

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

## Good Will Come: *Exploring The Good That Can Emerge From Hardship*

### About the Topic

By any yardstick, 2020 has been a tough year for many people around the world. COVID-19 has ushered in a variety of restrictions, dangers, and hardship. It has resulted in a great deal of suffering.

Out of hardship, however, can emerge new opportunities, new growth, and other outcomes we might call “good”. But how does this work? And what can we do increase the likelihood that good will, indeed, come in the wake of current hardships?

This discussion guide is designed to be used in conjunction with our companion resource on Good Will Come.

### About Discussion Groups

A discussion group can provide a way for a group of coworkers or colleagues to come together to explore and share their experiences. At their best, discussion groups create an emotionally safe space that allow participants to explore complex experiences together in community, learn more about each other, and extend and receive empathy and support.

It is important to allow adequate time for sharing and reflection. Depending on group size, discussion groups usually require 45 – 90 minutes. For groups of more than 3-4 people, a facilitator can be helpful to ensure the discussion stays on topic and that all participants are invited to contribute.

An effective discussion group generally has a number of elements:

- ✓ Group members are clear on the purpose and ground rules of the discussion. For example:
  - It is not therapy. Rather, it is a chance to learn more about each other’s experiences and perspectives upon the topic.
  - All contributions should be met with respect.
  - Group members can contribute (or not contribute) as they wish.
  - Group members should not share the specifics of other people’s contributions outside the group discussion.
- ✓ Group members should feel safe and comfortable expressing their experiences, ideas, and feelings.
- ✓ All members of the group should have a chance to speak, express their ideas and feelings freely, and to pursue or finish out their thoughts. Group members should feel invited (but not pressured) to share.

## Discussion Questions

1. Do you have a phrase, saying, or belief that offers you particular comfort during tough times? What do you tell yourself?
2. Do you believe that good can emerge from hardship? Can you give any examples of what that good may look like?
3. Have there been any “silver linings” in the COVID-19 pandemic for you? What?
4. Do you believe the phrase “what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger” is true? Why or why not?
5. Can you think of an example where a hardship you have faced has led to greater patience, empathy, and ability to cope with lower-level stressors? How did that work?
6. Can you think of an example where a hardship you have faced has led to LESS patience, empathy, and ability to cope with lower-level stressors? Why?
7. How can hardship deepen and strengthen relationships? Conversely, how can it weaken and damage them?
8. How can positive thinking help us cope with challenges and hardships? Can “thinking positive” ever hurt us?
9. Think of someone you respect who has faced significant hardship.
  - a. What do you respect about them?
  - b. What “good” has emerged from their struggles?
  - c. What do you think has helped that to happen?
10. If you were coaching a friend on how to support another friend of theirs who was going through a hard time, what sort of advice would you offer them?
11. Think back on a previous difficult season.
  - a. What did friends and family do to support you that you found helpful and encouraging?
  - b. Were there things that people said or did that you found particularly annoying or unhelpful?
  - c. What disciplines or practices or other things that you did helped you persevere?