



**Book Discussion Questions for:**  
*Hidden Valley Road* by Robert Kolker

**MPPL Fiction-AV-Teen Department**  
**(847) 590-4070**  
**readers@mppl.org**

## Discussion Questions Created by MPPL Staff

---

- What conversations did you have about mental health growing up?
- Let's start by discussing Don and Mimi. How did the idea of the American Dream or ideal family affect Mimi and Don's parenting style?
- How were the non-schizophrenic siblings affected by their schizophrenic brothers?
- How were the schizophrenic brothers different in their illness?
- At the time, mental illness/schizophrenia was blamed on the mother. What was your reaction to this? How did it make you feel about Mimi?
- What did you think of the main memories in the book being from Mary and Margaret especially towards the end?
- How are the Galvins shaped by their own traumas?

- What is something you learned about the field of psychiatry or schizophrenia?
- While this book is about mental illness, it is also very much about family. How do you think the book defines family?
- What did you think of the doctors/scientists at the forefront of schizophrenia research? Did anything surprise you about their research process?
- Lindsay says that her purpose for participating in this book is to bring greater empathy and compassion to people with severe mental illness. Do you think the book accomplished this?
- What was the experience of reading this book like for you?
- Is it ethical to publish a book like this? Does it violate the privacy of people who can't provide consent?
- What are some things you will take away from this book?
- Has this book changed the way you see your own family?