

**Dear Edward by Ann Napolitano**  
**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. In what ways can reading a tragic book help us find joy in our daily lives?
2. Have you experienced other books, movies, or TV shows that have broken your heart, but left you with a feeling of hope? What characteristics do these stories have in common?
3. Did Dear Edward influence the way you respond to emotional stories in the news? Do you think we have a responsibility to remember the people affected by these stories and continue to help them long after they've disappeared from the headlines?
4. Do you normally interact with people around you on a flight? After reading this book, do you think your perception of your fellow passengers will change?
5. How did you feel reading this book knowing that everyone on the plane was going to die except for Edward? How did the plane chapters and the Edward chapters feel different from each other?
6. Before the hearing in Washington, D.C., Shay tells Edward no one there can hurt him, and in fact, no one can hurt him ever again, because he has already lost everything. Did this ring true to you? Does this notion comfort Edward in any way? Would it comfort you?
7. Louisa Cox tells Edward the tragedy and its aftermath would have been much easier for him if he hated his family. Do you agree with this? In what ways can love make life harder? In what ways can love make life easier?
8. Edward has to make decisions about when to face things, like whether to go to the memorial or the hearing. Where is the line between shielding yourself from things for your own protection and facing them so that you can move on?
9. After the hearing, Edward tells his uncle he doesn't want to know why the plane crashed. Why do you think this is? Would you want to know?

10. Many of the other passengers on the plane learn about themselves over the course of the flight. Who do you think changes the most in the air? Who do you think changes the least?

11. Which of the characters on the plane, other than Edward, did you identify with the most? Why?

12. For months after the crash, Edward can only sleep at Shay's house. Why is this? How and why does Shay become an immediate source of comfort for him in the aftermath?

13. What do you think made people all over the country write letters to Edward? Do you think they wanted a response? What did they really want from him?

14. Was it fair for adults and children alike to write letters to Edward, who was just a child?

15. Do you think John and Lacey were right to keep all the letters from Edward? How do you determine when someone is ready to bear such a huge emotional weight?

16. In the end, Edward decides to use the millions of dollars he received to help other people, but he wants his donations to be anonymous. Why do you think he doesn't want his name to be connected with them? Do you agree with his decision to remain anonymous?

17. Towards the end of the book, we learn that the plane crashed due to a preventable human error. How did you react to this news? Did it change the weight of the tragedy at all? How should we feel about the fact that the crash was actually somebody's fault?

18. What moment from the book will stick with you the longest?