

A Reading Group Guide for

Never Enough

By Denise Jaden

About the Book

Loann has always wanted to be popular and pretty like her sister, Claire. So when Claire's ex-boyfriend, Josh, starts flirting with her, Loann is willing to do whatever it takes to feel special even if that means betraying her sister.

But, as Loann slips inside Claire's world, she discovers that everything is not as it seems. Claire's quest for perfection is all-consuming and comes at a dangerous price. As Claire increasingly withdraws from friends and family, Loann struggles to understand her and make amends. Can she heal their relationship—and her sister—before it's too late?

Themes

- Eating Disorders
- Body Image
- Self-esteem
- Bullying
- Domestic Abuse
- Sibling Rivalry

Discussion Questions

1. Loann and Claire may appear to be significantly different (in personality and physicality), but they are more alike than it may seem. How are the girls similar? How are they different? Compare and contrast how each girl handles body image.
2. The author infuses both bullying and domestic abuse into the story. Describe and discuss how these two additional thematic elements impact the larger theme of eating disorders. Are there connections between these situations?
3. Loann regrets not acting upon her suspicions of Claire's eating disorder. If you found yourself in the same circumstance, how would you communicate your concern to Claire or third parties?
4. Marcus, much like Claire, has a secret he is hiding. Is it more appropriate for Marcus to stay quiet about his circumstance than it is for Claire? Why or why not? Is Loann's response to his situation reasonable? What would you do differently?

5. Loann has very different relationships with each of the people in her life. How is each relationship unique and how does each help or hinder her as she deals with the result of Claire's eating disorder?

6. How would you describe Loann's family? In what way is Claire's eating disorder impacting how they relate to each other?

Interdisciplinary Activity

(Best paired with a technology course)

Using <http://www.webquest.com> as a guide, assign a group activity that encourages deeper understanding of eating disorders by requiring students to craft a lesson that educates different learners.

Targets National Standards:

NCTE

- English - Understanding Human Experience
- English – Communication Skills
- English – Applying Knowledge
- English – Developing Research Skills
- English – Applying Language Skills

ISTE

- Technology – Social, Ethical, & Human Issues
- Technology – Technology Productivity Tools
- Technology – Technology Communication Tools
- Technology – Technology Research Tools
- Technology – Technology Problem-Solving & Decision-Making Tools

Activities

Art as Therapy

Visit a local (or virtual) art gallery and have your students select a variety of works that they would consider therapeutic. Have them describe the pieces and reflect on the ways they would provide assistance.

Set Design

Loann and Marcus are set designers for their school play. Now it's your students' turn. Students will create a small-scale visual representation (i.e., diorama, poster, web-presentation, etc.) of a theatrical set that represents one of the thematic focuses of the book.

Bullying/Domestic Violence

Marcus is the victim of bullying at school. Discuss with your students how his relationship with his parents has influenced his reaction to his peers. Provide an alternative healthy response Marcus could be encouraged to develop.

About the Author



Denise Jaden spent her high school lunch hours trying to tame her frizzy/curly hair in the bathroom, or playing freeze tag in the drama room. She attended the theatre program at college, and then enjoyed a variety of occupations, including stage production, mushroom farming, and Polynesian dancing. The first draft of her debut novel, *Losing Faith*, was written in 21 days during National Novel Writing Month. *Never Enough* is her second novel. There is also a companion anthology of stories and deleted scenes available called *Never Enough Stories*. Denise lives just outside Vancouver, Canada, with her husband and son.

Find out more online at www.denisejaden.com or on Twitter: @denisejaden

Guide written by the author.

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