

Discussion Questions for *Shifts*: An Anthology of Women's Growth Through Change

1. What is the overarching theme of the book? How are the stories connected?
2. Describe which issues or ideas that the writers explore which remain especially memorable. Are they personal, sociological, global, political, economic, spiritual, cultural?
3. What new information did you learn about people who have had different experiences or cultural backgrounds? How has your perspective changed about something that you originally weren't familiar with?
4. Do any of the issues addressed in the book affect your life? How so—directly, on a daily basis, or more generally? Did the writers capture your feelings? If not, how do yours differ?
5. Focus on syntax and diction. What kind of language do specific writers use? Is it objective and dispassionate? Or passionate and earnest? Is it polemical, inflammatory, or sarcastic? Does the language help or undercut the writer's premise? Explain literary devices used to create a memorable text.
6. What are the implications for the future? Are there long- or short-term consequences to the issues raised in the book? Are they positive or negative...affirming or frightening? Consider a comparison between the past, present, and future.
7. Did you find any of the pieces to be controversial? If so why? Explain how a specific piece might incite disdain or anger, or even cause readers to outwardly protest. Did the writer's perspective help you think about something in a different way?
8. Talk about pieces that struck you as significant—or interesting, profound, amusing, illuminating, disturbing, or sad? What was memorable?
9. This book was written and edited by women. How would the book differ if someone outside of the demographic compiled the book? What can women say and understand about women that men cannot say? What does this say about other underrepresented and often misunderstood groups sharing stories?

Writing Prompt

10. What issues/topics do you feel could have been addressed in a different way? What would you add to the conversation? Create a fiction or creative nonfiction story, poem, or essay about this topic. You might respond to one of the writers, or write the piece from your own perspective to let your voice be heard. Feel free to e-mail the editors of *Shifts* with a copy of your writing from this prompt. MuseWrite Press could choose your work for either their website or future publications. (Communication will be established before any work is printed.)

For further insight, or to contact one of the book's authors or editors, email MuseWrite Press at MuseWriteCommunity@yahoo.com.