

Book Club Questions for Discussion

General Memoir Discussion Points:

1. How did the author tell their story—chronological, thematic, or episodic structure? How did this choice enhance the narrative?
2. How did the author develop their voice and personality in the book? Did you personally like the author or find them interesting or compelling in some way? Was there humor, honesty, or insights that made them memorable or relatable?
3. What were the main turning points or events that shaped their life story? How did they capture your attention and curiosity?
4. Were there any surprising revelations or discoveries that they made? Did you learn something new about yourself as it relates to the author's experience?
5. How were other people portrayed in the book? What effect did they have on the author's choices or outcomes?
6. How did the author explore personal topics such as identity, family, career, or spirituality?
7. Were you satisfied with the ending of the book? Did the author appropriately reflect on their journey at the conclusion?
8. How did the author's story make you reflect on your own life and experiences?
9. Why did the author want to tell their story? What do you think they wanted you to take away from reading their book?
10. Was the author a reliable narrator of their own history? Why/not?

Questions Specific to “Round the Twist: Facing the Abdominal”:

1. The author uses extended metaphors throughout the book to illustrate her own story. Which ones in particular spoke to you or related to your life in some way?
2. How different was her experience in getting diagnosed different from what you expected it to be like?
3. What do you believe were the qualities of the first set of oncologists that led her to fire them? How different do you think her treatment outcomes would have been if she hadn't done that?
4. Those diagnosed with cancer under the age of 50 are considered “young cancer patients.” How much of the difficulty she encountered do you believe was due to her age?
5. What were the lifestyle routines and choices she had established long before her diagnosis? Do you believe these helped her deal with treatments? Were any of her choices something you might consider changing in your life?
6. The power of positive thinking is a big theme in this book. Was this talked about specifically or was it demonstrated through examples? Did this speak to you or touch you in some way?
7. Did you know about colostomies before reading this book? What did you learn through her frank discussions of the surgical procedure?
8. How important is it to advocate for your own health? Do you feel empowered to seek out better care when you recognize you may not be receiving the best care you deserve?

9. What did you learn about chemotherapy, radiation, or surgeries that you may not have known before? Did parts of the recovery surprise you?
10. Which parts of the author's journey surprised you the most? Was it the physical or emotional aspects of her story that touched you the most? How will this affect the way you interact with future cancer survivors?
11. If the author is present at your book club, do you have specific questions you'd like to ask?