

Book Club Questions: Garden of Eve

- 1) With which character or characters in the novel can you most identify? And why? Eve herself, her daughters or granddaughter Emma; Anise, Artie and Viv, George and Mark Blandis, Bea, Jake, Matt and Ben Gaskill or Chris Demort.
- 2) Grief changes everything, Eve writes as the novel begins. Discuss what contributes to her ability to move beyond the ash heap on which she finds herself to discover new reasons for living.
- 3) More than plants grow in Eve's garden. Discuss the plot of the novel and its title. How does the image of the garden reflect Eve's personal journey?
- 4) We are all broken people at one time or another in our lives. How do the characters in the novel use their vulnerability to help themselves and one another grow?
- 5) Which of the novel's character(s) most reflect where you find yourself at this stage of your life journey? And why?
- 6) How do the sense of time and the changing seasons impact the characters in the novel? Why do you think human beings find the notion of "time" spiritually so important?
- 7) How have an awareness of passing time and the rhythm of life in the garden played a role in defining your own sense of what life is all about?
- 8) Gardening is the number one avocation or "hobby" in the world. Discuss how gardening impacts the lives of the characters in the novel.
- 9) How do the characters' experiences help explain the importance of gardening as a way of "grounding" human beings in our urban world?
- 10) As a mother, Eve Brennerman finds an ongoing challenge in the relationship between herself and her two daughters. How does Anise change that dynamic?
- 11) Discuss how the growing relationships in the novel redefine what it means to be "family". Anise, Eve and her daughters; George and Matt and their sons; Viv, Artie and the young Chris Demort; Eve and her granddaughter, Emma.
- 12) Why is intergenerational gardening so important? Compare how the novel's character are drawn to gardening with your own experiences.
- 13) Define community as you experience it? as it exists in Xenophon?
- 14) How does "time in a garden" shape your personal search for meaning?
- 15) If you had to predict where the characters in the novel would be on their life paths a year from now, where would they be?