We’re so pleased to share **However Long the Night** with you and your friends!

*Here’s inspiration: A letter from the first purpose-driven book club that sprung up in support of Tostan and the grassroots human rights movement in West Africa*

Dear Tostan Global Mobilizers,

The impetus to forming this club was the sudden loss of Judy Miller, my mother. Judy was a humanitarian, mother of three daughters, grandmother of five, sister, friend, mentor, and the Director of the Conrad Hilton Humanitarian Prize. Judy’s relationship with Molly Melching began when Tostan was nominated for the Hilton prize. Theirs was a natural friendship that grew out of mutual respect and a shared wicked sense of humor. After losing her, I naturally leaned on my support group made up of an amazing network of friends in San Clemente, California. As a way to thank them for their undying love, I gave each one a copy of *However Long the Night: Molly Melching’s Journey to Help Millions of African Women and Girls Triumph* by Aimee Molloy. Little did we know that this gesture would be the seed that would grow into Our Circle – a breakthrough book club. Forming the club was a natural idea. There was only one rule. To read inspirational, eye opening, soul searching books. No romance novels here.

But we were still missing something and wanted to give back, so the decision was made to collect dues at our club and donate 100% to the Tostan Judy Miller Fund. Specifically, our funds go toward scholarships to the Tostan Training Center (TTC.) Judy was passionate about the TTC and we could see why. The vast number of lives that one can potentially touch after going through the TTC program is truly staggering. Therefore, sending women to the TTC who will learn the Tostan model and teach it in their own countries seemed the smartest way to stretch our dollars. We are very proud that in less than two years we have raised enough funds to send three women to the TTC! Forming a club like ours is easy to start. Anyone can do it. No matter how small a group, and no matter the amount you collect and donate, you can make a difference by creating your own club with your own network. Our club means everything to us. Our friendships have grown deeper, and our knowledge of humanitarian issues around the globe is expanding. The quality of our group’s interactions is palpable and we’ve been driven to tears on more than one occasion through simple connection.

Sincerely, Colleen Graves

We began as a way to heal after losing Judy. But somewhere along the way, we learned that we never lost her at all.

*She lives within all of us.* — Colleen Graves (Judy’s daughter)

*Our Circle: A Breakthrough Book Club* — Colleen Graves, Julie Merlino, Tawni Burns, Alyssa Garrett, Shelly Ryan, Stacey Wendling, Linda Tanouye, Julie Andersen, Claudia Ryley, Tracy Ravera, Maureen Garrett, Jean Oleson, Cara Miller (Judy’s daughter), Cathey Jackson (Judy’s daughter) and Honorary Member Sandra Burns
Discussion Group Questions
This is just a start!

1. What moves you about this story?
2. What in Molly’s journey, reminded you of your own life and dreams?
3. How does this change your ideas around philanthropy and giving?
4. What was your favorite passage?
5. Would you like to share about a difficult period of your life and how you came through it? In other words, how did you deal with the hardships in your life just like Molly dealt with her own struggles?
6. What makes Tostan’s approach unique?
7. Have you ever experienced a “breakthrough” moment in your life?
8. What struck you about Molly’s approach to shifting deeply entrenched social norms?
9. What do you think it takes to integrate into a completely new culture and yet have profound empathy for people?

We want to hear from you!
Share what the story means to you and your community on social media — tag #TostanIgnite and @Tostan and we’ll respond with the latest updates from the movement leaders in West Africa!