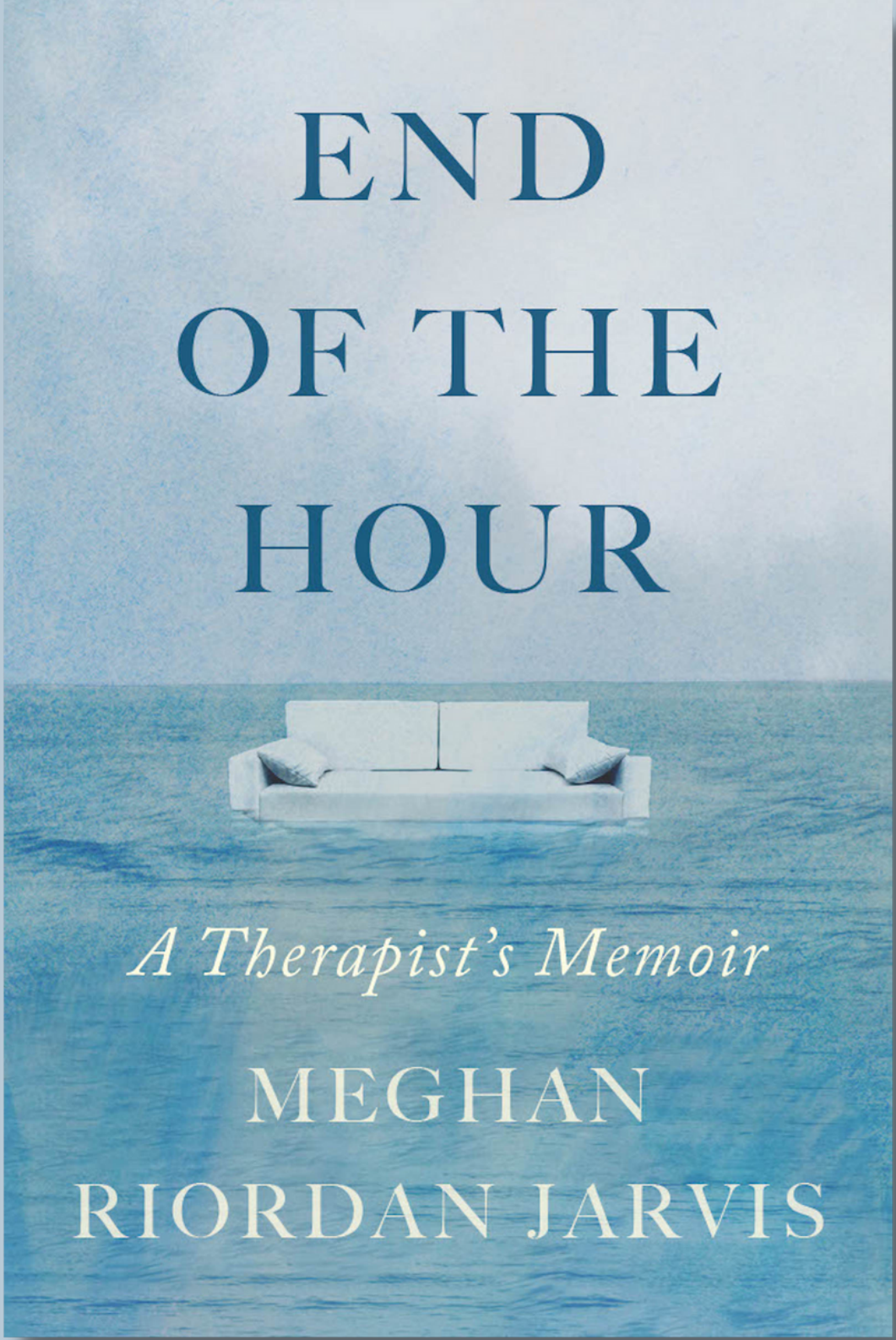


BOOK CLUB KIT



END OF THE HOUR

A Therapist's Memoir

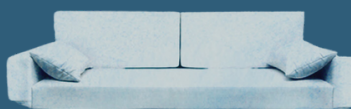
MEGHAN
RIORDAN JARVIS

GET READY TO HOST YOUR BOOK CLUB!

We're so glad you've decided to host a book club to discuss *End of the Hour*. Inside this kit, you'll find a Q&A with Meghan, some warm and cozy recipes, group activities and discussion questions, and more. Stories are best when shared, and we hope your time together helps to forge deeper connections between the members of your book club!

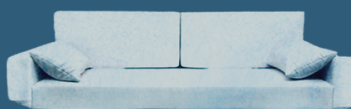
If you're new to hosting a book event, don't worry! We've got you covered. Here's what you'll need to do to get ready for your gathering:

- Determine if you'll meet virtually or in person.
- Save the date!
- Reach out to your local bookstore. You can direct your guests to purchase the book through the store ahead of time or coordinate with the store and have them sell the books at your event.
- Invite friends! Make sure your guests know they're welcome to attend even if they haven't read or finished the book!
- Plan to have some food and drinks, but don't stress about this! Use the recipes in this kit to prepare a batch of drinks or a warm soup.
- Relax and enjoy! Book clubs are meaningful because of the connections and the community. Allow everyone a chance to share or ask questions, and be mindful of those who haven't had a chance to read the book by discussing the themes rather than the specifics. Some of the content in this memoir is heavy so be sensitive to those who need extra time or space to process and discuss.



READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. What did you learn about trauma from reading *End of the Hour*? What did you learn about mental health in general? Did anything from this book resonate with your own mental health journey? If you're comfortable, share how this book helped you understand that journey.
2. At the end of chapter one, Meghan writes, "My parents hadn't known better—the general culture was to protect children with silence, so I was left to invent my own ways to cope." Did this resonate with you? Why or why not? How did your parents protect you as a child?
3. In chapter three, Meghan and her best friend Shelby have an unexpected falling out. What were your friendships like as a child? Did you ever have an experience like Meghan's?
4. Why do you think Meghan's father bought her the Christmas tree? How did that moment impact her? How would you have felt in that moment?
5. When Meghan starts at her boarding school, her writing talent is quickly discovered. Even though she garners a lot of praise and an offer to join a writing seminar with upperclassmen, she is determined to stay hidden and begins writing "basic, uninteresting papers." Based on what you know about Meghan at this point, why do you think this was her response? What would you have done in her shoes?
6. After starting therapy, Meghan discovers that her childhood has more happy memories than she thought it did. Have you ever tried to look at your childhood through a different lens? How did that feel? What is your happiest childhood memory?



READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

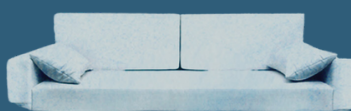
7. At the beginning of her relationship with Mike, Meghan is also learning about human attachment. How do you think what Meghan was learning impacted her relationship with Mike? Had you heard of the three types of attachment that Meghan mentions? Why would something like that be important to know for a romantic or platonic relationship? What is your attachment style?

8. When Meghan enters the labyrinth during the “professionals weekend” at a treatment center, she has a profound, visceral reaction that helps her process her father’s illness and impending death. What was it like reading about this moment? How did it make you feel? Have you ever experienced a moment of clarity and reflection like this? If you’re comfortable, share about what that experience was like for you.

9. After her mother’s death, Meghan takes her mother’s pills to the pharmacy to be disposed of, only to find out that the process has changed. She begins repeating to herself, “This is not a problem. It’s just different.” Why do you think Meghan reacted this way? Have you ever had an experience like this, where you expected one thing and got another and the change made it difficult to move forward? How did you handle it?

10. The moment that leads Meghan to treatment is when her mental pain manifests as physical pain—her back locks up, leaving her unable to do anything. It’s not unusual for our bodies to exhibit physical symptoms when our mental health is struggling. Have you ever experienced this reaction yourself? What was that like?

11. At Foundations, Meghan encounters the same woman who sent her through the labyrinth just after her father died. How do you think this impacted Meghan?



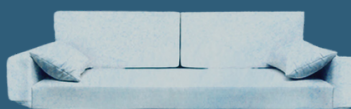
READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

12. During equine therapy, Meghan forms a connection with a horse named Dagger. She had been skeptical about equine therapy but found even the first session to be very healing for her. Have you ever tried equine therapy? Would you? Why or why not?

13. When Meghan goes to Franklin before leaving Foundations, she purchases five pies for her friends and the staff and then does something she'd had trouble doing—she asks for help. How do you think Jayson's willingness to help impacted her? What do you think would have happened if he had said no to her request? How do you feel when asking for help?

14. One of the conversations Meghan has with Jo at Foundations is centered around the idea of being “enough.” How do you think Meghan grew in her understanding of “enough” while at Foundations? How did you see it manifest in the rest of the book after she returned home? Have you ever struggled with feeling like you are enough? If you're comfortable sharing, talk about that feeling.

15. How was the Meghan who returned to the Cape to help pack up her parent's home different from the Meghan who left after her mother died? What do you think was Meghan's biggest learning moment in the year between those two moments, or was there more than one?



Q&A WITH MEGHAN

1. What made you decide to tell your story and talk about such a difficult moment in your life?

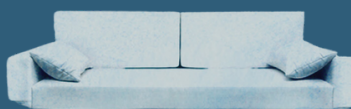
I've worked in the grief and loss space most of my life. When my mother died suddenly, and I developed PTSD, I understood my client's experience so much more deeply. We will all grieve in our lifetime, but so many griever describe feeling profoundly alone and even a bit crazy. I wrote about my own experience with my grief symptoms to help normalize that for others, but also to help distinguish the kind of grief that resolves itself on its own, from the kind that requires treatment.

2. How did you determine which parts of your life and/or people made it into your book and which ones to remove for the sake of privacy? Was that a difficult decision?

On every page I asked myself, "Am I still telling my story, or someone else's?" There are tons of details that are left out because while they might be interesting, they are not essential to telling my story of trauma and healing. I deliberately omit my siblings names because they didn't ask to be written about, though they were all incredibly generous about this project. For me the hardest part of the editorial process was blending some stories or combining two people (my therapist at Foundations is an amalgam of two people) or scenes into one that were important but were cut for clarity and length. That was hard because this book is a love letter to all who helped me heal, but not everyone made it into the final pages.

3. Can you tell me about your writing process? Do you write at certain times of the day or in certain locations? Did you keep journals that you went back to from this time in your life?

Yes. I get up at 5am. People call it the liminal hour. I am in my feelings then. My words come differently at that hour. I have a favorite pen and medium sized journals that I buy in bulk from Target. I write in an oversized chair on the sunny side of my living room. I prop my computer on the right arm and get going. The chair has some very odd wear and tear.



Q&A WITH MEGHAN

4. What was easiest about writing this book? What was most difficult?

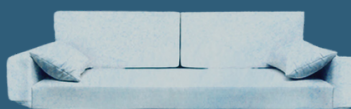
There are just some chapters that wrote themselves like the one about dreaming of my mother. I woke up, wrote down the dream and it went into the book pretty much as it happened. Same with the chapter in CVS when I was returning my mother's pill bottles. Those were easy. The hardest chapter is the one I am the proudest of, the one where my mental health starts to fray in the car. For nearly a year I couldn't retrieve those memories, which is common in grief. But I kept writing and that helped repair the neuropathways, and one day I remembered what happened. I worked hard with my editor at the time, Carolyn Murnick. She helped guide me to uncover my feelings through the words. It was hard and I cried a lot. Working on deadlines when you are writing about the worst moments of your life, and then going back and back again to those moments, is really difficult. I had to be careful not to retraumatize myself.

5. How do you hope your memoir resonates with people?

I'd like grieverers to feel less lonely, and maybe even validated by this book. If it was this hard for me with all my education and training, then of course it will be difficult for others. I think in the end, it's a book of hope. We can grieve and still continue to live. It's hard as hell, but every human does it.

6. What did writing *End of the Hour* teach you about yourself?

I'd basically never written anything before. A memoir is a pretty ridiculous place to start, but while authors write alone, we do not publish alone. There were so many people who made this happen, and I needed community in my grief. I have been so lucky by the community Zibby has offered me, first at her book club and then with her publishing company. I needed so much more emotional support and encouragement than I ever expected.



Q&A WITH MEGHAN

7. What advice would you give to someone who wants to write their own book?

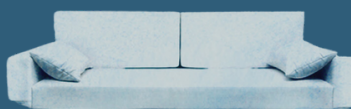
I run a writing class called Process to Product. I think writing is a gift to ourselves first and foremost. We learn to understand ourselves better when writing a novel, which in turn helps sculpt the story. I think if you want to write a book you have to get good at understanding who you are for yourself. Love the story you are telling. I don't think you have to know everything from the start either—get writing, and the words will teach you where you want to go.

8. What authors or books inspired you to become a writer?

In my early years it was John Irving. He is a puzzle master. If he bothers to tell you something, that detail is going to matter again somewhere else. *A Prayer for Owen Meany* is a holy text as far as I am concerned. I read *Tin Men* by Sarah Winman after my father died, and I just cried and cried at how beautiful the world can be. A friend of mine gave me Kelly Corrigan's *Tell Me More*, which is about the death of her father and her best friend, as well as her battle with cancer, and I just thought—grief and love is the root of humanity. We need to tell those stories for people like me who forget that every once in a while.

9. What are some of the books you've been reading recently? Anything you're looking forward to?

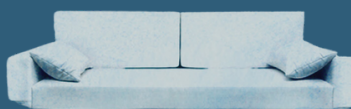
Honestly, I have a hard time reading when I'm writing, but I do it, especially because I have authors on my podcast. I am also in a book club with women I adore from high school so I do read. We read *Demon Copperhead* for the book club, but I put it down 50 pages in. Too bleak. Gorgeous writing, but my mental health couldn't take it. I have Ann Patchett's new book next to my bed and I'll get to it. I love everything she writes.



Q&A WITH MEGHAN

10. Are you doing more writing? What other projects are coming up for you?

I am always writing. I'm turning in a book on grief to my publishers at Sounds True Media at the end of 2024. It's everything I know about creating a grief practice and supporting griever. I wrote a novel, I just started another, and my business partner and I are working on a book about teaching people to create personalized grief practices. I have a couple of op-eds half written. I am ALWAYS writing.



WARM & COZY FALL DRINKS

There's nothing more comforting than a warm drink, especially in cold weather, and Meghan's story is a testament to the fact that we all need a little comfort. Here are two easy and delicious slow cooker drink recipes to make for your book club meeting!

Apple Cider

Ingredients:

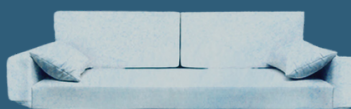
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 2 quarts of apple cider
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 orange, sliced



Instructions:

1. Combine cinnamon, cloves, and allspice in a double layer in a cheesecloth and tie with a string.
2. Place cider and brown sugar in a slow cooker and stir until sugar is dissolved.
3. Add spice bag and orange slices.
4. Cover and cook on low for 2-3 hours.
5. Remove spice bag and serve warm.

Recipe adapted from *Taste of Home*



WARM & COZY FALL DRINKS

Hot Spiced Wine

Ingredients:

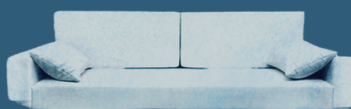
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 3 whole cloves
- 3 medium apples, peeled and sliced
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 2 bottles of dry red wine

Instructions:

- Add cinnamon sticks and cloves in a double layer in a cheesecloth and tie with a string.
- Place in a slow cooker with the rest of the ingredients and cook on low for 4-5 hours.
- Remove the spice bag and serve warm.



Recipe adapted from *Taste of Home*



CLASSIC CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP RECIPE

Pair your warm drink with some soup for optimal comfort! If you're planning to serve food at your book club meeting, try this classic chicken noodle soup recipe.

Servings: 6-8

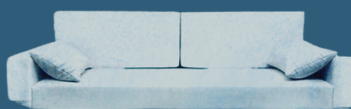
Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 large carrots, peeled and diced
- 2 ribs of celery, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 8 cups chicken broth
- 2 bay leaves
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 ½ pounds of boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 2 ½ cups wide egg noodles
- 2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 2 tablespoons thyme, chopped
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Instructions:

1. Melt butter in a large stock pot over medium heat.
2. Add onion, carrots, and celery. Cook until tender, about 3-4 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Stir in garlic and let cook for 1 minute.
4. Add chicken stock and bay leaves. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Add chicken and bring to a boil. Then reduce heat, cover, and simmer until the chicken is cooked through, about 30-40 minutes.
6. Remove chicken breasts and let cool before dicing into bite-sized pieces.
7. Add chicken back in. Add pasta and cook until tender, about 6-7 minutes.
8. Remove from heat and stir in parsley, thyme, and lemon juice.
9. Season again with salt and pepper, as needed. Serve warm and enjoy!

Recipe adapted from Betty Crocker



GROUP JOURNALING

Journaling is a great way to work through difficult moments in your past. It is hard to say some things aloud; writing provides a private space to work through things. In *End of the Hour*, Meghan describes leaving the trauma facility and receiving a journal upon her departure.

Though journaling can be an individual and personal activity, in a group setting it provides a sense of community and comfort. Even if you aren't ready to share the details of what you write, it can be useful to discuss how the act of journaling made you feel.

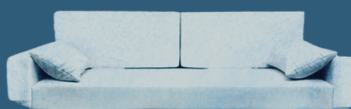
In a group journaling session, each member has time and space to privately free-write, and the group can come together to talk about the experience.

For this exercise, you will need:

- Paper
- Pencils
- Timer/clock

Some prompts to consider and read aloud as a group beforehand:

- What moments in your life have made you feel happy and content? When you think about “happiness,” what comes to mind?
- Write about a memory that makes you feel angry or sad. What emotions did you feel at the time of the memory, and what emotions still remain now?
- What do you love most about yourself?
- What do you think it means to be “enough”?



GROUP JOURNALING

Instructions:

After reading the prompts as a group, get ready to begin journaling.

Find a comfortable place wherever you are. The group doesn't have to remain in one location for this activity. It may be more comfortable for some members to go into a different room.

Have one group member set a 15-minute timer (or however long you'd like) and then start writing!

Once you are all back together as a group, take some time to reflect on the activity.

- Did you enjoy journaling?
- Do you make time for journaling in your regular life?
- If so, how does journaling benefit you? If not, would you consider doing so in the future?

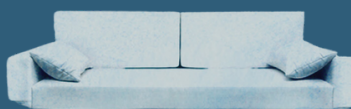


PHOTO COLLAGE

Photographs preserve our memories in a tangible way, and looking at an old photograph takes you back to that moment in time. This is especially true for memories that are tinged with grief. In this way, photographs have been a large part of Meghan's grief and healing journeys.

Creating a photo collage allows you to compile and preserve memories through photographs. Doing so with a group allows you to share those memories—the good, the bad, and all the in-between—with the people you love. Collaging is a great way to create a small narrative of your life in pictures. You can look at her [personal photo album](#) and her [memoir photo journey](#) for some examples.

For this activity, you will need:

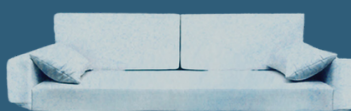
- Plain construction or printer paper
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Markers, colored pencils, or pens
- Photos! (When you're sending out the book club invites, remind each group member to come prepared with 5-7 photographs that are important to them, or that they feel represent important times in their lives)

Instructions:

Once you have all the materials laid out, and each group member has their pictures, start collaging!

Paste your photos onto paper in whatever order feels right to you. Write descriptions of the photographs, too: what you were doing that day, who you were with, how you felt. Draw, doodle, color, whatever *you* want!

After everyone has completed their mini photo collages, go around the room and talk about them. Each group member can talk about the photos they chose and why they are particularly significant.



PLAYLIST MAKING ACTIVITY

Similar to photographs, music also contains a lot of emotion, especially when connected to memories. Certain songs evoke specific memories, time periods, and feelings.

Music is very important to Meghan, and you can hear some of the songs that she loves [here](#).

Music brings people together in a particular way. Listening to music with loved ones creates a special type of connection.

In this activity, the group will create a shared playlist.

What you need:

- A speaker or device to play music
- Pen and paper
- Most importantly, come prepared with a song that is special to you!

Instructions:

Each group member will come prepared with a song that means something to them—one that evokes a particular memory, emotion, or time of their life.

Go around the room and share what song you chose and why. Listen to the songs as a group.

Have someone write all of these songs down and after everyone has played their songs, add them to a playlist—perfect for background music at your next book club meeting!

