



BOOK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Jeff Winthrop is so consumed with missing his dead wife, he is oblivious to the needs of his children as they deal with their difficult stepmother, Ruth. Grief is a very personal thing, but do you think grief can go on “too long”?
- Why do you think Jeff believed marrying Ruth was a mistake?
- Is Ruth religious or spiritual, both, or neither?
- What was at the heart of the issue affecting Jeff’s relationship with his son, Todd?
- Do you think Naomi’s spiritual views influence how she treats her patients?
- What do you think is really happening when Jeff has his “memory-dreams”?
- Do you think Julia Winthrop is “visiting,” or are the Winthrops experiencing some sort of group hallucination?
- Is grief ever unhealthy or should the process be allowed to reach its conclusion—whatever that may be?
- Why do you think Ruth “felt strange” as she and Jeff were having sex?
- Naomi sometimes crosses the therapist-boundary with her patients. Let’s say Naomi wasn’t helped by her “flash of truth” in realizing one of the Winthrop children was in harm’s way. Was Naomi’s extra involvement warranted, or should she have allowed Jeff to figure out the issues with Ruth in his own time and simply treated him for his grief and depression?
- Is Naomi’s grief over Tyson impeding a solid relationship with Kevin?

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