

Suggested Questions for Book Club Discussions

TEN THOUSAND ROCKS

The ocean is more than an incidental feature in this story. Describe how this powerful albeit inanimate “character” influences the storyline and the lives of different characters throughout the book.

Is there a deeper layer of meaning for the book’s title beyond the story of Mr. Fogarty, the old man who threw rocks into the ocean each day?

Discuss the relationship between Mr. Fogarty and the ocean. How did he impact the lives of other beachgoers?

Discuss the relationship between Will and his parents. Why did he keep his marriage a secret for so long? Do you think his parents were right to feel hurt about a “secret” that they actually knew about for years? How did the relationship change between Will and his parents? Between the parents and Laura?

If anyone in the discussion group has worked with quadriplegic patients or paraplegic patients, ask them to share whether Will’s reactions to his condition were typical to what they have observed. Invite them to talk about how patients and their families must adapt to an entirely new way of life.

How did Will’s and Laura’s reactions to Will’s life-changing condition evolve throughout the book?

Discuss Will’s attitude toward Laura when he first saw her after the accident. Do you think he meant it when he said he hated her and later asked for a divorce? Was he in his right mind?

Do you think Will ever got to learn what Donald Rasmussen found out? Please explain why or why not.

Which character did you most identify with and why?

What did you like most about the book?

Severe disability could happen to any person at any time, though most people assume it will happen to somebody else. A thematic question raised by the author in this book is: “What makes a life worth living?”. Discuss any new insights you may have gained from this book on this question.

