

Adventure of Ascent Discussion Questions

1. Author Lucy Shaw writes poetically about her “lifelong journey”. What are you feeling as you begin this discussion on aging?
2. “Our expressions vary; some have a grin for anyone who greets them; some project enthusiasm and optimism; some faces are drawn with effort and ache” (p. 16) .What expression would people say your face conveys now? How do you expect it will change – or do you expect it to change – in the future?
3. Physical limitations and diminished mental capacity are involved with aging. Do you fear physical or mental losses more? What in particular?
4. The author shares that driving frees her from the hindrances of physical disability (p. 25). What new activities have you found that reduce the inevitable limitations due to aging?
5. Why do you think we as a society are so fixated on aging, or preventing aging?
6. “I struggle with ambition, the hope that something I’ve contributed to the world has lasting value, and might even be unique, what no one else has done or could have done” (p. 53). We all want a life live with “no regrets” do you think that’s a realistic goal to have? Why or why not?
7. Lucy talks about “a good death” (p. 63). Have you witnessed such a passing? What would it look like to you?
8. Lucy shares her experience of being treated as “a fragile old lady” (p. 65). When have you experienced a similar feeling? If you are younger, does her story affect how you might treat those older than you?
9. In Ch. 9, Learning to Breathe, Lucy shares what brings her comfort and rest: a warm bed, music, beautiful scenes from Christmas cards, poetry, nature and prayer. What brings you comfort and rest or is this something you need to discover in your life?
10. The verb “attend” is appealing to the author. At this point in your life what verb are you drawn to and why? (p. 78)
11. Throughout the book Lucy brings up in various ways the question “what is the significance of the present moment when the rest of life looks so drastically limited?” (p. 157). What is your answer to this question or is it one you’d rather not think about?
12. Lucy Shaw’s elegant style of writing offers up many soulful nuggets. Which in particular were meaningful to you?
13. While aging is universal each of our lives are unique. Were there any aspects of the author story that didn’t resonate with you or that you can’t imagine experiencing?