

Dear Randy,

You don't know me, but I'm writing you today as one of your new fans. I work from time to time with Abby and Irene as an editor on their various films. My first contact with you and Brad came when I was cutting a two minute promo for the film. Right from the start I was excited by the footage and interested in the film that it could become.

A very close uncle of mine has a form of schizophrenia (I don't know his exact diagnosis). Even though he's in Boston and I'm in Montreal, he always made the effort to visit on my birthdays and on some holidays. I noticed my uncle was "different" from an early age, and it was difficult if not impossible for me to understand the true nature of his illness, or what it was like to be him. What I do know is that of all my aunts and uncles, he was and still is the most attentive and easy to talk to, because he really cares about people.

Watching your film, I saw my uncle in you, and you in my uncle. Never having vacationed or lived with my uncle, I've never seen him in a troubled state. But in the 50 or so minutes of your film, I was able to feel some of the ups and downs of your life, and I couldn't help but project your experiences onto my Uncle David's. You have had the courage to let me see what my uncle never allowed me to see. And although I can understand why my uncle would not want to share his difficult times with a nephew, I think that had I been permitted to know the whole person, we would have become even closer than we are.

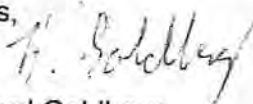
All this to say that I admire your courage at having participated in the film. I was riveted to the screen from the very first seconds, and filled with explosions of surprise and understanding over and over. We need more documentaries like this one so that people all over can begin to come to terms with mental illness in a rational and compassionate way.

Let me tell you that in my mind at least, you come off as a kind of hero. Someone who is bright, a fighter, a lover, a family guy. Someone who respects family, friends, and has a love of life that you don't find in everyone.

I am aware of your reticence to be seen in a bad light. But I have to tell you honestly that in my opinion, the film would have only a fraction of its' value if the scenes in which you suffer were removed. We need to witness hardship sometimes (both yours and your family's) in order to feel compassion and to be driven to find out more.

So I write to thank you for an unexpected insight into my uncle's life, to wish you all the best with whatever you choose to do, and I hope that if you're ever in Montreal, we can meet for a coffee or something with Abby.

Yours,



Howard Goldberg.