



Fairytales can be rewritten....

Book Club Materials

Meet the Author

Stacy Ross



Stacy Ross is an author, speaker, and a mother of a child/adult with Borderline Personality Disorder. With raw honesty Stacy shares her 29 year journey to audiences of all sizes and backgrounds. By openly discussing her feelings of guilt, loneliness, frustration and fear that accompany having a child with a disability, Stacy shines a light on a unique yet universal story that any parent who has faced challenges raising their family will find a piece of themselves in.

Her Mission:

Through advocacy Stacy hopes to create a conversation and a community for parents often battling it out alone, ultimately reducing stigma and making way for real change.

Her Background:

Stacy holds a BS from Cornell University, an MBA from the University of Rochester, and is a certified Yoga Instructor. Stacy speaks in communities, for organizations, and in the media.

Contact Information:



stacyrossspeaks.com



stacyrossspeaks@gmail.com

About the Book

Fairytales can be rewritten...



When you are constantly holding your breath every time the phone rings. when you are always waiting for the other shoe to drop, when you are continually walking on eggshells...you can't help but crave for a lighter time, and want for the fairytale.

In *Searching for Slippers*, Stacy Ross tells her story as a parent of a child with Borderline Personality Disorder. With a raw honesty rarely found in parents of children with mental illness, Stacy takes readers on a roller coaster ride of emotions and experiences on her journey to acceptance. Through it all, she has her own coming of age discovering that a life unplanned for was exactly what she needed to emerge a lighter yet stronger version of herself.

Author Questions

DOWNLOAD VIDEO INTERVIEW FROM STACY'S WEBSITE

1 The Author's Why

Mental illness is a difficult topic and there are things you share that are deeply personal. What initially drove you to write your story, and has that reason changed or evolved since you began?

2 The Meaning Behind the Title

Searching for Slippers is a unique title. It conjures up images of fairytales, coziness, warmth - all images that are unusual when discussing mental illness. Why did you name the book searching for slippers and how do you explain the imagery it brings to mind?

3 The Coming of Age Story

Most coming of age stories are about people in their teens or early twenties. How does *Searching for Slippers* fit into this category and/or genre? Why did you choose this for the subtitle?

4 The Gift of Hindsight

When we first meet you, you are a college student in an ice cream shoppe. Would you have done anything differently had you known what life had in store?

5 Advice to Your Younger Self

What advice would you give the young mom working so hard all the time to fix everything? You share glimpses of your childhood, but were you always a "fixer"?

6 The Affects on Marriage

You talk a lot about your relationship with Howie. Many couples who go through what you have gone through don't make it. Why did you? What is your relationship like today?

7 The Happy Ending

In the epilogue you say "one of the hardest things about writing a memoir is you can't tie it up in a pretty bow at the end." What do you mean by that? How did that knowing that affect when and how you ended the story? Is there a sequel in the works?

8 Fin's Reaction

Why did you choose to include "Through Fin's Eyes?" How does he feel about the book? Did it help or hurt your relationship?

EMAIL STACY FOR ZOOM OR IN PERSON VISIT

SEARCHING FOR SLIPPERS

GENERAL

Discussion Questions

FOR THE GROUP

1 The Opening Scene

The opening scene dives right into the heart of Fin's mental illness - why do you think the author chose that as the opening scene? Do you think it was a good choice? Why or why not? Is there another scene that you think would have worked better? Why or why not?

2 The Note to Readers

In the "Note to Readers" the author seems to be warning the readers about something?. What do you think she was warning them about? Was it necessary? Do you think she was "unwaveringly honest" throughout the book? How did her honesty help you to relate to her and to her story?

3 Advice to Your Younger Self

Who do you think is the intended audience for *Searching for Slippers*? Does it only speak to parents of children with Borderline Personality Disorder? Why did it or didn't it resonate with you?

4 Coming of Age Story

This book is categorized as a memoir, yet on the cover it is subtitled "one mom's coming of age story." A coming of age story is defined as a "protagonists journey from childhood to adulthood". How does this book fit into both categories? Does it fit into one more than the other? How can an adult have a coming of age story? Have you had a second coming of age?

5 Fin's Response to the Memoir

Why do you think the author chose to include "Through Fin's Eyes"? Did you think it was a good choice? How would you handle writing a memoir that so heavily involved others, especially a child? Was having a response from Fin necessary?

GENERAL

Discussion Questions

FOR THE GROUP

6 Part One: The Search is Over, Chapter One, Once Upon a Time

In Chapter One, the author first introduces the theme of fairytales and her belief in them. How was this theme carried through the book? Would you still call her life a fairytale at the end of the book? Why or why not?

7 Part One: The Search is Over, Chapter One. The Wedding Scene pg 24

In the wedding scene, the author talks about expectations and dreams of the twenty-somethings in the room. How is this scene familiar to you? Where does it bring you back to in your own life? Do you think it is a fair depiction of twenty-somethings today vs. the time period (late 80's, early 90's) that the author is referencing? What has and hasn't changed?

8 Part One: The Search is Over, Chapter Three, And Baby Makes Three

In this chapter, the author gives a detailed description of Molly's birthparents, Dan & Jill, and their relationship with Stacy & Howard. Do you think Stacy was fair to "cut ties" (page 42) with Dan & Jill? Why or why not?

9 Part Two: Hanging on By a Thread, Chapter Five, A Fork in the Road

In this chapter, Molly goes into the hospital for suicidal thoughts for the first time and Stacy is forced to face the possibility that Molly has a serious and enduring illness. We also witness how the family first dealt with Molly's illness as a unit. Consider the impact of Molly's emerging illness on the family's life, and in particular Leo's and Emily's. What unique challenges do siblings of children with mental illness face - both immediately and in their future lives? Do you have times in your own life that were "forks in your road"? What are they and how did they affect you and your family?

10 Part Two: Hanging on By a Thread, Chapter Six and Chapter Seven

In these two chapters, the author introduces two coping skills, yoga and running. What other coping skills does she seem to use? What is in your coping toolbox?

GENERAL

Discussion Questions

FOR THE GROUP

11 Part Three: The Support System, Chapter Eight, When I Can't Talk I Type

Do you think Stacy's emails in this chapter were an effective way of communicating during that time period? Were they necessary? Why was it easier to "type than talk" for Stacy sometimes?

12 Part Three: The Support System, Chapter Ten. It's Not Easy Being Married to Superman, pg.137

In this chapter, the author describes "True Molly Fashion" (page 137). Do you agree with the author's statement that as adults we become shackled with constraints? If so, find some examples from your own life and examine why and how this happens.

13 Part Three: The Support System, Chapter Ten. It's Not Easy Being Married to Superman

Also in Chapter 10 It's Not Easy Being Married to Superman the author describes Howie's ability to compartmentalize as something she first resented but then, with Dr. Sanders help, learned to adopt as a coping tool of her own. Keeping the chapter title in mind, do you think compartmentalizing is a superpower all the time? In what situations do you think it works best? Are there times in your life where you practice it or times where you wish you had?

14 Part Four: Lost and Found, Chapter Twelve, The Jury is Out

In this chapter, Stacy is forced to hold Molly's graduation in their backyard after Molly withdrew from Windward and didn't want to participate in NJ Regional's ceremony. What were your thoughts as you read the author's description of the graduation? What do you think Stacy was feeling? The rest of the family?

15 Part Four: Lost and Found, Chapter Fourteen, A Soft Landing

In this chapter, we witness Fin jumping out of a moving car and biting Stacy with Stacy's mom in the backseat. The author describes this as "killing" her mother's naivete and being "let into a version of my life I'd held close." Understanding that Stacy is close with her parents, and they live nearby for much of the year, how is this possible? Discuss the impact of having a grandchild with a mental illness. How is their experience different? What types of coping skills could they benefit from? What are some creative ways for them to help or remain a part of a family in crisis?



Lavender Slippertini

Ingredients

Muddled lime
2oz blanco tequila,
1oz lavender syrup
.5oz cointreau

Directions

Pour all ingredients in a shaker. Shaken well and served in a martini glass is how Stacy likes it. Can be served on the rocks as well!!

The H.O.N.E.S.T.Y Acronym

Creating a Coping Toolbox

H

Honoring the truth

O

Owning Your Situation

N

Noticing the Details

E

Empowering Yourself

S

Sharing the Burden

T

Telling Your Story

Y

You Matter

Keep the
Conversation
Going!!!

What does
“honesty”
mean to you?