

> Discussion Guide

> **Somethingism**



+ Exploring Our Sense of More

Luke Cawley

> Discussion Guide

1. Do you ever have a sense that there's something more? What has given you that sense?
2. If there is some transcendent aspect of reality, or even a God, do you think you have either (1) experienced or (2) perceived this at that some point? When and how?
3. Do you know anyone who seems to you like a spiritual person, or someone who has "something" you don't? What is it about them that gives you this impression?
4. What images or ideas typically come to your mind when you think of the word "God"?
5. Have you ever tried to reach out to God (or whatever/whoever is out there), whether by prayer, meditation, or other means? What was your experience?

6. With what specific claims about God making himself known are you most familiar? What most attracts you to these claims, and what pushes you away?
7. What life story or biography has most shaped you—whether it was someone telling you their story first-hand or through written or film versions? In what ways did it do so?
8. Have you ever had the experience of feeling that your friendship with another person has helped you make sense of yourself... or left you more confused? What happened?
9. If God has shown himself through the life and person of a particular individual in history, what about that would you find attractive, and what questions would it raise?
10. How does the story of Jesus compare with how you typically imagine God? Where are the overlaps and the contrasts?

11. Have you ever considered that your sense of something more may be invitational and not only accidental—that God may be reaching out to you? How might your past experiences be reframed if viewed from this perspective?
12. If God were “neither indifferent nor uninterested”, then what would you want to say to him?
13. Where would you place yourself on the Nagel-Daniels scale? What do you think pulls you towards the Daniels end and what towards the Nagel end?
14. What most resonated with you in this chapter’s description of the author’s own discomfort with the possibility of God? What might you have added or changed had you written this section?
15. Why do you think we sometimes find it hard to think of ourselves not only as spiritual seekers, but also as spiritual evaders? In what ways do you think “spiritual seeking” manifests itself for you? How about “spiritual evasion”?

16. Have you ever had the impression that connection with God hinges on our hard work or goodness? If so, who or what do you think helped create that sense?

17. If your relationship with God was dependent on your skill or effort, do you think you would incline more towards cockiness or despair? Or both? Why do you think that is?

18. If God welcomed you based on his own self-breaking forgiveness, rather than the excellence of your performance—”extending forgiveness for all that will ever need forgiving”—in what ways would that be liberating for you, and in what ways might it be unsettling?

19. Where would you say you are in terms of the three modes of relationship with God described in the analogy of Jackson’s relationship with Hagi—awareness, contact or friendship? Why would you place yourself there?

20. Have you ever considered responding to God’s invitation in the way described in the final section? What pulls you towards doing so, and what makes you hesitate?

21. Have you ever observed people who expect God to “turbocharge their agendas, like an electoral candidate waving a Bible in the hope that it legitimises all they want to do anyway”? In what ways do you think (or worry) that responding to God might call into question your agenda?

22. What would you like to say to God? If you were to pray to him right now, what would be the content of an honest and open response on your part?

23. What threads still hang loose for you? What would be your biggest questions related to the themes covered in this book?

24. With whom might you take your next steps? With which person might you arrange to have a conversation? And which communities or courses might you visit—do any spring to mind or will you need to do an online search or ask a friend for a recommendation?