

# Adult-Teen Discussion Guide

## *Grounded Wildness*

### **Before You Begin Your Discussion...**

This guide is designed to foster conversation between adults and teens on the topics in *Grounded Wildness*. It can be used between any adult and teen, whether that's parent-child, aunt-niece, teacher-student, mentor-mentee, or any other combination!

Please keep a few things in mind as you discuss the book:

- *Grounded Wildness* wasn't specifically written for teens, however, the teen years are often when girls start to feel the rules and expectations described in the book. Additionally, Heather includes many examples from middle school, high school, and college in the book that teens can relate to. Decide together what is appropriate for the age of the teen reading the book.
- Discussing the topics in *Grounded Wildness* can be vulnerable. They are often rooted in deep stories we've carried with us a long time. It might be uncomfortable for either the teen or the adult to talk about these topics - and that's okay! Share what works for you, but push your comfort zone a bit. You will get more out of this conversation if you share real things.
- Trust is the key to being able to share openly. Be clear that anything you talk about is confidential, unless there is a concern for safety or wellbeing.
- Enjoy! Discussing *Grounded Wildness* is a great opportunity to learn more about yourself, each other, and build deeper relationships.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. In Chapter One, Heather shares her quick transition from wildness to performing in seventh grade. Do you feel like you've lost your wildness? If so, when did that happen?
2. Proving, pleasing, perfecting, and rebelling are all the ways we perform that are described in Chapter Two. Which of these do you connect with? Do you mainly prove, please, perfect, or rebel - or some of each?

3. In Chapter Three, Heather writes about glimpses of wildness she had throughout her life, even when she was still proving, pleasing, and perfecting most of the time. What glimpses of wildness have you experienced? How did you feel when they happened?

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. What does your inner voice usually sound like? Is it mean? Or curious and kind?

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?

6. What rules and expectations do you feel, like the rules Heather got from our culture that told her she needed to be thin, overachieve, and be successful at everything? Are there differences in the rules teens are handed today and the rules adults were handed when they were younger?

7. What does grounded wildness mean to you?

8. How do you create space in your life? How do you slow down and listen to your own voice?

9. In Chapter 14, Heather talks about how she has historically been pretty bad at feeling her feelings. Is feeling your feelings easy or hard for you?

10. What is on your Aliveness Agenda? What makes you feel truly alive?

11. In Chapter 16, Heather shares stories of when she did and did not follow her knowing and the outcomes of each. When have you followed your knowing? What makes it hard to follow your knowing?

12. What kinds of signals does your body give you? How does it feel in your body when something is really great vs you know something is wrong?

13. Share your "I am a person who..." statements from Chapter 18 with each other.

14. What does it look like when you take up space in your life? At school? At work? In your relationships with friends and family? What about taking up space is uncomfortable, if anything? What is freeing?

15. When have you followed other people's opinions and expectations, even when you knew it wasn't right for you? When have you followed your knowing even when people didn't get it?

16. Who is in your grounded wildness community? How do you feel when you're around them?

17. 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?