

DREAMS OF A GOOD LIFE

by Bridget Pickering
15 minutes, South Africa

A film of laughter, fear, and the solace of sharing. Five women talk about life, love and how their dreams for the future have changed since finding out they are HIV positive. The women now examine their relationships with men more openly than ever before. A film with and about HIV+ women.

Synopsis:

A film of laughter, fear, and the solace of sharing. Under a tree in a sunny garden a group of twenty-something women talk about life, love and how their dreams for the future have changed since finding out they are HIV positive. In a world where an increasing number of mothers, wives and girlfriends are becoming infected with the HIV virus, the impact on families and relationships is impossible to quantify. The women now examine their relationships with men more openly than ever before.

These women talk about their dreams in the past tense for they are all HIV-positive. One wanted to be a beauty queen, another a TV presenter, another to make enough money to look after her mother. They laugh at their own and each other's dreams, until one woman says she has no beautiful dreams to share. Her world turned dark a long way back when she was sexually abused as a child.

As they move onto the present, and the men in their lives, the mood shifts. Raucous and bashful laughter changes quickly to tears as fears rise to the surface. Should they disclose their status to their lovers and if they do, what will the reaction be? Should they give up men altogether?

One is afraid because her boyfriend has a gun; another lost her boyfriend to AIDS and has been left with a child who is also HIV-positive. They envy the woman who found the courage to tell her man.

This is women doing what women do best — talking, comforting, sharing. And what emerges is that love and relationships continue to be the joy of their lives: they want them, they need them, but they are also afraid of them.

Director s Biography:

Bridget has been in film production for ten years. In 1992 she started her own company On Land Production, in Namibia after her return from Universal Pictures in New York. She has produced and co-produced a number of films in Southern Africa. In 2000 she directed her first fiction film ***Uno s World*** for the Mama Africa series. She was also a taskforce member who helped to draft the Namibian Film Regulations.

Directors Comments:

This film came together magically and made me realize how powerful simple stories can be. The story is simple in its treatment and in its spirit: a group of women who speak opening and frankly about life with HIV.

They show that HIV/AIDS does not define the human being, but that the layers of personality and individual experience remain. Yes, we are HIV-positive, they say. But we continue to live, to dream, to wrestle with the choices of love and life.

As a filmmaker it touched me on many different levels. I feel honored to have shared in the lives of these women who made me realize the potential and strength of human beings to overcome their circumstances. The power of the film is in the power of the women. It celebrates their strength and ability to keep going and to laugh even though they sometimes want to give up.

I hope the film will give strength to those who are positive and afraid to come out, for it shows that, despite the inevitable repercussions, there *is* life after HIV.

Credits:

Production Company	Ice Media
Director	Bridget Pickering
Producer	Dan Jawitz
Cinematographer	Nina Kellgren
	David Forbes
	Eddie Wes
Sound	Karen Boswall
Editor	Cathy Myburgh
Music	Phillip Miller
Professional Support	Jennifer Fox