Discussion Questions

1. When the film opens, Dona is 64 years old and has never lived away from her mother, Mimi, who is 92.
Imagine yourself in Mimi's shoes. What might Mimi be thinking at this stage of life?

2. Dona's nephew Bo says that "Mimi has simply done everything for Dona" and suggests that Dona is more capable of independent action than she shows.
Is it possible for Dona to learn to take care of herself, at age 64?

3. Dona's family felt they had few options for her placement outside the home.
If you had a child or sibling like Dona, what type of living arrangement would you want for this person?

4. Dona's nephew Keith, who has a son with autism, says, "I occasionally feel like I have to live forever and outlive him."
What is behind Keith's statement and how do you feel about it?

5. Parents must frequently choose what they think is best for their children. This becomes more complicated when the child is an adult with an intellectual disability.
How much do Dona's wishes matter in this scenario?

6. Dona struggles to adapt to her new home while Mimi initially regrets moving Dona.
What could have made the transition easier for both Dona and Mimi?

7. Mimi did not make plans for Dona until she reached a very advanced age.
What keeps us from making arrangements in advance concerning our own aging and eventual demise?

8. With the incidence of autism now 1 in 68 children, there will be many more older adults with autism who will need help after their parents pass away.
Who should provide that help? What is the role of the family? Of the government?

9. Dona's sister Merrily steps in when Mimi can no longer manage Dona's care.
How do you feel about the sibling's response to their situation?

10. The film celebrates the love of Mimi and Dona while also showing the heartbreak of their separation.
What do you find most upsetting/inspiring about the film and why?

For more information and additional resources, please visit the MIMI AND DONA website at mimianddonamovie.com