

WONDERHELL

WHY SUCCESS DOESN'T FEEL LIKE IT SHOULD...
AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT



GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

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WONDERHELL

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GATHER YOUR RIDE-OR-DIES!

Wonderhell is that space in between who you were yesterday and who you just realized you can become. But it's tricky footing to have one foot in the past while also testing the next step forward.

Lucky for you, you don't have to go through it alone! Look to your right. Look to your left. Are you strapped in to this ride with the person who is going to help get you there?

Alright, then, let's go!

HOW TO START:

This discussion guide is here to help you learn how to survive and thrive in the most unexpectedly harrowing experience of your life: success!

Look, we all get taught how to handle the tragic stuff, the sad stuff, the heartbreaking stuff. But no one tells us how to handle the good stuff, and the tsunami of emotions that come with it.

But, Wonderhell does. This discussion guide is here to help you work through it together, highlighting important points from the book, and giving you catalyzing questions to spark conversations. It's packed with questions to inspire you to take action and find the wonder in any hell.

SUGGESTIONS TO WARM UP YOUR GROUP:

Pick one or a few ideas below and leave time for open discussion. Use your gut and transition to the questions on the next page once you feel that people are in the mood to share.

- *Talk* about why you decided to share Wonderhell with this group.
- *Share* what has changed since you read the book.
- *Describe* a recent struggle and how this book helped you approach it differently.
- *Discuss* how the book's ideas helped you see a clearer path through your own Wonderhell.
- *Watch* Laura's 12-minute talk on [TED.com](#) on Wonderhell.
- Or, you can read the following question, and start with your own answer:

In the opening pages of Wonderhell, the author asks us to consider the following quote:

"The gods have two ways of dealing harshly with us.

The first is to deny us our dreams, and the second is to grant them." -- Oscar Wilde

What does this quote mean to you?



HOW DO WE THRIVE IN WONDERHELL?

The author found herself in Wonderhell shortly after she published her last book *Limitless*. She was thrilled with the success of this thing that she worked so hard for, but she was also exhausted, stressed, anxious, and uncertain. She didn't know what to do. So she did what any researcher would do: research! She spoke to nearly one hundred glass ceiling shatterers, Olympic medalists, start-up unicorns, and every day people like you and like her in search of a solution. And, in their stories, three main strategies emerged:

- Embrace Your Ambition
- Renegotiate Your Response to Emotions
- Be Prepared to Do It Over and Over and Over Again

We'll go through each of these individually in the following pages. But, first, let's get your group talking about the idea in general.

You may have some questions of your own...go for it! (And let us know what you come up with, too!) If you don't, here are some suggestions:

1. What is your biggest takeaway from Wonderhell. Why?
2. Which section of the book (Impostortown, Doubtsville, Burnout City -- or even which specific ride) resonated with you most?
3. Which story in the book felt most familiar to your own?
4. If you got the chance to ask the author one question, what would it be?
5. What is one life change you would like to make after reading Wonderhell?
6. Where did you agree with the author, where did you disagree, and where did you feel uncomfortably challenged (in all the best ways)?



IMPOSTORTOWN: EMBRACE YOUR AMBITION

The gates of Wonderhell are your personal portal to your next big success. Through those gates, you glimpse the tantalizing future you never even knew you wanted or could achieve. Every bit of that future success can be yours, if only you are bold enough to believe in it—and go after it.

So, what's stopping you?

It's time to stop shrinking into the smaller box built for you by others—or even the safe, secure, but suffocating box you built for yourself—and start taking up a space of your own. It's time to embrace your ambition.

First stop: Impostortown!

Wait, you don't feel like you belong here? Perfect! Neither does anyone else.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR CONVERSATION:

1. Are you waiting for someone to give you permission to be ambitious and, if so, who? (And why?)
2. When you glimpsed that "new you," what did you see?
3. In what ways does the thing that makes you different also make you special?
4. How much of your impostor syndrome is caused by being the "first of" in an organization, company, or community that wasn't built for someone who looks, thinks, prays, loves like you?
5. What narratives, hang-ups, old thinking, or past influencers are holding you back, and what can you do to rid yourself of their hold on what you can become?

Bonus question: What's that goal you've been afraid to speak out loud up until today?



DOUBTSVILLE: RENEGOTIATE YOUR RESPONSE

You did it! You embraced your ambition and envisioned something you didn't think was possible: a bigger and better you.

But wait . . . now what?!

A tsunami of emotions is roaring toward you, and they aren't all good. Some of them feel downright horrible. You are filled with dread, discomfort, and doubt. Not only that, but you have no idea where to go, how to be, or even who to be.

Your jumbled-up emotions are screaming at you to stop, do an about-face, and hightail it to safety. But what if these emotions are merely a sign that you're on the right track? What if the uneasiness you feel is your pathway to growth?

If you haven't realized it by now, you're in Doubtsville.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR CONVERSATION:

1. What have you learned from failures, and which of them make your favorite cocktail party stories?
2. What has been your safety net in the past, and how often have you needed to use it?
3. When have you trusted your gut in the past? What did you learn from doing so?
4. How have you handled situations in the past when you have outgrown people whose presence in your life is simply holding you back because you are embarrassed to be your true self around them?
5. What valuable lesson from a mentee, peer, or mentor has shaped your current thinking?

Bonus question: Where have you learned to be comfortable being uncomfortable in the past, and can you apply it here?



BURNOUT CITY: DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN

You've made it through Impostortown, where you gave yourself permission and owned up to your next big dream, and Doubtsville, where you confronted mixed emotions and forged ahead. Now you know that you truly do belong on this new, bigger stage. And you've even gotten comfortable with being uncomfortable as you pursue those bigger dreams.

But wait! Wonderhell has one more magical island of fun to discover. Ahead lies Burnout City—where you get to do it all over again. You thought success was a finite destination? That would mean there is a finite limit to your growth. Good news: you're not done learning. Bad news: you're not done learning.

Wonderhell isn't just a place you visit once. If you have a vision (and the stomach for going after it), you get to come back over and over again. Anticipate this repeat voyage—and even welcome it!—and you'll live to tell the tale. But the key isn't just to survive Wonderhell. Your goal is to thrive in it.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR CONVERSATION:

1. What are you pursuing that is interesting to you, and what are you just pursuing because it was interesting to someone else?
 2. What matters most in your life right now, and are you prioritizing it (or them) appropriately?
 3. Do you have perfectionist tendencies, and are they helping you or harming you (or both)?
 4. What are the standards that you will uphold, day in and day out, even if disaster strikes? In other words, what is sacred and non-negotiable for you?
 5. In what ways are you at risk of self-sabotaging, and in what ways should you prepare to adopt a beginner's mindset and start fresh?
- Bonus question: What would it look like if -- and just hear me out -- you chose not to stop and evaluate why you are pursuing your goals?



ABOUT LAURA GASSNER OTTING

Laura's secret superpower is seeing your greatness and reflecting it back on you, so that you can get "unstuck" — and achieve extraordinary results.

A frequent contributor to Good Morning America, the TODAY Show, Harvard Business Review, and Oprah Daily, Laura's 30-year resume is defined by her entrepreneurial edge. She served as a Presidential Appointee in Bill Clinton's White House, helping shape AmeriCorps; left a leadership role at respected national search firm to expand a tech start-up; and founded, ran, and sold her own global search firm, partnering with the full gamut of mission driven corporate and nonprofit executives.

Laura is turned on by the audacity of The Big Idea and that larger-than-life goal you just can't seem to shake. She's an instigator, motivator, and provocateur, and she's never met a revolution she didn't like. Just ask her enduringly patient husband, two almost-grown sons, and two troublesome pups with whom she lives outside of Boston, MA.

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WANT MORE?

Subscribe to Laura's wildly popular newsletter, Hello Tuesday, where each Tuesday she comes to you with one thing she knows to be true that week.

It's guaranteed to be the kick in the pants you need wrapped in the warm hug you want.

Hello Tuesday!

Motivations on things I know to be true.

And, you can also follow Laura on social @HeyLGO for your daily dose of tough love and wisdom on the channel of your choice.



Hey, it's Laura.

People always ask me why I write the books I write.

The answer is simple really: I write the books I write because I needed to read books like this when I was solving problems like these.

And, I figure that if I have these problems and need these solutions, maybe I'm not alone.

Maybe you needed this, too?

If so, I'd love to hear from you. Tell me where you've been stuck, and what Wonderhell did to dislodge a pre-conceived notion, rewrite a false narrative, or encourage you to finally grab hold of a dream you only dared whisper.

In short, what are you going to do now that you didn't feel empowered to do before?

Would you send me an email at LGO@LimitlessPossibility.com and tell me?



P.S. If you haven't already, check out my last book, *Limitless: How to Ignore Everybody, Carve Your Own Path, and Live Your Best Life*, and see why Robin Roberts named it one of Good Morning America's Favorite Books of the Year.