



BOOK CLUB KIT

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BY CHAPTER

Then

- Have you experienced ambiguous grief? If so, how did it feel to read about it? If not, did you have others come to mind that have?
- Stephanie defines “soulbroken” as a state of anguish brought on by the loss of our love our relationship, and ourselves, and is often void of validation. How did this definition resonate for you? Have you experienced “soulbreak”?

Chapter 1 – Activating Events, Estrangement, and Intention

- Stephanie introduces us to a list of activating events that can trigger ambiguous grief. How many have you experienced? Were any activating events not on the list?
- In reading about John, the father grieving the familial estrangement of his adult daughter, how did you feel about his decision to set an intention to turn his energy toward himself and stop pursuing a relationship with her?
- Exercise 6 includes an invitation for readers to set an intention. What intention did you set? If you didn’t, why not?

Chapter 2 – The Feeling State of Grief, Cognitive Decline, and Minding Your Mind

- The through line of this chapter is the mind: cognitive decline as the activating event, the thoughts we think that inform the feelings often experienced in grief, therapy to help process our thoughts, medication to help regulate our brains, and meditation as a tool for healing. Did anything in this chapter open or change your mind?
- Think back to the story of Beth, the daughter caring for her mother with Alzheimer’s Disease. How did you feel reading this story? Use the formula of feelings exercise to get clear on your feelings and then report back!

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Chapter 3 – Hope, Personal Power, and the Women of Sex Monster Camp

- How does/did Hope present for you as you grieve the loss of your loved one who is still living? Where are you on the map and where are you headed?
- Inspired by Epictetus' teachings on personal power, Stephanie suggests the “sort and file” method as a tool. Share your experience with this practice and what you have found to be its benefits and challenges.

Chapter 4 – Internal Hope, Imprisonment, and What Elsa Forgot

- Letting go is easier said than done. What practice or tool has helped you? What is the worst advice about your grief that you have been given?
- For Tameka, the wife grieving the loss of her husband to incarceration, focusing on herself and making small changes in mind and body made a big difference for her. In what ways are you “changing the station,” practicing internal hope, and finding benefits to your overall wellness?

Chapter 5 – The Bridge to Recovery, Addiction, Reconciliation, and Rituals

- What is your reaction to Stephanie's ayahuasca experience? Is this sacred plant medicine something you would seek for yourself? Why or why not?
- Addiction does not discriminate and impacts families in countless ways. How close are you to someone battling addiction or grieving due to addiction (e.g. alcohol, drugs, sex, work, shopping, gambling, exercising, and gaming)? Discuss any insights gained from this chapter.
- In lieu of a funeral, a faux-uneral allows your grief to be witnessed and your love to be honored. What do you think about creating a ceremony to recognize your loss? What did you find to be the benefits and if you haven't held yours, what is holding you back from doing it?

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Chapter 6 – From Recovery to Regeneration

- Gender identification may activate ambiguous grief in both parents and children alike. What tools - shared in the book or not - might help both parties feel better supported in their ambiguous grief?
- Stephanie offers the word “regeneration” as a replacement to the word “recovery”. Do you identify more as someone regenerating or recovering from ambiguous grief?

Chapter 7 – The Other F Word and Life on the Other Side

- Discuss your feelings and thoughts about forgiveness. Do you agree or disagree that forgiveness is not a prerequisite to begin healing?
- What is your relationship with faux-giveness? How is it impacting you?

Unpacking

- In reviewing your notes, what did you find most illuminating about your journey? What were the biggest lessons or learnings you discovered?
- As you consider your journey and ponder your needs, what does your gut tell you is the next right step for you?
- Stephanie believes that, if we allow it, grief can be a portal to our greatest and highest selves. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Bonus

- Discuss your experience with meaning and/or gratitude as related to your ambiguous grief. How has ambiguous grief changed you?