

Book Club Discussion Guide

Unlocking: A Memoir of Family and Art

Here are some questions that could inspire interesting dialogue for a book club discussion:

1. What are the two or three most important themes that run through the book? How successful was the author in intermingling personal and professional “stories”?
2. What about the author’s life most resonates with you? Did you find anything particularly inspiring?
3. How did *Unlocking* change or shape your awareness of looking at art? What struck you most about the author’s descriptions of works of art and the importance of art in her life?
4. What chapters did you like best or least and why? What did you find most poignant or painful?
5. How would you describe Pressly’s ambivalence about her career? She talks a great deal about her difficulty balancing her role as a mother and as a full-time professional. How is this different from what parents experience today?
6. The author doesn’t think of herself as a feminist or a trailblazer yet among her peers she was on a different trajectory. How do you see her in the context of the early 1980s?
7. Part Three of the memoir is entitled *Epiphanies*. Discuss this last section. Why do you think she chose this construct? What were her most profound revelations?
8. How did you feel when you finished the book? What struck you most about the author and her life’s journey?
9. What passages did you find particularly moving and well written and why?