

Book Club Discussion Guide

Grounded Wildness

Before You Begin Your Discussion...

Discussing the topics in *Grounded Wildness* can be vulnerable. They are often rooted in deep stories we've carried with us a long time and they can be difficult to share publicly. There is also great comfort in knowing how many people face similar struggles. Discussing these rules and challenges openly is both powerful and healing. At the start of your discussion on *Grounded Wildness*, I recommend agreeing upon the following guidelines:

- Acknowledge this is a vulnerable topic. Emotions may arise during the discussion and that's okay! All emotions are welcome.
- Trust is the key to being able to share openly. Maintain confidentiality. What is discussed at your book club stays with the book club.
- Listen openly to others' experiences without putting your own beliefs and stories onto another participant in your discussion. Refrain from telling someone what they should or should not feel or that something they experienced wasn't real.
- Enjoy! Discussing *Grounded Wildness* is a great opportunity to learn more about yourself and build trusting relationships with those in your discussion group.

Additionally, this guide is designed to give you structure and questions to stimulate discussion and idea sharing. You don't need to utilize all the questions in the exact format they are laid out. Instead, choose the ones that you believe will be most relevant and engaging for the group - or have each participant pick the question they'd most like to discuss and start there. Feel free to add new questions as well!

Discussion Questions

1. In Chapter One, Heather shares her quick transition from wildness to performing in seventh grade. When did you first lose your wildness?
2. Proving, pleasing, perfecting, and rebelling are all the ways we perform that are described in Chapter Two. How do you perform in your life? Do you mainly prove, please, perfect, or rebel? Or do you do some of each in different areas of your life?
3. In Chapter Three, Heather writes about glimpses of wildness she had throughout her life, even when she was still in performing mode most of the time. What glimpses of wildness have you experienced? How did you feel during those times when your grounded wildness surged to the surface?
4. In Part Two of the book, Heather describes the difference between simply breaking down, when you turn to self-critical judgments, and breaking open, when you get curious with openness and self-compassion. The latter is needed to then break through into grounded wildness. What in Heather's self-critical questions resonated with you? How do you typically respond during a break-down?
5. How did you feel when you read Heather's deep realization that YOU were never broken, it was always the SYSTEM that was broken? What broken rules do you recognize now that were handed to you, like the rules Heather got from our culture that tied her worth to desirability, weight, and beauty?
6. What does grounded wildness mean to you? How does it feel?
7. Which of the four tenets of grounded wildness resonated with you most? They are:
 - You were never broken. You are innately and completely enough, worthy, and whole.
 - You belong within.
 - You are radiant.
 - You get to make up your own tenets to grounded wildness.
8. What additional tenets do you need? What beliefs make you feel free from the rules you were handed?
9. How do you create space in your life? How do you reconnect to yourself and feel your grounded wildness separate from the rules and noise around you?
10. In Chapter 14, Heather talks about how she has historically been pretty bad at feeling her feelings and provides steps for feeling your feelings and using them as a guide back to yourself. What connected with you from this chapter?

Discussion Questions Continued

11. What is on your Aliveness Agenda? How do you build those places, people, and activities into your life in both big ways that don't happen frequently, like taking an international trip, and in small, day-to-day ways?
12. In Chapter 16, Heather shares multiple stories of when she both did and did not follow her knowing and the outcomes of each. What is a time you didn't follow your knowing - and what were the results? What's another time you did follow your knowing, even if it didn't make complete sense on paper?
13. What does "letting your body lead" mean to you? How does your body give you signals?
14. Share your "I am a person who..." statements from the exercise in Chapter 18, Claim Yourself. It's powerful to put a stake in the ground and tell people out loud exactly who you are. If you haven't done the exercise yet, take a few minutes in silent reflection to create your declarations and then share them with each other.
15. What does it look and feel like when you take up space? What about taking up space is uncomfortable? What is freeing?
16. In Chapter 20, Heather talks about how people don't always understand your decisions and choices, especially when they veer off the expected path - and how that is okay. Not everyone needs to get it - only you need to get it. When in your life have you allowed other people's opinions to guide your decisions, even when it went against your knowing? When have you followed your desires and knowing even when people didn't get it - or actively disapproved of your choice?
17. Who is in your grounded wildness community? How do you feel when you're around them? Have you done anything to build your grounded wildness community since reading the book?
18. In *The Journey Continues*, Heather tells us that letting go and becoming is a process that happens over and over again. What are you letting go of in your life right now? Where do you feel yourself becoming?
19. The very end of the book is a quote from Heather's journal that reads: "Start now. You don't have to fit yourself into the box of what you think is acceptable. GET OUT OF THE BOX. You never belonged in it anyway. Take a risk. A real chance. Be free. Be free. Love, love, love with every- thing you are. Surrender. Let go. Stop playing by the rules. Live free, be free, do all things free. LIVE YOUR TRUTH. Be all of it. And start now." What do you need to start now to further step into your grounded wildness, stop performing your life, and starting living it?