**SUGGESTED BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR:**

Hello readers! Thank you, thank you for reading "The Fire Outside My Window.” I hope you enjoyed the Cedar Fire story and learned something valuable about the challenges–and opportunities–faced by ordinary citizens, emergency responders, and communities facing today’s catastrophic megafires. As you gather your book club to delve into the worlds of nature, firefighting and the resilience of the human spirit, feel free to use these questions as a catalyst for meaningful discussions.

Follow your bobcat!

Sandra

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. The author, Sandra Millers Younger, opens her introduction to the 20th-anniversary edition of *The Fire Outside My Window* by describing her persistent fear of Santa Ana winds and wildfires. Can you relate to this sense of constant vigilance in the face of natural disasters or other challenges? How else did her personal fire experience shape her perspective and change her life?
2. *The Fire Outside My Window* describes the extreme nature of today’s megafires as a result of long-term fire suppression, rising temperatures and persistent drought. How did this book contribute to your understanding of wildfire’s shifting effects on ecosystems? How do today’s severe wildfires play into our global environmental challenges? What meaningful steps can we as individuals and society at large take to address these issues?
3. The author emphasizes the psychological and emotional impact of wildfires on survivors. How do the characters in the book cope with trauma, and what support systems do they rely on? Have you or someone you know experienced similar trauma, and if so, how did it affect you or them?
4. Resilience is a recurring theme in the book, as both survivors and emergency professionals demonstrate remarkable strength in the face of adversity and recovery. Discuss examples of resilience from the book and what lessons we can take from these experiences when facing our own challenges?
5. After losing her home to the Cedar Fire, the author and her husband chose to rebuild in the same location. Would you have done the same? What motivated their decision, and what does it reveal about the concept of "home"? Have you ever experienced a similar attachment to a place, despite the risks involved?
6. The Cedar Fire now serves as a case study in crisis response, and *The Fire Outside My Window* is used as a text in leadership training for incident commanders. What were some of the challenges faced by emergency professionals during the fire? Were there any aspects of firefighting or emergency management described in the book that surprised you?
7. What lessons can we all learn from the Cedar Fire, as described in the book? How can we apply these lessons to be better prepared for future wildfires and/or other natural disasters? Are there additional takeaways from the book you found particularly valuable or insightful?
8. In closing her introduction to the 20th-century edition, Sandra discusses the idea that life follows a cycle of "order, disorder, reorder.” How does this concept resonate with you? How is it illustrated in the book through the experiences of the author and other survivors? How has it shown up in your own life?

That’s it for now–a few ideas to get your discussion rolling. Please know that I offer a 30-minute virtual call as a thank-you to book club members. To schedule, please email Sandra@SandraYounger.com with your requested date and time, and we’ll do our best to work it out. I will also greatly appreciate your online book reviews through your preferred retailer.

Thanks again,

Sandra