

DISCUSSION GUIDE

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FRIENDS

Belonging and the
Family We Choose

CENTRAL
PERK



SHOW SNAPSHOT

Friends follows six young adults in New York City as they navigate life, love, careers, and everything in between—together. Their friendship is their constant, chosen family.

6 PSYCHOLOGICAL THEMES

- 1 The Fundamental Need to Belong
- 2 Belonging Outside the Family of Origin
- 3 Chosen Family
- 4 The Power of Social Support
- 5 Growing Up, Together
- 6 The Limits of Parasocial Bonds

REFLECTION PROMPTS



What does belonging look like in your life right now?



What kind of friend are you—and what kind of friend do you want to be?



How can you invest in friendships that nourish and last?



Belonging is a fundamental human need.



Friends can become the family we choose.



Support, acceptance, and showing up matter.



We grow through life's changes—together.



Stories connect us, but real relationships sustain us.



BONUS QUESTION

If your life were an episode title, what would it be right now—and who would be in the story with you?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

THE NEED TO BELONG



How do the friends meet each other's need to belong? What moments in the show show how important that connection is for each of them?

2

BEYOND THE FAMILY OF ORIGIN



In what ways do the friends create a sense of family for one another? How is this similar to—or different from—your own experience?

3

CHOSEN FAMILY



What makes this group function like a family? What are the strengths and responsibilities that come with that bond?

4

THE POWER OF SOCIAL SUPPORT



Think of a time one of the friends showed up for another. How does their support help the other person grow or heal?

5

GROWING UP, TOGETHER



How do we see the friends change over the ten seasons? What helps them keep their friendship strong through all of life's changes?

6

PARASOCIAL BONDS



Why do you think so many people feel close to the friends, even though they aren't really a part of their lives? What are the limits of that connection?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

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Understanding
minds.



Strengthening
connections.