

# STAY WITH YOURSELF

## 111 Movies to Make You Laugh, Cry + FEEL

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This list of 111 movies will bring you to tears and laughter as well as offer new insights into the meaning of life, love and living from your heart.

Ranging from fantasy to romance, absurd to heartfelt, hilarious to deeply moving, you are sure to find a number of films on this list that will suit your mood and cinematic preferences.

As a lover of the cinematic arts, I could easily add another 100+ movies to this list. Maybe someday I will. In the meantime, I hope you find a few movies that speak to you, and if you want more recommendations, feel free to reach out and ask!

### 1. [A Ghost Story \(2017\)](#)

This gorgeously still and deeply moving film starring Casey Affleck + Rooney Mara is one of my all-time favorite movies. It lovingly depicts the process of grief and loss, and there's a long, continuously shot scene with Rooney Mara in the kitchen that will stick with you long after the movie is over. Gorgeous!

### 2. [About a Boy \(2002\)](#)

This movie will make you laugh, cry, smile, and maybe even sing along. The premise is about a hip, irresponsible Londoner who meets the troubled son of a depressed single mother, and a quirky and unexpected friendship blooms. Hugh Grant, Toni Collette + Rachel Weisz are splendid in this film.

### 3. Advanced Style (2014)

This well-put-together documentary profiles seven New York City women in their 60s through their 90s, whose snappy style decidedly disproves the notion that advanced years and glamour are mutually exclusive. STYLE is no doubt the secret to aging well!

### 4. Amélie (2001)

I never get tired of this movie! It's a French film, starring Audrey Tautou, who plays, Amélie, a quirky young woman who finds a long-hidden trove of toys behind a baseboard in her apartment. She's inspired to return the items to their original owner, which sparks her to do even more benevolent acts. (Side note: when this movie was first released, my hair was short and people kept telling me I looked like Amélie. SUCH a good compliment!)

### 5. Anne of Green Gables (1985) + Anne of Avonlea (1987)

Growing up, this series was the only thing I would watch. The character of Anne Shirley still inspires so much of who I am today. These movies are a must-see for everyone, especially young girls who need to know it's okay to be smart, strong, imaginative and wildly capable! Anne's warm-hearted enthusiasm and irrepressible imagination are overwhelmingly charming.

### 6. Arrival (2016)

This is my favorite Alien movie! There's so much kindness, humanity and thoughtfulness put into the characters and storyline. Amy Adams is wonderful in this film as she communicates with the extraterrestrials with an open heart and mind. The ending is also unexpected and brilliant.

### 7. Away We Go (2009)

OMG!! WATCH THIS MOVIE. Starring John Krasinski + Maya Rudolph, plus a gazillion other amazing actors, this film follows the journey of a sweet couple looking to locate the perfect place on the planet to raise their child. But their quest inevitably yields many unexpected and hilarious surprises. And the soundtrack is fantastic! So good!

## **8. Baby Driver (2017)**

First of all, the soundtrack for this movie is awesome! The whole film is like watching a series of music videos. Whether it's a high-speed car chase or two innocent lovers meeting, every scene in this movie is intentional and riveting. You'll also love the actors, including Ansel Elgort, Lily James, Kevin Spacey, Jon Hamm, Flea, and so many more!

## **9. Band Aid (2017)**

This movie stars Zoe Lister Jones (who also wrote and directed), along with Adam Pally + Fred Armisen. It's about a couple who is constantly fighting, but they find a way to communicate better by turning the fights into songs. In the end, they finally face what they've both been avoiding, and the journey this film takes you on to get there is fun, quirky, funny and relatable. Not to mention, you'll LOVE the music!

## **10. Big Little Lies TV Show (2017-2019)**

Reese Witherspoon, Nicole Kidman, Shailene Woodley, Laura Dern, Zoe Kravitz + more star in this gorgeous tv show! The cinematography, location (Monterey, CA), lifestyle sequences, character development, and depth of storytelling will draw you into watching an entire season in one night. Also, find the music playlist for seasons 1 + 2 on Spotify. You'll love it!

## **11. Boy Erased (2018)**

Based on a true story, this film tells the courageous story of the son of a Baptist pastor, who is outed for being gay. His parents struggle with reconciling their love for their son with their beliefs. The boy is pressured into attending a conversion therapy program, where conflict with its leader reveals heartbreaking abuses. Directed by Joel Edgerton and starring Lucas Hedges, Nicole Kidman + Russell Crowe, this movie is full of so much love, beauty and hope!

## 12. [Breakfast on Pluto \(2005\)](#)

Actor, Cillian Murphy, is absolutely lovely in this film based on the novel by Patrick McCabe. Also starring, Liam Neeson, this movie is about the transvestite love child of a priest who leaves his small-town life behind and heads to swinging 1970s London to find the mother who abandoned him years ago.

## 13. [Bridesmaids \(2011\)](#)

When this laugh-out-loud comedy for women was released, it was one of the first I'd ever seen of its kind. After growing tired of all the crass male-centered comedies out there, this film became an instant favorite of mine as soon as I saw it. Starring one of my favorite female comedians, Kristen Wiig, along with Maya Rudolph, Rose Byrne, Melissa McCarthy + so many more funny people, this movie is sweet and meaningful as well as hilarious.

## 14. [Call Me by Your Name \(2017\)](#)

This beautifully filmed movie, starring Armie Hammer + Timothee Chalamet, tells the coming-of-age story of a 17-year-old boy on vacation with his family during the summer of 1983 in Italy. When he meets a charming American scholar, they explore their sexual desires together, leaving both their lives altered forever. The very end scene is incredibly emotional and tender. I hope you love this one as much as I do!

## 15. [Captain Fantastic \(2016\)](#)

This heartwarming moving, starring Viggo Mortensen, is about a dad who is raising six children in wooded isolation in the Pacific Northwest, but he's suddenly drawn back into civilization by a shocking tragedy. As the kids face an unfamiliar world, he begins to reexamine his approach to parenting, finding a really lovely balance in the end. So good!

## 16. [Chocolat \(2000\)](#)

This is a movie I could watch over and over again. With Juliette Binoche, Judy Dench + Johnny Depp at the center, this film is about a single mother and her young daughter who move to a peaceful French village and open a chocolate shop during the height of Lent. At

first, the shop's rich, sensuous desserts scandalize the town. But the villagers soon learn to savor the sweetness. You'll love this one!

### **17. [Cloud Atlas \(2012\)](#)**

I can't even tell you how many times I have watched this movie and how often I meditate on the deeper meaning of the storyline. It's a star-studded drama, where six seemingly disparate stories take viewers from a South Pacific Island in the 19th century to 1970s America to a dystopian future, exploring the complicated links that humans share through the generations. Tom Hanks, Halle Berry, Hugo Weaving + more are exceptional in this one!

### **18. [Crazy Stupid Love \(2011\)](#)**

This movie, starring Steve Carell, Ryan Gosling, Julianne More + Emma Stone takes you on a journey of love with hilarity, depth and kindness. All the characters are fantastic and the storyline is woven together with so much fun and wit. I probably watch this movie at least once a year!

### **19. [Dallas Buyers Club \(2013\)](#)**

Loosely based on true events, this drama follows a man, who refuses to accept he'll die in 30 days when he's diagnosed with AIDS in 1986. He extends his life and eventually helps many other AIDS patients by smuggling medications from abroad. Matthew McConaughey + Jared Leto are really wonderful in this film!

### **20. [Don Jon \(2013\)](#)**

The thing I love most about this movie is how deeply it takes you into the experiences of the main character, who is addicted to porn. But when he connects with a real and authentic woman, he is shown how much deeper and more meaningful physical connection and intimacy can be. Joseph Gordon-Levitt directed and acted in this film, alongside Johansson + Julianne Moore. I really want everyone to see this movie!

## 21. Dumplin' (2018)

This sweet and heartwarming movie with Jennifer Aniston + Danielle Macdonald is about a Texas teen who enters a local pageant run by her ex-beauty queen mother in order to prove a point about measuring up and fitting in. You'll love the main character immediately!

## 22. Eighth Grade (2018)

Oh, this is such a tender movie that takes you straight to the heart of the emotional perils of adolescence. Directed by Bo Burnham and starring Elsie Fisher, a shy eighth grade girl faces the looming social challenges of high school that terrify her as well as finds her voice in a really lovely way. I watched this with my kids several times after it was released and we all love it!

## 23. Equals (2016)

This film seems to be loosely based on the 1971 sci-fi drama *THX 1138*. It's about a future dystopia where emotions are controlled with inoculations and coupling is strictly prohibited, but two young illustrators (Kristen Stewart + Nicholas Hoult) defy societal laws by beginning a secret love affair. When a "cure" for all human emotion is invented, the couple must plot a way to escape the totalitarian state. It's a quiet movie and very romantic.

## 24. Fantastic Mr. Fox (2009)

I'm a huge Wes Anderson fan, and was having trouble deciding which of his movies to put on this list. But I kept coming back to this animated film, voiced by George Clooney, Meryl Streep, Bill Murray + more. It's about a fox who's nightly raids on three nearby farms raise the ire of the selfish farmers. He must outwit the men's increasingly outrageous plans to catch him in this animated adaptation of the Roald Dahl book, and Mr. Fox must find a new way to get his paws on the bounty. My kids and I love watching this one together!

## **25. Fleabag TV Show (2016-2019)**

In this dark comedy adapted from a one-woman play, London is home base for a snide young woman who's determined to use all the city's distractions to avoid the pain of her best friend's death. Actress, Phoebe Waller-Bridge, is absolutely AMAZING in this tv series. She is so good a being both hilarious, deep and dark at the same time. Highly recommend!

## **26. Frances Ha (2012)**

If you're at all familiar with Greta Gerwig + Adam Driver, you know this quirky movie will make you scratch your head a few times as well as sweep you up in the antics of the main character. It's about a determined dancer in New York who pursues her unlikely goal with more enthusiasm than natural talent. The rest of the time, she and her sardonic best friend, Sophie, put off growing up for as long as they can.

## **27. Garden State (2004)**

When I first saw this movie I fell in love, and I continue to fall in love every time I watch it. There's a quiet sadness to the characters and the cinematography is stunning. This film singlehandedly set me on the path of primarily watching independent films. Directed by Zach Braff, who also stars in the film, along with Natalie Portman, it's about a young man who is recently weaned off antidepressants, and has to go back to his hometown after a decade away for his mom's funeral. During his visit, he starts to see his life in a new light, and in the process, confronts his psychologist father and connects with a new friend.

## **28. Get Out (2017)**

A friend of mine kept insisting I should watch this movie. She said it's "like a horror movie but it isn't." It took a while for me to come around but I'm so glad I did! It's directed by Jordan Peele and is about a guy who is uneasy about meeting his girlfriend's parents for the first time. His anxiety doesn't diminish once he gets to their posh suburb and learns that young African-American men like himself have been vanishing from the spot. Yes, there is blood, but it feels very justified. If you're into unexpected twists and endings where bad guys get what they deserve (with plenty of blood, of course), you'll love this movie!

### **29. [Girl Most Likely \(2012\)](#)**

It's no secret I'm a huge fan of every movie Kristen Wiig has ever done. Add Annette Bening to the cast, along with a fantastic storyline, and I'm in heaven. This film is about a struggling playwright who moves back home to live with her mother because she unsuccessfully staged her own suicide to get her boyfriend's attention, and ends up meeting a handsome lodger who sings with a Backstreet Boys cover band. It's quirky, heartfelt and sweet. You'll love it!

### **30. [Gloria Bell \(2019\)](#)**

Starring Julianne Moore + John Turturro, this movie is based on the original film "[Gloria](#)" and is about a free-spirited divorcée who spends her days at a straitlaced office job and her nights at L.A. dance clubs. One evening, Gloria finds herself in a new romance that shows her love can strike at any time, but more than that, it shows all women everywhere that we can be joyful, free and happy without a romantic love interest. My favorite scene in this movie is when Gloria wields a paintball gun with empowered ferocity. So good!

### **31. [Good Will Hunting \(1997\)](#)**

You are likely already familiar with this movie, and if you haven't seen it already, you've likely heard about it. Matt Damon + Ben Afflack took over Hollywood with this film when it first came out, launching them both into stardom, and for excellent reason. The synopsis is about an MIT professor who discovers an aimless young janitor working at the university who is also a mathematical genius, and a therapist helps the young man confront the demons that are holding him back. All I can say is watch it again!

### **32. [Green Book \(2018\)](#)**

This is a moving film about a bouncer from an Italian-American neighborhood in the Bronx, who is hired to drive a world-class Black pianist, on a concert tour from Manhattan to the Deep South, and they must rely on "The Green Book" to guide them to the few establishments that were then safe for African-Americans. Confronted with racism and danger as well as unexpected humanity and humor—they are forced to set aside differences to survive and thrive on the journey of a lifetime. Starring Viggo Mortensen, Mahershala Ali + Linda Cardellini.



### **33. Gringo (2018)**

This is SUCH good movie and hits all the marks when it comes to excellent writing, cinematography, action, adventure, and COMEDY! It's about a mild-mannered man on a trip to Mexico who finds himself at the mercy of his back-stabbing business colleagues, local drug lords, and a morally conflicted black-ops mercenary. Crossing the line from law-abiding citizen to wanted criminal, he battles to survive his increasingly dangerous situation in ways that both entertain and amuse. It's directed by Nash Edgerton, and stars David Oyelowo, Charlize Theron, Joel Edgerton + more.

### **34. Happy (2011)**

This documentary takes a look into the lives of truly happy humans around the world and asks the question, "What is true happiness?" I think about this film, and the humans in it, often as a reminder that happiness is a choice as well as a state of Being. Combining real-life stories and scientific interviews, the film explores the secrets behind our most valued emotion, and takes viewers on a journey from the swamps of Louisiana to the slums of Kolkata in search of what really makes people happy.

### **35. Harry Potter Series (2001-2011)**

If you're already a Harry Potter fan, you don't need me to tell you how great these movies are. They're (obviously) based on the popular book series by J.K. Rowling, and follow the journey of orphan, Harry Potter, who on his 11th birthday, learns he's a powerful wizard, with a place waiting for him at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Friendship, adventure, and heartwarming themes throughout the series will have you coming back time and again!

### **36. Hello, My Name is Doris (2016)**

After years of not seeing Sally Field in any new films, I was delighted to see her hit the screen in this fun and vibrant role, alongside Max Greenfield. The premise is about a 60-year-old woman, inspired by insights gained through a self-help seminar, who brazenly steps forward to pursue the affections of a much younger co-worker, and inadvertently becomes a hit with his hipster cohorts. This is a truly lighthearted and heartwarming movie for everyone to enjoy!

### **37. Her (2013)**

In this sci-fi romantic comedy starring Joaquin Phoenix, love comes to a lonely young writer in the sleekest of packages when he finds himself falling for the advanced operating system he purchased to run his life. This movie is quiet, quirky and full of emotional depth. Each scene is absolutely gorgeous with the costumes, locations and music, setting the mood perfectly. It's directed by Spike Jones and also stars Scarlett Johansson, Chris Pratt, Rooney Mara + many more amazing actors. I hope you love it!

### **38. High Fidelity (2000)**

With music at its center, this cult classic is about a record store owner who gets dumped by his girlfriend because he hasn't changed since they met. This causes him to revisit his top five breakups of all time in an attempt to figure out what went wrong. This is one of my all-time favorite films with John Cusack – a classic I can watch time and again!

### **39. Honeyboy (2019)**

Actor, Shia LaBeouf, drew from his childhood to write the screenplay for this powerful drama about his relationship between himself as a tv star at age 12, and his father, a former rodeo clown who controls and abuses him. This movie is beautiful and heartbreaking, and I admire Shia's ability tell the story of his painful childhood with so much compassion. Shia also acts as his father in this film, and it's absolutely stunning.

### **40. How to Talk to Girls at Parties (2018)**

I almost turned this movie off within the first five minutes of watching it. I wasn't sure where it was going but I'm really glad I kept watching! This movie is where Punk Rock meets Sci-Fi meets The Best Costumes Ever. Starring Elle Fanning, Alex Sharp + Nicole Kidman, this movie is immersed in London's 1970s punk rock scene, where a teen boy and his pals sneak into the party of their dreams, which is full of gorgeous women. But the trio soon discovers that these bodacious beauties are part of an alien invasion. It's fun, creative and very sweet!

#### 41. [Hunt for the Wilderpeople \(2016\)](#)

Directed by New Zealand filmmaker and actor, Taika Waititi, this breakout film is about a young misfit who has grown comfortable with his very sweet foster parents, Aunt Bella and Uncle Hec. But when Bella's death threatens to send the boy back to child services, the irascible Hec heads for the bush with the boy, setting off a national manhunt. The characters in this film are SO loveable and sweet, and the vibe of the film is lighthearted while touching on the depths of the human heart. Such a good movie!

#### 42. [I Feel Pretty \(2018\)](#)

This hilarious and empowering movie, starring Amy Schumer, Busy Philipps, Aidy Bryant + more, is about a woman who struggles with feelings of insecurity and inadequacy on a daily basis. After suffering a fall, she wakes up believing she is suddenly the most beautiful and capable woman on the planet. With this newfound confidence she is empowered to live her life fearlessly and flawlessly. What's even more amazing is what happens when she realizes her appearance never changed. This is one of the best movies I've seen for women in recent years. Please watch it!!

#### 43. [I Love You Man \(2009\)](#)

As a huge fan of Paul Rudd + Jason Segel, as well as seeing positive depictions of male friendship, this movie is perfect! It's about a guy who is engaged to the bride-to-be of his dreams but lacks a best man for their pending nuptials. On a determined hunt for a stranger who will stand up for him, he eventually meets a candidate with wedding-party potential. This movie will make you laugh and sigh with all its humor and sweetness!

#### 44. [In a World \(2013\)](#)

I love this movie so much!! Not only did Lake Bell act and direct in this film, it was also my first introduction to comedian Tig Notaro. It's about a vocal coach who lives in the shadow of her father – a Hollywood's go-to movie trailer voice – as she tries to break into the field herself. Aided by her sister and a sound whiz friend, she jumps into an unexpectedly strange new career. But ultimately the story is less about her career and more about her showing up with all her talent and glory as a woman. So, so good!!

#### **45. Isn't It Romantic (2019)**

This is another funny movie with a central female character, who is finding her value and worth outside of romantic relationships and her physical appearance. Starring Rebel Wilson, Liam Hemsworth + Adam DeVine, this film is about a New York City architect who works hard to get noticed at her job, but is more likely to be asked to deliver coffee and bagels than to design the city's next skyscraper. And if things weren't bad enough for this lifelong cynic about love, she has an encounter with a mugger that renders her unconscious. She wakes to discover that her life has suddenly become her worst nightmare – a romantic comedy – and she is the leading lady. Pair this movie with lots of wine and your best girlfriends for a night of laughs and inspiration!

#### **46. It's Kind of a Funny Story (2010)**

This movie is about a 16-year-old boy who feels like being a teenager is too much. He shocks his parents by checking himself into a mental health clinic for a little R & R, but when the youth ward is unexpectedly closed, he's forced to live among the adult patients, where he meets some very quirky characters, including a guy played by actor Zach Galifianakis. Also starring Keir Gilchrist, Jim Gaffigan + more funny people, this movie touches on some very serious issues with lots of levity and heart!

#### **47. Izzing Gets the F\*ck Across Town (2018)**

Ummm, this movie is SO punk rock!! The premise is about Riot grrrl rocker and shameless hot mess Izzy, who wakes up hungover AF to find out that her ex-boyfriend is celebrating his engagement to her ex-best friend tonight at a bougie party across town. Enraged and desperate, Izzy embarks on a frenetic quest across Los Angeles to break up the party in order to fulfill what she believes to be her destiny...before it's too late. This film also perfectly depicts the Bargaining stage of grief perfectly, and offers anyone suffering from the pain of a breakup, some much needed fuel to say “fuck it!”

#### **48. Jojo Rabbit (2019)**

I saw this movie in the theater with my kids on Christmas day, and it has stuck with me every day since. Directed by, and starring, Taika Waititi, along with Thomasin McKenzie, Roman Griffin, Rebel Wilson, and Sam Rockwell, this World War II satire, is about a lonely

German boy, Jojo, who has his worldview turned upside down when he discovers his single mother is hiding a young Jewish girl in their attic. In spite of his idiotic imaginary friend, Adolf Hitler, Jojo confronts his blind nationalism and discovers something deeper in the end. When leaving the theater with my kids, they said, "I want to watch more movies about war!" And I gently reminded them that the movie we just watched is unlike any other. It's not war movies they want to see more of, it's movies with depth of heart, emotion, love, forgiveness, compassion and humor. Watch. This. Movie!

#### 49. [Julie & Julia \(2009\)](#)

This movie was directed by Nora Ephron with Meryl Streep + Amy Adams at its center. This heartwarming, truth-inspired tale is about Julie, who decides to spice up her uneventful life by cooking all 524 recipes outlined in Julia Child's culinary classic *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. In the process, she completely changes the course of her life in unexpected ways. This film is full of heart and sweetness, plus it's based on a true story, which I love!

#### 50. [Juno \(2007\)](#)

This offbeat, Oscar-winning, coming-of-age comedy was written by the ever-talented, Diablo Cody. It's about a teen girl facing an unplanned pregnancy while she's still in high school, who devises a plan to locate her unborn baby's perfect adoptive parents. But the seemingly ideal couple she chooses still has some growing up to do. Starring Ellen Page, Michael Cera, Jason Bateman, Jennifer Garner + tons more crazy-awesome actors, this movie is one of my all-time favorites. I hope you love it too!

#### 51. [Kill Bill Volume 1 \(2003\)](#) + [Volume 2 \(2004\)](#)

These are by far my two favorite movies from director Quentin Tarantino. The all-star, kickass cast of women includes Uma Thurman, Lucy Liu + Daryl Hannah. The storytelling is awesome, and the fight scenes are epic. It's a gritty revenge saga, where an assassin is shot at the altar by her ruthless employer, Bill, and other members of their assassination circle. But she survives and sets out to kill all those who wronged her, saving Bill for last. I almost didn't include this saga on the list because it's bloody, but it's bloody in all the right ways! Enjoy.

## 52. [Kinky Boots \(2006\)](#)

This heartwarming movie is inspired by real-life events, and it's oh-so inspiring. The story is about a man who inherits a struggling shoe factory, and aims to take the fashion world by storm with help from a flashy cabaret dancer who helps him design a racy line of men's boots. It's such an uplifting tale that will leave you smiling and dancing at the end!

## 53. [La La Land \(2016\)](#)

I'm not typically a fan of musicals but I loved this one. It's not so much about the singing and dancing, but about the heart of love and the choices we make around it. Starring Ryan Gosling + Emma Stone, this movie is about a jazz pianist pursuing showbiz fame who falls for an aspiring actress. The two embark on an intense love affair, but as their separate paths of ambition force them to make tough choices, their relationship starts to change. The ending of the movie is absolutely beautiful and will leave you contemplating what's important to you in the long run. So good!

## 54. [Lady Bird \(2017\)](#)

This movie is about a teenage girl who calls herself Lady Bird who, in her senior year of high school in Sacramento, is set on making her way east to attend college in New York City. With help from her adopted brother, she begins putting together a plan for her great escape. But, for me, the central relationship in this movie is between the girl and her mother, and the complicated love they share for one another. It's directed by Greta Gerwig and stars Saoirse Ronan, Lucas Hedges, Laurie Metcalf + Timothee Chalamet. It's sweet and lighthearted. Good for everyone!

## 55. [Learning to Drive \(2015\)](#)

Starring Patricia Clarkson + Ben Kingsley, this film is about a soon-to-be-divorced woman who signs up for driving lessons. Her instructor is a Sikh immigrant to America, and though their cultural perspectives are poles apart, the two begin to develop a bond that transcends their differences. I love how easy going this movie is and how the simple storyline draws you in because of the character's genuineness.

### **56. Life Itself (2018)**

Featuring a star-studded cast with Oscar Isaac + Olivia Wilde at the center, this multigenerational love story unfolds across decades and geographies – from the New York City streets to rural Spain – with a single event connecting them. I love how this movie reminds us how connected we all are to one another as well as those who came before and after our time. I'm also a romantic who enjoys a well written love story!

### **57. Lion (2016)**

This true story is about 5-year-old Saroo who is adopted by an Australian couple after losing his way in the urban jungle of Kolkata. More than two decades later, new mapping technology prompts Saroo to search for his lost family in India. Starring Dev Patel, Rooney Mara + Nicole Kidman, this movie is wildly moving and inspirational. Get ready to cry in all the best ways!

### **58. Little Miss Sunshine (2006)**

Watch this movie! Watch this movie! You will LOVE actress, Abigail Breslin, and the quirky yet loveable family she is surrounded by, especially her grandfather, who is played by Alan Arkin. Also starring Steve Carell, Toni Collette + more, this movie is about two parents who are convinced their little girl is beauty queen material, so they load the rest of the family into a van and embark on a life-altering road trip to a California pageant. This film is so fun, funny and sweet. I hope you love it as much as I do!

### **59. Lord of the Rings Saga (2001-2003)**

From the idyllic shire of the Hobbits to the smoking chasms of Mordor, director Peter Jackson brings the world of J.R.R. Tolkien's novels to life as Frodo Baggins embarks on his epic quest to destroy the ring of Sauron. As a HUGE fan of the Lord of the Rings books, I love these movies. Granted, there are lots of parts to the story that didn't make it into the films, buuuut it doesn't stop me from watching all three movies with my kids in one day during Christmas break every year. Highly recommend!

## 60. Me and Earl and the Dying Girl (2015)

A boy cruising through his senior year of high school spends his free time making parody versions of famous films with his pal Earl. But when his mother asks him to befriend a leukemia patient his blithe outlook begins to change. Starring Olivia Cooke, Thomas Mann, Nick Offerman + more, this movie brings a lot of heart, levity and connection to a heavy topic. It's truly such a sweet and moving film!

## 61. Moonlight (2016)

Oh, boy. This movie is so good! It's about a boy growing up in the drug-soaked world of 1980s Miami, who struggles to make his way through a helter-skelter adolescence while also grappling with confusion and anxiety about his emerging sexuality. It helps you see beyond the tough exterior of a very sweet soul who deserves alllll the love. Get your Kleenex out!

## 62. Moulin Rouge (2001)

This movie is the ultimate love story for anyone who is a hopeless romantic, like myself! Starring Nicole Kidman, Ewan McGregor + more, this film is about a naïve young poet who falls in love with a cabaret star, and their ill-fated romance serves as a convenient peg on which to hang a dazzling array of songs, from snatches of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "The Sound of Music" to Madonna's "Like a Virgin." But the real star is director Baz Luhrmann, who came up with this infectious concoction that won two Oscars for art direction and costume design as well as six other nods. So good!

## 63. Mr. Church (2016)

This sweet movie, starring Eddie Murphy + Britt Robertson, is about a man named Mr. Church who is hired to lend a hand to a single mother diagnosed with cancer. He wins the hearts of mom and daughter through his cooking, establishing a bond that lasts long beyond the mother's death and her daughter's childhood. What I love most about this film is seeing a man who caretakes through simple household chores and cooking. It's so simple and deeply moving.



#### **64. On the Basis of Sex (2018)**

Inspired by the powerful true story of a young Ruth Bader Ginsburg, *On the Basis of Sex* depicts a then-struggling attorney and new mother facing adversity in her fight for equal rights. When Ruth takes on a ground-breaking case, she knows the outcome could alter the courts' view of gender discrimination. Stronger together, Ruth teams up with her husband to fight the case that catapults her into being one of the most important public figures of our time. If you're a fan of RGB, you'll love this movie starring Felicity Jones + Armie Hammer.

#### **65. Only Lovers Left Alive (2013)**

This movie is dark and slow and a bit weird, not to mention intriguing and very romantic. Starring Tom Hiddleston + Tilda Swinton, it's about an underground musician vampire who is depressed over the state of the human world, and hooks up again with his mysterious lover of many centuries. But the antics of his lover's spirited little sister threaten to destroy their eternal love. She doesn't, of course, but still... This movie is so different from anything I've ever seen, and is perfect for any rainy, angsty night inside.

#### **66. Operator (2016)**

The thing I love most about this movie is the ending, but what makes the ending so great is everything leading up to it! Starring Martin Starr + Mae Whitman, this film is about an anxious programmer who enlists the help of his empathetic wife to create the perfect call center program. However, their relationship spirals out of control when he begins replacing her with an ideal computerized replica, only to realize you can't reduce human beings down to an algorithm. It's simplistically profound in so many ways.

#### **67. P.S. I Love You (2007)**

What amazed me about this movie was how much it made me cry. Yes, I'm a sucker for romance, but this was so tenderly and thoughtfully done. The sweetness of the storyline is what I love the most. It's about a grieving widow who loses her husband to a brain tumor, and learns that he left a series of letters behind to help her cope with the pain of living without him. Gah! Starring Hilary Swank + Gerard Butler. So sweet!

## 68. [Paper Heart \(2009\)](#)

Real-life sweethearts Charlyne Yi + Michael Cera star as themselves in this quirky hybrid of documentary and scripted comedy. The charming romance was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival. Charlyne is an eccentric performer and romantic skeptic who embarks on a quest to learn the true nature of love, which of course, I'm always down for. If you like comedy, real life people and quirky romance, this is for you!

## 69. [Passengers \(2016\)](#)

Starring Jennifer Lawrence + Chris Pratt, this movie is set during a 120-year journey of the "Starship Avalon" to a distant planetary colony, where a computer glitch rouses a mechanic from hibernation decades ahead of schedule. Desperate for company, he wakes up a female journalist, who isn't very happy about it. They have to figure out how to live the rest of their days on a ship destined for a planet they'll never reach in their lifetime. It's part sci-fi, part love story, and totally awesome!

## 70. [Paterson \(2016\)](#)

Unspooling over the course of a week, this nuanced indie drama chronicles the ebb and flow in the unassuming lives of Paterson, a New Jersey bus driver and part-time poet, and his flighty but supportive wife. Actor, Adam Driver, is really lovely in this movie and I especially love the poetry that's woven throughout. It's the perfect movie for a quiet and contemplative evening at home.

## 71. [Planes, Trains and Automobiles \(1987\)](#)

Starring Steve Martin + John Candy, this classic movie is equally heartwarming as it is hilarious. It's about a marketing executive trying to get home to his family in Chicago for Thanksgiving. He runs into one disaster after another, which includes being stuck with an insufferable (but loveable) salesman as his unshakable traveling companion. A must watch over and over!

## 72. Roman Holiday (1953)

This is the movie that caused me to fall in love with black and white films! It's about a princess who leaves her guardians while in Rome, and is taken under the wing of a tabloid writer and his photographer sidekick. She thinks the boys don't know who she really is, but they're onto her. More than that, they take her on the adventure of her lifetime! Starring Gregory Peck + Audrey Hepburn, this is a classic for all time!

## 73. Russian Doll TV Show (2019)

I've watched a lot of movies and tv shows, and this show is one of the most fun, intriguing and unique shows I've ever seen. The leading actress, Natasha Lyonne, is to-die-for awesome, as is the music, cinematography, costumes, script and supporting actors. It's about Nadia who meets an untimely end on the night of her 36<sup>th</sup> birthday then suddenly finds herself back at the party her friends threw for her. She has to figure out why she keeps dying and coming back to life at the same point in time. This show finds new ways to present an old storyline. So, so good!

## 74. Sex, Lies and Videotape (1989)

A friend first told me about his movie a few years ago when I was telling her how much I value having no more than a few keys on my keyring. She said the main character doesn't have more than one key as a symbol of freedom. With that, I had to watch it! It's a voyeuristic indie drama directed by Steven Soderbergh that paints an intimate portrait of discord among a frigid housewife, her philandering husband, her adulterous sibling and an intriguing out-of-towner who gradually turns their lives inside out. My favorite line in this movie is, "I can't because I won't." So good!

## 75. Somewhere (2010)

This is my favorite movie by director Sophia Coppola, starring Stephen Dorff + Elle Fanning. It's an atmospheric dramedy that centers around a hard-living actor whose life is thrown for a loop when his 11-year-old daughter pays him a surprise visit. As the two become better acquainted, he realizes he needs to make changes to his life. This is a movie I think about often because the storyline is so tender, sweet and connecting.

## 76. [Son of Saul \(2015\)](#)

Of all the World War II movies out there, this is by far the most beautiful, heart wrenching, authentic and moving. It's a foreign drama that focuses on a prisoner amid the horrors of Auschwitz, who has the grim duty of transporting corpses from the camp's gas chambers to the crematoria. But when he thinks he recognizes his son's body, he sets out to save the boy from incineration. This movie will stick with you, and there will be moments that are hard to watch, but it's absolutely gorgeous and worth opening your heart to. Really good!

## 77. [Spirited Away \(2002\)](#)

It was hard to pick just one movie by renown director, Hayao Miyazaki, but it was made easier when I asked my kids which one I should choose. This film is about a girl who moves to the suburbs with her family and wanders into a magical world where a witch rules, and those who disobey her are turned into animals. When the girl's parents become pigs, she must find a way to help them return to their human form. Like all [Miyazaki films](#), this one explores all facets of the human heart, where no one is all good or all bad. I highly recommend staring with this film and working your way through EVERY movie by this director.

## 78. [St. Vincent \(2014\)](#)

Starring Bill Murray, Melissa McCarthy, Chris O'Dowd + Naomi Watts, this movie is about a lonely 12-year-old boy who strikes up a friendship with his war-veteran neighbor, Vincent, because his parents are preoccupied with their divorce. Vincent is a hard-drinking gambler with a fondness for hookers, who finds his life changed by the boy's presence. Bill Murray is absolutely wonderful in this role. It's such a tender and lighthearted film.

## 79. [Steel Magnolias \(1989\)](#)

Featuring a star-studded cast, including Sally Field, Dolly Parton, Shirley MacLaine, Daryl Hannah + Julia Roberts, this bittersweet drama follows the abiding friendship among five tight-knit women who congregate at a beauty parlor in a small Louisiana town to laugh, cry and discuss their lives. It's a classic movie centered around the hearts and lives of strong and loving women. It's one for the ages!

### **80. Sunshine Cleaning (2008)**

With Amy Adams, Emily Blunt + Alan Arkin at the center of this film, how could I not love it?! Plus, the storyline is funny, heartfelt and totally unique. It's about a mother who is on shaky ground financially yet determined to send her son to a top private school. She teams up with her unreliable sister to start a new company that specializes in biohazard removal and crime scene cleanup. This movie will have you laughing and sighing with enjoyment!

### **81. The Beautiful Fantastic (2017)**

This movie is not only beautiful, it's full of heart! It's about a librarian and aspiring author who is forced by her landlord to clean up her overgrown garden. In the process she meets her grumpy elderly neighbor, who's an avid horticulturalist, and an unlikely friendship is born. You'll love this film for both its characters and its flowers!

### **82. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2011) + The Second Best (2015)**

These films are about a group of British seniors who move to India to make the most of their meager retirement savings and live out their golden years at the Marigold Hotel. But upon arrival, they discover the once-lavish resort has wilted considerably. Starring Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Bill Nighy + so many more, these movies remind you that your entire life is an adventure to the end!

### **83. The Big Lebowski (1998)**

If I had a Spirit Animal, it would be The Dude. "The Dude" Lebowski is a slacker who gets involved in a gargantuan mess of events when he's mistaken for another man named Lebowski, whose wife has been kidnapped and is being held for ransom. All the while, the Dude's friend, Walter, stirs the pot. What I love about this movie is how The Dude takes everything in stride, and in the end, he gets his rug back, which is all he wanted to begin with! Starring Jeff Bridges, John Goodman, Julianne Moore, Steve Buscemi + tons more, this film is a cult classic that lives up to the hype!

#### **84. The Count of Monte Cristo (2002)**

This film is an adaptation of the Alexander Dumas tale by the same name. It's about a sailor who is falsely accused of treason by his best friend, who wants his girlfriend Mercedes for himself. The sailor is imprisoned on an island for 13 years, where he plots revenge against those who betrayed him. With the help of another prisoner, he escapes the island and proceeds to transform himself into the wealthy Count of Monte Cristo as part of his plan to exact revenge. I can't tell you how many times I have watched this movie. It's truly fantastic!

#### **85. The Danish Girl (2015)**

In this movie, a Danish 1930's painter elects to have gender-reassignment surgery, with the blessing of his wife. This true-life narrative of personal courage also sheds light on the medical origins of transsexual surgery, as well as the transformative power of unconditional love. Both Eddie Redmayne + Alicia Vikander are so sweet and lovely in this film. So, so good!

#### **86. The English Patient (1996)**

This Oscar-winning drama is set against the backdrop of World War II, and stars Ralph Fiennes as a badly burned pilot who recounts a tale of doomed romance to the nurse tending him. As his story spills out via flashback, so do secrets about his identity. It's a gorgeous story with a backdrop to match. Also starring Juliette Binoche + Willem Dafoe, this one is both epic and moving.

#### **87. The Family Man (2000)**

This movie is in heavy rotation in my household every year at Christmas time. Again, as a hopeless romantic, I find this modern-day riff on Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life*, truly delightful. It's about a cutthroat investment banker, who eschews emotional ties and is transported into the life he might have had if he wed his college sweetheart. Nicolas Cage, Tea Leoni, Don Cheadle + Jeremy Piven bring SO much humor and heartfelt authenticity to this must-see holiday classic!

### **88. [The Family Stone \(2005\)](#)**

This is another exceptional holiday film that I watch every year during the Christmas season. The first time I watched it, I didn't like it at all. I thought the characters were way too flawed and I just couldn't handle the complicated nature of their personalities all together. But over the years it's become one of my most favorite films. Starring Rachel McAdams, Diane Keaton, Claire Danes, Luke Wilson + more, this movie is about two buttoned-up Manhattanites whose relationship begins to fall apart when they visit the suburbs for the holidays to stay with his family. This is a tenderhearted film with lots of humor to keep you going. Highly recommend!

### **89. [The Florida Project \(2017\)](#)**

Starring Willem Dafoe, Brooklyn Prince + Bria Vinaite, this movie was filmed entirely on iPhones, which is amazing because this movie is absolutely gorgeous! It's about the children of families living within sight of Disney World's glittering attractions. Residing in tacky motels near the megapark, the kids create their own magical world together, led by the spirited 6-year-old Moonee. I also highly suggest you check out another movie titled, [Tangerine](#), that's equally moving and was also filmed entirely on iPhones by the same director. Both stories give a very authentic slice-of-life look into worlds you might not otherwise see.

### **90. [The Fountain \(2006\)](#)**

Starring Hugh Jackman + Rachel Weisz, this sci-fi drama spans a millennium, where a man searches for a tree believed to grant eternal life in 16th-century Spain, seeks a cure for his wife's cancer as a present-day scientist, and traverses the universe as a 26th-century astronaut. It's beautifully written and filmed, with deep and meaningful themes throughout!

### **91. [The Help \(2011\)](#)**

Based on a novel by the same name, this story takes place in 1960s Jackson, Miss., where an aspiring writer crosses taboo racial lines by conversing with her black housekeeper about her life. Their ensuing friendship upsets the fragile dynamic between the haves and the have-nots, and there are some wonderful scenes with a questionable pie that will

leave you laughing. Viola Davis + Emma Stone play their parts splendidly. Your heart will be broken wide open along with your smile!

### **92. [The Hundred-Foot Journey \(2014\)](#)**

This is a sweet movie that centers around food, culture and beauty. It's about a young chef and his family who relocated from India to a quiet village in the south of France to open an Indian restaurant. But when their business starts to thrive, a competing restaurateur directly across the street, launches a war between the eateries. However, this film is about so much more than that. It teaches us to be slow to judge and open to new people. It's truly a wonderful tale of love, friendship and self-discovery.

### **93. [The Hunger Games Trilogy \(2012-2015\)](#)**

Based on the popular book series by the same name, this trilogy is about a dystopian future ruled by a totalitarian regime, where a resourceful girl and her partner represent their district in the lethal Hunger Games, a televised survival competition in which teenage contestants fight each other to the death. As each movie unfolds the main characters find themselves fighting not only for their own freedom, but freedom for all. Starring Jennifer Lawrence, Woody Harrelson, Elizabeth Banks, this is a great trilogy to watch with older children.

### **94. [The Kids Are All Right \(2010\)](#)**

This movie is about two children with same-sex parents, who become curious about their sperm-donor dad and set out to make him part of their family unit. But his arrival complicates the household dynamics, and they all have to face themselves in unexpected ways, as well as find their way back to each other and their deeply held bonds. The cast includes Julianne Moore, Annette Benning, Mark Ruffalo + Mia Wasikowska. So, so good!

### **95. [The Lady in the Van \(2015\)](#)**

Maggie Smith, Alex Jennings + Jim Broadbent star in this touching human drama adapted from writer Alan Bennett's bestselling memoir, where a man befriends the elderly lady living in a van that's been parked in his driveway for 15 years. She's cantankerous and kind



of scary, but she also has a lot of history to her that is revealed as the story unfolds. It's another lovely film that gives a tender look into an aging life.

### **96. [The Last Black Man in San Francisco \(2019\)](#)**

This is a wistful film populated by skaters, squatters, street preachers, playwrights, and other people on the margins, and centers around a man who enlists his best friend to help reclaim the Victorian home his grandfather built in the heart of San Francisco. They begin a search for belonging in a rapidly changing city that seems to have left them behind. This movie is a poignant and sweeping story of hometowns and how they're made, and kept alive, by the people who love them.

### **97. [The Last Word \(2017\)](#)**

I love love love this movie! Shirley MacLaine + Amanda Seyfried are absolutely wonderful, and the storyline is incredibly heartfelt and moving. It's about a retired businesswoman who hires a young writer to write an obituary worthy of her because she doesn't want to cede control of any facet of her life, or death, to anyone. When the results fall short of her expectations, she sets out to reshape her legacy, which ends up impacting the lives of many people in simple yet profound ways. My favorite line from this movie is, "If I want your opinion, I'll give it to you!" Oh, and the soundtrack for this movie is the BEST!!

### **98. [The Lego Movie \(2014\)](#) + [The Second Part \(2019\)](#)**

These animated movies feature the voice talents of Chris Pratt, Will Ferrell, Elizabeth Banks + more. They center around an ordinary mini-guy who is mistaken for the LEGO Master Builder, and is swept up in an urgent quest to thwart the evil plans of Lord Business. His adventures include daunting challenges and hilarious missteps in this computer-animated epic. I cried at the end of both movies because they are so damn sweet. They're also hilarious and perfect for family movie night!

### **99. [The Leisure Seeker \(2017\)](#)**

This movie stars Academy Award-winner Helen Mirren and two-time Golden Globe-winner Donald Sutherland as an aging runaway couple going on an unforgettable journey in the

faithful old RV they call The Leisure Seeker, travelling from Boston to The Ernest Hemingway Home in Key West. They recapture their passion for life and their love for each other on a road trip that provides revelation and surprise right up to the very end. What more can I say? It's another great one!

### **100. [The Matrix Trilogy \(1999-2003\)](#)**

This trilogy is one of my all-time favorites! It's about a computer hacker searching for the truth behind the mysterious force known as the Matrix. He discovers that what most people perceive as reality is actually a simulation created by machines and joins a rebellion to break free. It's a deeply metaphorical series that will get you thinking about your life, your choices, and your actions. Starring Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, Carrie-Anne Moss + Hugo Weaving, these movies continue to stand the test of time!

### **101. [The Other F Word \(2011\)](#)**

This insightful documentary examines the mid-life evolution of a generation of punk rockers, including Jim Lindberg, Art Alexakis and Flea, who must reconcile fatherhood and responsible family life with their status as legendary anti-authoritarians. What I love most about this documentary is seeing how fatherhood and "adult responsibilities" have softened, mellowed, and changed these old punk rockers for the better. I don't watch a lot of documentaries, but this one is definitely a must-watch for any rocker!

### **102. [The Others \(2001\)](#)**

Directed by Alejandro Amenabar and starring Nicole Kidman, this movie is about a devout Christian woman who is awaiting the return of her soldier husband from World War II. She's the mother of two children who have a rare sensitivity to light, and she's beginning to think their family house is haunted by ghosts. This is a supernatural thriller with a surprise ending that will have you watching the movie all over again! I also highly recommend the movie [Vanilla Sky](#), another film by the same director that will leave you feeling the same way. I love his films!

### **103. [The Secret Life of Bees \(2008\)](#)**

This touching drama is based on Sue Monk Kidd's best-selling novel of the same name. It's about a 14-year-old girl haunted by her mother's death, who escapes her dreary life on her father's farm and heads to Tiburon, S.C., with her friend and caregiver, which spawns a life-changing journey of self-discovery. Set amid the hotbed of racial tensions in the 1960s South, this movie stars Queen Latifah, Dakota Fanning, Alicia Keys + more. I loved the book and am equally pleased with the movie. So good. So uplifting!

### **104. [The Skeleton Twins \(2014\)](#)**

Kristen Wiig does it once again with this movie! And even better, she does it with Bill Hader + Luke Wilson. Seriously, watch this movie! It's crazy sweet, funny, loving and serious all at once. It's about estranged twins who reunite when near-death experiences on the same day motivate them to reconnect. They're forced to reevaluate their empty lives as they attempt to mend the long-broken bond between them. In essence, they help each other heal. You will love it. I promise!

### **105. [The Way Way Back \(2013\)](#)**

Oh, you will love this movie too! It follows the story of a stifled teen who finds his voice with encouragement from the manager of a local water park, where he takes a summer job to escape his unbearable home life with his mom and her overbearing boyfriend. The all-star cast includes Steve Carell, Toni Collette, Allison Janney, Sam Rockwell, and Maya Rudolph. I meant it! Watch this movie!

### **106. [The Wife \(2018\)](#)**

Glenn Close is absolutely brilliant in this interwoven story of a couple's youthful passion and ambition held up against a portrait of their marriage, thirty-plus years later – a lifetime's shared compromises, secrets, betrayals, and mutual love. What I love about this movie is the all-too-familiar storyline of a woman who has been sidelined but doesn't realize it until years later. If you are able to get this on DVD and watch the Special Features at the end, you'll love the interview with Glenn Close. She rocks!

### **107. Troop Zero (2020)**

This movie is about an elementary school girl who is fixated on making contact with extraterrestrials. She drafts a group of girls for a talent show where the winners will get to send a message to aliens via NASA's Golden Record, soon to be launched into space. But really, this story is about lasting friendship, being true to oneself, the meaning of life, and love love love! Starring Viola Davis, Mckenna Grace, Jim Gaffigan + Allison Janney, this movie will melt your heart with its sweetness!

### **108. Wanderlust (2012)**

Starring Paul Rudd, Jennifer Aniston + Justin Theroux, this movie is about a New York couple who fall on hard times economically and are forced to pull up stakes and head for Atlanta, where their boorish relatives are ready to take them in. On their way south, they spend a night at a hippie-style inn and wind up considering a whole new lifestyle. It's full of ridiculous scenes, hilarious antics and tender moments throughout. Enjoy!

### **109. We're the Millers (2013)**

This movie is about a small-time pot dealer who gets mugged and needs to find a way to pay back his supplier. Agreeing to smuggle in a major stash from Mexico, he rounds up a fake family to act as his cover, and they head for the border in an RV. With Jennifer Aniston, Jason Sudeikis, Kathryn Hahn + tons more funny people at the center, this is another fun movie that will keep you laughing the whole way through. So good!

### **110. Whip It (2009)**

This movie was directed by Drew Barrymore and stars Ellen Page, Marcia Gay Harden, Kristen Wiig, Juliette Lewis, Kristen Wiig + tons more awesome women. It's about a small-town teen who dodges her mother's beauty pageant plans in favor of joining a knock-'em-sock-'em all-girl roller derby team. As she gains notoriety on the track as Babe Ruthless, her thrilling double life begins to catch up with her. This movie is kick-ass, heartfelt and full of strong women you will love!

### **111. Wild Tales (2014)**

This is one of my ALL-TIME favorite movies by Argentinian director, Danian Szifron. It's a foreign film that threads together six independent narratives as a cathartic compendium provides a meditation on the bruising blows of everyday life as all the characters are pushed beyond their thresholds of restraint in merrily pernicious ways. What I love about this movie is how ridiculous all of the vignettes are. The characters are overcome with passion and act on that passion. I find it to be hilarious in all its seriousness. Plus, the cinematography is incredible. I hope you love it as much as I do!

**HAPPY MOVIE WATCHING!!**

xoxo - Jessica