



Starting Now, Reading Guide

1. *Starting Now* is not only the title of this book, it's also the theme. Besides Libby, what other characters in the book are coping with life-changing developments? How are they handling the upheaval in their lives?
2. During Libby's time of unemployment, she learned she was a survivor. Share with your group about a time in your life when you had to start over or went through a similar period of adversity. What did you learn about yourself in the process?
4. When Libby's boss lets her go, he advises her to get a life outside of work. What did you think about Libby's attempts to do that? Would you have approached it differently than she did? Why do some people struggle more than others to maintain a balance in life? What do you think are the keys to achieving that balance?
5. Libby discovers great joy by volunteering at the hospital. What do you think it was about the experience that proved so fulfilling? Would a different type of volunteer work have had the same impact?
6. Libby demonstrated her optimistic outlook on life when she told her friend, Robin, that eventually everything would right itself. Even so, Libby still had setbacks and disappointments. Do you believe that everything works out like it's supposed to? Did you agree with how Libby faced her challenges? How would you have responded differently?
7. For Libby, re-discovering knitting is therapeutic. What is it about this activity that helps her? Have you had similar experiences with taking up a hobby?

8. Both Libby and Phillip have a tendency towards being workaholics but this is something Phillip has taken action to address when the book opens. How do you think this tendency impacts their relationship? Is the fact that these two characters are cut from the same cloth, so to speak, a benefit or a hindrance?
9. Several of the characters in *Starting Now*, including Libby and Ava, feel they have been defined by their mothers. Likewise, Casey is having a much different mother/daughter experience with Lydia. Discuss these characters and how their mothers have had an impact on them, particularly at critical crossroads in their lives.
10. Which character in *Starting Now* do you relate to the most—and why?
11. Libby and Robin have a falling out. Do you think Robin was justified in being upset with Libby? How would you have handled it differently?
12. *Starting Now* demonstrates the resilience of the human spirit. By the story's end, in what ways was Libby's life better because of her ability to turn adversity into opportunity?

Spoiler Alert Questions

13. Lydia seeks out Ava's grandmother when she and Libby are made aware of Ava's pregnancy, and they debate about whether or not this is the best course to take. Intervention by outsiders into private family matters can be challenging and controversial. Did you agree with this course of action? How might you have handled it differently?
14. When Libby thought she was going to adopt Ava's baby, she planned on it being an open adoption, where Ava could be a part of the baby's life. Do you think Libby's decision was wise? If you were in Libby's shoes, would you choose an option adoption? Why or why not?
15. How do you think things would have played out if Libby had been able to adopt Ava's baby? How would it have affected her career? Would the course of her relationship with Phillip have been any different?