

Book Group Questions

1. Consider the severity of the early emotional and psychological abuse Margel and her siblings suffered at the hand of their mother, as well as the fallout they continue to experience as adults. How has it manifested in each and what very different coping mechanisms have they developed?
2. Discuss some of the parallels between the traumatic events in Margel's past and those unfolding in Mosquito Harbor.
3. As a child, Margel often shielded her brother and sister from their mother's cruelty by putting herself in the line of fire, yet she's racked with guilt for having left them behind when she ran away as a teenager. Discuss the impact this guilt has had on her life, as well as the role of guilt in the overall story. Which characters internalize guilt for their actions (whether they should or not), and which don't but perhaps should?
4. Parenting is a recurring theme in the book. Discuss its many guises and contexts within the story. What are the primary responsibilities of parenthood in your view? Are they met in these instances?
5. At the beginning of the story, Margel is convinced she's carrying the same dark seed as her mother and will someday unleash similar treatment on her daughter. What leads her to believe this and are her feelings justified? Why?