

THE HEALING BETWEEN US

A Story of Faith, Healing & Sisterhood

READING GROUP GUIDE

By Author SunShyne B.

Four women. Four journeys. Four hearts. One conversation worth having.

Welcome, readers. Whether you gather with a book club, women's ministry, church group, or circle of friends, this guide invites thoughtful conversation about grief, chronic illness, motherhood, betrayal, faith, and the power of being seen and supported.

Spoiler notice: The questions below discuss major revelations and the ending. Finish the novel before beginning, or select questions carefully.

Group agreement: Make space for different opinions; do not pressure anyone to share personal experiences; respect privacy; and remember that no reader has to defend a response to trauma or illness.

Opening the conversation

1. Which woman challenged your first impression most as the story progressed? What changed your understanding of her?
2. The four women appear strong in different ways. When does “being strong” become a barrier to asking for help?
3. If you had to name the novel's central argument about healing, what would it be—and which scene best supports or complicates it?

Porsha: grief, loyalty, and new beginnings

4. How does Porsha's grief shape her choices and relationships? At what point, if any, does protecting a memory begin to limit the living?
5. Consider Porsha's relationship with Marcus. What must trust look like after loss, and what would you have needed to see before supporting their future together?

6. At the housewarming, Marcus proposes and Porsha reveals her pregnancy. Does this ending feel like earned restoration, an idealized resolution, or both? Defend your view.

Elizabeth: identity beyond a career

7. When sarcoidosis forces Elizabeth away from hairstyling, what exactly does she lose besides income? How does the book distinguish identity from occupation?
8. Elizabeth builds Beauteeful You Hair & Scalp Care. Is her entrepreneurial pivot primarily an act of resilience, a practical necessity, or a risk she should have approached differently?
9. How do the setback with an investor and Elizabeth's solo Jamaica trip complicate the idea that healing means constant forward progress?

Lillian: motherhood and invisible labor

10. Which expectations of wives and mothers make it hardest for Lillian to admit she is struggling? Who should have noticed sooner, and why?
11. What does Lillian's decision to seek therapy say about faith, responsibility, and receiving professional help? How might different readers interpret that decision?
12. How do her family's baby dedication and her decision to return to work change your view of what a "good mother" should be?

Andrea: betrayal, accountability, and agency

13. Andrea's HIV diagnosis and Matthew's recorded confession transform what she knows about her past. How should a survivor's agency shape the way friends and communities respond?
14. What obligations, if any, do people such as Marc have when they witness or attempt to stop harm? Where does responsibility begin and end?
15. Andrea's public testimony leads to a book and film opportunity. What are the potential gifts and risks of turning private trauma into a public story?
16. What makes Andrea's developing relationship with Lucas feel hopeful? What boundaries would be essential for her healing regardless of whether the relationship continues?

The Circle: faith, friendship, and hard truths

17. Pastor Naomi offers the women a place to gather. What makes a group emotionally safe—and what might undermine that safety even among people of faith?
18. When is prayer a source of strength, and when might someone mistakenly use spiritual language to avoid grief, conflict, therapy, or practical action?
19. Which woman gives support most generously, and which finds receiving support hardest? Is there a cost when friendship becomes one-sided?
20. How does the novel balance forgiveness with accountability? Identify a situation in which forgiving someone would not require reconciliation or restored access.
21. What is the difference between “God has a purpose” and telling someone that their suffering was necessary? How should a caring community speak about pain?

Endings, choices, and debate

22. Which resolution felt most convincing, and which felt too neat or unresolved? What alternate ending would preserve the novel’s message?
23. The women begin mentoring teenage girls. What lessons are they qualified to teach, and what must they still be learning themselves?
24. If one character could revisit a single decision, which should it be? How might that change the story for better and for worse?
25. What should a reader take away if her own healing does not arrive with a new business, romance, pregnancy, or public recognition?

Optional group activities

Four corners: Assign each corner of the room to Porsha, Elizabeth, Lillian, or Andrea. Invite readers to stand by the character whose decisions they understood best, then explain their choice. Allow participants to change corners after hearing others.

Debate prompt: “Healing requires community more than personal courage.” Divide into two groups and have each build a case using scenes from the novel. Close by identifying where both sides may be right.

Letter to a character: Write a short, compassionate letter to one woman at the moment she feels most alone. Share only if comfortable.

Closing reflection

What is one conversation this book made you more willing to have—with yourself, someone you love, or your community? What would it look like to make room for that conversation with care?

For group organizers: Suggested session length: 60–90 minutes. Choose 8–12 questions rather than trying to cover them all. Sensitive subjects include sexual assault, HIV, grief, chronic illness, and postpartum mental health; participation and disclosure should always be optional.

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