

## ***The Authenticity Project* Discussion Questions**

1. Julian writes, “*Everyone lies about their lives.*” Is this true? What leads people to stretch the truth?
2. Julian calls his notebook *The Authenticity Project*. Do you think people are increasingly searching for authenticity in today’s world? If so, why? How do they go about it? How do you?
3. We are all connected via huge social media communities, but increased online interaction often comes at the expense of the type of local, real-life community provided by Monica’s Café and Julian’s Supper Club. What do these communities give us that virtual ones do not?
4. Most of the characters in the book are lonely, but in very different ways. What are the various forms of loneliness explored in *The Authenticity Project*?
5. The story is told from the perspectives of six main characters. Did they sound distinct to you? Who did you relate to the most, and why? Which character is least like yourself?
6. Baz keeps the truth from his grandmother in order to spare her feelings. Julian avoids the truth to protect himself. Are there times when admitting the truth isn’t the right thing to do? Explain.
7. We all make snap judgments about each other, and often they’re wrong. What incorrect assumptions do *The Authenticity Project* characters make about each other, and what are the consequences?
8. There is a scene in the book where Monica and Alice first see each other through the café window, and both want what the other has. What does *The Authenticity Project* teach us about envy?
9. Riley is the only character in the novel who doesn’t have an obvious fatal flaw. Does this make him more loveable, or less? How does Riley act as a touchstone for the other characters?
10. Monica idolizes suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst and speaks about being a strong female in a male-driven society. How is that balanced with her desire for a family? Does the book adequately explore the conflicts women face in finding work/life balance?
11. *The Authenticity Project* has been translated into 29 languages. Do you feel the characters, themes and plot would translate well into other cultures? Were there any cultural differences that stood out to you?
12. Reviewers have compared *The Authenticity Project* to *A Man Called Ove* and *Elinor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*. What similarities and differences do you find among those books?

13. Has reading this book changed how you consume or post on social media?

14. Did you write in one of the Authentic Tosa notebooks scattered around town? What did you write about? If you had the chance now, what truth would you tell?

15. Was *The Authenticity Project* a good choice for an All-City Read? Why? What other books or genres would you like to see selected?