

## BOOKCLUB DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### FOR BEAUTIFUL FRAGMENTS BY VANESSA EVETTS

1. Reading *Beautiful Fragments*, you bear witness to two suicide attempts, violence, abuse and a brutal rape. How did this affect your reading experience?
2. Discuss the prevalence of suicide and sexual abuse in your culture and how we can solve such multi-faceted issues?
3. Sam saved Sophie's life against her wishes. Discuss the moral dilemma that existed.
4. We naturally judge others, their circumstances and choices based on our own life experiences. *Beautiful Fragments* gives you insight into the life of two women who were abandoned, abused and hopeless. Were you able to connect with them, understand and have compassion for them? Would you think differently about a 'Sophie or Jamie' you saw on the street after reading this novel?
5. This novel is a call to action. A call to notice. A call to love. What can we do differently as a company of women (or men) to empower, encourage and raise up the most broken of us?
6. This novel is also a celebration of the beauty that lies beneath the scars we carry. How can we make sure we allow ourselves to push past first impressions and judgements and spend time getting to know people who live or believe differently to us?
7. What was your first impression of Joy? How did this change throughout the novel?
8. Was there a scene, moment or conversation in the book which captured you? Discuss.
9. Vanessa Evetts writes with unusual insight. If you could sit down with the author, what would you ask? (Feel free to post your questions on her Facebook author page or Goodreads).
10. Overcoming fear was a strong theme throughout the novel. Is there something that is holding you back from living your best life? What are some steps you could take to overcome it?
11. Joy describes forgiveness as an act of power. Discuss whether this conversation with Sophie made you think differently about the act of forgiveness.
12. The words 'I am' are highlighted in the book title *Beautiful Fragments*. The truth is we are all 'Beautiful Fragments'.  
How important are your 'I am's'. Consider the way you think about/talk about yourself.  
Who do you say you are?

13. There is an international crisis of identity in today's world. How important is a healthy sense of identity? What does that mean to you?
14. Sophie's sense of identity was wrapped up in the way she had been treated throughout her life. Discuss the main turning points in the novel which gave her a renewed sense of who and what she was.
15. When Sophie was in the brothel there was an unravelling of negative ruminations which were tied to an unhealthy sense of self-worth. They were replaced by the voices of three women determined to help her. How much did this play a part in her survival?
16. We could all do with a shake-up where our thoughts are concerned. The author calls our internal thoughts a 'soundtrack' – for two reasons – firstly, negative thoughts like to go round and round like a record, and secondly – the record can be changed. It is a physical response to an emotional and spiritual issue. What is playing on your soundtrack? Do you need to change the record?
17. You can't just get rid of negative thoughts, you have to replace them with truth, and build a new neural pathway until your brain automatically chooses the new path over the old. Discuss or spend some time identifying some rogue negative thoughts that have become a well-worn pathway in your brain. Read some articles or blogs about this process or Heidi Farrelly's bestselling book, 'Choosing Happy' – and start using positive affirmations or truth statements about your identity (I am) to build some new pathways.
18. Sophie and Caleb had very different views and behaviours around sex. Discuss how this impacted the novel and their journey, both as individuals and a couple.
19. What could you take away from Sophie, Joy and Caleb's lives to better serve those who are hurting or recovering from abuse or addiction?
20. There is a strong spiritual sub-theme through this novel. Discuss your own beliefs and experiences with religion and church. If you are discussing with others please do so with grace and love, understanding that everyone has had different experiences in life which have led them to their worldview and beliefs.
21. How did this sub-theme affect your reading and enjoyment of the novel?
22. How does the author's literary style contribute to the message, or the story? Give an example.
23. If you could rewrite Sophie's story, or part thereof, what would it look like?

24. The author created a playlist on Spotify to accompany this book. Have a listen. Would there be any other songs you would add?
25. If Beautiful Fragments was to be made into a film and you were the casting director, who would you cast?
26. The impact strangers had on Sophie's journey to freedom and healing was immeasurable. Discuss the presence of compassion, or lack thereof in our communities/world and brainstorm ways to show kindness and compassion in our everyday lives.
27. We often make snap judgements about people, their choices and their lifestyles based on what we can see, but it's what we can't see that dictates character and conduct. Has reading this novel given you pause to consider the ways we can treat ourselves and others with more grace and understanding? Discuss why this is important.
28. The main question of the novel was 'What benefit is hope, when you are trapped in a nightmare that has no end?' Discuss your response to this question in relation to the text and your own lives.
29. Discuss the reasons why this book and others like it need to be put into the hands of teenagers.
30. How do we raise our kids to have awareness of the dangers and lies of the world, without being consumed by fear?
31. What were your ideas about the sex-industry before reading this novel? Were you aware that boyfriending is used to manipulate young girls and boys into the industry? Did you know sex and human trafficking is an issue in your part of the world? *Boyfriending: 'being lured into a romantic relationship with a man who is intentionally preying on his/her vulnerabilities'.*
32. Human trafficking is a massive international tragedy. There are more slaves in the world today than any other time in our history. What can we do as individuals and organisations to lend our voice, our hands and our resources to the cause?
33. Suicide, mental illness and drug and alcohol addiction are epidemics internationally. What can we do as grandparents, parents, educators, leaders, pastors, siblings to make sure our loved ones and people within our own communities are not suffering in silence. How can WE help?

## A CALL TO ACTION

There are a million Sophies & Jamies in the world, and there are wonderful organisations whose sole mission is to help victims of violence, abuse, addiction and trafficking find their feet, their purpose, identity and place in the world, as well as undertaking preventative action. Get involved locally where you can; be honest with people you trust; use what is in your hand to affect change in your area of influence; speak up in love rather than judgement, and above all else, be kind.