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What if one day, you woke up and found that you could no longer walk? What if you opened your mouth and couldn't form the words that you heard so clearly in your head? Who would you trust enough to speak for you?

Now imagine for a moment, that you have always lived that way.

Filmmaker, Eva Sweeney does not have to imagine this. A Pasadena resident, Sweeney, was born with a condition called cerebral palsy, which inhibits her ability to walk, speak, or use her muscles in conventional ways. Eva requires full-time assistance with everything from eating to communicating.

Respect: The Joy of Aides is Sweeney's first documentary film, which examines the relationship between people with disabilities and their aides. Sweeney is in a unique position to produce this film, as she is a member of the disabled community herself, and has extensive experience in the world of aides and their employers. Sweeney says of the project, "Some people with disabilities treat their aides as their hands or like servants. They don't communicate openly, choosing instead to order them around. When those 'relationships' (if you can call it that) go sour, the family and friends in the disabled person's life blame their aide and don't look at both sides of the relationship. With my film, I hope to show a more balanced view of this complex partnership."

People from all walks of life are sure to enjoy *Respect: The Joy of Aides*, because it's ultimately a story about relationships; which everyone, disabled or not, can relate to. The documentary features the very talented comedian and playwright, Allison Cameron Gray, who talks about her own experiences in the disabled community as well as Sweeney's exploration of relationships with her aides and the balancing act that sometimes must be played between forming a friendship and maintaining a professional alliance. Among other featured talent, one of Ani Difranco's Righteous Babe Records artists, Animal Prufrock, provided voice-over for the film.

The response to *Respect: The Joy of Aides* has been outstanding. Acclaimed novelist and screenwriter, Delia Ephron, said, "This documentary is smart, insightful, enlightening, beautifully made and moving in Eva's signature unsentimental and spirited way. I learned so much from it. It should be required watching for all members of the human race." A physician from the Cleveland Clinic remarked, "I am recommending that this (documentary) be included in our curriculum at the medical school next year."

With any luck, the documentary will also serve to educate people and give them a glimpse into a world many of us cannot even imagine. Through her unique perspective and sensitivity to the issues involved, Sweeney has created a film that not only explores a somewhat elusive culture between aides and their employers, but also raises the bar of standards on how aides should be hired and directed as employees. Sweeney challenges others with this film... she challenges them to ask the question..."Who would you turn to if you found yourself unable to speak... to move? Who would you respect enough to hire as your aide?"

For more information and to view the trailer, go to www.joyofaides.com.