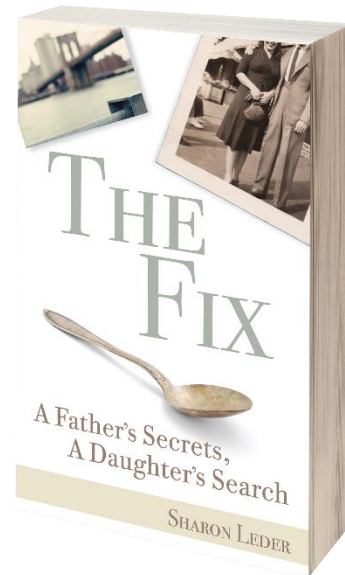




The Fix: A Father's Secrets, A Daughter's Search

by Sharon Leder is an excellent conversation starter for middle school and high school classes, as well as for addiction-recovery groups and book clubs. Here are some suggestions for using the book with your group.



Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. Why might an author who survived trauma write about the experience in fictional form rather than in a memoir? What are the strengths and weaknesses of writing a story based on real life as a novel rather than as an autobiography or memoir?
2. How and when should a parent speak to her/his children if the other parent suffers from addiction? What considerations should be kept in mind? How well did the character Helen in *The Fix* handle this challenge with her children?
3. With whom should children speak about their questions, fears, and feelings if they have one or more parents suffering from addiction? Why would it be difficult for a child or teenager to speak directly with the parent suffering from addiction? Why couldn't Sara fulfill Grandma Hannah's direction to speak to her father about his problem? What resources are available for children of addicted parents?
4. How are children affected if family members require that a parent's addiction be kept a secret? How did the Katz family secret affect Sara and her mother, Helen?
5. Why do you think Sara became interested in Civil Rights and the Women's Movement?
6. What kinds of conflicts and tensions arise within families when a parent suffers from addiction? What conflicts arose between Sara's parents and grandparents? Between Sara and her mother? How are such tensions and conflicts being resolved in families that are affected by the opioid epidemic today?
7. How are attitudes toward heroin addiction today different from those that prevailed when the Katz's family story takes place?
8. Why is addiction, or chemical dependency in general, such a difficult problem to address and control? Why do you think Josef was not able to end his addiction? Were there options available that he didn't try? Are there options available today that have enabled heroin addicts to control their problem and live satisfying lives?
9. How could this novel be helpful to both adolescents and parents?



Role-Playing Activities

1. Volunteers can be selected by the facilitator to play eight-year-old Sara; her mother, Helen; and her grandmother, Hannah. Ask the volunteers to enact the scene in which Grandma Hannah tells Sara to persuade her father to stop using drugs. The volunteer playing Helen should take the opportunity to intervene using words that are not provided in the novel. The volunteers should take the freedom to have Helen, Grandma Hannah, and Sara speak to one another in new ways.
2. Two people can be selected by the facilitator to play ten-year-old Sara and her father, Josef, as Josef is explaining to Sara that he will spend time receiving shock therapy at Hawthorne Lodge in Connecticut. The volunteer playing Sara can tell her father how she really feels about his going away from the family a second time, and how she feels about his drug problem. The volunteer playing Josef can use his or her own words to respond.

To order additional copies of *The Fix*, please visit KiCamProjects.com or Amazon.com.

To learn more about author Sharon Leder, please visit SharonLeder.com.