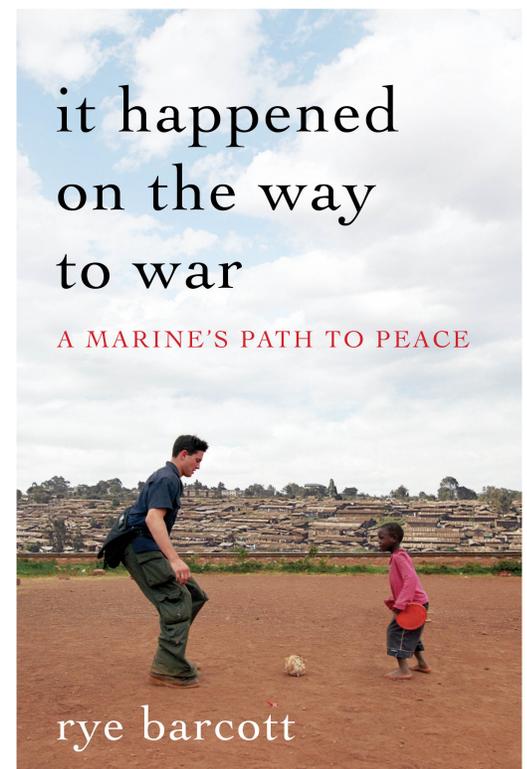


Discussion Guide for *It Happened on the Way to War* by Rye Barcott

These 26 questions are meant to guide a discussion of *It Happened on the Way to War*. We hope they help you build and strengthen your own communities.

1. What moments in the book made you laugh?
2. The phrase "Talent is universal; opportunity is not" is on the book's dedication. How does this statement connect with your own life experiences?
3. Chapter 1 opens with the statement "My father was the main reason I was a Marine." However, we soon realize that his father was ambivalent about this decision, and his mother was even less enthusiastic about the military. Would you ever encourage your children to join the military? How did this book connect to your own views on parenting?
4. Rye travels to Kenya with his parents when he is 13. What are your own thoughts on giving young people international experiences? Would you ever let your own child travel to Kibera alone? If so, at what age and under what circumstances?
5. As a college student on his way to Kibera to do research, Rye asks himself if poverty makes people less trustworthy. What do you think?
6. Carolina for Kibera was originally founded as a way to prevent ethnic violence and develop youth leaders through sports. Do you agree that sports can help prevent violence? What roles have sports played in your own life?
7. Would you have given to Carolina for Kibera when Rye was forming it with Nate as a college student? What would it have taken for you to contribute? How much would you have given and why?
8. Who would you have invested with in Kenya if you were in Rye's shoes: Taib, Tabitha, Jumba, Olouch, Kash, Elizabeth, Salim?
9. What happened to Kash? Do you sympathize with him? Do you agree with Salim's and Rye's decisions and actions? Why or why not?
10. Is anyone in the book selfless? Are people inherently selfish?
11. When Rye is deployed overseas he is challenged by the two seemingly opposing forces of his life: Kibera and the Marines. How can he be a champion for peace in Kibera while at the same time seek to kill enemy combatants in Fallujah? How is the violence advocated by the Marines different from the ethnic violence in the slums of Kibera? Who determines when violence is "just"?



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12. What are your impressions of the relationship between Tracy and Rye? How does it impact the events described in the book? Was Tracy too patient? Was she not patient enough?
13. Rye believes in finding local leaders, and then empowering them through participatory development. How was this successful in Kibera? Do you think this kind of collaborative leadership could work in other situations? What are the drawbacks?
14. Have you ever met a Tabitha? A Salim?
15. Are the youth of today “our current and future leaders”?
16. There is a description of the ideas behind Rye’s assignment to Djibouti called distributed operations. He calls this a new way of thinking about counter-terrorism, and it is currently employed by our armed services around the globe. What is your concept of appropriate counter-terrorism?
17. Why does Rye spend so much time discussing compartments? What compartments do you keep? How have they changed over time? What’s the best way to manage our life’s compartments?
18. What is the significance of the “elephant” metaphor? Can you relate to the desire to see the elephant?
19. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have affected hundreds of thousands of American families. What do you think of the way that Rye dealt with his experiences? Who do you know who has been affected by these wars?
20. Did this book alter your views of the U.S. military? If so, how?
21. What character in the book would you most like to meet and why?
22. Who were Rye’s most important mentors and what characterized those relationships? Who have been the most important mentors in your life? How are you “paying it forward?”
23. Why has CFK been successful? What makes it unique from other non-profits and non-governmental organizations, if anything?
24. What role does faith play in this story? How did the book relate to your own spirituality?
25. What was the most memorable scene to you and why?
26. What can you buy for \$26?

Special thanks to Caroline Scott, Tom Darden, Jenny Ward, and the Lynne Kohn book club for developing many of these questions.

How You Can Help

Rye, Tabitha, and Salim founded CFK on the belief that the poor have solutions to the problems they face, but they lack access to resources and opportunity. For the past 10 years, CFK has worked alongside the community of Kibera to create opportunities for lasting and widespread change. CFK has developed a collaborative network of programs that advance health, education, ethnic cooperation, gender equality and economic empowerment for thousands each year.

We believe that by investing in local leaders we can address the complex issues of extreme poverty in dense urban slums while strengthening a community that will sustain and multiply that change.

But we need to do more. Half of the population of Kibera is under the age of 15. The future of Kenya lies in the potential of her young people. So, please join us! You can help Carolina for Kibera make an even bigger impact in Kibera. Your support allows CFK to identify and cultivate more local leaders and create programs that catalyze positive change.

Some ideas to get you started:

Donate

- Invest in the potential of Kibera. In the hands of local leaders, your contribution can go a long way. cfk.unc.edu/donate

Join our community

- The CFK story is rooted in community. Join the conversation online and come together to find inspiration from one another.
 - Blog: cfk.unc.edu/blog
 - Twitter: twitter.com/cfk
 - Facebook: facebook.com/carolinaforkibera

Take the 26-day Challenge

- Living in Kibera is both challenging and stimulating. How would you do? Take the challenge and find out. What is it like to have your whole family living in one room? What does it feel like to eat one meal a day or walk to work? Take the challenge and share your reflections (including photos and videos!) with our online community. powerof26.org

Be creative!

- Come up with your own creative idea to raise money and help. Do you have plans to run a marathon or climb a mountain? Maybe you have a birthday, anniversary or other big life celebration coming up? Use the opportunity to raise funds for Carolina for Kibera and invite your friends to be involved. Tell us your ideas: cfk@unc.edu

Give *It Happened on the Way to War* to a friend

- Inspire someone else with a gift of *It Happened on the Way to War*. A portion of proceeds from the book will be donated to Carolina for Kibera to cultivate local leaders and fight extreme poverty. <http://ithappenedonthewaytowar.com/buy-the-book/>

About the Book

In 2000, a 20-year-old college student heading to the Marines sought to understand the ethnic violence that had convulsed Africa and might one day confront him in uniform. While in Kibera, one of the world's largest slums, Rye Barcott stumbled into friendship with a widowed nurse, Tabitha Atieno Festo, and a hardscrabble community organizer, Salim Mohamed. Together they built Carolina for Kibera (CFK) and became a pioneer in a movement called participatory development. Engaged in two seemingly contradictory forms of service at the same time, Barcott continued his leadership in CFK while serving as a human intelligence officer in Bosnia, the Horn of Africa, and Iraq. Struggling with the stress of leading Marines in dangerous places, he took lessons from CFK's approach to community development and became a more effective counter-insurgent and peacekeeper. The book not only explores the inextricable link between security and development, it also offers an inspirational tale of commitment and friendship.

About the Author

Rye Barcott, author of *It Happened on the Way to War*, co-founded the non-governmental organization Carolina for Kibera (CFK) with Salim Mohamed and Tabitha Atieno Festo while he was an undergraduate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After graduation, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps for five years, deploying to Iraq, Bosnia, and the Horn of Africa. Barcott earned master's degrees in business and public administration from Harvard University, where he was a Reynolds Social Entrepreneurship Fellow and a member of the Harvard Endowment's Advisory Committee on Shareholder Responsibility. In 2006, ABC World News named then Captain Barcott a 'Person of the Year' for his dual service to Kibera and the Marine Corps. In 2009, he joined the inaugural class of TED Fellows. He currently works in the Sustainability Office at Duke Energy in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he lives with his wife and daughter.

About Carolina for Kibera

Established in 2001, Carolina for Kibera (CFK) is an international, nongovernmental organization based in the Kibera slum of Nairobi, Kenya. CFK exists to develop local leaders, catalyze positive change and alleviate poverty in the Kibera slum of Nairobi. Driven by local needs, our collaborative network of programs advance health, education, ethnic cooperation, gender equality and economic empowerment, and equip leaders with tools to strengthen the community. CFK has been named a TIME Magazine and Gates Foundation "Hero of Global Health" and has worked with organizations in more than 6 countries to teach their model of participatory development.

CFK was founded and shaped by the belief that solutions for poor communities must come from the community itself. The community possesses the knowledge and motivation to solve their problems, what they lack is not talent, but opportunity. To that end, CFK's innovative community-based leadership model creates opportunities for change, directly reaching thousands of Kibera's residents each year. CFK's organizational structure mirrors its values - CFK is staffed by more than 60 Kenyan full and part-time staff members in Kenya and only 1 full-time staff person in the US. A community of hundreds of Kenyan and American volunteers supports the work.



**CAROLINA for
KIBERA**

Tuungane Tuungaze
Let's Unite and Shed Light

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