

perfect strangers

one gently used kidney — free to a good home

Perfect Strangers, 69 minutes
Produced and Directed by Jan Krawitz

ABOUT THE FILM

Perfect Strangers raises questions about what motivates an individual towards an extreme act of compassion. This documentary tells the story of two unique and engaging characters. One is Eldonna, who, at the age of 49, embarks on an unpredictable journey of twists and turns, determined to give away one of her kidneys. Five hundred miles away, Kathy endures nightly dialysis and loses hope of receiving a transplant until “Ellie” reads her profile on an online website and decides to contact her. Both women face unexpected challenges as their parallel stories unfold over the course of four years. Why are we unnerved by the idea of such an extreme gift?

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I first met Ellie in 2007 after she had taken the initial steps to become an altruistic, non-directed kidney donor. Articulate and sometimes irreverent, Ellie was an ideal protagonist for this experiential, character-driven film as she was forthright, insightful, and willing to grant me unprecedented access to her story. Her decision to become a donor cannot be easily dismissed by the viewer as she was motivated by nothing more than a genuine motivation to help someone in need and the recognition that, like many of us, she had the ability to do so.



As the population ages, the need for organs increases and the wait list for a kidney from a deceased donor steadily grows. Altruistic kidney donation from a living donor is the new frontier that could significantly increase the supply. But many people feel discomfited by the idea and policymakers are wary of the implications. Through the prism of one kidney's journey, *Perfect Strangers* confronts thorny philosophical questions about acts of compassion, altruism, and ultimately, who deserves a second chance at life and at what cost.

--Jan Krawitz, Director, Producer, Editor