

## SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL – READER'S GUIDE

1. Many of the characters in *SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL* grow up to be different from their parents. Caitlyn doesn't share her parents' academic natures. Jonathan doesn't have his father's gift for the pulpit. Matt is nothing like his crazy, wastrel mother and neither is Sarah.

In what ways are you different from your parents and in what ways are your children different from you? Are there certain traits you do or don't want to share with your family members?

2. Caitlyn can't imagine what kind of mother could abandon her baby, and Caitlyn and Matt argue over Emily belongs with the mother who abandoned her. Even Sarah wonders whether she would be the better choice to raise Emily than Matt or someone else.

Do you think Sarah did the right thing in leaving Emily with Matt? What would you have counseled Sarah to do or what would you have done in her place? Should Emily have been given back to Sarah?

3. Pauline, the church secretary, says to Jonathan, "You can help a lot more people if you stay on top of the cliff throwing down ropes, rather than climbing down into a hole to save one soul and maybe never coming back." The church board considers shutting down the church because of low attendance although Jonathan argues that even saving one soul is worth the price.

Do you think it's better to throw a lifeline to many or to personally help one person in need? Does either do more good? How have you helped someone? Have you ever helped someone at the expense of yourself? Is there a cost trade-off to be placed on saving a human soul?

4. Caitlyn's fiancé Brian left her to pursue a job opportunity which she encouraged him to take even though it took him across the country while she was recovering from an injury.

Do you blame Brian for leaving Caitlyn? Do you think Caitlyn has a right to be angry at Brian given she told him it was okay to go? Have you ever told someone to do something you didn't want them to? Were you angry if they took you at your word? If so, why? Is this a justified reaction?

5. Sarah's psychiatrist says, "Sometimes the monsters we create in our mind are far more powerful than the ones that actually exist." Matt and Sarah's mother was a very sick woman who didn't receive the help she needed for her problem, and the specter of her illness has left an unshakable impression on her children.

What "monsters" from your childhood still affect you today? As an adult, do they seem more or less scary than they did to you as a child?

I hope you all enjoyed *SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL* and these questions help inspire some great discussion. Happy reading!

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