

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR
HEALING STONES
by
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1. *Healing Stones* was created first and foremost as literature, to be embraced and enjoyed. We hope you were able to immerse yourself in the story and know the characters as real people. Without destroying any of the sheer pleasure (as so often happened in your high school English classes, we are sure!), you might want to discuss some of these points –
 - a. The story is written from two distinct points of view – Demitria’s and Sully’s. Which one did you relate to most personally?
 - b. Were there any secondary characters who captured you? Mickey? Jayne? Ethan? Porphyria? Rich? Chris? Tatum?
 - c. Were there any characters who ticked you off? (i.e. made you want to shake, slap, or flush them down the toilet?)
 - d. Which story line did you want to stay with most? Demitria and Rich’s dilemma? The quest to discover who took the pictures? Sully’s inner demons?
 - e. Was there anything about the style of the novel that either delighted you or turned you off?
 - f. Were you satisfied when you finished reading the last page?
 - g. What do you think the next phase of Sully’s journey will look like?

2. The theme of the book is, of course, forgiveness, on its many levels. It might be helpful to discuss how you define forgiveness, how you’ve experienced it, etc., before looking specifically at how it plays out in *Healing Stones*.
 - a. Were you able to forgive Demitria for her unfaithfulness to Rich, or did you think she pretty much got what she deserved?
 - b. Were you able to empathize with Rich in his inability to forgive her?
 - c. How did you feel about Christopher’s reactions to his mother? Why do you think he responded so bitterly?
 - d. How, in your opinion, was Jayne able to forgive her mother when Christopher couldn’t?
 - e. What was up with Mickey? She showed so much compassion for Demi, but when her own daughter needed some, she couldn’t seem to produce it. What’s that about?
 - f. Demitria needed forgiveness, surely, but what about the people she needed to forgive? Talk about that.

- g. Do you agree with Demi's interpretation of the story of Jesus and the adulteress?
 - h. How about Ethan's explanation of how we are saved from our separation from God by the death and rebirth of Christ (as described in his Easter sermon)?
 - i. Kevin St. Clair and Wyatt Estes obviously had a very different view of grace than Ethan and Demi, but is there anything in the St. Clair/Wyatt take on forgiveness that you agree with?
 - j. Both Sully and Demitria had issues with forgiving themselves – and accepting God's forgiveness. How is that different from giving and receiving forgiveness with other people?
 - k. When Sully (on p. 333) agonized over what he should and possibly could have done to save Lynn, Porphyria said, "Maybe you could have. Maybe you even should have." Did that surprise you? Discuss whether what Porphyria goes on to say about how to accept God's forgiveness and healing rings true for you.
 - l. Is it enough to simply be forgiven? What does the novel seem to say about what has to come after the acceptance of mercy and grace?
3. In *Healing Stones*, we have tried to show people at their breaking points, where a decision has to be made, and that decision will determine the direction of the rest of a person's life journey. Chat together about each of these characters' breaking points – where they occur in the book, what choice they make, how that plays out.
- a. Demitria Costanas
 - b. Zach Archer
 - c. Rich Costanas
 - d. Jayne Costanas
 - e. Christopher Costanas
 - f. Ethan Kaye
 - g. Sullivan Crisp
 - h. Mickey Gwynne
 - i. Audrey Flowers
 - j. Tatum Farris
 - k. You

If you or your reading group has questions for us, please feel free to email either or both at: nnrue@hughes.net or sarterburn@newlife.com. We love to talk about what we're doing with the Sullivan Crisp novels, so do not hesitate to contact us. We are all on this journey together.