DISCUSSION & ASSIGNMENT GUIDE

FOR THE FIVE WIDOWS CLUB

These questions are intentionally open-ended to support reflective, ethical, and discussion-based learning.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. How does the narrative portrayal of grief in The Five Widows Club challenge or expand traditional models of grief you've encountered in coursework?

2. In what ways do gender, culture, or social roles influence how grief is expressed or received in the text?

3. How does story-based understanding differ from case-study or diagnostic approaches when engaging grief?

4. What moments in the book highlight the importance of presence over problem-solving?

5. How might professionals balance empathy and boundaries when supporting individuals experiencing loss?

Sample Assignment Ideas

A. *Reflective Essay (2–4 pages)*
Students reflect on how narrative deepened their understanding of grief as a lived experience. Emphasis should be placed on meaning-making rather than analysis of characters as clinical subjects.

B. *Narrative Analysis Assignment*
Students select one character arc and analyze how identity, loss, and resilience are shaped by social or cultural context. This assignment encourages critical thinking without pathologization.

C. *Professional Reflection Journal*
Students maintain a short reflection journal exploring how exposure to grief narratives impacts their understanding of professional presence, boundaries, and sustainability.

D. *Group Facilitation Exercise*
Students design and lead a short discussion using selected excerpts from the book, practicing ethical facilitation and reflective listening.

E. *Application-Based Response*
Students connect themes from the book to their discipline (e.g., counseling, education, healthcare), identifying implications for ethical practice and care.