

EQUILIBRIUM

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Preston mentions the word “friend” to the female sense offender in the interrogation room, she says:
“I’m wondering if you have any idea what that word means...Friends!” know what the word means.”

Later in the conversation, she asks:

“Why are you alive?”

-What do these questions say about what Preston has been “missing” while on his daily Prozium dose?
-What do we have in our world today that “numbs” us in the way Prozium numbs the inhabitants of EQUILIBRIUM?

2. Later in the conversation, she tells him...

“To feel is as vital as to breathe.”

To what extent is this true for you?

3. At 31:30 in the film, Preston stares at his dose for what seems like a very long time. What was going through his mind in this scene? What are the dilemmas that are “dancing” in his head?
4. This movie communicates much of what is going on in Preston’s thought processes through his dreams and “flashbacks.” When he awakes from one of these dreams, he peels back the covering of the glass. What is the significance of this action?
5. As Preston “withdraws” from his daily dose of Prozium, his mannerisms change significantly. Discuss the significance of the following (and others) that stood out to you:
 - He rearranged his desk
 - He begins to remove his gloves in various situations to feel items.
 - What other evidence is there of an awakening of his senses?
 - What evidence is there of the awakening of his emotions?
6. In his meeting with “Father’s” representative (45:10), Preston asks:
“Sir, without the logic of process, is it not just mayhem? What we have worked so hard to eradicate?”

He is told:

“You must understand, Preston...that while you and even I might not always agree with it, it is not the message that is important. It is our obedience to it. Father’s will...call it FAITH! You have it, I assume?”

COMMENTS?

7. When speaking to the leader of the underground (Yergen), about Carrie (female sense offender), the following conversation occurs:

Preston: *"She's scheduled for combustion...tomorrow"*

Yergen: *"I know. You know I was like you...but thing we learn about emotion...is that it has its price. Complete paradox. But without restraint, without control...emotion is chaos."*

Preston: *"But how is that different??..."*

Yergen (interrupts): *"The difference being that when we WANT to feel...WE CAN. It's just that some of us...some of us must forgo that luxury so the rest can have it. Some very few of us...have to force ourselves not to feel...like me...like you."*

Preston: *"What can I do?"*

Yergen: *"You can kill father."*

Questions:

- Is it possible for Preston to accomplish his task if he prevents himself from feeling?
- Can Yergen truly lead the resistance if he does not allow himself to feel?
- What other contradictions jump out at you either here or in other parts of the film?

8. Yergen was shown (10:20) in an earlier scene (did you notice??). Does this help you understand why he forced himself not to feel?
9. Preston's son is shown sparingly in scenes throughout the movie (22:00, 22:50, 1:15:00, 1:27:30, 1:39:00). How does he change throughout? Why is his role important to the overall plot?
10. When Carrie finally realizes that Preston has begun to feel (1:16:10), how does this change her view of him? What is the significance of this to the overall storyline?
11. When Preston walked out into public view after the execution, he fell on his knees sobbing in front of all of EQUILIBRIA. He had to know that this would be a sure sign of his doom, yet he did so anyway. What are some examples of how we do the same (or similar) thing when we allow ourselves to "feel?"
12. "Father" doesn't even exist anymore? Are you kidding me??? Did that just blow you away? Can you think of anything in today's society where an "figurehead or "face" is perpetuated to keep a message alive?
13. What happened in the scene with the "lie detector?" When it flat-lined? Was Preston able to control that? Could he have controlled it all along? What if he had done that when with the underground? How does this relate to his conversation with Yergen after the first lie-detector test?
14. The last 10 minutes of the movie are painfully bloody and graphic. Was this necessary to drive home the point of the movie? Could the plot and story have come to resolution without all of the graphic violence, or was this just added to appeal to an audience who looks for this in movies?