

Book Club Questions for *Save What's Left*

1. What resonated with you the most while reading *Save What's Left*? Reflect on the depth and significance of the book's title, exploring its evolution from a simple slogan to a profound existential exploration. Discuss the aspects of Kathleen's journey that captivated you and consider how you personally related to her fish-out-of-water experience.
2. Kathleen undergoes a major life change when her husband leaves and she decides to start over in a beach town. Have you ever experienced a significant life change that prompted you to reevaluate your priorities and make a fresh start? How did that experience shape your perspective on life and personal growth?
3. Kathleen remarks that small rural towns like Whitbey are often perceived as peaceful and quaint, but her own reality proves to be quite different. Why do you think she decides to stay in Whitbey despite her initial reservations? Compare Kathleen's experience with those of longtime local Rosemary, recent transplant Josie, and even her estranged husband Tom. How does each character's perspective shed light on the allure and challenges of small-town living?
4. The Sugar Cube emerges as a central focal point in *Save What's Left*, standing in stark contrast to Kathleen's modest oyster shack. Analyze how this architectural wonder takes on a character of its own in the novel. Additionally, for a fun twist, imagine yourself having to choose between the two beach homes—Kathleen's cozy cottage or the modern marvel of the Sugar Cube—and explain your preference and the reasons behind it.
5. In *Save What's Left*, Kathleen's estranged husband occupies her driveway and later moves to the water, while Josie and Dan renew their wedding vows following a scandalous infidelity. Delve into the concept of a "normal" marriage and family within the context of the novel. Discuss the book's exploration of love, betrayal, and forgiveness, and examine what it reveals about the complexities and dynamics of these relationships.
6. Kathleen ponders whether people ever stop asking about one's occupation and if that question persists throughout life. Explore how *Save What's Left* tackles the themes of aging, retirement, and the pursuit of the American Dream. Consider the risks and rewards of following one's heart and uncovering personal passions. Is there ever a point when it becomes too late to discover one's true identity or purpose?
7. Examine the narrative structure of *Save What's Left*. Did you enjoy the epistolary elements, such as Kathleen's letters to Supervisor White? Identify other storytelling techniques employed in the book, such as foreshadowing and gripping chapter endings. Share any notable moments that left you pleasantly surprised or craving more.

8. Discuss the role of community and belonging in the book. How does Kathleen navigate her sense of identity and find a sense of belonging in the small beach town? What lessons can be drawn from her experiences in terms of the importance of community support and connection?
9. Kathleen humorously expresses her desire to wake up with amnesia, forgetting why she is in Whitbey. However, she also admits to loving the town or, at the very least, loving to hate it. Can both of these sentiments coexist? Reflect on these intimate asides and their effect on your connection with Kathleen. Which of her remarks stood out to you the most and why?
10. In *Save What's Left*, there are multiple perspectives and layers to the story. Discuss the characters you found yourself rooting for and the reasons behind your support. Additionally, delve into Kathleen's newspaper article and its implications regarding the nature of "fake news" on a neighborhood level.
11. If you had the chance to ask the young, first-time author one question about *Save What's Left*—whether it's related to the writing process, the portrayal of mature characters, or the intricacies of the plot—what would you ask? Take this opportunity to delve into your curiosities about the book's creation and execution.
12. Envision the future for Kathleen in Whitbey beyond the final chapter of the book. Extend this exercise to other characters such as Tom, Rosemary, Josie, Hattie, and newcomer Cindy Schwartz. Share your thoughts on their potential paths and the possibilities that lie ahead for each of them within the confines of Whitbey's community.