

# *R*eaders' Guide

*For Personal Reflection  
or Group Discussion*



## *Readers' Guide*


*Concessions* is the story of losing yourself and finding yourself again, only stronger and better. Without God this would be an empty story. He is the catalyst behind Karan and Jack's newfound truths. God works through a process. Rarely do we receive the rich reward of revelation without hardship.

Hopefully, you have learned from the experiences of the characters in *Concessions* and can relate to their struggles. Look at life a little differently, at yourself differently. And understand that change—expected or unexpected—can reap benefits if we are willing to learn the hard lessons and love unceasingly.

Reflect on the following questions:

Jack's discontent was full blown before he shared it with Karan. How do you think it got to that point? Should Karan have seen it coming?

Karan makes the comment, "Maybe my world is small. But is that wrong?" What does that tell you about her? How do you feel about her small world? Is it wrong?



Karan was drastically affected by Jack's spontaneous choices. What happens to us when we feel we aren't making our own choices anymore?

When life started spinning out of control for Karan she went through a period of rebellion, refusing to give herself fully to Jack. Was this a proper response, or not? If not, what might have been?

At her lowest point Karan found it difficult to pray. Why do you think it is sometimes our tendency to avoid God when we need him most?

Creativity was an important aspect of Karan's personality. In what ways can creativity aid us in knowing God and ourselves better?

In the midst of her pain what Karan needed most was a sense of security. Could Jack have provided that to her? How do we go about finding security in insecure circumstances?

Karan had a happy life in Alaska as a homemaker. When she was forced to go to work she was forced to change against her will. How can we make the best out of an


unwanted situation? And how can we include God in this process?

Determination and perseverance were key factors in Karan's survival through her months of loss and change. However, she sought God in her responses and was obedient to him. In this age of embracing female empowerment as the answer to creating positive change, how does a Christian woman, strong in her opinions, strike an appropriate balance?

Karan asked God a lot of questions. Was this a good thing or bad thing? Do you think God wants us to ask questions? Can we cross the line from questioning to disrespecting our Creator?

Karan gained new friends, family and experiences she would not have known if it hadn't been for the move. What did she gain by having had these people added to her life?

No doubt, Karan's experiences changed her. Looking back, think of an experience that changed you. Did the circumstance lead to a change in heart and a change in view? Did it cause you to grow in your faith and your love of God, or the opposite?



Karan had a “cast of characters” to deal with in her jobs, most of them non-Christian. What did Karan learn from them? How can we learn from those who do not share our beliefs?

A main lesson in this book is that material things cannot fill the void in our lives. How is this evident in some of the lives of the characters in the book? How do you deal with the accumulation of things in your life?

At one point, Karan washes Jack’s feet in an act of love and servanthood. What do you believe is the significance of this scene? What impact did it have in tearing down Jack’s walls?

Many of the secondary characters in this book present different views of life. (Such as Karan’s mom, the voice of reason; Cindy, the carnal Christian; Candy, the confused seeker; Delilah, a woman of worldly values.) Explore these characters further. Do you see mirrors of them in your circle of friends? Or, perhaps, do you see elements of each in your life?

Jack struggles for his worth outside of God and family. Why do you believe some of us go looking in the wrong places for a sense of self worth?

It took tragedy for Candy to see that God was the answer to her big question mark. What might have held her back for so long?


Faith and Hope, two very different sisters, reacted in different ways to change. Had their differences not been recognized by Karan there might have been deeper wounds. How can we as parents celebrate the differences in our children?

Karan had forsaken female friendships because her own family relationships were so satisfying. What do you think she was missing out on?

Helpless to hurry along Jack's learning process, Karan discovered new emotions, weaknesses, and vulnerabilities in her time of waiting. What have you learned about yourself in times of necessary waiting?

One of the central themes in this story is discontent and the havoc it causes. Paul says in Philippians 4:11 that he has achieved contentment in *whatsoever state I am*. How can we achieve contentment in our lives, even when we would like to have a different life than the one we have?





Jack was from Louisiana, and Karan was from Alaska. How do our backgrounds influence what we want out of life?

Obviously, Karan had some misconceptions about California and life in general. What were some of these misconceptions?

The author brings out the many differences between men and women in this story. Did you see some truths? If so, consider them.

Children are resilient, as demonstrated by Hope and Faith. Do you believe God instills this gift in children? What have we lost as adults that children maintain which allows them to be more adaptable?

Karan refers to Jack's search as "Solomon's crooked road to fulfillment." What other biblical characters can you think of who learned lessons similar to Jack's by taking the wrong path? What was their outcome?

Humor was one of Karan's saving qualities. How can we choose to view bad situations with humor? Do you think we sometimes take ourselves too seriously?

In the end the LaRue family unit is stronger than ever before and Karan, too, is stronger and wiser. What role did truth, loyalty, and love play in this outcome?

If Karan were a real person how might she live her life differently today than she would have before the changes took place in her life? Would you consider these positive changes?

