

Discussion Questions

Based on the novel *Come Back to Me* by Carolyn Astfalk

1. Alan and Jamie made big life decisions without much forethought and sometimes not for the right reasons. Have you ever felt pressured to make a big life decision by the comments, actions, or urgings of others?
2. To make a marriage work, both husband and wife should possess a certain level of maturity and selflessness. What tips would you have given Alan and Jamie for discerning whether the other was ready to marry?
3. Alan spends months boarding with Chris and Rebecca. While the newlyweds are generous with their home and supportive of Alan, as Rebecca's pregnancy progresses, Alan begins to wear out his welcome. Have you ever been in that position either as the host or the guest? If so, how did you make it work—or end?
4. Megan's family seems to have fallen apart after the death of her brother Randy. Her parents split, her brother Tim drinks too much, and she's avoided any real relationships with a childish infatuation and a string of hookups. How has grief affected your family?
5. When Megan's brother Tim finds happiness with sobriety and his new girlfriend, Megan reacts with hostility. Why do you think she resents Tim's decisions and treats Holly so poorly?
6. Chris let Alan be the one to initiate a conversation about religion, letting his and Rebecca's lifestyle communicate their faith and beliefs. What kind of evangelization do you find most effective—a quiet example or a heartfelt conversation?
7. Jamie assumed her father's lack of involvement in her childhood was due to a lack of love until her mother tells her the truth about her father's depression. Have you ever assumed someone's motive and then discovered a mitigating circumstance that helped you to understand and possibly forgive?
8. It takes hitting rock bottom and a brush with temptation for Alan to re-commit to his marriage. Why do we often have to fall so far before we're willing to make changes or reconsider our choices?

9. Sebastian's birth and baptism have a healing effect on multiple relationships in *Come Back to Me*. Have you witnessed the birth of a child drawing a family closer? Have you ever felt the graces of a sacrament or realized their effect in retrospect?