



# Lost Child?

**A sister. A brother. And the film that made them family again.**

Featuring Alyssa Ruzzin  
Produced and Directed by Gregory Ruzzin

## Film Discussion Questions

Prepared by Professor Vicki Graf, Ph.D., Director, Special Education, Loyola Marymount University School of Education.

1. What does the title “Lost Child?” tell you about the film?
2. The title poses a question. What are some possible answers?
3. Alyssa is an adult. Why would the title say “Lost Child?”?
4. Alyssa says she has a learning struggle, not a learning disorder. What difference does it make how she describes herself? What do these terms imply?
5. What do labels of disability tell us? What perceptions do these labels create in society about individuals with disabilities?
6. Alyssa describes her learning struggle as being a literal thinker who struggles with reading and receiving and understanding language. From viewing the film, is she accurate? How could educators teach someone like Alyssa with these characteristics?
7. How does society describe Alyssa? How does the world see Alyssa?
8. When you hear “epilepsy”, what do you think it means? How does society respond to hearing that a person has epilepsy?



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9. What does the movie tell you about Alyssa and her relationship with her brother Greg? Is their relationship similar or different from other siblings?
10. What are Alyssa's coping skills in her daily life? How well has she adjusted to adult life?
11. What can K-12 educators learn from watching Alyssa's daily life?
12. How might instruction for students with special needs be improved by watching Alyssa's daily life?
13. Alyssa takes a lot of medication that is very expensive. What is society's responsibility for individuals similar to Alyssa who have these medical needs?
14. Alyssa has to keep her income below \$800 in order to keep her social security benefits. Does this seem just?
15. Are you surprised that Alyssa has a boyfriend? What are issues that are involved with couples who have developmental disabilities?
16. What can we learn from Alyssa's description of her experiences in elementary and high school?
17. How important is transition planning for someone like Alyssa?
18. Alyssa's parents describe Alyssa's childhood and education. How typical are her parents' comments? What can educators learn from Alyssa's parents?
19. What do friends mean to Alyssa?
20. How does Alyssa's friend, Beth, describe Alyssa as lost child?
21. What can we learn from Alyssa and Beth's friendship?
22. How do you respond to the pacing of the film? Could the pacing be intentional? What could it tell us?
23. What are some of Alyssa's quotes that impress you?



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24. What do her quotes tell you about her? For example, what does “Wherever you are is where here is” tell you?
25. Is Alyssa insightful to her situation and the world around her? Why or why not?
26. What does Alyssa think about having a movie made about her?
27. What does she think the movie can tell the audience?
28. What do you think Alyssa’s future will be as she gets older?
29. What responsibility does society have for Alyssa or should her family assume responsibility for her?
30. What does Alyssa teach us?
31. What does the movie tell us about disability being a part of being human?

For more information on the film, to purchase the DVD, or to arrange a screening of the film followed by a discussion with Alyssa (either live or via skype) please visit the film’s website at: [www.lostchildmovie.com](http://www.lostchildmovie.com)

