

THE LATECOMERS

BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

1. The story begins with Charlie leaving Maggie. It is clear that Charlie is not sure what he is seeking, but he feels he needs to go on this journey without Maggie. Do you believe Charlie was justified, or do you believe his actions were selfish? What do you think of Maggie's reaction to Charlie leaving?

2. A central theme in the the book *is moai's*. Maggie learned of *moai's* when in Okinawa during college. She forms a *moai* with her husband Charlie, and later invites her friend Rebecca, then Joe and Ebba to join as well.
 - a. Many today talk of 'chosen families', *moai's* are much more. On page 162, in the chapter *ikiagi*, Charlie defines *moai* as, '*A family striving to wake up by working at their ikigai's each day*'. He also defined *ikiagi* as '*reason for being or going after your life's purpose*.' Do you feel that the concept of *moai's* was central to the book, and did it enrich the story?
 - b. Do you believe people can extend beyond families, and broaden out to participate in *moai's*? Do you have any examples of *moai's* in your life?
 - c. What do you believe the *moai's ikigai* is?

3. The book is broken into 2 major parts. The first half of the book is fairly grounded in reality of Maggie and Charlie, their separation, the growth of Maggie's relationship with Joe, and Charlie's with Ebba. The eventual growth of the *moai* to include all 5 of them. The 2nd part of the book takes the reader on a journey of to uncover the secrets of *Stones and Pilgrims*. How did you feel about this?

4. Years earlier Maggie and Charlie had discussed Assisted Suicide and should either come to a point in their life that they could not live fully the life they wanted, they would want assisted suicide and each had pledged to help the other. In the book Maggie has a crisis of conscience when Charlie asks her to help him end his life. When presented with the reality of Charlie's situation, he asks her to help him die. She tells him she will. In the end however, she cannot do it and betrays Charlie's request. Do you think Maggie did the right thing here, or should she have honored her promise to Charlie? If you were in a similar situation as Maggie, could you help a loved one end their life, or not? Why?

5. In the book we meet 2 elders, Mrs Karlsson and Anna, both who appear to be much younger than they are. Anna is 112 years old, Mrs Karlson is 90. We are introduced to the concept that our longevity should be on average about 115 years. However, due to a number of external factors including environmental, dietary and stress factors we face today our average life span is far less. Do you believe this to be true?
6. In the Chapter titled, The Earnings, we read '*The Everiery Corporation blows out Q3 Earnings.*' The *moai* gather and discuss this news. Klara is improving the drugs with an extract from the Vishäldomsa plants that make their drugs much more effective. They also appeared to be adding something to make them addictive / requiring patients to stay on the drug for life. Do you believe this is a valid trade-off?
7. In the beginning of the book we are introduced to Ebba, who suddenly drops everything after a call from Charlie. She agrees to take an extended leave of absence from work and join Charlie on his retreat to Overlamma Cove. What do you believe from Ebba's life has brought her to this decision to uproot herself and go on this journey with Charlie? Could you do this for another?
8. In the book there is a chapter titled, *Radical Generosity*, which is in reference to Joe. Joe does show radical generosity, but he also shows unwavering commitment, unconditional love and acceptance of Maggie and what Maggie needs throughout the book. Could you do this for another?
9. What do you think of Joe and Maggie's relationship? Were you routing for Joe and Maggie or for Maggie to return to Charlie?
10. Klara is the antagonist of the story. What did you think of her and her continued focus on power and dominance in her industry?
11. In the end of the book Maggie and Charlie make a very difficult and heart wrenching decision about their futures and their destinies. How did this work for you? Do you think if you were Maggie or Charlie would you have made the same decision or would you have chosen differently? If differently, what would their future look like for you and why?
12. The book has a bitter sweet ending. How did you feel about it and what the future holds for Maggie, the others and the *moai*?

