

AMENDMENT

Faith-based Discussion Guide: A Journey Toward Peace and Purpose



By Julea Douglass, Ph.D.
with Brooks Douglass & Richard B. Douglass

Faith-based Discussion Guide to Accompany *The Amendment* Movie

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Amend

verb

- to change for the better; to improve
- to alter, modify, rephrase; add or subtract from

Amends

Noun

- reparation or compensation for a loss, damage or injury
- to make amends, to compensate for injury or loss

Mend

noun

- to make (something broken or damaged) whole, sound

verb

- to progress toward recovery; to set right; make better; improve

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For Richard and Marilyn Douglass
Your love lives on

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
—Matthew 5:4

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FOREWORD

From Brooks Douglass

I was 13 when this photo was taken and I will never forget it. My father Richard B. Douglass had just finished writing his first book *My Way, God's Way*. I had written a short paragraph that he used in one of the chapters. As this photo was being taken, he said, "*We can use this for the first book we write together.*" So Dad, here it is! Of course, I never dreamed I would write our book without him here, or that I would have the honor to write that same book with my wife Julea.

My father was a devoted pastor and writer. He pastored his first church when he was 16 and published more than 2,500 articles in his short 43 years. I remember many nights when I was a kid waking up at 4:00 A.M., seeing the light on from under my door, and hearing my father's typewriter *clickety-clacking* with an occasional ding of the bell when it reached the margin. I've kept many of the articles he wrote and want to thank the *Rocky Mountain Baptist News* staff for providing us with some of the columns we didn't have. Julea was able to find an applicable article my dad wrote for each lesson in this guide.



Richard and Brooks Douglass, October 1976

My father's work provided the backbone not only my career and life but now for *The Amendment* movie and ultimately this guide. As I have spoken across the country, I have often repeated how the opportunities I have had in my life are greatly because of the people my parents were. When I first started campaigning for the Oklahoma State Senate, I was 26 years old. I looked every bit of 18, and frankly I don't think people took me very seriously at first. I can't tell you how often I knocked on someone's door and heard, "*If you're half the person your mom and dad were, you will be OK.*" I owe so much to the legacy they left for me. One of the main reasons for undertaking this entire project and playing the role of my father in *The Amendment* was to pay tribute to my parents and to continue to share their love and example with others.

I want to thank Julea for her tireless work in developing this guide. She's done a tremendous job of making sense of so many parts of *The Amendment*—and even my life—that I'm not sure I really understood until I read what she wrote. I couldn't have accomplished this project without Julea. From her initial support of my desire to move to Los Angeles and take up screenwriting, acting and producing to all the curve balls that have happened since, she has been with me every step of the way. She has paid a fitting tribute of her own to my parents by so thoughtfully writing this guide.

Julea and I tried to incorporate much of the wisdom of my parents within this guide. We hope you find something that is meaningful for you in every session. Thank you for going on this journey with us.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *Amendment Faith-based Discussion Guide: A Journey Toward Peace and Purpose*. We hope you find this guide comforting and inspirational as you learn more about the movie, yourself, and God's purpose for your life.

After watching *The Amendment* movie, some feel an instant connection. People who have lost a loved one or experienced tragedy and grief themselves can feel their own emotions played out in Brooks' and Leslie's life story. Others cannot imagine enduring such pain and loss. They have not experienced a tragedy so great, and while they sympathize with and support Brooks and Leslie, it's hard to put themselves in their shoes.

This *Amendment Faith-based Guide* is designed to encompass the universal emotions and experiences of joy and pain, anger and forgiveness, loss and healing. While you may not have experienced a loss as profound as Brooks' and Leslie's, we can all relate to a yearning to find peace and purpose amidst disappointment, uncertainty, and challenges.

GUIDELINES

Each chapter is designed to be a 60-to-90-minute discussion. A discussion group is most effective when blanketed in mutual respect and provides opportunities for every member to speak and be heard. We recommend using the **"Think-Pair-Share"** method to keep everyone involved. After seeing the clip, group members write responses to the first few questions (*think*), talk about their answers with a partner (*pair*) then reconvene as a whole group to talk about what they learned (*share*) in order to create the foundation for the rest of the session.

Confidentiality is crucial. Trust amongst members is the lynchpin to a meaningful experience. Remind each other that all conversations are to remain within the group and are not to be discussed outside the group.

Throughout this guide, we ask God to join us in the journey. He is essential to this story, Richard's lifework, and Brooks' healing. Each lesson has a **"Faith Walk"** with scripture to support and reinforce the theme. We recommend you start and end each lesson with prayer. God promises us in Matthew 18:20, *"for when two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."* Invite God to be present in the discussion.

If your group does not have time for all 11 sessions, we suggest choosing four to eight lessons most important to members. It is not necessary to do the previous lesson to be prepared for the next lesson. Although each lesson can stand on its own, Sessions 8 and 9—*Feeling Forgiveness* and *Reaching Restoration*—go well together.

Please schedule time before starting the guide to see all of *The Amendment* movie, which can be viewed in 90 minutes. We also recommend possibly seeing the movie again after you have finished the guide. People consistently tell us that the movie is more powerful for them the second time after they become more familiar with the characters and story.

We would love to hear about your experience with the movie and this guide. Please feel free to e-mail Julea directly (Julea@DouglassHouse.org) and/or join the discussion on our website (www.DouglassHouse.org/Discussion).

We wish you peace and purpose.... Respectfully, *Julea and Brooks Douglass*