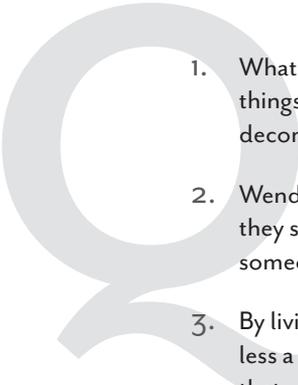


READING GROUP DISCUSSION  
QUESTIONS FOR  
THE GOOD LIFE LAB



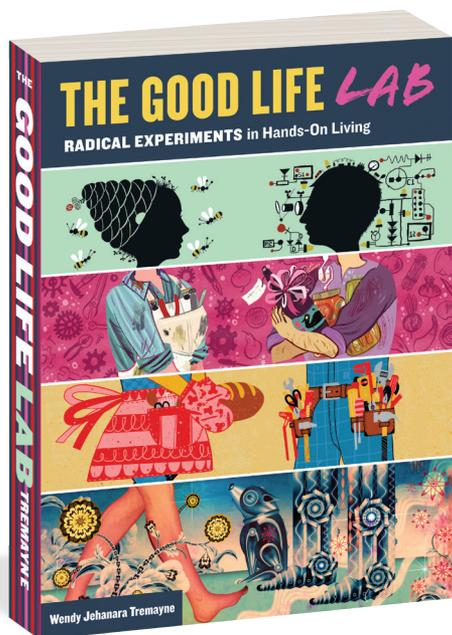
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1. What things are you doing in your life that are similar to things Wendy and Mikey are doing in their effort to create a decommodified life?
  2. Wendy likens her journey to the one the Nearings made when they searched for a sane way to live eighty years ago. Is there someone who has lived in a way that inspires you?
  3. By living in the waste stream, Wendy feels a sense of relief and less a part of the problem. Are there ways that you are living that you feel stuck in, but wish to change? What is it that holds you back from a change?
  4. How has your definition of waste and the waste stream been altered by *The Good Life Lab*?
  5. In Wendy's world, a person who hoards junk is keeping the waste stream from functioning properly. What "junk" do you have at home that could be transformed into something useful?
  6. Wendy has learned to live with chipped dishes, torn clothes, and scratches, dents and dings in her goods. How would you feel doing the same? How would people in your life respond to this change?
  7. What do you think the brands you choose tell people about you?
  8. Foraging and making culinary staples like tea, cheese, yogurt, and preserves are a routine part of a sustainable life. What foraging have you done? What homemade items do you have in your pantry?
  9. What are you interested in making that you currently buy?
  10. Do you think of yourself as a creative person? How did this book change your definition of creativity?
  11. Wendy found a way to use the skills she honed through employment to create a solution. Using production and media skills she created Swap-O-Rama-Rama. What skills have you mastered for your job? How might they be turned around to solve a problem?

12. Is there something that you see in the world that needs fixing? What skills do you have that can be used to repair it?
13. If you could learn a new skill today, what would you choose to learn?
14. What would you sacrifice to lower your cost of living?
15. Wendy and Mikey learned to see value differently. They got rid of their cash and exchanged it for land, water, and tools to make things. What is valuable to you?
16. What if people stopped believing in money?
17. Can you imagine a world without money? How might people interact? How would goods be exchanged?
18. If you reduced the things you own to only what you need what would you have?
19. What does “abundance” mean to you? Did the story of the volunteer who asked to be paid change that?
20. Have you experienced Wendy’s idea of abundance in some aspect of your life? What was the effect of that experience?
21. Wendy sees patents and copyrights as obstacles to progress and time wasted solving the same problems that have already been solved. They prevent the best ideas from being free to change the world. Would you be willing to give away your best ideas?
22. Considering the environmental cost of fossil fuels what mode of transportation is ideal for you (bike, train, electric vehicle, biodiesel, air travel, walking)?
23. What role has nature played in your life? Do you think of yourself as part of nature or separate?
24. How does time spent in nature feel differently to you?
25. How do you bring nature into your everyday life?

“A rollicking, inspiring tale . . .  
alternately funny, tender,  
philosophical, and practical.”

— PUBLISHERS WEEKLY



**Wendy Jehanara Tremayne** was a creative director in a marketing firm in New York City before she and her companion Mikey Sklar moved to rural New Mexico. She writes the blog *Holy Scrap* and has written for *Craft's* webzine and *Make* magazine. Tremayne founded Swap-O-Rama-Rama, an annual textile-repurposing and skill-sharing event. Her off-the-grid desert oasis has captured the attention of such media as *The Discovery Channel*, *CNET*, and *Women's Health*. She lives in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

Paper: \$18.95 US / \$22.95 CAN

ISBN: 978-1-61212-101-7 | eBook available