

ARE WE FRIENDS YET?



A Reading Guide for Parents

*Friendship in the season of raising little humans, when
you have the least time and need your people the most.*

ALEX ALEXANDER

START HERE



FOR PARENTS & MOMS' GROUPS

Something happens to friendship when you become a parent. The time evaporates. The old friends are still there, but the rhythm is gone. You make “mom friends” out of proximity and survival, and some become the real thing while others stay at the school gate. And underneath all of it is a quiet truth no one warns you about: you can be surrounded by little people all day and still feel lonely.

This guide takes *Are We Friends Yet?* and reads it through the season you are in. It is for parents reading together, for a moms' group, for a couple of friends who keep saying “we should really talk,” or just for you, on your own, with a highlighter.

One thing before you start: you are allowed to want this for yourself. Not because connected parents raise more connected kids, though they do. Just because you deserve friendship too, in this season, not only on the other side of it.

How to Use This Guide

Each chapter has a quote from the book and a few questions. Use the ones that land. Skip the ones that do not. There are no right answers here, and there is certainly no gold star for finishing.

- **Lower the bar on purpose.** Snacks on a paper plate. Kids underfoot. A voice memo instead of a meet-up. The point is honesty, not a clean house.
- **Let it be personal.** This book gets real, and so might the room. Nothing has to be fixed. Listening is the whole job.
- **Take it in pieces.** A chapter at a time, in the carpool line, is completely valid. So is one long, rare, kid-free night.
- **Be gentle with the comparison reflex.** Every parent's village looks different. Yours is allowed to look like yours.



QUESTIONS FOR THIS SEASON

Move through the chapters as you read, or jump to the ones that fit where you are right now. A couple of questions per chapter is more than enough.

CHAPTER 1

Recognizing Your Current Reality

“Friendships should feel good.”

- When you honestly look at your friendships since becoming a parent, what feels good, and what feels like a struggle?
- Who could you call on a hard parenting day? Do you feel like you have that person, or are you mostly doing it alone?
- What did your friendships look like before kids, and what do you miss most?
- What about your friendships, family relationships, or community has shifted and felt positive since having kids?
- What friendships make you feel like... you? Not the you that is a parent, but the ones that remind you of the other parts of you?

CHAPTER 2

Defining Your Boundaries

“Boundaries are the secret to building fulfilling connections that feel easy.”

- The book reframes boundaries as bridges that show people how to connect with you best. What boundary would let you actually enjoy friendship in this season, instead of dreading the logistics?
- Where do you say yes (the playdate, the group text, the favor) when you mean no, and what does it cost you?
- What is one expectation of yourself as a friend, in this season, that you could set down?

CHAPTER 3

Getting a Better Handle on Your Time

“It’s not about whether or not you are using your time efficiently; it’s about whether you are using your time in ways that bring meaning to your life.”

- It’s easy to believe we are using our time one way, only to find out it’s not the reality. It’s also easy to spend time on activities that aren’t fulfilling. Where does your limited time actually go, and where do you wish a sliver of it went?
- What is one tiny pocket (nap time, pickup, a walk with the stroller, doing dishes) you could turn into connection?
- What do you do for your kids’ friendships that you never quite do for your own?

CHAPTER 4

Building Strong Friendship Habits

“We don’t typically think of friendship as an area of our life built on habits, but it is.”

- What is one friendship habit you could stack onto something you already do (drop-off, the park, a bedtime text)?
- Are you usually the one organizing, or the one waiting to be invited? How is that working in this season?
- Is there a recurring, low-effort ritual (a standing walk, a monthly dinner) you could start with another parent or an old friend?

CHAPTER 5

The Three Fundamental Stages of Friendship

“All friendships start because you meet a person in a place. It’s that simple.”

- “All friendships start because you meet a person in a place.” Where do you actually cross paths with other adults right now, and are you using those moments?
- Not every mom friend has to become a close friend. Which of your connections feel right exactly as they are?
- Which friendships from before kids do you want to carry forward, and which have naturally shifted?

CHAPTER 6

Shared Experience Roots

“Not everyone has to be a close friend to bring value to your life.”

- Frequency and consistency build connection. Which parent or friend do you already have a natural rhythm with, even a small one?
- What low-stakes shared thing (a class, a walk, the sideline of a game) has actually brought you closer to someone?
- Is there an interest that is just yours, not about the kids, that you wish you shared with a friend?

CHAPTER 7

Emotional Intimacy Roots

“Moments are fleeting. Memories last.”

- Small intimacies are tiny, low-risk shares. What is one honest thing about parenting you could let a friend in on this week?
- When has another parent admitted something real (the hard night, the doubt, the not-coping), and how did it change things between you?
- Where do you keep it all “fine, busy, good” when you could let someone see a little more?

CHAPTER 8

Story Roots

“Our beliefs are often the reason we take action.”

- What stories do you carry about your friends since becoming a parent (“she is too busy,” “she does not get it”)? Where is that coming from?
- Have you felt let down by a friend in this season? Is it the friend, or an expectation worth revisiting?
- What story do you tell about yourself as a friend right now, and is it actually fair?

CHAPTER 9

Recognizing Your People

“You are the center of an interconnected web of humans.”

- The Wheel of Connection counts family, old friends, mom friends, neighbors, and community as one web. Which part is holding you up right now, and which is emptier than you would like?
- Is there a category (family of choice, a historic friend) you have not been leaning on or appreciating?
- Who is in your village right now, really?

CHAPTER 10

Building Your Support System

“We are not meant to move through life alone. We are social creatures.”

- The book swaps keeping score for nourishment. Where are you keeping score (who texted last, who showed up), and what would ease if you stopped?
- Are you better at giving help or receiving it? As a parent, which one feels harder to accept?
- What kind of support do you most need right now and rarely ask for?

CHAPTER 11

Understanding How Our Connections Grow and Change

“What holds our friendships and relationships together is constantly changing, and we are scrambling to adjust without always understanding what is happening.”

- Friendships shift hard when kids arrive. Which friendship has changed on you, and can you name what actually changed?
- Is there a friendship that has quietly grown stronger through parenthood that you could appreciate out loud?
- Which of your friendships are in a paused season, versus truly over?

CHAPTER 12

Nurturing Your Relationships

“No friendship is maintenance free—and don’t forget, maintenance can be mutually beneficial!”

- No friendship is maintenance free. Which friendship is worth a little intentional tending from you right now, even in five-minute pieces?
- What is one specific, doable way you could show up for a friend this month?
- How do you most want to be shown up for, and have you ever actually told anyone?

CHAPTER 13

Reimagining Your Community

“You only stop making new friends when you are in the grave.”

- “You only stop making new friends when you are in the grave.” Where is there a chance to make a new friend that you have been too tired or too shy to take?
- Relationships do not have to be all or nothing. Is there a casual parent friend who could become more, or who is wonderful exactly as a casual friend?
- What would your ideal village look like, if you let yourself dream a little?

CHAPTER 14

Learning to Let Go

“Different isn’t bad; it’s just different.”

- Different is not bad, it is just different. Is there a friendship you are quietly mourning because it cannot be what it was before kids?
- Have you grieved a friendship that faded after a baby, a move, or a diverging path? How are you making peace with it?
- Is there a relationship you are holding to old expectations that you could update, instead of end?

CHAPTER 15

Embracing the Future and Taking Action

“Trust that small actions add up.”

- What is one small, imperfect step toward friendship you could take this week, even with everything on your plate?
- Consistency beats grand gestures. What is one friendship habit you could actually keep in this season?
- Who is one person you want to invest in, and what is the very next thing you will do?

CHAPTER BONUS CHAPTER

Bonus Chapter: Back to the Basics

“Little shifts count. Big shifts count.”

- Little shifts count. What small thing has already shifted in your friendships since you started this book?
- What connection do you most want to keep nurturing, and what is your next step?



ONE LAST THING

Here is what I want you to hear, as a parent who is tired and stretched and doing a lot: the friendships are not a luxury you will get back to later. They are part of how you keep going now. And modeling real, imperfect, maintained friendship may be one of the most quietly important things your kids ever watch you do.

You do not need more time or a different life to start. You need a few small, consistent moves, and the permission to make them. Consider this your permission.

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