

Reading Group Guide for
When the Heart Heals: A Novel
by Ann Shorey

1. At the beginning of the story, Rosemary thinks of the owner of West & Riley's as "the grocer." When he tells her to call him by his first name, she gains a friend. How often are we guilty of pigeonholing people by their jobs rather than seeing or getting to know the whole person? Can you share an example from your own experience?
2. Rosemary's dog, Bodie, plays a part in this story. What did you think of his role? Did he remind you of a pet you've loved?
3. Rosemary places great faith in herbal remedies used in conjunction with medical treatment. Some people agreed with her—others violently disagreed. Did you admire her perseverance? Would you have done the same?
4. Rosemary becomes the victim of a whispering campaign against her. How would you have handled her situation?
5. Curt and Faith both have Rosemary's best interests at heart when they ask her to live with them. Yet she resists. Do you think she'd have been safer in their home? Is "safe" always the best choice?
6. When Jacob West decides to court Rosemary, his approach is pragmatic. Would she have been interested in him had she not met Dr. Elijah Stewart?
7. In his medical practice, Dr. Stewart wants to overcome his father's reputation. Often we can be judged by the actions of family members. Did you agree with how he handled his situation? If not, what would you have done?
8. Do you know of a real-life situation that parallels that of Galen French and Jolene Graves? If so, would you share with the group how the "real" story ended?
9. Reverend French and his wife have very different reactions to Galen's choice. Over time, how do you think these relationships will mature?
10. Why do you think Rosemary reacted so hastily to Miss Mason's announcement? In Rosemary's place, how would you have handled such news?
11. Forgiveness is a theme that runs through *When the Heart Heals*. What did you think of Rosemary's approach to asking forgiveness—and offering forgiveness—to others? Is asking forgiveness an easy thing to do?

