

Book Club Discussion Topics and Questions

***Dare I Call It Murder?: A Memoir of Violent Loss* by Larry M. Edwards**

Investigation

1. Was there any effort by search and rescue teams to find the bodies?
2. Do you feel the authorities did enough to detain your brother? Why was he so free to come and go? Did they ever investigate other suspects and didn't they have any of Gary's fingerprints on the gun?
3. Dare we call it murder? Why or why not?

Book business

1. Tell us about the process of having your book published by a local publisher-Wigeon Publishing. How did you come to work with this particular company?
2. How can an author like Ann Rule publish a true story without permission from you or does she just have to state that the work is "unauthorized"?
3. How are the book sales going?
4. Which retailer is best in terms of volume?
5. Do you sell more paper or electronic books?

Family issues

1. Do you know what Gary is doing now and has anybody in your family contacted him?
2. Has there been any reconciliation b/w you and Kerry? Will she ever tell you the truth?
3. Do you think Kerry was sexually abused?
3. What is Lori doing now?
4. Do you think the book has generated greater awareness and conversations about violent loss? Has writing the story helped you heal and move forward?
5. Given your experience, what advice would you give someone with a similar situation?
6. Our community has experienced several violent deaths in the last few years. As a survivor, do you want community friends to approach you and ask questions, console you, or just leave the topic alone?

Violent loss

1. It's been said that the primary causes of violence/murder are: greed, jealousy, fear, revenge, or a sudden, insane anger.
2. What, if any, of these motives may be involved in this case, and what is your reasoning?
3. Violent loss (murder, suicide, catastrophic death) may result in what is known as traumatic grief; survivors often experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress, and a significant percentage are diagnosed as having PTSD; this is the "new normal."

What are the symptoms/indications of traumatic grief?

- avoidance, withdrawal, loss of meaningful existence
- feeling of defilement, anger/rage, short temper

- substance abuse
 - depression
 - guilt
 - sensitivity to and intolerance of loud sounds, noises
 - inability to do one's job effectively or even hold a job
 - compulsive inquiry/investigation—trying to “solve” the case
 - prolonged recovery/complicated bereavement, which may be delayed further by legal matters, criminal and civil
 - no closure, no “getting over it”—survivors get a “life sentence”
 - Murder is especially hard to deal with due to the three V's:
 - violence—forceful, sudden, traumatic act
 - violation—transgressive act
 - volition—intentional act
4. When a loved one has died a sudden, violent death or has been murdered, how does a survivor get beyond the loss and learn to live again?
 - Knowing she/he is not alone
 - Calling on one's innate resilience to keep on living
 - Finding healthy distractions
 - Finding a “mission” in life and pursuing it
 5. Do you know anyone who has suffered a violent loss/murder of a loved one or close friend? What changes did you notice in the person's behavior, outlook on life? What did the person do to cope and adapt to the “new normal”? How did you interact with this person?
 6. What do you say to a survivor of violent loss/murder?
 - Survivors do NOT want to hear “I know how you feel”—it is well intended, but misguided, and may be perceived as insulting.
 - Sitting quietly—sometimes the best thing to say is nothing at all.
 - Offer your support and assistance—how may I help you?

Additional reading/resources

Please visit the SVL Resource pages at the *Dare I Call It Murder?: A Memoir of Violent Loss* website: <http://www.dareicallitmurder.com/>