



DISCUSSION GUIDE: MARIO'S STORY

Objective: Students will reflect on how the connections they have with their role models have influenced their lives.

Themes: Drugs, alcohol, grief, loss of parent, anxiety, depression

Option 1: Watch the entire video all the way through and have a conversation using these questions or ones that make sense for your students.

1. Start by asking, “Do you have anyone in your life that has made a big impact on you like Graham did for Mario?”
2. Think about all the outside activities you do away from school, which of those bring you the most connection? What would it take for you to invite someone to one of your activities?
3. Reflecting on Mario’s story, what do you think it was about Mario that allowed him to change his life so dramatically after losing his mom? And then again after the concussion?
4. Allow time for students to text or call someone they are thinking about at the moment.

Option 2: Play the full video once all the way through, then go back and play it again, pausing for conversation.

As you rewatch, pause at 2:30 and engage with students about Mario’s story. He shares his background and experiences of being an immigrant with a family that needs to seek out work away from their children. He talks about having the freedom to be out and about but mentions he did that to avoid being home. His loneliness allows for him to make a lot of questionable decisions. In the moments after losing his mom, he vows to do better, you can see him smile in a very genuine way.

- Ask students about the relationships they have, is there someone that you would make that kind of change for?

Continue to watch and pause again at 3:50.

When I hear Mario’s story, I see that outside connections have always mattered to him—first it was his friends when he was “out and about” then it was school and sports and clubs. When he lost football due to the concussion, he was not only alone, but in pain. His friend inviting him to church allowed him to reconnect with a group in a new way.

- As you think back over your life, what groups are you a part of outside of school? What role do the people in those groups play in your life?
- How has a role model played a part in your life to this point? If you haven’t had one, what are you looking for in a role model?

Extension:

1. Encourage students to share the characteristics and see what similarities come up in the classroom.
2. Are there any common role models?