



Book Club Questions

The Change by Kirsten Miller

1. Each of the three protagonists of *The Change*—Jo, Nessa, and Harriett—develops a particular power in mid-life that's uniquely suited to them. If mid-life were to bring you a specific new power, what would it be? How would you use that power?
2. Author Kirsten Miller has said that certain elements of *The Change* are "ripped from the headlines." Were there storylines or characters who reminded you of real-life events or people? Why do you think the author drew inspiration from current events?
3. Jo starts her gym Furious Fitness because she sees that the women who come there "were blowing off steam before they exploded." Why are so many women in the book so full of rage—and what do they do with that rage? Do you identify with that anger?
4. Harriett tells Jo: "I feel like I spent the first twenty years of my life trying to figure shit out. The second twenty I wasted on the wrong people...Then I reached this stage of my life, and all that fell away.. And for the first time in my life I knew what the hell I was doing." Age and experience have made Harriett smarter and more powerful than ever. But that's also the moment when her boss and her husband dump her. Does that ring true for you? Have you seen this dynamic at work in your own life?
5. Mattauk, where the women live, is a seemingly idyllic beach town, but "Nessa wondered what [her parents] would have said if they had known there was a monster lurking in the shadows of their storybook town. Would that have come as a surprise? Or had they known, deep inside, that's how things worked—even in pretty little places like Mattauk." What do you think? Do people move to places like Mattauk thinking that exclusivity will keep them safe? Does it?
6. The women of *The Change* pit themselves against evil men, but not all the men we meet are bad guys. What did you make of characters like Franklin, Art, Josh, Eric, even Chase? What do they tell us about men's potential as partners and allies?
7. Stories of Culling Pointe's past victims are interspersed throughout the book. Why do you think Kirsten Miller chose to include those? Did they affect the way you felt about the main story?
8. Did the truth about Claude shock you? Were there clues about her complicity that the other women should have seen earlier? Were you surprised that she turned on Leonard in the end?
9. Claude tells the girls who she procures, "What you just received was a shot in the arm...A little dose of ugliness. A glimpse of the way things really work. You survived, and now you're not only immune, you're stronger than you were before. Take the money you've made and the wisdom you've earned and put them both to good use. That's what I've done." Do you think there's any truth to that? Do you think Claude really believes it?
10. Claude later tells Harriett that "Nothing's going to stop [predatory men] from doing what they want to do. These are some of the richest men in the country...The only thing I could do was make sure some good came out of it." Did you buy this argument? Did any good actually come out of what happened at Culling Pointe?
11. What do you think becomes of Jo, Nessa, and Harriett in the years after the close of this novel? How will their new powers affect the next phase of their lives? What would you like to see them do?

Book club questions by the publisher