



# KYOKO NATURALLY

**A film by CHRIS THOMPSON**  
**Distributed by UWM'S CENTER ON AGE & COMMUNITY**

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

### **HOW IT WAS MADE**

As a film major at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Chris Thompson had to plan, shoot, and edit his own short film. The result, with Kyoko's help, was *Kyoko Naturally*.

Kyoko and Chris met in 2004 while he was working on a documentary featuring a Parkinson's support group that Kyoko was attending shortly after her husband passed away. After the support group that evening, Kyoko needed a ride home. It just so happened that Chris and Kyoko lived quite close to each other. Since that first car ride in 2004, Chris and Kyoko have been getting together to talk, have meals, and work on her house.

*Kyoko Naturally* has screened at several film festivals, winning the Audience Award at the IFFP - Chicago Film Festival, and the Midwest Director Award at the Milwaukee International Film Festival.

### **UPDATE**

Kyoko and Chris are still close friends. They see each other a couple times each month. They drink tea and talk about their busy lives, as well as their hopes for the future. Chris now works full-time editing and producing at a Milwaukee film company, while Kyoko hopes to take classes at the UW-Milwaukee in the near future.

### **CREDITS**

*Kyoko Morris*  
*Chris Thompson*

### **Thank You**

*Jamie & Sean Carroll*  
*Dick Blau*  
*UWM Film Dept.*  
*371 Productions*  
*Bluemark Productions*  
*Keesia Hyzer*  
*Rob Danielson*  
*Lisa Gildehaus*  
*Suzanne Welles*  
*Iverson White*  
*Peck School of the Arts*  
*Final Cut Pro*

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

A social worker might call Kyoko a “hoarder.” Someone who hoards collects excessive amounts of things that have seemingly little or no value. Clearly, Kyoko is also much, much more. Ebullient and gregarious, Kyoko sets about helping her new friend Chris to achieve his goal to become a filmmaker. The film raises myriad questions about aging.

We offer just a few simple questions to guide discussion of the film, and point viewers toward the bountiful web resources that address the deeper issues the film touches upon.

## AGING AND RESILIENCY:

**Kyoko has experienced some significant challenges in her life, particularly her husband’s illness and recent death. She is far from her family support system.**

- ☞ How does she respond to these challenges?
- ☞ How does she find emotional and physical support?
- ☞ What additional support might be helpful?

## HOARDING:

**Kyoko recognizes that her house is getting dangerous. Does it surprise you that Kyoko hoards? Why?**

- ☞ How does she feel about it?
- ☞ Why do you think she does it?
- ☞ Do you think she will succeed in her plan to reduce the clutter?
- ☞ What additional help, if any, might help Kyoko succeed?
- ☞ How does Kyoko’s differ from more typical cases of hoarding?
- ☞ What are the risks of hoarding
  - why should we be concerned about it?
- ☞ Do you think hoarding might also be linked to other problems in a person’s life?

## CULTURAL INFLUENCES AND INTERGENERATIONAL FRIENDSHIPS:

**Chris and Kyoko strike up a mutually beneficial friendship. Does this friendship seem unusual? Why?**

- ☞ In general, how does American culture encourage or discourage friendships across generations?
- ☞ Does this differ in the various cultural traditions within it?
- ☞ What are the rewards of friendships across generations?
- ☞ How might we encourage more such relationships?

## WEB RESOURCES:

**Generations United:** since 1986 GU has served as a resource for educating policymakers and the public about the economic, social, and personal imperatives of intergenerational cooperation.

[ipath.gu.org/](http://ipath.gu.org/)

**Healthy Aging for Older Adults:** The Department of Health and Human Services’ Center for Disease Control offers a wealth of information on aging with passion and strength, including end of life issues, health information and statistics, and a healthy brain initiative.

[www.cdc.gov/aging/](http://www.cdc.gov/aging/)

### Cornell University’s Program

**for Environmental Geriatrics:** this site has an extensive section on hoarding and its challenges.

[www.environmentalgeriatrics.org/home\\_safety/clutter.html](http://www.environmentalgeriatrics.org/home_safety/clutter.html)

### Obsessive Compulsive Foundation Hoarding website:

covers the definition of hoarding, professional articles on multiple aspects of hoarding, a Research Digest for hoarding related scientific papers, self help and support group articles, a hoarding / compulsive buying screening test, and useful information about this medical disorder.

[www.ocfoundation.org/hoarding/](http://www.ocfoundation.org/hoarding/)