

**FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 2017**

**BREAKOUT SESSION EIGHT: 4:00 P.M. - 5:15 P.M.**

**BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS ABOUT SEXUAL IDENTITY AND NEEDS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES | CENTENNIAL HALL C/D**

PANEL MEMBERS:

Judi Levine, Such Much Films, Inc., Film Producer

Ben Lewin, Writer/Director

SYNOPSIS: In a time when sexual identity and sexual behavior is being seen in the media more than ever before, people with disabilities and their own struggle with sexual identity and desire is, for the most part, being ignored. The award-winning film *The Sessions* (2012) opened a whole new discussion about the needs and desires of people with disabilities, as well as conversation about the authentic representation of people with disabilities on screen. Although 25% of the US population is defined as “disabled”, less than 5% of characters in the media are represented as disabled, with the majority of those characters being cast with able-bodied people. This panel continues that conversation and looks at what is being done to raise awareness in mainstream society so as to redress these issues of keeping the sexual aspects of disability overlooked and behind closed doors.