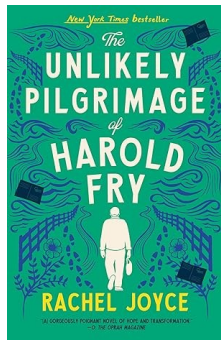




Discussion Guide



About the Book:

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry

Author: Rachel Joyce

Random House 2013

Website: <https://www.rachel-joyce.co.uk/rachel-joyce-books/>

Facebook: Rachel Joyce Books

Questions for Discussion

1. What were your general impressions of this book?
2. What did you think of the character of Harold Fry? Could you identify with him?
3. What did you think of Harold's wife, Maureen? Could you identify with her in any way?
4. **Wikipedia defines pilgrimage** Wikipedia defines a pilgrimage as "a journey into an unknown or foreign place where a person goes in search of new or expanded meaning about their self, others, nature or a higher good through the experience. It can lead to a personal transformation after which the pilgrim returns to their daily life." **In what ways was Harold's trip a pilgrimage? What was unlikely about it?**
5. Have you ever gone on a pilgrimage? If so, where did you go and what was it like?
6. In what ways, if any, do you feel stuck in your life? Would a pilgrimage help?
7. If you planned a pilgrimage for yourself what would it be?
9. How did Harold's relationship with people change during his trip?
10. After awhile, Harold really enjoyed being outdoors, even sleeping outdoors. How did the natural world affect him? Have you noticed this in yourself?
11. How did Harold's pilgrimage affect his friend, Queensie?
12. How did the pilgrimage awaken Harold and Maureen?
13. There were many people who joined Harold on his pilgrimage, how did you react to them?
14. What do the MAMs have to say about the book? Whom do you agree with?

Listen on YouTube:

THE UNLIKELY PILGRIMAGE OF HAROLD FRY | Official Trailer (2:33)

The Unlikely Pilgrimage Of Harold Fry - Interview With Rachel Joyce (5:55)

Rachel Joyce - The Unlikely Pilgrimage Of Harold Fry (10:03)

Meet the Author: Rachel Joyce (5:54)



NANCY: An unlikely book for me to read, but my book club chose it and so I did. I found the main character, Harold, rather endearing. It's quite an unreasonable adventure, and yet it was exactly what he needed to awaken to his life. There are many things I loved about this story, especially the transformations that occurred. It makes me think maybe we all need a pilgrimage of some sort.



ABIGAIL: I loved the way the author explained Harold's new awareness of the natural world. I think this is true for many people, me included. I can easily go about my life oblivious to the beauty of nature, and yet I often feel most alive and at home when I'm outdoors. The story reminds me to take time outdoors each day.



SALLIE: This story underscores the ways children can really be messed up by their parents' lives. Harold had such a rough time growing up and it stifled him, until his unlikely pilgrimage. I wonder how we can create experiences to help children and adults open to a full life, so they don't have to wait a life time.



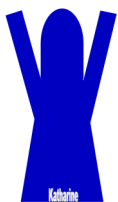
PRISCILLA: What a peculiar story! Don't you think Harold had a bit of a religious awakening? You know that's what pilgrimages are usually about. I wish I could go to the Holy Lands. Do you think the MAMs could plan a trip there sometime soon? I think that's the real pilgrimage for a Christian, — to see where Jesus lived.



MOLLY: I liked the way Harold opened up to a variety of people that he wouldn't usually associate with. I think that may be the value of pilgrimage, to get outside of the box. Maybe if everyone did this we could all get along better.



JANE: I kept wanting him to call home and get a lift. Crazy, crazy story. I mean who would walk 500 miles and think it would keep a friend with terminal cancer alive? He could've spent this time with his friend, instead of making her wait while she suffered. Why?



KATHARINE: I taught a class on spiritual pilgrimages. Quite intriguing, the variety of ways and places people journey. Harold's story included elements of traditional pilgrimages, as unlikely as it was. I wish I could have included for my class, to compare and contrast!