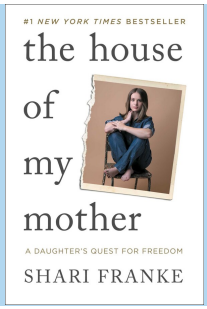
Discussion Guide



The House of My Mother
Shari Franke

Gallery Books
2025
320 pages
ISBN: 978-1668065396

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Summary

From Shari Franke, the shocking true story behind the viral *8 Passengers* family vlog is revealed. Shari, the eldest daughter of the convicted YouTube star (Ruby Franke), writes of the hidden abuse she suffered from her family's devastating involvement with Jodi Hildebrandt, and how, in the face of unimaginable pain, she found freedom and healing.

Questions

1. What do you think motivated Ruby Franke to start family vlogging, and how did it change her approach to motherhood?
2. How does Shari's experience illustrate the potential harms of children growing up in the public eye through social media?
3. What role did the Mormon community and LDS values play in the Frankes's story, both in their initial vlogging success and their later involvement with ConneXions?
4. How did Ruby's parenting evolve from the early years to her time involved with ConneXions, and what remained consistent?
5. Why do you think Kevin went along with Ruby's increasingly extreme parenting, and what does his behavior tell us about his culpability?
6. What impact did growing up with her mother's conditional love have on Shari's mental health and development?
7. How did Ruby use her children's privacy violations and personal struggles as content for her channel, and what does this reveal about her priorities?
8. What warning signs did people outside the family notice, and why do you think interventions by authorities failed to protect the children earlier?
9. How does Shari's description of her mother's journaling about the abuse reveal Ruby's mindset during the most severe period of abuse?
10. What do you make of Ruby's behavior at her trial, particularly her claim that she was also a victim of Jodi?
11. How did Shari's relationship with her faith and scrupulosity (excessive guilt and anxiety over moral or religious issues) reflect her attempts to understand and cope with her mother's treatment?
12. What does the "cancellation" of the *8 Passengers* channel in 2020 reveal about the relationship between family vloggers and their audiences?

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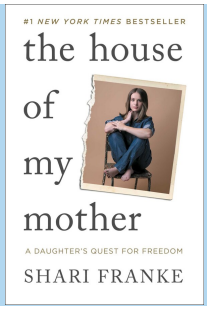

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13. How does Shari's experience with therapy—both with Jodi and later with a legitimate therapist—illustrate the difference between genuine mental health support and manipulation?
14. How did Shari's understanding of her own trauma responses (particularly the fawn response) help her begin to heal?
15. What does Shari's memoir contribute to the broader conversation about "sharenting" and children's digital rights?
16. How did Ruby's isolation of her children from extended family and the outside world enable the escalation of abuse?
17. What role did Chad play in the family dynamic, and how did his defiance differ from Shari's coping mechanisms?
18. Now that Shari has found her "chosen family" and is working toward healing, what do you think the future holds for her and her siblings' relationships with each other and with their parents?

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