

# BOOK CLUB GUIDE

*Includes discussion questions, a playlist,  
insights from the author & more*



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## [All That Fills Us by Autumn Lytle](#)

In a last-ditch effort to make something of herself, an anorexic woman sets out on foot in a cross-country pilgrimage. As she faces the forces of nature and battles her inner demons, she'll come face-to-face with her disorder along the journey to healing, acceptance, and fulfillment.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

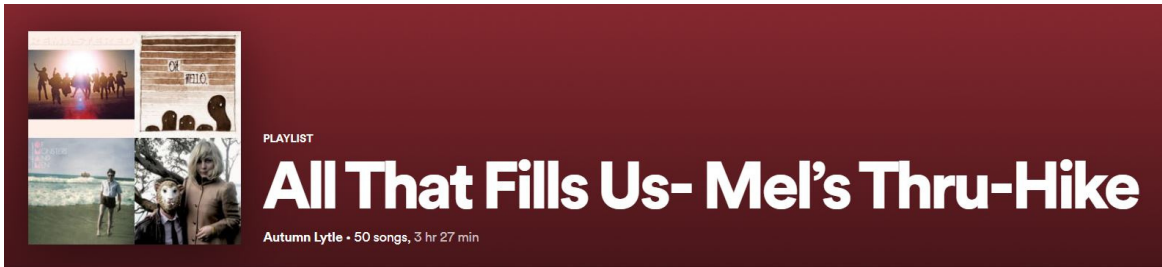
1. What role did the trail play in Mel's recovery? How did it act as its own character? In what ways was the trail a hindrance and in what ways was it a help to Mel's healing?
2. Mel's sense of worthlessness manifests itself in various forms of self-harm. Have you ever felt a sense of worthlessness? How have you seen the consequences of that feeling play out in your own life?
3. Mel meets many unexpected people along her journey who assist her and help her heal. Who has been an unexpected helper in your life? How have they helped you heal?
4. Mel's dad journeyed to the Grand Canyon when God felt far away. Mel headed to Mount Rainier. Where do you journey when God feels far away, even if it's just in your own head?
5. What was Mel looking for when she set out on her journey? Did she find it? How do you think the journey compared to her expectations?
6. What insights did you glean from reading the perspective of someone living with an eating disorder? How does American society often hinder those trying to heal from an eating disorder?
7. Nothing about Mel's journey was sugarcoated. At what points did you feel most sympathetic toward Mel? At what points were you most frustrated? Were there any moments when you empathized with Mel or her struggles?
8. Do you believe Mel's grandma is worthy of Mel's gratitude? Do you believe she was doing her best to help? Why or why not?

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

9. Is there a figure in your own life who uses religious guilt as a weapon like Mel's mother? How did that affect the way you see yourself?
10. On the trail, Mel mostly encounters women. How did that work in her favor? How did her interactions with the women on the trail differ from her often-fraught relationships with the women in her life?
11. Do you think Mel and Alex are a good match for each other? Why or why not? If Mel eventually chose to get back together with Alex, what sort of personal growth would she have to make, and what boundaries would she have to set to make sure this time was different?
12. Mel is deeply and spiritually affected by the natural world during her hike. What role does nature play in her healing journey? What role does it play in your life?
13. Which of the people Mel met on her journey spoke to you the most? Do you feel like they spoke to you because they are the kind of person you are, the kind of person you want to be, or the kind of person you need in your life?
14. Much of Mel's healing was repetitive. What truths did she have to keep relearning? How do you think repetition plays into healing from a mental health disorder?
15. Did Mel's journey make you want to tackle a thru-hike of your own someday? If so, what would you do differently?



# MEL'S THRU-HIKE PLAYLIST



Listen here:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4nwfn6qvxDdykfEbjMJoAD?si=drfbQJCIT5aAREDBf5-QNA>

## INSIGHTS FROM A REAL THRU-HIKER

Despite owning three hiking backpacks and dressing almost exclusively in Patagonia-brand clothing, I have almost no firsthand experience with the perils, joys, and demands of thru-hiking. However, my dear friend and her very new husband set out on a thru-hike last April, tackling the entire Appalachian Trail in six months! Our hometown ran an article about their experience, which I have included below for a truly authentic look at what it takes to complete a thru-hike.

Read here:

<https://www.hometownlife.com/story/life/2021/07/16/michigan-newlyweds-hike-appalachian-trail-honeymoon/7825352002/>



# FACTS ABOUT MOUNT RAINIER THAT ARE SO COOL, THEY'RE GLACIAL

- Before it was named Rainier, several Native American tribes called the mountain variations of Tacoma or Tahoma, which means “the source of nourishment from the many streams coming from the slopes.” But then a white guy came around just before the eighteenth century and renamed the mountain after his buddy Peter Rainier, a Royal Navy officer in the Revolutionary War.
- Famous naturalist and preservationist John Muir was more than a little obsessed with Mount Rainier. So much so, he led the charge to designate Mount Rainier as America’s fifth national park. His famous quote about Mount Rainier is carved into the steps at Paradise: “The most luxuriant and the most extravagantly beautiful of all the alpine gardens I ever beheld in all my mountain-top ramblings.”
- Mount Rainier is the highest mountain in the northwestern Cascade Range and boasts twenty-five named glaciers. These glaciers provide an essential water source to six mighty rivers.
- The Nisqually, Puyallup, Squaxin Island, Muckleshoot, Yakama, and Cowlitz tribes all maintain relations with the park. Archaeological evidence traces indigenous use of this region back nine thousand years. For years, the park has reserved special areas for Native American rituals and worship. This provides spiritual and cultural resources to the current generations, linking today’s tribal members to their ancestors who lived in the shadow of the mountain for millennia.



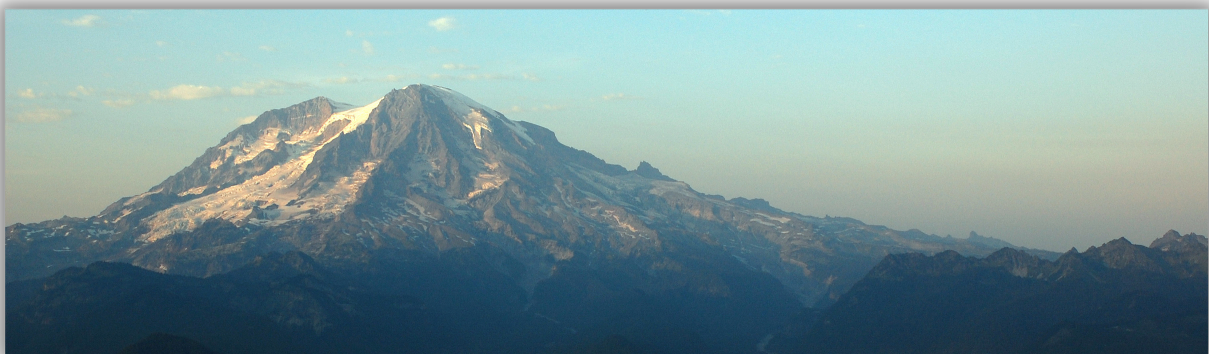
# FACTS ABOUT MOUNT RAINIER THAT ARE SO COOL, THEY'RE GLACIAL

- Mount Rainier is a stratovolcano that has erupted again and again over time, alternating between quiet lava-producing eruptions and explosive debris-producing eruptions. The most recent eruption was a small summit explosion between 1820 and 1850. Mount Rainier is one of the most dangerous volcanoes in the world. An eruption, although unlikely, could be catastrophic. Scientists say the large amount of glacial ice on Mount Rainier makes it capable of producing massive lahars that could devastate communities in the lower valleys.
- Archaeologists have found rich histories in the park, including a 1,200-year-old rock shelter containing charred goat, beaver, elderberry, and wild hazelnut remains.
- The park's Paradise area averages 639 inches (53 feet!) of snow a year, based on snowfall data collected over the past century. The record was set during the 1971-72 season with 1,122 inches (93.5 feet) of snowfall.
- Each year approximately ten thousand people set out to climb Mount Rainier. Only about half reach the summit.

Interactive Map of Mount Rainier National Park:

<https://www.nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit/maps.htm>

Sources: [1](#) | [2](#)



# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF COMMON EATING DISORDERS

Please note that the following information was gathered by me, Autumn Lytle, the author of a fiction book who should in no way be trusted with diagnosing or treating any mental health disorders. Heck, I'm still struggling with my own stuff. The following is only meant to inform. If you believe anyone in your life may be struggling with an eating disorder, please reach out to them and follow up with professional help.

- Although eating disorders can affect people of any gender at any life stage, they're most often reported in adolescents and young women. In fact, up to 13 percent of youth may experience at least one eating disorder by the age of twenty.
- Personality traits sometimes play a role in developing an eating disorder. In particular, neuroticism, perfectionism, and impulsivity are often linked to a higher risk of developing an eating disorder.
- Other potential causes include perceived pressures to be thin, cultural preferences for thinness, and exposure to media promoting such ideals. In fact, certain eating disorders appear to be mostly nonexistent in cultures that haven't been exposed to Western ideals of thinness.
- More recently, experts have proposed that differences in brain structure and biology may also play a role in the development of eating disorders.
- *All That Fills Us* explores the inner thoughts of someone struggling with anorexia; however, eating disorders can take several different forms. Here are some of the most common types of eating disorders and what signs and symptoms may accompany them.

## **ANOREXIA NERVOSA**

**Anorexia is officially categorized into two subtypes: the restricting type and the binge eating and purging type.**

- **Individuals with the restricting type lose weight solely through dieting, fasting, or excessive exercise.**
- **Individuals with the binge eating and purging type may consume large amounts of food or eat very little. In both cases, after they eat, they purge via vomiting, taking laxatives or diuretics, or exercising excessively.**

**Symptoms include:**

- **Being considerably underweight compared with people of similar age and height**
- **Very restricted eating patterns**
- **An intense fear of gaining weight or participating in persistent behaviors to avoid gaining weight, despite being underweight**
- **A relentless pursuit of thinness and an unwillingness to maintain a healthy weight**
- **A heavy influence of body weight or perceived body shape on self-esteem**
- **A distorted body image, including denial of being seriously underweight**
- **Obsessive-compulsive symptoms are also often present; for instance, many people with anorexia are often preoccupied with constant thoughts about food, and some may obsessively collect recipes or hoard food**
- **Difficulty eating in public and exhibiting a strong desire to control their environment, limiting their ability to be spontaneous**

## **BULIMIA NERVOSA**

**People with bulimia frequently eat unusually large amounts of food—foods the individual would normally avoid—in a specific period of time. Binge eating episodes usually continue until the person becomes painfully full.**

**During a binge, the person usually feels that they cannot stop eating or control how much they are eating. Individuals with bulimia then attempt to purge via forced vomiting, fasting, taking laxatives or diuretics, enemas, and exercising excessively, to compensate for the calories consumed and relieve gut discomfort.**

**Symptoms include:**

- **Recurrent episodes of binge eating with a feeling of lack of control**
- **Recurrent episodes of inappropriate purging behaviors to prevent weight gain**
- **Self-esteem that is overly influenced by body shape and weight**
- **Fear of gaining weight, despite having a normal weight**

## ORTHOREXIA NERVOSA

This type of eating disorder involves an unhealthy obsession with healthy eating. Unlike other eating disorders, orthorexia nervosa mostly revolves around food quality, not quantity. They have an extreme fixation on the “purity” or “cleanliness” of their foods, as well as an obsession with the benefits of healthy eating.

### Symptoms include:

- Intense fear of “unhealthy” foods and avoidance of those foods
- An obsession or preoccupation with healthy foods, nutrition, and eating
- Unable to deviate from a specific eating style or dietary regimen without feeling extreme anxiety
- An obsession with checking ingredient lists and nutrition labels
- Cutting out large groups of food despite having no medical, religious, cultural, or ethical reason for doing so (e.g., gluten, sugar, carbs, fats, animal products)
- Large amounts of time spent planning, buying, and preparing meals perceived as healthy, to the point of interference with other areas of life
- An unusual interest in or excessively critical view of others’ eating habits
- An unusual amount of time spent reviewing menus or thinking about the foods served at events
- Avoidance of social events and foods prepared by other people
- Bringing premade meals to events as a result of the belief that food prepared by others will not meet their standards of “healthy”
- Unintentional malnutrition or weight loss as a result of severe food restrictions
- Fixation on preventing or curing disease with food or “clean eating”

SOURCES: [1](#) | [2](#)



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Autumn Lytle identifies with a strange group of humans who enjoy running long distances and writing even longer books. Along with being a forever-recovering anorexic and exercise addict, she is a weirdly good checkers player and finder of four-leaf clovers. She spends her days thinking up stories and trying to figure out this whole parenting thing with her son. She can often be found exploring her hometown of Seattle, Washington, with her family in tow. Learn more at [www.autumnlytle.com](http://www.autumnlytle.com).



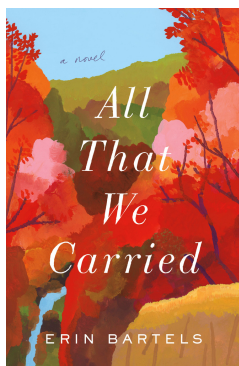
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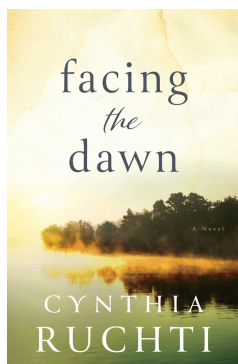
 [AutumnLytle21](https://www.pinterest.com/AutumnLytle21)

# WHAT TO READ NEXT



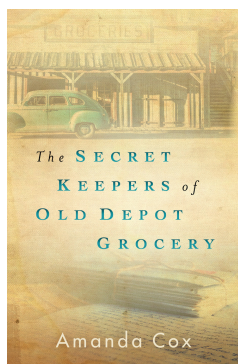
## [All That We Carried by Erin Bartels](#)

Estranged sisters embark on a hiking trip on the tenth anniversary of their parents' deaths in an attempt to reconnect. In the wilderness of Michigan's Upper Peninsula they'll face their deepest fears, question their most dearly held beliefs, and begin to see that perhaps the best way to move forward is the one way they had never considered.



## [Facing the Dawn by Cynthia Ruchti](#)

Mara Jacobs does her best to hold everything together, despite three detention-prone kids, an unrewarding job, never-ending chores, and a husband thousands of miles away. After a shocking loss, she must lean on those around her to find her way to healing and renewed faith.



## [The Secret Keepers of Old Depot Grocery by Amanda Cox](#)

For decades, three generations of women of Old Depot Grocery have been keeping secrets from each other. When Sarah returns home with hopes of running the store, the long-buried past will be brought into the light and threaten not only to destroy the family business but sever the family ties.



# ABOUT REVELL

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and help for everyday life.*

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