

BOOK GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

For DELIA'S PLACE

by Lin Stepp

1. How is Delia Walker's engagement to be married broken? Aside from hurt and shock, what are Delia's deepest concerns? What does she do in response? Have you ever experienced a broken relationship? Do you remember how you felt and what you did?
2. Why does Delia regret running into Tanner when she arrives in Gatlinburg? What is their past relationship? How are things different as they re-establish their friendship?
3. What brought Tanner Cross back to Gatlinburg? Is he comfortable with his life? Who are the Jack Gang and what is their place in Tanner's life? Do you still have close friends you've known since childhood?
4. How does Delia meet Hallie Walker? What is their family relationship? What problems have brought Hallie to Aunt Dee's on Balsam Lane? Would you have helped Hallie in the same situation?
5. Personalities often balance each other in positive ways. How is Tanner good for Delia in this hard time? How does he help her moods and emotional upset when she arrives? How does he later encourage her dreams and ambitions? What do you like about Tanner?

6. Who has made most of the decisions about Delia's life in past? Why? What has held Delia back from being more mature and independent at almost twenty-three? Why do you think Hallie has more maturity and confidence at only seventeen?

7. Delia often talks out her problems with her cat, Graham. Do you ever talk with your pets? How are animals a help and comfort in our lives?

8. How did Hallie meet John Dale Madison? What is their relationship? In early times in America, couples often married in their teens. Now they marry later, often in their late twenties on average. How is this hard on couples that meet and fall in love at a young age?

9. Delia and Hallie are kin to the Walker sisters. Had you ever heard of these sisters before reading this book? Looking at the photo of the cabin where they lived at the book's end, what do you think it would have been like—for a family with eleven children and later for five single women—to live in this rustic cabin?

10. At the Greenbrier School House and later on the trail, Delia and Hallie quote familiar poems. What were some of these? Do you know poems learned at home or in school you can still recite? Do you think children still learn poems at school and home?

11. Why does Delia think starting her own business in Gatlinburg is a bad idea? What risks are there in starting your own business? What helps to

develop Delia's decorating business as she tried her first jobs? Why is her family not supportive even when she experiences success?

12. Tanner is often angry and frustrated as he tries to respond to Delia's interest—and flirtation—only to be pushed away. How is the gazebo scene at Tanner's birthday an example of this? What happens? How are these issues later resolved?

13. What new unexpected calamity makes Hallie's life situation even more difficult? How do Hallie and John Dale differ in how they want to handle this situation? Later in the story, who helps the couple to find a good resolution to their problems?

14. Early in the book Hallie says to Delia, "I think we're going to bond, Cousin." In what ways did Hallie and Delia bond in friendship over the course of the book? In what daily way did they try to grow their faith together?

15. As Delia struggles to make decisions for her own life, she gets counsel from Hallie, Tanner, her family, Maureen, Aunt Dee's devotional guide, and Perry at the church... even from Zola Devon, a total stranger at a shop in Gatlinburg. What did you think of these different counsels, especially Zola's? How did the Zola's counsel, especially, help Delia later as she struggled to make her own right decisions—and not just please others?

16. How did Delia handle the frightening scene with Jonas Cole? What did she say to Tanner on the phone that alerted him that Jonas was there? How did Tanner respond?

17. What possessed Hallie to go back to the burned out ruins of her old house? Where did she run when she realized Jonas Cole was chasing her? Why? What later happens when Jonas escapes from prison? Why do you think a person becomes disturbed and dangerous, like Jonas Cole?

18. Toward the book's end, Tanner finds Delia dancing to old tunes in her Aunt Dee's ballgown. What is the same about this scene as an earlier one between the two? How is it different? Did you enjoy this book's ending? What characters did you like best?