

THE THERAPIST

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *The Therapist's* prologue closes with a Henry David Thoreau quote: "Happiness is like a butterfly; the more you chase it, the more it will elude you. But if you turn your attention to other things, it will come and sit softly on your shoulder." How does this quote relate to the rest of the novel?
2. The Circle itself plays a large role in *The Therapist*: a gated, tight-knit community of twelve families could, at times, be a difficult place to live. Would you consider living in an estate like The Circle? Was conflict of some kind—if not necessarily to this extent—almost inevitable?
3. In Chapter 2, Leo says to Alice, "We're fine on our own. We don't need anyone else." Alice continues to dwell on this statement; do you think this "us against the world" mentality can be romantic? Healthy? How does your understanding of this statement change as you learn more about their relationship?
4. Alice offers multiple reasons for not revealing to friends that Thomas Grainger was the one to tell her about the murder—seemingly harmless white lies that eventually build to a nearly deadly resolution. Do you buy in to her reasoning? Putting yourself in her shoes, what would you do differently?
5. In Chapter 13, Alice reveals that her older sister Nina named her after *Alice in Wonderland*. How are the two Alices similar? Different? What about the two Ninas in this novel?
6. Early in the novel, Alice admits that she can't bring herself to like her new home, and later, in Chapter 17, she thinks, "it's not easy living with Nina's ghost." Though, ultimately, real people are responsible for the deaths that occur, how do ghosts and hauntings permeate *The Therapist*?
7. The "Past" interstitials play out almost on repeat—until the last two when things abruptly take a turn. What effect do you think the author was trying to create with this technique?
8. In one of the final reveals, we learn the truth behind Alice's sister's death. Were you surprised by this information? How did it change your understanding of Alice's motivations and reactions?
9. The words that end the novel are, "The truth, and nothing but the truth." How does this sum up the events that occurred and the choices characters made in *The Therapist*?

