COMPANION KIT

Book club guide

These questions fit a two-hour meeting. Pick two or three from each part. Nobody has to share a story they would rather keep.

Before you meet

Each person tries Level 1 (almost nothing) for five minutes, once, and brings one word for how it felt.

Introduction

1. What was the word you were handed as a child for how to spend your time? What did it mean in your house?
2. Where do you still hear it?

Part One: Why nothing fails

1. In the lab study, many people could not sit alone with their thoughts for a few minutes. Did that surprise you? What would you have done?
2. The book separates imposed nothing from chosen nothing. Where in your life is the time empty but not chosen?
3. Chapter 3 says empty days can make grief heavier. Does that match anything you have seen in someone else?

Part Two: How to make nothing work

1. Which excuse topped your list in the gap audit? Was it real, or a candy?
2. What did you do on your first ten-second pause?
3. Who or what tried to take your protected time? What did you do with the request?

Part Three: The field guide

1. Which kinds did you try? Which did you rate Tested, Related or Untested, and did the label change how you felt about it?
2. Which kind would you recommend to someone in this room?

Part Four: Nothing in real life

1. Which chapter fits your life best: caregiving, work, other people, travel, evenings or the days you cannot do anything?
2. What is one sentence from the scripts you would actually say to someone?
3. Chapter 14 says on some days you are not failing at nothing. Who needs to hear that?

Part Five and Afterword

1. What survived your thirty days, and what did you drop?
2. The book asks what “constructive” should have meant. What would you tell the child who was handed that word?
3. What would you say to someone who has just lost a person and has nothing on the calendar?

Ground rules for the meeting

- Start with one minute of quiet. Set a timer.
- Phones in a basket.
- Silence between answers is fine.