

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WALL-E:

Loneliness, Presence, and the Attention That Connects Us

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE

Use this guide to connect as a family, put down the screens, and practice being fully present with each other.

1. BEFORE WATCHING

Set the stage and open hearts and minds.

- Have you ever felt lonely even when you were not alone?
- What does it feel like to give something your full, undivided attention?

2. WHILE WATCHING

Pay attention to attention, loneliness, and connection.

- How does Wall-E pay attention to the little things he finds?
- What is Wall-E longing for, even though he has adjusted to being alone?
- On the ship, how do the people treat the screens in front of their faces?

3. AFTER WATCHING

Reflect together and make meaning.

- What changes for Wall-E when EVE arrives, and how does her trust grow?
- Why is it such a big deal when two people finally hold hands?
- What did the people on the ship lose, and what helped them start to notice it?

4. FAMILY REFLECTION

Go deeper with empathy, honesty, and connection.

- **Little ones (4 to 7):**
Pick one small thing and really look at it the way Wall-E does. What did you notice?
- **Big kids (8 to 12):**
Name one thing you do mostly on a screen. How could you do it in person this week?
- **Teens and up:**
When were you with someone today but somewhere else in your attention? Try one screen-free conversation.

DR. Z TAKEAWAY

“We are most connected not when we are near each other, but when we are truly present with each other. Presence is a muscle, and it grows when we use it.”

DR. MICHAEL ZAKALIK, PSY.D.
Psychologist for Parenting | Z Psychology

Understanding minds.



Strengthening connections.

Connection heals.
Conversations help.