

RANGE OF MOTION

Book Club Questions

1. What is the significance of the title of the novel?
2. Discuss how the 'range of motion' of the main characters are limited as the novel begins.
3. How does the flexibility of the characters expand over time and what factors or events contribute to that growth?
4. Talk about ways in which problems with 'range of motion' apply not just to individual lives in the novel but to the cottage community around them.
5. What do you as a reader consider the most difficult kind of impediment to 'range of motion' you have encountered in your own life? (physical, emotional, spiritual, other)
6. Discuss how a strong sense of tradition in a family or community can be a roadblock to maintaining flexibility and growth. Illustrate this from your own experience and/or the experiences of the characters in the novel.
7. Both individuals and communities may have flaws or biases that go unnoticed. Discuss how Maggie comes to recognize this and tries to move beyond those 'blind spots'.
8. Do you think Maggie will ever sell her family cottage, and why? How does her attitude toward 'home' and 'tradition' change in the course of the novel?
9. What role does gardening play in Maggie's life? Discuss how her experiences in the garden contribute to her feelings about love, loss and community.
10. How does Maggie and Jake's relationship help and/or hinder their struggles with 'range of motion' in the novel?
11. Reflect on how the garden, the Northern Michigan environment and the cottage community function as 'characters' in the novel?
12. Compare/contrast Maggie and Jake's relationships to their adult children. Do children ever stop being your children?
13. How does Maggie's relationship with her mother change in the novel? How does it change her own view of parenting?
14. What part of the novel speaks most to you personally and why? Discuss ways in your own life for maintaining or increasing your 'range of motion'? Do these change with age?