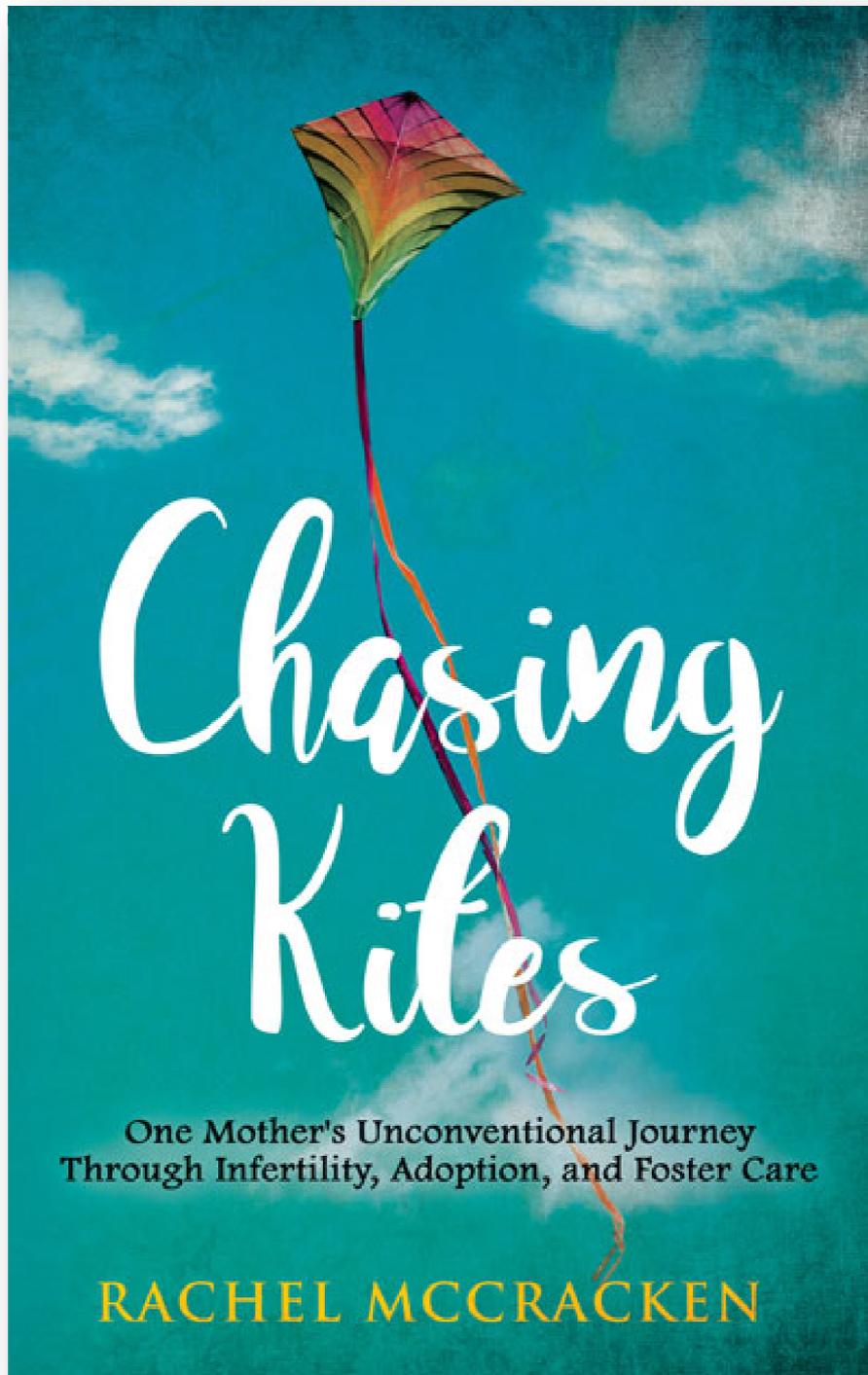


Book Club



Discussion Guide

Topics and Questions

Chapter One

Topics

--Infertility

--Loss

--Choosing to act rather than be acted upon

Questions

1. Who do you know that has experienced miscarriage? Have you? How has it changed you?
2. What about aborting a fetus??? Would you take your chances or follow medical advice? Why?
3. If you had to choose fertility treatments or adoption, which way would go? Why?

Chapter Two

Topics

--Adoption

--Abandonment

--Discipline

--Orphanage Life

Questions

1. What would it be like if you showed up one day in a foreign country and met your children for the first time?
2. What experiences from Bogota did you find the most fascinating?

3. What are the “**had nevers**” that you take for granted with your children?

*“We also found ourselves rapidly teaching life skills such as how to use a fork, how to use the bathroom, how to touch only one button when using the elevator. And the list went on. We were inundated with a steady stream of seemingly basic tasks that our children didn’t know how to handle. They **had never** been to school, not a real one, anyway. They had never had a play date. They **had never** prayed, went school shopping, or attended a birthday party. They **had never** been sung to, read to, or comforted by a loved one, not that they could remember.”*

4. How would you reconcile the competing thoughts of wishing your children were with their first family and wishing you had birthed them? How do imagine that would feel?

“Aside from crying for the obvious reasons, lack of sleep, heart-breaking moments of terror, adjustments in my marriage, and really adjustments of every kind, I was also crying for a million and one silent reasons. I wished we had found the children sooner. I wished we could have cared for more children left behind in the orphanage. I wished their first experience in childhood had been the very best this world had to offer. I wished their parents had made different choices. I wished they could still be in their native land, speaking their native tongue, enjoying their first family.

On the flip side, I wished I had birthed each of them and that I didn’t have to share space in their hearts. I still wished I could have a baby, and that made me feel guilty. I wished for a friend that would understand exactly what I was experiencing. You name it, I wished for it. Nothing about adoption or fostering is fair—to us, our children, or their birth families.”

5. What were your thoughts about the sections “The Orphanage” and “The War on Adoption?” Were there any new concepts or thoughts brought to light by either of these sections? Things you have never considered?
6. What are your thoughts on discipline? How do you lead with love? What do you think the author means by “Discipline is Organized Love?”
7. In your opinion, is adoption for everyone? Why or why not?

Chapter Three

Topics

--Coming Home

--Traditions and memory making

--Firsts

Questions

1. How do you think you would fair if taken from one place and inserted into another? Another culture, another language, another way of doing things?
2. What did you think of all of the kids' firsts? What about the author's firsts as a mom? What about the concept of firsts, in general?
3. How would you react to missing so many of your child's firsts in life?
4. How do you create intentionality in your home or as a parent or grandparent? How do you get children, teens specifically to see past their own tomorrow, teaching them to be doers?
5. What are your thoughts on a "No Victim Mentality?" What do you think of the following statement?

" Teaching children of trauma to erase or hide their past is to rob them of opportunities to strengthen themselves and others. Instead, we must train them to use that trauma and abandonment, the good and the bad of their childhood, to help bless others. And at the very least, we must help them to not remain a prisoner of it."

Chapter Four

Topics

--Faith

--Foster care

--Sibling groups

--Family size

Questions

1. What is a molecular moment? Have experienced a moment like this in your own life? Did you act on it?
2. What has been with foster care? What are some of the biases you hold toward it?
3. Do you think fostering and adopting sibling groups would be more or less challenging? Why?
4. What are your thoughts on the three new little ones in this chapter?
5. Do you agree or disagree with the sentiment "*It is not the Size of Your Family, but the Size of Your Heart?*"

Chapter Five

Topics

--Love

--Grief

--Healing

Questions

1. What part of Henry's story touched you the most?
2. What can the public do to help fix the broken system that failed Henry? Or do you think the system did exactly what it was supposed to?
3. "*Knowing him was worth losing him.*" How do you cope with significant moments of grief and sadness in your life?
4. Has grief ever NOT turned into healing for you? Why do you think that is?
5. Have you ever allowed "what ifs" stop you from loving or doing?

Chapter Six

Topics

-- Fertility Treatments

--Hard Choices

--Premature Birth

Questions

1. What were your thoughts on the process of In-vitro? Too invasive? Morally wrong?
2. *"I chose the pregnancy!"* Would you have chosen the pregnancy or the four foster children? Why?
3. What are the moral implications, if any, of leaving potentially viable embryos frozen indefinitely? Is it worth the risk to try and implant them? Why or why not?
4. Do you cast a wide net in your life or do you keep your net narrow and close? Do you wish you lived your life differently or are you generally happy with the movement in your life?

Chapter Seven

Topics

--Adoption versus Biology

--Bonding and Attachment

--Gratitude and Grace

Questions

1. What do you think about the following statement:
"The thing that [name removed] really taught me is that pregnancy is not that big of a deal. That you love your bio kids the same as you love your adopted kids. That color or blood ties really do not matter. Pregnancy, nursing, babies are so temporary, they are gone in a blink, but motherhood is eternal.

Being a mother is what matters . . . The hope that once your children are home and settled and healed, you will love them so much that you would not want to be a mother any other way. You will actually be glad that you had infertility because it gave you your children. You will be glad that it cost so much and took so long because it helped you appreciate them all the more."

2. Could you bond with any child? Why do you think you can or think you can't?
3. How have you felt the hand of the Lord in your life?

General Themes and Questions

1. How has grace touched your life?
2. What spiritual experiences or brushes with the cosmos have shaped your decisions and your life's path?
3. What person do you have the greatest bond or attachment with? What makes the bond so great?
4. What friends do you have in your life who make you better? How do they make you so?
5. What significant moments of grief and loss have shaped you into something better?
6. What attitude do you approach the world with? What kind of mark are you leaving as you sojourn through this life?

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