

# THE WILD + FREE FAMILY

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

### CHAPTER 1: TO CREATE A FAMILY CULTURE

1. How would you describe your family's culture? What is the vision you have for what you'd like your family culture to be? Write it down and place it somewhere you'll see it, if that's helpful for you.
2. What are some nonnegotiables in your household?
3. What does being an intentional parent look like for you?

### CHAPTER 2: TO PRESERVE CHILDHOOD

1. In what ways does our society push for children to give up their childhood too early? What do you want childhood to look like for your children?
2. How are you creating meaningful relationships within your family?

### CHAPTER 3: TO CONNECT WITH YOUR KIDS

1. Ainsley quotes Pam Leo's "rewind, repair, replay" strategy to connect with your children (p. 42). Try this with your family and share how it goes.
2. What is one effective way you've found to calm your child/children? What are your favorite ways to play with your child/children?

### CHAPTER 4: TO UNDERSTAND YOUR CHILDREN

1. What do you find prevents you or distracts you from really listening to your child/children? Are there some easy things you can do to minimize these distractions?
2. What types of intelligence listed on pp. 64 and 65 do you see demonstrated in your child/children?

### CHAPTER 5: TO CREATE A SAFE HAVEN

1. When you think back on your childhood home, was it a safe haven? Why or why not?
2. Can you identify any generational patterns/wounds repeating in your parenting? If so, how might these patterns be showing up in your relationship with your children?
3. Ainsley describes a home as being like "a nest—enduring, loosely woven, expansive, and open" (p. 81). How well does it describe your home?



## CHAPTER 6: TO REDEEM WHAT'S BEEN BROKEN

1. What emotional wounds do you need healing from? What are some steps you can take to begin or continue this healing process?
2. Is there anyone in your family you need to forgive? What is one step you could take to move closer to forgiveness?

## CHAPTER 7: TO CHASE WONDER

1. Ainsley lists several ways to chase wonder: read books together, go outside, stay curious, and welcome boredom. Which one most appeals to you to try now? Which one are you already doing well?
2. Do you struggle when your child's curiosity and questions come at what feels like the wrong time? How can you prepare yourself to better embrace those moments?

## CHAPTER 8: TO ADVENTURE TOGETHER

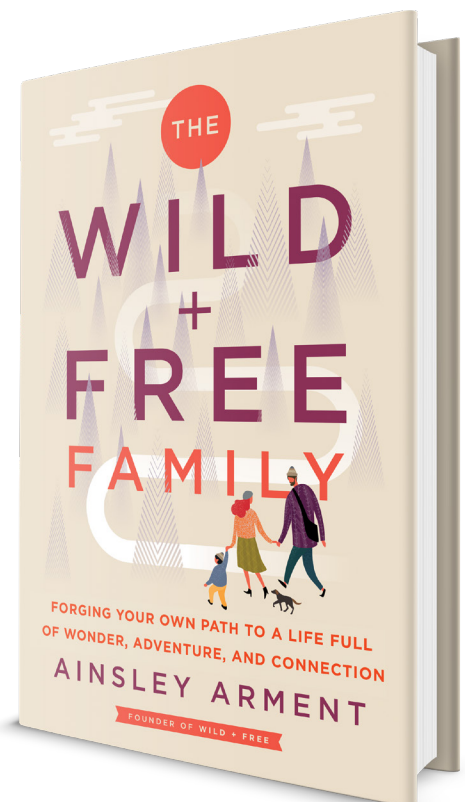
1. Why is adventure one of the wild and free family core values?
2. What kind of adventure best suits your family? Camping? A trip to a faraway place? A themed visit to a place you've been learning about? Look at your calendar and pick a date to take your family on an adventure in the next month.

## CHAPTER 9: TO UNLEASH THEIR GIFTS

1. Are there any dreams from your childhood that your family didn't encourage because they were "impractical" or "useless"? Are there any dreams of your child's that you have been reluctant to encourage for similar reasons?
2. How have you created space for solitude and downtime in your family? How have you created this space for yourself?
3. What interest of your child might you be called to nurture further? What's a small way you can start nurturing?

## CHAPTER 10: TO UNLOCK THEIR POTENTIAL

1. Describing the neurodevelopment program for her son Cody, Ainsley writes, "The outcome is not changing who he is but rather optimizing his unique gifts" (p. 157). If you're raising a neurodivergent child, what does the concept of optimizing your child's gifts rather than changing them mean to you?
2. Have you struggled with blaming yourself or focusing too much on the "why" when it comes to a struggle your child faces? If so, how can you change your focus?



## **CHAPTER 11: TO PURSUE A VISION**

1. Ainsley writes, “When all else fails, pay attention to what you complain about” (p. 169). What insight does this give you into your family’s purpose? What is the gift your family has to offer the world?
2. What are some practical ways your family could live out this purpose?

## **CHAPTER 12: TO BECOME TOGETHER**

1. Your child/children are in the process of “becoming” (p. 170). How might such an idea help you to respond when your child/children acts in a way that isn’t what you want?
2. What does thinking of yourself as being in the process of becoming change about the way you see today? About the way you see tomorrow?

## **CHAPTER 13: TO NOT GROW WEARY**

1. What are the parenting worries that keep you up at night? How might focusing on progress rather than perfection ease your worries?
2. Ainsley writes, “Our great challenge is not what we accomplish each day, but how we respond when our plans go awry” (p. 194). How do you tend to respond, and what helps you to respond with more patience, humor, and love?

## **CHAPTER 14: TO SET THEM FREE**

1. How could you practice gratitude in your everyday life?
2. Throughout the book, Ainsley uses the metaphor of parents as gardeners. How might seeing yourself as a gardener impact the way you view parenting?
3. What does being a wild and free family mean to you?
4. What is one thing this book has inspired you to change or implement in your parenting?
5. You’re not in this alone! Who in your community could you join up with to support you in your parenting journey? (You are always welcome to join the Wild + Free community too!)

