

BOOK GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

For House of Wind

By Laura DeNooyer

BOOK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1) Ron warned Wendi that “planting wind reaps a harvest of tornadoes.” How does that fit with the title, *House of Wind*? In this story, what was the wind being planted, and who planted it?
- 2) How had Wendi lost her voice and identity within her marriage? What options did she have for recapturing it? What had she tried?
- 3) What kind of responses and/or advice were people (family, friends, elders, therapist, etc.) giving to Wendi? What was helpful and what wasn’t—and why?
- 4) Which parts of Wendi’s meeting with the elders twisted into spiritual abuse (exhortations couched in blame, shame, and/or manipulation)? How can you distinguish truthful, godly advice from spiritual abuse? What recourse is there when abuse occurs and nobody believes it? What about in church settings?
- 5) Ron’s behaviors of emotional abuse include criticism, shaming, blame shifting, manipulation, and gaslighting (making Wendi question her own reality). Which of these do you think is the most harmful and/or scary? Explain.
- 6) Why did it take so long—nearly sixteen years—for Wendi to realize what was happening in her marriage? How did she come to understand she was enabling Ron’s bad behavior? Should she have insisted on more changes from Ron? Should she have left earlier or stayed longer?
- 7) What boundaries did Wendi erect between her and Ron—physically and emotionally? How did you feel about her decision to separate geographically and later choose divorce? When did you need to put up a boundary between you and somebody else?
- 8) What do you think of Garrett’s role in the story? Were his renovation object lessons (mold in the bathroom tiles, taking down lath and plaster bedroom walls, etc.) helpful?
- 9) How well did Wendi handle Julia and Christopher’s emotions and confusion? What could Wendi have done differently? Explain. (Their ages are 14 and 11, respectively.)
- 10) What did you think of Garrett’s definition of everyday heroes, when talking to Christopher? (In chapter 17, Garrett asks, “But who are the grownups who protect you from lies? Ones who take time to know you, make you feel visible and valuable?” In Chapter 39, he says everyday heroes are “The truth tellers. The ones who make you feel like you

matter. Ones who aren't afraid to show their feelings. Ones who are still kind even when life is harsh.")

11) How did Wendi's journaling help her? Do you keep a journal? Would you recommend journaling to others?

12) What are the important components of Wendi's healing? Are some more important than others?

13) Which people were most vital to Wendi's healing and why? How did she determine who was emotionally safe for her to trust and confide in? What makes *you* feel emotionally safe?

14) What is the best way to come alongside victims of emotional abuse, whether in marriage or other relationships?