



1. Mental illness affects the entire family. How did Linea's illness affect her relationship with Cinda during the initial symptoms and diagnosis through the end of the book? What were the biggest challenges as Linea moved into adulthood? In what ways did they grow closer and in what ways did they independently mature?
2. In Linea's sophomore year of high school she told a teacher that her best friend Chrisy was cutting. Was the possible loss of friendship worth telling Chrisy's secret? Do you think that self-mutilation is something that should be addressed in schools? Did Linea's response to the situation with Chrisy, in which she contemplated cutting herself, surprise you?
3. Linea and her family had a very difficult time in the emergency room the first time she was hospitalized. Even knowing that psychiatric ERs are overwhelmed with patients and beds in psychiatric units are limited, waiting over eight hours for care was excruciating. What, if anything, could have made this process easier? Do you think this lack of resources for psychiatric patients is a national concern? What can individuals do to improve this situation?
4. Jean and Linea were best friends from their earliest years. Linea's illness caused a rift in their relationship. Why do you think it was so difficult for them to remain close? What do you think kept them from completely ending their friendship? What could have been done to lessen the difficulties they faced? What does their friendship teach us about supporting friends with mental health conditions?
5. After being hospitalized for a couple of weeks, Linea's nurse said (referring to the cranes outside the hospital window), "And you can always tell if they're a girl or boy dinosaur because they're not wearing clothes. See?" (page 158) Why was this interaction important? Was this interaction significant in Linea's recovery and if so, why?
6. Electro-convulsive therapy (ECT) is suggested shortly after Linea is hospitalized. Why do you think Linea's reaction was different from her parents? Why do you think Linea's dad was angry about this proposal? What could have made this decision easier on the family? Do you think there is stigma about ECT and, if so, how can we change that?

*A
Reading
Group
Guide*



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8. Linea's first roommate was discharged against her wishes. "He will kill me!" she cried as the social worker explained that she would be going to a homeless shelter and assured her she would be safe (page 179). What impact did this have on Linea? Do you think most people know that this happens in hospitals across the country? Should this be shared with the public and, if so, how?
9. Cinda steps into an elevator leaving the psychiatric unit at Harborview and is joined by a patient (page 176). Was the fear and trepidation that Cinda felt based on stigma? Would you feel the same in this situation? How could this interaction have been more positive from the beginning?
10. Linea returns to Chicago after her first hospitalization and time spent at home in Seattle. She is then hospitalized for a drug overdose. What do you think about Cinda and Curt's decision to let her stay in Chicago? How do you think their choice to let her stay affected Linea's life at the time?
11. Mental illness affects siblings as well. How do you think Linea's illness affected her sister Jordan? Do you think this changed over time? Were there things that could have been done differently to support Jordan?
12. Cinda and Curt mostly worked together as a team but still faced many difficulties. What particular challenges do you think a child's mental illness brings to a relationship? What can couples do to strengthen their relationship when their child is seriously ill?
13. Linea is open and honest, often painfully so, about her thoughts and symptoms. What do you think about how honest she is with her family? Do you think this honesty was a source of strength for her or a detriment to her friendships and recovery?
14. Linea's descriptions of her suicide ideation are terrifying and painful for the reader and yet offer insight into what it is like to have a deep depression. Did this change the way you understood depression and suicide ideology? If so, in what ways?
15. Were there specific events that you think caused Linea and Cinda to become such strong advocates? What part do you think advocacy plays in the recovery process if at all?

For resources and information about Linea's and Cinda's activities please see their website: www.lineacinda.com