

READING AND DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR

Hope Springs

by

Lynne Hinton

1. Lynne Hinton has stated that her grandmother, to whom the book and the opening poem are dedicated, taught her to garden. Is there anyone in your life who taught you to love the earth? What does gardening mean to you?
2. Charlotte realizes that she doesn't have anything to offer her suicidal parishioner, Nadine. What do you consider an appropriate pastoral response to a person who attempted suicide?
3. The doctor is concerned about his patient Margaret when they discuss the findings from her mammogram. He wonders "what kind of support systems she had, what gave her purpose, and how well she could fight trouble." What resources do you think a person needs when facing an illness?

4. Charlotte decides to see a therapist. What are your thoughts about a minister going into counseling?
5. Jessie discusses her desire to move from Hope Springs, her hometown. Have you ever desired to live in a place other than where you live? Where would you choose to move and why?
6. Marion, Charlotte's therapist, asks the young pastor to tell how she thinks of God. How do you think of God? How comfortable are you with a feminine image of God?
7. Margaret, Louise, and Beatrice discuss what makes a woman a woman. What are your thoughts about what distinguishes a woman from a man? Is it physical or emotional?
8. In order for Nadine to begin to heal regarding her loss she must forgive herself for what she considered her responsibility in the accident that killed her daughter. How does a person learn to forgive herself? What helps in encouraging the forgiveness of oneself?
9. Jessie realizes her fears that James will leave her again. Are you surprised that she took him back when she did? How does a couple who has separated and come back together regain the trust that was lost?
10. Why do you think the women decided to shave their heads? What displays of empathy and friendship have you experienced in your life? How important is friendship in facing illness?

11. Jessie and James decide to take a trip to Africa. What trip have you always wanted to take? Where would you go if you could go anywhere?
12. Since there's another book in the Hope Springs trilogy, another book about the women in Hope Springs, what do you think might happen next? Which character would you like to know more about?