fiction. Moore won an Academy Award for this star turn.

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- “Una Vida: A Fable of Music and the Mind,” starring Aunjanue Ellis, Joaquin deAlmeida and Bill Cobbs, directed by Richie Adams, 2014. Fiction.
- “Wrinkles,” 2014. Martin Sheen, Matthew Modine and George Coe lead a cast of eccentric characters who rebel against authority in this wonderfully animated and poignant comedy for adults. Using hand-drawn animation, “Wrinkles” moves freely between the residents of an old age home’s daily routines and their more colorful, dementia-induced fantasies. Dementia and Alzheimer’s.

### neurodevelopmental disorders, (includes learning disabilities and intellectual disabilities):

#### film:

- “A Child is Waiting,” 1962. Starring Judy Garland and Burt Lancaster, based on the Devereux School. Fiction
- “Being There,” 1979. Starring Peter Sellers and Shirley MacLaine, based on the novel by Jerzy Kosinski. Fiction
- “Best Boy,” 1979. (documentary)
- “The Big picture: rethinking dyslexia,” 2013. (documentary)
- “Charly,” 1968. Starring Cliff Robertson and Claire Bloom. This film demonstrates what it might feel like to be a learning disabled adult, given a glimmer of genius. It poses challenging hypothetical questions like: What are the rewards and challenges of certain limitations or genius? How are the perceptions of others shaped by relative intelligence? Fiction.
- “Elling,” 2001. Norwegian Academy award nominated film is based on a best selling novel. It is a loving, funny and warm portrayal of agoraphobia and mild cognitive disability. Fiction.
- “Flowers for Algernon,” the original, 1968. Cognitive impairment. Fiction.
- “Forest Gump,” 1994. Intellectual disability. Fiction.
- “The Green Mile,” 1999. Intellectual disability. Fiction.
- “I am Sam,” 2001. Starring Sean Penn and Michelle Pfeiffer. Autism and neurodevelopmental disorders. Fiction.
- “I have Tourette’s but Tourette’s doesn’t have me. dispelling the myth one child at a time,” 2006, documentary. 2006 Winner of the Emmy for outstanding children’s program.
- “Keep the Change,” 2017. Feature film, multiple neurodevelopmental disorders including autism and learning disabilities. [A 2018 TOP PICK]
- “The Kings Speech,” 2010. Speech & social anxiety disorder. Based on the true life story of King George VI.
- “Like stars on Earth,” 2007. Dyslexia. Fiction.
- “My Left Foot,” 1989. Starring Daniel Day-Lewis. Based on the life story of Christy Brown, born with cerebral palsy.
- “Of Mice and Men,” original starred Burgess Meredith and Lon Chaney in 1939, remake with Gary Sinise and John Malkovich in 1992. Cognitive impairment. Fiction.



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- “Profoundly Normal,” 2003. Starring Kirstie Alley and Delroy Lindo, director Graeme Clifford. Based on a true story of two cognitively challenged individuals and institutionalized living.
- “Radio,” 2003. Developmental disability. Fiction.
- “The Road Within,” 2015. Starring Kyra Sedgwick, Robert Sheehan, Dev Patel, and Zoe Kravitz. Director Gren Wells is an anorexia survivor. Set in a non-traditional residential program, the movie profiles 3 lovable young actors who give extremely accurate portrayals of OCD (Patel), severe Tourette’s (Sheehan) and anorexia (an illness actress Kravitz has struggled with). Tons of research was done. They’ve proven that you can be accurate about the medical mental health conditions and not sacrifice entertainment value. The movie is funny, sad, moving and triumphant. Fiction.
- “2e twice exceptional,” 2015. “2e” follows the personal journeys of a unique group of high school students in Los Angeles who have been identified as ‘twice exceptional’ - gifted or highly gifted kids with learning disabilities or differences. among them may be the next Einstein, Mozart or Steve Jobs ... if they can survive the American school system and their own challenges. (documentary)
- “What’s Eating Gilbert Grape?,” 1993. Neurodevelopmental disability. Fiction.
- “When I Stutter,” 2017. Stuttering. (documentary)
- “Yellow Brick Road,” 2006. (documentary)

### television:

- “Born this Way,” 2016 Emmy Award winner. A reality television series about a community with Down Syndrome. hashtag: #dontlimitme
- “The Big Bang Theory.” Non-specified neurodevelopmental issues. Fiction.
- “Rise.” NEW in 2018. A working class high school theater department and the students come alive under a passionate teacher and family man whose dedication to the program galvanizes a town. Characters meet the challenges of teen alcoholism, living in foster care, autism spectrum and Downs Syndrome. Fiction.
- “Speechless,” 2016. ABC fictional television comedy series starring Minnie Driver. The character of her son with a disability is played by Micah Fowler, an actor with cerebral palsy.

### psychotic disorders including schizophrenia:

#### film:

- “20/20 schizophrenia,” ABC, 2007. (documentary)
- “The Aviator,” 2004. Obsessive compulsive disorder, psychosis or bi-polar disorder. Based on the life of Howard Hughes.
- “A Beautiful Mind,” 2001. Based on the life story of John Nash. While a compassionate portrayal, tremendous Hollywood license was taken in the making of this movie. Nash did not experience *any* visual hallucinations. Hallucinations experienced in true schizophrenia are rarely warm and friendly,



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they are typically demeaning and berating. For accuracy, I recommend "[A Brilliant Madness](#)," referenced below.

- "[A Brilliant Madness](#)," PBS American Experience, 2002. (documentary) The remarkable story of Nobel Prize winning mathematician John Nash. This documentary features Nash's colleagues, friends, archived footage and photos, as well as interviews with John Nash. It is far more accurate than the Hollywood version "[A Beautiful Mind](#)" and more accessible than the book by Sylvia Nasar. It is also a vivid depiction of 'care' and understanding of schizophrenia from the 1950's through the present.
- "[Canvas](#)," 2007. Psychosis. Fiction.
- "[Gabriel](#)," 2014, starring Rory Culkin. Schizophrenia. Fiction.
- Historic films quality publishers: "[Historic schizophrenia films](#)," 2007. Footage from asylums in 1940. (documentary)
- "[K-Pax](#)," 2002. Starring Kevin Spacey and Jeff Bridges. Psychosis induced by severe trauma. Fiction.
- "[Love & Mercy](#)," 2015. Starring John Cusack and Paul Dano. Based on the life story of the Beach Boys' Brian Wilson.
- "[My name is Alan and I paint pictures](#)," 2013. Directed by Johnny Boston. This film is a five year chronicle about Alan Street, a paranoid schizophrenic, struggling to succeed as an artist in NYC. (documentary)
- "[People say I'm Crazy](#)," 2004. Documentary about John Cadigan an artist with schizophrenia. Available through the John Cadigan Foundation.
- "[Pi, faith in chaos](#)," 1998. A film by Darren Aronofsky. Schizophrenia. Fiction.
- "[Proof](#)," 2005. Psychosis. Fiction. (based on the stage play of the same name.)
- "[Revolution number 9](#)," 2001. Schizophrenia. Fiction.
- "[Safety Not Guaranteed](#)," 2012. Directed by Colin Trevorrow. Psychosis or government conspiracy? You decide. Fiction.
- "[Shine](#)," 1996. Starring Geoffrey Rush, Armin Mueller-Stahl and Justin Braine. Psychosis. Based on the story of pianist David Helfgott, who, driven by his father and teachers, has a 'breakdown.' Years later he returns to the piano, to popular if not critical acclaim.
- "[The Soloist](#)," 2009. Starring Robert Downey, Jr. and Jamie Foxx. Schizophrenia. Based on the life story of Nathaniel Ayers.
- "[Through a Glass Darkly](#)," 1961. Directed by Ingmar Bergman. Psychosis. Fiction.

### **substance use and addictive disorders:**

#### **film:**

- "[Addiction why can't they just stop?](#)" a 14 part series by HBO, 2007. (documentary)
- "[Amy](#)," the story of Amy Winehouse, A24 Studios, 2015. (documentary)

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- “The Anonymous People. Recovery is out - to change the addiction conversation from problems to solutions.” Alive Mind Cinema, 2013. (documentary)
- “Christiane F.” 1981. This movie portrays the drug scene in Berlin in the 1970s, following tape recordings of Christiane F. 14-year-old Christiane lives with her mother and little sister in a typical multi-story apartment building in Berlin. She's fascinated by 'The Sound', a new disco with the most modern equipment. Although legally she's too young, she asks a friend to take her. There, she meets Detlef, who's in a clique where everybody's on drugs. Step by step she gets drawn deeper into the scene. Based on Christiane F.'s journals.
- “Cracked,” 2005.
- “Dad’s in Heaven with Nixon,” 2010. Tom Murray lovingly presents his autistic brother Chris Murray (1960- ), through Chris's relationship to his family members, their father, who died when Chris was about 20, to various jobs, through his success as an artist. Chris has lived on his own for more than 30 years, navigated public transportation, is affectionate with his mom and brother and is certain that his father is in Heaven. Chris's creations are cheerful landscapes of New York buildings, meticulously done in multi-media. He likes his life, just as it is. Tom depicts a history of mental health conditions in family members with addictive disorders and bipolar disorder. (documentary)
- “Days of Wine & Roses,” the classic starring Jack Lemmon and Lee Remick, 1982. Fiction.
- “Don’t Worry, He Won’t Get Far on Foot,” 2018, starring Joaquin Phoenix and Jonah Hill. The story of John Callahan, controversial cartoonist and his rocky path to sobriety after an accident that left him wheelchair bound.
- “Flight,” 2012. Starring Denzel Washington. Substance use and addiction. Fiction.
- “The Gambler,” 1974. Starring James Caan. Note: The original film with James Caan captures the addictive features of gambling with humanity. It is an accurate compassionate portrayal of this addictive behavior. By contrast, the remake released in 2014, is *inaccurate* in its portrayal of the disorder and recovery. This remake is not recommended by the Foundation. Fiction.
- “Go Ask Alice,” 1973, starring William Shatner. Based on the diary of the true story of a 16 year old drug addict.
- “I Saw the Light,” 2016. A biopic of the life of Hank Williams, beloved country music star. Williams was an alcoholic and pain killer addict. He died tragically young at 29 from heart failure.
- “Interview with Dr. Nora D. Volkow, Director National Institute of Drug Abuse.” April, 2009. By Ashish Bakshi, a Yale journal of Medicine & Law video.
- “The Last Fix. An addict’s passage from hell to hope,” 2011. A film by Jacqui Lofaro and Victor Teich. Justice Productions.
- “Lipstick & Liquor, secrets in the suburbs,” 2014. Unique perspective on alcoholism as it manifests in women. (documentary)

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- “Mary and Max,” 2010. From Academy Award winning writer/director Adam Elliot comes the hilarious and moving ‘clayography’ feature film about the pen-pal relationship between two very different people: Mary Daisy Dinkle (voiced by Toni Collette) is a lonely 8-year-old in the suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. Max Jerry Horowitz (voiced by Oscar winner Philip Seymour Hoffman) is an obese 44 year old with Asperger’s living in NYC. Over the course of 20 years, their unusual journey of friendship explores autism, alcoholism, stuttering, agoraphobia and social anxiety.
- “Moonlight,” 2016. Starring Mahershala Ali, Shariff Earp and Duan Sanderson, directed by Barry Jenkins. This movie is a timeless story of human connection and self-discovery. Three actors play a single character, Chiron, at various stages in his life – from his vulnerable youth on the rough streets of Miami, to crucial life decisions made as an adolescent, to his adulthood as a street-toughened drug dealer. The film demonstrates the intricate interplay of environment, opportunity and role models in the development of attachment and conduct disorders. Fiction. Academy Award winner for Best Picture and Best Supporting Actor (Ali). [TOP PICK 2016-2017]
- “My Name is Bill W.,” 1989. The true story of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- “Smashed,” 2013. Fiction.
- “Trainspotting,” 1996. Starring Ewan McGregor, Ewen Bremner and Jonny Lee Miller. Fictional tale of Renton, deeply immersed in the Edinburgh drug scene, as he tries to clean up and get out, despite the allure of the drugs and influence of friends. Fiction.
- “Unguarded,” 2011. He lived the dream and the nightmare. The story of NBA star, Chris Herren. Documentary.
- “Valley of the Dolls,” 1967. Starring Barbara Parkins, Patty Duke and Paul Burke. Film version of Jacqueline Susann's best-selling novel chronicling the rise and fall of three young ladies in show business. Fiction.
- “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Wolf,” 1966. Starring Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Sandy Dennis and George Segal. Based on the play of the same name by Tennessee Williams, Virginia Wolf takes alcoholism to a new level. Fiction.
- “Wild,” 2014. Starring Reese Witherspoon. Maladaptive response to loss, expressed through depression, substance use and eventually a 1,100 mile healing journey up the Pacific Crest Trail. Based on the true story of Cheryl Strayed.
- “The Wolf of Wall Street,” 2013. Fiction.

### **television:**

- “Elementary,” CBS 2012-present. The leading player in this series portrays a fictional Sherlock Holmes as a recovering addict. Sentiments expressed at Narcotics Anonymous meetings and with his sober companion, Dr. Watson, are warm, compassionate and caring. Bravo! Fiction.
- “The Fosters,” the series, ABC Family, 2013-present. Fiction.

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- “Grace and Frankie,” starring Lily Tomlin, Jane Fonda, Sam Waterson and Martin Sheen. Netflix, family member Coyote struggles with addiction. Fiction.
- “House” the series 2004-2012. Fiction.
- \* “Mom,” the CBS series, 2013-present. This sitcom demonstrates a dysfunctional relationship between recovering alcoholic mother and daughter and has scenes played out at AA meetings. In my opinion, it offers a much needed touch of comedy to a sober issue with love and humility. Fiction comedy. [A 2013-present TOP PICK]
- “Rise.” NEW in 2018. A working class high school theater department and the students come alive under a passionate teacher and family man whose dedication to the program galvanizes a town. Characters meet the challenges of teen alcoholism, living in foster care, autism spectrum and Downs Syndrome. Fiction.
- “Seinfeld.” The character Kramer humorously depicts gambling addiction in Season 6, Episode 21 ‘The Diplomat’s Club.’ Fiction comedy.
- “This is Us,” 2016-present, NBC. A heartwarming and emotional story about a unique set of triplets, their struggles, and their wonderful parents. This life-affirming dramedy reveals how the tiniest events in our lives impact who we become and how the connections we share can transcend time. Several characters struggle with addictive disorders.

### suicidal behavior disorder:

#### film:

- “Boy Interrupted,” 2009. Suicide and bipolar disorder. Documentary created by the parents of a son who died by suicide.
- “Bully,” 2011. (documentary)
- “Disconnect,” 2012. Fiction.
- “Don’t Change the Subject,” 2011. Suicide. (documentary.) Note: This is a *funny* movie, but may not appeal to everyone’s sense of humor. The overriding theme is to celebrate the life of the individual who has died and to keep the conversation about suicide alive.
- “The Humbling,” 2014. Starring Al Pacino. Depression and suicide. Fiction.
- “It’s Kind of a Funny Story,” 2011. An uplifting comedy, based on the novel of the same name by Ned Vizzini, about finding sanity in the most unlikely of places, a Brooklyn psychiatric ward. Focus is on teen anxiety, depression and suicide. Tragically, author Vizzini killed himself in January 2015. He was 32 years old.
- “More Than Sad [teen depression]” 2009. Recommended for anyone who works with, cares for and loves adolescents. This excellent short documentary shows signs and symptoms of depression and multiple ways to help. (note: the acting is not very good — non-professionals were used in the making of the film.)
- “Ordinary People,” 1980. Depression and suicide. Fiction.
- “The Dead Poets Society,” 1989. Starring Robin Williams. Fiction.

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- “What Dreams May Come,” 1998. Starring Robin Williams. Suicide. Fiction.

### television:

“Thirteen Reasons Why.” Netflix

### trauma & stressor related disorders:

#### film:

- “American Sniper,” 2015. Starring Bradley Cooper. Based on the life story of Navy SEAL Chris Kyle.
- “Beasts of No Nation,” 2015. Starring Abraham Attah and Idris Elba. A drama based on the experiences of Agu, a child soldier fighting in the civil war of an unnamed African country.
- “Bullied,” 2010. This documentary centers on the powerful story of Jamie Nabozny, a gay teenage boy, tormented for years by classmates. Jamie fought back, not with his fists but in a courtroom. Narrated by Jane Lynch.
- “Crown Heights,” 2017. Starring Lakeith Lee Stanfield, based on the story of Colin Warner, an 18-year-old kid from nearby Crown heights, who was wrongfully convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison. [A 2017 TOP PICK.]
- “The Deerhunter,” 1978. Starring Robert DeNiro, Christopher Walken and John Cazale, is an in-depth examination of the ways in which the U.S. Vietnam war impacted and disrupted the lives of people in a small industrial town in Pennsylvania. Fiction.
- “The Fisher King,” 1991. Starring Robin Williams and Jeff Bridges. Fiction.
- “Hotel Rwanda,” 2004. Starring Don Cheadle. Based on the true event.
- “The Hurt Locker,” 2008. Starring Jeremy Renner and directed by Kathryn Bigelow. Winner of six 2010 Academy Awards including Best Motion Picture, Best Director (Bigelow) and Best Actor in a Leading Role (Renner).
- “Jacobs Ladder,” 1990. Posttraumatic stress disorder and substance use, set during the Vietnam War. Fiction.
- “K-Pax,” 2002. Starring Kevin Spacey and Jeff Bridges. Psychosis induced by severe trauma. Or is it? Fiction.
- “Last Flag Flying,” 2017. Starring Steve Carell and Bryan Cranston.
- “Manic,” 2003. Starring Don Cheadle and Joseph Gordon-Levitt. This film, shot in documentary style, is set in an adolescent residence for violent teens and demonstrates aggressive behaviors sometimes associated with disruptive behavior disorders. Bipolar, depression, eating disorders, trauma, extreme anxiety and more are explored. Fiction.
- “Mommy,” 2014. The adolescent in this French Canadian film is reportedly diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity (ADHD). However, as the film progresses it is clear that his diagnosis came after the ‘window’ of onset for ADHD and is more probably the impulse control disorder known as conduct disorder, as a result of post-traumatic stress disorder. Fiction.

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- “My Life as a Zucchini,” 2016. Directed by Claude Barras, a stop-motion animated feature film. Barras says “This film is an homage to neglected and mistreated children who do the best they can to survive and live with their wounds. Zucchini, our hero, has been through many difficult times and, after having lost his mother, he believes he is alone in the world.” Healing begins when Zucchini meets a kindly policeman, starts a new life in a foster care center, finds a group of friends he can rely on, falls in love, and learns what it means to be happy. Adapted from the book “Autobiography of a Courgette,” by Gilles Paris. [A 2017 TOP PICK and Academy Award nominee.]
- “Saving Private Ryan,” 1998. Starring Tom Hanks. This is the story following the Normandy Landings, when a group of U.S. soldiers go behind enemy lines to retrieve a paratrooper whose brothers have been killed in action.
- “Served Like a Girl,” 2017. Documentary about women coming home from war and competing in a ‘beauty pageant.’ [A 2018 TOP PICK.]
- “Short Term 12,” 2013. Starring Academy Award winner Brie Larson. Told through the eyes of a young supervisor of a group home for troubled teens, this feature touches on issues of childhood trauma, attachment and disruptive behaviors. Fiction.
- “Sophie’s Choice,” 1982. Based on the novel of the same name by William Styron, starring Meryl Streep and Kevin Kline. A story of the ultimate impossible choice.
- “Spotlight,” 2015. Starring Michael Keaton, Mark Ruffalo and Brian D’Arcy James. This is the true story of how the Boston Globe uncovered the massive scandal of child molestation and cover-up within the local Catholic Archdiocese, shaking the entire Catholic Church to its core. Nominated for six 2016 Academy Awards. Winner of two, for Best Motion Picture and Best Writing. [A 2015 TOP PICK]
- “Sybil,” 1976. Starring Sally Field, Joanne Woodward and Brad Davis. A young woman whose childhood was so harrowing that she developed at least 13 different personalities - a clinical disorder known as Dissociative Identity Disorder (formerly Split Personality Disorder), based in extreme childhood trauma and abuse. Based on the story of ‘Sybil.’
- “Valentine Road,” 2013. (documentary.) On February 12, 2008, in Oxnard, California, 8th grade student Brandon McInerney shot his classmate Larry King twice in the back of the head during first period. Larry died two days later. This is the true story of the deceased (an effeminate gay youth) and the murderer (a budding neo-Nazi). The film connects the human wreckage of Larry's and Brandon's troubled lives-both physically abused, both from broken homes, and both searching for a sense of belonging.

### **television:**

- “Law and Order” 1990-2010 and “Law and Order SVU” 1999-present, multiple episodes. Fiction.



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- “Parenthood” 2010-2015, character - Ryan, a war veteran suffers from posttraumatic stress disorder. Fiction.
- “This is Us,” 2016 - present.

### **movies where people exposed to traumatic events triumph in the face of extreme adversity:**

- “Amour,” 2012. (fiction)
- “Bambi,” Disney pictures, 1942. Loss and attachment. Animation. Fiction.
- “Beasts of the Southern Wild,” 2012. Based on events of Hurricane Katrina. Fiction.
- “Blood Diamond,” 2006. Set in the political unrest of Sierra Leone. Fiction.
- “The Book Thief,” 2013. Based on the life story of Liesel Meminger, WWII survivor.
- “Conviction,” 2010. Starring Hillary Swank and Sam Rockwell. Based on a true story. A working mother puts herself through law school in an effort to represent her brother, who has been wrongfully convicted of murder and has exhausted his chances to appeal his conviction through public defenders.
- “Dallas Buyers Club,” 2013. Based on the life story of Ron Woodroof and his fight against AIDS.
- “The Darkest Hours,” 2017. Starring Gary Oldman. [A 2017 TOP PICK.]
- “Frida,” 2002. Starring Hanna Hayek and Alfred Molina. This film is a biopic of artist Frida Kahlo, who channeled the pain of a crippling injury and her tempestuous marriage into her work.
- “The Good Lie,” 2014. Based on the inspiring stories of the lost boys of the Sudan. [A 2014 TOP PICK]
- “Hacksaw Ridge,” 2016. Starring Andrew Garfield. Based on the true story of WWII American Army Medic Desmond T. Doss, who served during the Battle of Okinawa. Doss refused to kill people, and endured relentless ridicule and abuse from fellow soldiers. Still, he performed heroically, saving dozens of lives, and became the first man in American history to receive the Medal of Honor without firing a shot.
- “He Named Me Malala,” 2015. Based on the best selling book by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb, “I Am Malala. the girl who stood up for education and was shot by the Taliban.” Documentary.
- “The Impossible,” 2012. The story of a tourist family caught in the destruction and aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. Based on the miracle survival story of a real family.
- “Life is beautiful,” 1997. A ‘fable,’ set in occupied Italy before and during WWII.
- “Little Boy,” 2015. A powerful big fish tale of a little boy and what he’s willing to do to bring his father home from WWII alive. Fiction.
- “Lion,” 2016. Starring the remarkable Dev Patel (“Slumdog Millionaire”), Nicole Kidman and Rooney Mara, tells the story of 5 year old Saroo lost on the streets of Calcutta thousands of miles from his home and his harrowing challenges



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before being adopted by a loving Australian family. 25 years later Saroo sets out to find his lost family in India. "Lion" is adapted from the book "A Long Way Home," by Saroo Brierley. This film demonstrates resilience in the face of extreme adversity and shows positive attachment techniques for adoptive parents. [A 2016 TOP PICK]

- "Loving," 2016. As recently as 1967 it was still illegal in some states for interracial couples to marry. Jeff Nichols' film tells the true story of Richard and Mildred Loving (played by Joel Edgerton and Ruth Negga), a white man and a woman of color, who fought the anti-miscegenation laws in their home state, Virginia - and won.
- "Mandela, the long walk to Freedom," 2013. A powerful depiction, endorsed by Mandela's family as an accurate portrayal of the life of Nelson Mandela.
- "My Life as a Zucchini," 2016. Directed by Claude Barras, a stop-motion animated feature film. Barras says "This film is an homage to neglected and mistreated children who do the best they can to survive and live with their wounds. Zucchini, our hero, has been through many difficult times and, after having lost his mother, he believes he is alone in the world." Healing begins when Zucchini meets a kindly policeman, starts a new life in a foster care center, finds a group of friends he can rely on, falls in love, and learns what it means to be happy. Adapted from the book "Autobiography of a Courgette," by Gilles Paris. [A 2017 TOP PICK and Academy Award nominee.]
- "Patriots Day," 2016. with an all-star cast including Mark Wahlburg, Kevin Bacon and John Goodman, tells the true story of the Boston Marathon bombing. It is a triumphant picture of how a city under siege came together and profiles the resilience of an entire community. [A 2016 TOP PICK]
- "Room," 2015. Starring Brie Larson and Jacob Tremblay. Adapted from Emma Donoghue's 2010 novel of the same name, this is the story of a woman and her young son living in the forced intimacy of a 10' x10' garden shed. With screenplay written by Donoghue and directed by Lenny Abrahamson, what could have been a lurid, opportunistic glimpse into the heart of darkness instead becomes a probing, extraordinarily tender portrait of maternal devotion and youthful resourcefulness. Fiction. [A 2015 TOP PICK]
- "Saving Mr. Banks," 2013. Starring Tom Hanks and Emma Thompson. Based on the lives of Walt Disney and P.L. Travers, author of "Mary Poppins." Hollywood license was taken in the making of this movie. Portrayal depictions are reportedly more loving than their real life counterparts.
- "Served Like a Girl," 2017. Women come home from war, documentary.
- "Sully," 2016. Directed by Clint Eastwood and starring the singular Tom Hanks as Captain Chesley Sullenberger, the American pilot who became a hero after landing his damaged plane on the Hudson River in order to save the flight's passengers and crew.
- "Which Way Home," 2010. Academy Award nominee for best documentary feature, child migrants hoping to reach America.

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- “Wild,” 2014. Starring Reese Witherspoon. Maladaptive response to loss and trauma, expressed through depression, substance use and eventually a 1,100 mile healing journey up the Pacific Crest Trail. Based on the true story of Cheryl Strayed.
- “Unbroken,” 2014. Based on the life story of Olympian Louis Zamperini. This film tells the tale of Zamperini’s harrowing 47 days in a raft with two fellow crewmen before being caught by the Japanese and sent to WWII prisoner-of-war camps. Though faced with unspeakable torture, Zamperini endures unbroken.

### **movies where people exposed to traumatic events turn violent:**

- “Bundy,” 2007. Anti-social personality disorder.
- “The Valley of Elah,” 2006. Post-traumatic stress disorder. Fiction.
- “Monster,” 2003. Starring Academy Award winner Charlize Theron. Psychopathy, based on the story of serial killer Aileen Wuornos.