

WHAT DOESN'T KILL US MAKES US



by Mike Mariani



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Before reading the book, how did you think people changed after experiencing catastrophic life events (such as paralysis, limb loss, blindness, incarceration, etc.)? Did your idea of “life-altering” change? Why or why not?
2. Have you experienced a life-changing event? How did it affect you? How were you able to adapt to and coexist with the permanent changes that experience wrought? What was it like reading about other people’s experiences? (Note: If you are not comfortable discussing your answer to this question with a group, it is okay to reflect on it only with yourself. Your experiences are your own and you do not have to share anything that you do not want to.)
3. How do you feel about the validity or veracity of Nietzsche’s famous maxim, “What doesn’t kill me, makes me stronger”? Did this book change your opinion of that phrase, or facilitate the development of a more nuanced understanding of it?
4. What is the relationship between tragedy and identity?
5. How did the author’s own experiences inform or complicate your understanding of how people change after catastrophic life events?
6. Were there particular subjects or experiences that you strongly related to? How so? (Note: If you are not comfortable discussing your answer to this question with a group, it is okay to reflect on it only with yourself. Your experiences are your own and you do not have to share anything that you do not want to.)
7. How do you compare Nietzsche’s ubiquitous maxim to the concept of Amor fati? Is one superior, or more truthful, than the other?
8. What do you think of the title, *What Doesn't Kill Us Makes Us*? What is the significance of removing “stronger” from the quote? Are resilience and strength the same thing? What does it mean to be “made” by an experience?