1. The author makes the point that having compassion is a way to overcome demagoguery. Is there anyone who isn’t deserving of compassion, because of things they’ve said or done? Or does the nature of compassion demand that everyone be granted it?

2. Is it ever ok to have an out-group/in-group dynamic? If so, what groups are you thinking of and why are these groups ok?

3. Are all politicians demagogues by virtue of the fact that they have to convince people to vote for them? Put differently, do you think politicians can be successful if they don’t resort to demagoguery? Can you give any examples?

4. Given today’s hyper-polarized media environment, which sources do you think would be considered valid by people of a given in-group and out-group?

5. Are demagogues actively lying or are they self-deluding?

6. The book talks a lot about in-groups and out-groups, which reminded me of the tendency for people to call “the middle” the “right” solution to a policy disagreement. Do you think this is valid? Is the policy position in between two extremes always the fairest/objectively desirable outcome?

7. Is it possible for someone to be objectively bad? That is, seen as bad by both her out-group and in-group?

8. The author argues that demagogues can often be taken down by members of their own in-group. Do you see this as realistic? Under what circumstances do you see this in-group happening?

9. Think about a time when you’ve called someone in your out-group out for doing something while dismissing the action when it’s done by someone in your in-group.

10. Is charismatic authority ever a good thing as defined by the author?

11. Find a recent example from political rhetoric when a politician is trying to portray their groups as being victims.

12. Provide a recent example of when someone tried to use hybridity against an opponent.
13. Does the person who unseats a demagogue necessarily have to be a demagogue themselves? That is, can a leader who is super inclusive successfully unseat a demagogue in a democracy? Or will it just be exchanging one demagogue with another?

14. Why do you think some societies create conditions that are ripe for demagoguery while others only witness this phenomenon rarely?

15. Which one of her four prescriptions on page 94 did you find most convincing?