

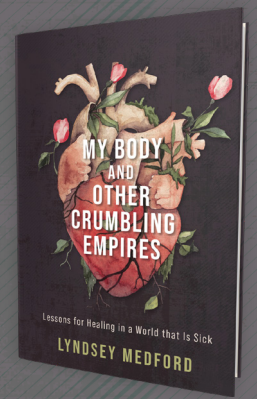


MY BODY AND OTHER CRUMBLING EMPIRES:

Lessons for Healing in a World That Is Sick

BY LYNDSEY MEDFORD

DISCUSSION GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

Have you encountered the idea of “communal sin” before? How does this idea strike you? In what ways have you participated in or been the victim of communal sin?

CHAPTER 1

Do you agree with the idea that we are our bodies? Does this idea match or clash with the conceptions of bodies you received growing up?

CHAPTER 2

Did you feel you could relate to the author’s discussion of burnout? What gets missed or overlooked in cultural conversations about burnout?

CHAPTER 3

When you read the author’s description of *The Autoimmune Wellness Handbook*, what was your first reaction? How do you feel about navigating between modern Western medicine, “lifestyle interventions,” wellness industries, and alternative medicines?

CHAPTER 4

The author lists forms of knowing other than scientific knowledge that contribute to people’s health and healing in healthcare settings. What are the benefits of relying on scientific knowledge to make certain decisions or solve certain problems? Are there costs when we don’t value other ways of knowing?

The author writes, “It often seems that my most privileged friends are the most paralyzed by unjust systems and the uncertain future.” Have you ever observed a dynamic like this? What do you think helps people to recognize and overcome it?

CHAPTER 5

How do you relate to the idea of “fragility”? What does your society or culture implicitly or explicitly tell people about being needy, weak, or delicate?

How do you believe God relates to the needy, weak, and delicate? How does that belief show up in your day-to-day life?

CHAPTER 6

Do you agree with the author’s reframing of “efficiency” and “effectiveness”? How have you seen her alternative vision for slow and sustainable change play out (or not) in your life or organization?

CHAPTER 7

How have you seen spaces or organizations “design for community” or “design for loneliness”? What insights do the retellings of Jesus’s story offer into how we can choose community more intentionally?

CHAPTER 8

Do you notice the accessibility of spaces or events in your day-to-day life?

Have you ever been involved in making a space more accessible to diverse body-minds? What did you learn from that experience?

As a thought exercise, brainstorm a few ways you could bring more accessibility to a space you’re often in.

CHAPTER 9

Competing claims and judgments about nutrition and ethical eating are everywhere these days. How do you navigate deciding what’s best for you and/or your family?

How are the ways we perceive or connect with the earth—such as in the author’s meditation on Jesus’s relationship with land—relevant to creating systemic environmental change?

CHAPTER 10

How do you define health and healing?

Were you familiar with the concept of Eros and/or “knowing by heart” before reading this chapter? Did you find these terms useful for understanding who Jesus is or who God calls us to be? What questions did this discussion of Jesus bring up for you?

CONCLUSION

What are you taking away and into your life from your reading of this book?