Book Club Discussion Guide For

Across the Street Around the Corner

*--The Road Home*

1. The book starts off with the author and a former neighbor talking about the web of support which a neighborhood can be, what would that web be for you?
2. What is your definition of the term, “good neighbor”.
3. The author goes back and forth 60 years in time—from her childhood neighborhood to her present neighborhood time where now, she is the old-timer on the block. What observations would you make about the differences in society?
4. What motivated the author to embark on the diary entries that are at the end of the little chapters? Have you every kept a personal diary like that?
5. Would you say you are the kind of person who easily greets others in your neighborhood or stays to yourself? What are the pros and cons of each ways of being?
6. The character of Donna explains how her mother cooked—just 6 recipes—“She could make them for 4, she could make them for 40. She was always having the neighbors over for dinner.” In todays world, what do you think of this?
7. In the piece where the author is meeting with her coffee group and she poses a question to her friends, “When was a time you had a memorable, positive and lovely experience with a neighbor?” The coffee group has a hard time bringing anything to mind and ends up laughing and giving up. What about you? Do you have an example or an experience with a neighbor that was memorably positive?
8. Does Across the Street and Around the Corner take you down any personal memories of your childhood?
9. What are your thoughts on Ginger’s statement, in the final chapter, “If you can’t give up complaining, then no neighborhood will be good enough.”
10. What are some of the things you like about your own neighborhood?
11. Either from your childhood or from now, do you have any “kooky” neighbors and what are they like?
12. The author wrote this during the pandemic as a way for herself to get through the lockdown. As she stated, “Can’t travel around the world? Well, how about around the block and see what others are up to.” What were some of the take aways for her efforts?
13. The author writes about JJ, and how she tried to help her neighbor who was kind of mean and angry. Have you ever tried to help a neighbor who seemed this way?
14. And finally, what do you think was the reason for the author wanting to write this book?