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VOLUME SIX - ROAM
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GROWING FOOD

LET THEM ROAM: RAISING FOOD
 GROWING A SOUVENIR GARDEN

GROWING HUMANS

A RETURN TO SIMPLER PLAY
 FAMILY TRAVELS: MOAB DESERT

GROWING LOVE

MODERN NOMADS: HOMES ON WHEELS
 INTERVIEW: PONDEROSA & THYME



FEMALE FOUNDER
COLLECTIVE

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There is only one way into this world,

*Standing at the kitchen sink,
in the carpool line,
sunlight sparkle in a puddle,
listening to the bird's song,
waiting for the doctor,
moonbeams on the bedroom floor,
holding your hand.
Where else does the entire universe reside?*

and an infinite number of ways out of it.

The greatest distance I can travel is into the very heart of me,

*I've been to all the corners of the earth
When I hold a droplet of rain.
When I don't turn away from another's tears
When the waters break for each new life.
When the droplet of rain feeds the soil
and I taste the fruit.*

and then back out to the heart of you.

The pilgrim's path is wound and coiled inside of us,

*Earth's vast beauty inspires awe
and still the adventure,
the beauty,
the expanse
inside of each soul
is radiantly more miraculous.
The path so often hidden.
So often neglected and unseen.
Infinite caverns to explore, vastness beyond imagination,
and every dream we seek.
Plus love.*

when we choose to walk it, adventure begins.

Tragedy won't be avoided,

*Each and every traveler comes to see what they can see
and be what they can be.
On the same journey,
no matter where we roam.
By grand cosmic lottery,
we won a ticket here.
Nothing is ordinary,
each of us with our own perfectly crafted itinerary.
Every day is magic, a chance
to see what we can see
and be what we can be.*

and regret is not necessary.

Replace the fear that it will end,

*Rest in that.
The miracle of being here.
The adventure of life, and love, and figuring it all out.
Adventure is not the summit.
Adventure is the climb.
Adventure is the unknown
the excitement of finding the way.
No map,
just a compass.
Adventures await.
Inside, outside.*

with awe that it exists at all.

Past the curtain, we step

*Be here with me,
together,
in awe together.
Each moment full of poignant tension and potential.
Don't waste one breath.*

to that magnificent secret landscape of sovereignty and oneness, together.



*A HOME WHERE
BEING YOUR TRUE
SELF IS MORE
THAN ENOUGH.*

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If you're a regular reader, you're likely already wondering where the Note from Jilly has gone. Well, friends, my dear friend and colleague, Jill Snell, our regular editor-in-chief brought a new addition into the Snell family in the Spring and hopefully she's nestled somewhere with that little bundle, bonding and smelling that new baby smell. This is, however, highly unlikely. More likely is that she has strapped that curious little babe to her body, handed her 3 other children various tools and is standing boots deep in fertilizer and mulch.

Nevertheless, it felt vital that Huckleberry release Jill to take the time necessary to nurture herself and her family after birth, so I gladly took on a guest editorship of this, the sixth volume of Huckleberry magazine, the Roam edition. After all, it would be hypocrisy for me to have put years into birthwork with pregnant and postpartum women as a doula, then move on to curate this, the House of Huckleberry in tandem with Jill—an inclusive space that stands first and foremost for the idea that we are better together—then expect any mother to carry on with a high vocational workload postpartum. Perhaps by now you're guessing that I could stand on a soapbox for hours and talk about the need for parental leave in the U.S. and how the health and happiness of our communities depend on it because our communities are buoyed and built largely by mothers. And you'd be correct. I could do that. Just not today.

Right now, I'd like you to take a deep breath. I mean it. I'll wait.

I'm excited to invite you into Roam. As we were mulling over themes for this Summer edition months and months ago, I was struck then by the way many of us are tugged out into the wild when the weather warms and that thought has taken me on a journey into the many ways folks satiate that inclination. I've chatted with modern nomads who live their whole lives on the road—everything they own fits into a van and that has been the path out of monotony and expectation for them; I've had the good fortune of editing farmer, Amber Webb's piece on ethical livestock rearing and my perspective of this vast food industry will be forever altered; I spent hours with Katie Davis, of Ponderosa & Thyme and drank in her accounts of landscapes and cultures from all over the world that her creative work has taken her to; and, I'm resolute that my next family adventure with my own children will be to the Moab desert because Sarah Kehler's photo essay has captured my curiosity and I absolutely have to experience those red rock formations and vast skies for myself.

Ready to dive in? I encourage you to spend time with each of these articles and let them inspire your sense of adventure. Whether your resources allow for a plane ticket booked tomorrow, or a self-guided tour through your own city's nature reserve, just go. Pack a bag, and get out. Tred on some earth that hasn't been paved, breathe deeply of some fresh air in another part of the world, or experience a way of life you haven't before. You'll be better for it. It's one more way we can grow together.

Wildly,

Erica Martin



**VEGGIE CORNER:
CUCUMBER**

Words: Jill Snell | Artwork: Andi Allison

Of all the summer vegetables we grow, cucumbers have to be one of our family's favorites. From eating them fresh from their vine to preserving more pickles than we know what to do with, cucumbers should be a staple in everyone's growing space.

Cucumbers are known as heavy feeders, meaning they require living and rich soil to grow properly. By ensuring your pH is where it needs to be for them (6.0–7.0), providing a fresh layer of compost and by giving them a solid dose of well-balanced vegetable fertilizer in the beginning, just about any cucumber variety will thrive.

A FEW TIPS FOR GETTING
THE MOST OUT OF YOUR

CUCUMBER CROP

01. Cucumbers love the heat and lots of light. Make sure you plant them in a location that has at least 8 hours of solid sun. They will not do well if you plant them in the soil too early—wait for the true warmth of Spring to arrive and any and all threat of frost to be a distant memory (think two weeks past last frost date AND a consistent 70 degrees).

02. They vibe well in moist soil but their roots will not be happy in soggy soil.

03. Cucumbers grow both on a vine and as a bush—but vining cucumbers are by far the most popular. Hosting a trellis in your growing space will not only allow your cucumbers to take up less square footage in your garden, it will also keep your cucumber fruits uniformed and prevent bug damage.

04. Don't let cucumbers get too large before harvesting or they will become bitter.

05. Best companion crop to plant alongside of cucumbers? Corn, beans and peas.

06. Lastly, don't be intimidated by these hard working annuals. Your bounty will be fabulous and your fridge will be stocked with delicious pickles all summer long.



LET THEM ROAM

*Words: Amber Webb, Spontaneous Farm, Dayton, OR
Artwork: Traci Wright Martin*

When I think of animals roaming, I can't help but think of the bison that once ran free in the Great Plains. No one fenced them in and no one fed them grains, yet they were still able to provide life sustaining food for the natives that hunted them. As Europeans flooded this continent and agriculture started to tame the land, roaming was still very much a part of farming livestock for our ancestors until our grandparents generation. Ranches were vast and cowboys would herd their livestock on the open ranges to eat on the best grass before driving them to market. The whole process embraced what nature intended for these herds of animals. Their growth was healthy, on a balanced variety of grasses and shrubs. Their waste was processed by the soil of the same grasslands that sustained them, and their life was content. Today, however, the harsh reality of how we grow our livestock is very different from where we started and what nature intended for them as herd animals. We live in a society that values faster and cheaper, and that production style has reshaped our farming industry. To grow livestock faster and cheaper, modern factory farms in the US and around the world have turned to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). CAFOs are defined by the USDA as farms that house over 1000 animal units for more than 45 days of the year. They started in the 1950s, grew in popularity through the '70s and '80s, and finally dominated our livestock production in the U.S. in the mid 2000s. These CAFOs are extremely unsustainable, and unlike roaming herds, severely abuse our land, the animals and our precious natural resources.

CAFOs are responsible for producing millions of tons of manure a year. Large quantities of animal waste presents major health risks to our surface and groundwater, our aquatic ecosystems and, by extension, public health. Some CAFOs use lagoons and other management systems, however these systems are not foolproof, and still do not fully mitigate surface runoff. That runoff can be carrying large loads of several different contaminants, some of which are nitrogen, phosphorus, organic matter, bacterial and viral pathogens that contaminate our waterways; also, volatile compounds like ammonia, methane, and hydrogen sulfide that contaminate the air. Hormones, pesticides, antibiotics, and pharmaceuticals are also in the runoff of CAFOs and they pose a threat to public health. One of the largest environmental spills in the U.S. was caused by a CAFO in 1995. An estimated 25.8 million gallons of effluvia was spilled into the New River in North Carolina after a lagoon failed. The spill caused 10 million fish in local waterways to die, and caused major health issues for the local population.

"Longhorn," charcoal, pastel and hand-made paper by Traci Wright Martin for Marvin's Place Art Gallery, Ardmore, OK (2019)

These examples of water contaminants are scary enough, but they are just one small part of the larger picture that reflects how bad these factory farms really are for us. Aside from the water pollution and poor living conditions for the animals, these fossil fuel based farms have huge carbon footprints and require incredible amounts of energy to operate. Roughly 70% of our grain production in the U.S. is for animals, and being pulled off the grasslands and put into confinement forces producers to finish the livestock with grain. These animals have not evolved to eat a grain-based diet. It is so unhealthy for them, that if they were not taken to slaughter, they'd likely die. Animal welfare aside, just the production of that much corn impacts the carbon cycle in a measurable way. Synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, plus the fuel needed to seed, harvest and transport the grains all contribute to the pollution of our air and ultimately contribute to climate change. In addition to carbon and other harmful air pollutants produced, we have eliminated one of our main carbon sinks by reducing our grasslands to make way for these crops.

We've taken a system that nature had perfected and changed it to a system that has us trucking fossil fuel raised feed grain to a fossil fuel based CAFO, and has turned the animal waste from natural fertilizer to toxic waste.

This is clearly not sustainable or in any way good for us or our environment. In a modern era, where we may have forgotten how generations before us worked with nature to provide sustainable food, a few pioneers have come forward to remind us. Farmers like Joel Salatin and Allan Savory have inspired a whole new generation of farmers to embrace rotational grazing, and it just might help save the world. Rotational grazing mirrors how wild herds move naturally and takes away all the negative effects of CAFOs mentioned previously. Rotating herds or flocks of chickens, sometimes both

in a biodynamic management system, requires a bit more oversight and labor on the producer's part. But this is not a bad thing at all. It brings farmers back into regular contact with their livestock allowing them to keep a close eye on overall health of the herds. Farming is also an aging profession, and the average median age of U.S. farmers is growing, with many retirements each year. But we are also starting to hear stories of young farmers leaving desk jobs to head back to the land. Statistics are showing a great proportion of these new farmers are inspired to grow organic, diverse crops and are moved to support local distribution systems. This revolution is a direct response to a growing number of consumers wanting choices in what they put into their bodies, how it impacts our environment and natural resources, and desiring to take into consideration the quality of life for livestock and wildlife.

When I left my career in the water quality field six years ago to go back to farming, there was no question in my mind how I was going to manage my animals. My family falls in the category of those consumers that choose not to support factory farming, and rotational grazing is our way of rebelling against the system and doing our part to help save the world. Joel Salatin calls us "Lunatic Farmers" because of the push back from corporate agri-business and industrial farmers. However, over the last decade our numbers continue to grow, as do our supporters. If you are interested in becoming a supporter of a lunatic (rotational) farmer the best way to find one is by talking to your local producers about how they manage their livestock. Look up your local Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), go to your local farmer's markets, and ask producers how they manage their animals. Here in Oregon, we are also lucky enough to have Friends of Family Farmers to help connect consumers and pasture based producers. They can easily be found through a Google search. The greatest impact a consumer can have to change the farming system is to get passionate about how their food is produced. Together, much like the herds roam the land, we will roam into a brave new era of agricultural management practices and hope they continue to grow in popularity for the sake of our planet.



"Angus," charcoal, pastel and handmade paper by Traci Wright Martin for Marvin's Place Art Gallery, Ardmore, OK (2019)



*Welcome to the House of
Huckleberry's Kitchen!*

IN HUCKLEBERRY'S KITCHEN, WE'RE BUILDING CONNECTIONS THROUGH FOOD. CREATING MENUS TOGETHER, GROWING FOOD TO FIT THOSE MENUS, HARVESTING AND WASHING VEGGIES, CUTTING, PREPPING, MAKING MESSSES, CLEANING UP MESSSES, SETTING THE TABLE, SHARING OUR PEAKS AND PITS OF THE DAY, WASHING DISHES—A POWERFUL, DAILY TOGETHERNESS.

WE'RE HERE TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO EXCHANGE THE IDEAL OF PERFECTION FOR THE REVERENCE OF LAUGHING, SHARING AND LEARNING TOGETHER.



**A NEW KIND OF HEIRLOOM:
GROWING A SOUVENIR GARDEN**

*Words: Kristin Guy, Dine X Design
Photos: Denise Bovee (Garden Portrait Images) & Kristin Guy (Recipe & Food Images)*

One of my favorite ways to travel is by living the location through food. Be it Nashville or Naples, each city near and far has a diverse flavor story ready to be unlocked. I'm one of those people, feverishly taking notes in restaurants. What's in this dressing? How were these ingredients prepared? Where did they get all this texture and richness from? Jotting down ingredients, techniques, shyly asking the staff questions and even at times peeping under tableware to see which ceramics they're serving it on—I am a curious culinary traveler, unashamed to learn more.



As I've been cultivating my own homestead these past couple years, the garden and greenhouse expanding along with it, growing the food I've discovered on travels has become just as exciting as preparing the dishes they appeared in. Be it collecting various seeds along the way, or researching specific varieties to order online once I've returned, my edible garden has begun to explode each season with a new crop of heirlooms and exotics that challenge me to create in the kitchen while reliving those travel memories back home.

I call it my souvenir garden.

As seasons circle back each year, new favorites have become staples and these tasty traditions are reimagined over and over again. Not only does each new vegetable that I learn to grow create an exciting challenge and education, but to snip them from the vine and bring directly into the kitchen is a reward unlike any other. I'll never forget the victory of successfully harvesting my first butternut squash after bringing seeds back from my home state of Michigan. There was a certain pride, not only for the actual produce, but the fact that they came from a sentimental location that I could transport back to my little Los Angeles plot for years to come. This idea of growing memories has now blossomed into a diverse garden plan and seasonal harvest allowing me to relive some of life's most precious moments.

It's amazing what you might discover in unexpected locations. Trips to Australia have unleashed new flavor ideas for me like smoked tomato sorbet with anchovy and dehydrated vegemite crumbled over avocado toast. Adventures in Hawaii introduced me to street vendors selling pickled mango and every sweet/savory combo of shaved ice imaginable. Visits to the South in my home country have made me a fan of okra, now a summer staple in my garden, and how delightful it can be blistered and topped with a vibrant tomato compote and fresh scallions. For me, having an open mind and a bit of wondering time to discover are important no matter where you might find yourself. Be it overseas or over the state line, there are new seeds to grow and dishes to discover along the way.



Inspired by recent travels, my greenhouse is currently stocked with new varieties of squash and peppers to experiment with during summer. Aleppo and paprika are flowering with anticipation of harvesting the peppers to dry and mill into new spice mixes. Teot Bat Put, a type of hybrid Asian squash named after its similar looks and creamy consistency of an avocado, is starting to vine and I'm longing for them to ripen to experiment with a new spin on a favorite mediterranean dip. The excitement for these travel inspired dishes is longer lasting than just re-creating a meal at home. With each new seed and sprout that appears in the garden, there is a deeper discovery into the dish that originally inspired this culinary journey back home.

Eating while traveling isn't the only source of inspiration... albeit my favorite method. I also love strolling local markets in search of new ingredients, meandering farmers markets for local produce, or looking through stores to see if there is a cookbook I haven't heard of by a local chef or cuisine. For me, packing up these memories, taking notes and experimenting back home both in the garden and the kitchen are the greatest souvenirs of all. You'll be amazed what kinds of discoveries are there to encounter by just opening up a new ingredient or flipping to a recipe after your travels. And you will be enjoying those memories far longer as you tinker and develop your favorites over time.





AS I SIT HERE AT HOME

getting the summer garden up to speed while eagerly awaiting the arrival of my first child this summer, I cannot wait to pass along these traditions to her and learn what she might want to grow in the garden after our adventures together. A new kind of heirloom indeed.

HOW TO GET INSPIRED AT HOME:

LET'S FACE IT. IT'S NOT ALWAYS THE RIGHT TIME TO PACK UP AND GO. JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE IN YOUR HOMETOWN DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T GO ON A CULINARY QUEST. HERE ARE TWO OF MY FAVORITE WAYS TO SPARK INSPIRATION WHILE STICKING CLOSE TO YOUR OWN KITCHEN.

Exploring New Neighborhoods —

Bakeries, food trucks, farmers markets and beyond! There is a treasure of new discovery waiting in your very own city. Try popping into an Asian market to discover the nuances of miso, the delicacy of seaweed powder, and the wonder that is black sesame paste. Bringing home a new ingredient might just be the ticket to the newest destination you've been looking to explore. Going to an international market is one of the best ways to discover new ingredients (at home or while traveling). Even if you don't know what to do with it, let yourself loose on a flavor adventure to discover new combinations and favorite dishes that you just might start making for years to come.

Pick Up A New Cookbook —

Interested in a new culture but don't have the chance to hop on a plane? Now is an amazing time to start browsing new releases in the cookbook section. There are so many region specific books out now that will transport you and your kitchen to a new place of flavor and excitement. Perfect to test out new recipes and play with seasonal ingredients—try inviting a few friends to participate in the journey by assigning recipes and inviting them over potluck style. Bookmark your favorites and start plotting next season's garden with new things to grow!

A FEW OF MY OWN SOUVENIR GARDEN RECIPES TO TRY THIS SUMMER:

Each year it seems my garden looks a little different. Inspiration strikes from different destinations and the greenhouse becomes filled with starters anticipating a season of new flavor discoveries. Here are a few recipes that I will be enjoying this summer and I hope you might give them a go too!



Shiso Strawberry Wraps with Miso and Sesame

Shiso is an exotic addition to any garden and incredibly easy to grow! Loves full sun and leaves should be harvested often to promote more growth. The flavor is a unique combination of spearmint, basil, anise and cinnamon. Which is an amazing addition to salads or as an herb substitute for garnishing. Blooms are also edible making it a beautiful topper for cocktails and desserts.

DIRECTIONS

Slice strawberries into bite sized pieces. Combine sesame oil, miso, agave and rice vinegar into a bowl and mix well. Drizzle dressing over strawberries and mix well before placing in the center of a shiso leaf. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and enjoy as a unique wrapped bite.

INGREDIENTS

STRAWBERRIES.....	2 CUPS
WHITE MISO	1 TSP
CHAMPAGNE VINEGAR	¼ CUP
AGAVE SYRUP	¼ TSP
SESAME OIL	¼ TSP
WHITE SESAME SEEDS.....	
FRESH RED OR GREEN SHISO LEAVES FOR WRAPPING	



Chrysanthemum Simple Syrup

Shungiku (aka: edible chrysanthemum) is typically grown as stir fry greens, leaves plucked tender and young way before any beautiful buds bloom...but I think the real gift are it's edible flowers which are not only showstoppers in the garden, but can be dried and used for tea. Or in this case, a simple syrup which can be used to sweeten your summer cocktail, add floral notes to your homemade ice cream or be used as a glaze on top of a citrus cake.

DIRECTIONS

If starting with fresh chrysanthemum place into a dehydrator for 8-12 hours until all moisture is removed. Store in a sealed container until ready for use. In a saucepan, combine water and sugar and bring to a boil until solids dissolve. Add in dried chrysanthemum flowers, remove from heat and let steep covered for 20-30 minutes. Strain out any solids and allow to cool before placing in a sterilized container. Syrup should last for 3-4 weeks.

For a thicker sweeter syrup, try a 2:1 ratio of sugar to water.

INGREDIENTS

WATER 1 CUP
SUGAR 1 CUP
DRIED CHRYSANTHEMUM BUDS (~6 FLOWERS) ¼ CUP



Blistered Peas with Garden Pesto, Mint and Burrata

Make use of those lingering spring peas and give them a good blister on the bbq for added depth. A fresh garden pesto makes everything better (trust me, I use it on everything from salad dressings to pizza) and this dish can be served as an appetizer or on top of a grilled piece of toast. It's perfect for summer entertaining on the patio with a chilled beverage and friends. Don't be too precious with pesto, any soft herb will work, making it perfectly customizable to the season and state of your garden.

DIRECTIONS

Add herbs, garlic, nuts, olive oil, parmesan, and lemon zest/juice into a food processor and pulse until smooth. Season to taste with additional salt and fresh cracked pepper. This can be made ahead of time and stored in the refrigerator for up to three days. Toss fresh peas into a cast iron and place onto a BBQ on high heat or over stovetop burner on high. For best blister, get cast iron piping hot before adding peas, do not use cooking oil as a dry heat will allow peas to retain crunch. Keep a close watch and toss for even blistering, remove after a few minutes once peas have a few charred spots and softened slightly. Drizzle with a small amount of finishing olive oil and arrange on a platter with dollops of pesto, freshly torn mint and burrata cheese. Finish with some quality olive oil and a squeeze of lemon, a sprinkle of chili flakes, chive blossoms and finishing salt also works some magic just before serving.

INGREDIENTS

MIX OF FRESH HERBS	1-2 CUPS
<i>Whatever is in the garden — parsley, basil, tarragon, chives</i>	
GARLIC CLOVES	1-2
PISTACHIOS	¼
OLIVE OIL	3 TBSP
GRATED PARMESAN	¼ CUP
ZEST AND JUICE OF LEMON.....	1
FRESH PEAS	1 CUP
FRESH MINT	
BURRATA.....	



FINDING THE MOMENTS BETWEEN THE POSES.

 **EUGENE PAVLOV**
PHOTOGRAPHY

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THE SCENIC ROUTE OF DISABILITY

Navigating the world of disability before the diagnosis.

Words: Ileana Sosa | Photos: Jessica Santa

“We don’t know exactly what is wrong with her.”

Not the words you expect to hear from your child’s pediatric neurologist who’s decorated in college degrees. After months of anticipating this appointment for my daughter, Giselle, I had hoped that we were done wandering the halls of the medical office, bouncing from specialist to specialist. I was hoping that, finally, someone was going to be able to neatly explain the anomaly that was the culprit behind my daughter’s lack of developmental growth. Unfortunately, we were left with no more than a *“See you in 6 months to reconvene.”* Like people who get lost say they are taking the ‘scenic route,’ we too needed to find a way to live this life despite feeling as if we were aimlessly traveling through unfamiliar territory.

Among all the feelings that one could possibly feel after being met with the uncertainty of their child’s future, fear set it and it set in fast. I didn’t want to be left in the dark and yet it was where we were for the first 2 years of Giselle’s life. I viewed the unknown as an enemy, a dangerous adversary to combat. At its core, fear heightens a distorted perception of the future and confuses bogus scenarios with reality. It’s totally void of peace, tranquility and often times reason. As I waited for test results and appointment follow-ups, I found myself wrestling with the idea of what could be, what wouldn’t be and how my entire motherhood journey was completely falling off the tracks. I felt lost. My insecurity in my ability to be a mother felt as if it were on display for the world to see. *Was I smart enough, capable enough, strong enough—was I simply enough for my child?* I was afraid of failing her and waiting for answers made it all the more difficult.

WAITING IS HARD.

*And while the years passed on,
I had to learn to be comfortable
with the uncomfortable—to sit in
the uncertainty and not fall apart.*

As much as I had hoped, no one had a crystal ball to tell me with the utmost confidence what Giselle's life would look like. It was years of regression, growth, stagnation on a continuous loop in no particular order. I cried, I grieved, I moved on, and then found myself in tears once more. And yet it was this very cycle of emotions which plagued me, that caused me to eventually dig deep and face the ugliness in my own heart. Truth be told, I had no idea until I had Giselle, until I had no choice but to be faced with disability on a personal level, that I lived with distorted, preconceived ideas of what disability was and what it looked like. Having Giselle required me to completely confront and obliterate everything I once thought and for that, I am forever grateful to have had the veil of ignorance lifted.

Eventually, at around year 2-½, we received two diagnoses, which interestingly enough, were quite common: microcephaly and cerebral palsy (cause unknown). Finally, I received these formal diagnoses that allowed us to move forward with services and therapies, and yet when we received them, it seemed like simply a side note. The confirmation didn't change a single thing about Giselle. There was still a vibrant, capable, beautiful life to be lived and a label couldn't undermine it. I didn't have all the answers, but we needed to keep on living and keeping on is exactly what we did.

All the waiting was necessary and purposeful. It was just the beginning of my preparation of becoming the advocate Giselle needed. In the midst of what I like to call my own maternal metamorphosis, I learned that what she needed more than anything else was a mother who loved her for everything she was and would fight for her space in the world no matter the detours. Creativity, adaptability, resourcefulness, were just a few of the many skills I discovered while surviving the wait. Life isn't neatly packaged and as I despised the setbacks, hindsight allows me to marvel in its necessity. I had to feel lost in order to rediscover who I was and uncover who I was supposed to be. It gave me an opportunity to step foot into a community I knew very little about and relish in the beauty of taking the uncommon road. So yes, there is treasure, hope, joy and all the other wonderful things that you can still enjoy, even when you aren't living your plan A life. Sometimes it just takes time to embrace the scenic route and when you do, you'll be so thankful you did.

A young girl with blonde hair, wearing a light-colored dress, is climbing a playground structure. The structure is made of grey metal poles and black ropes, with several large yellow spherical accents. The background is a clear blue sky with green trees. The image is split vertically by a thin white line.

**FREE TO BE: A RETURN TO
SIMPLER PLAY & BRAVER KIDS**

Words: Cre'shea Hilton, Mothering Wild | Photos: Erica Martin

Rewind to 1988 and you'd overhear my parents saying things like, "Sure, play in the park, but come back inside when the streetlights come on." I was about 6 or 7 years old, living my best life across the street in the park spinning for hours on the merry-go-round until I was dizzy beyond return. Like clockwork my sister (age 4) and I would hustle our dirty feet (because we were typically barefoot) back into the house as soon as those lights would flicker on. Kid sister and I just knew what to do. Lights are on, time to go back in. How did two little girls have the instincts in place to follow such directions, play safely, and also be back exactly when our mom told us to? One might argue that it was a simpler time or that maybe our mom just didn't care much what kind of shenanigans we were up to. On the other hand, maybe there is some weight to how we used to assess risk as parents that led to braver kids. The collective of parents that I know have found themselves in this place in life where they inspect the reasoning behind why they parent a certain way. Coupled with that questioning is a longing to give our kids experiences that are simpler, slower, and nourished with a healthy balance of what's safe and what's not. More importantly, let's teach our kids how to learn that for themselves. If we give them the opportunity to not see risk every time they face something hard, the end result may be a kiddo that thinks and plays more freely.

Fast forward to today and you'd overhear me hollering at my kiddos to make sure they have shoes on, and to not sneak into the front yard. Oh, and stay outta the street, "Because you'll get hit by a car!" It's a dichotomy of parenting or unparenting that is not lost on me. There's a lot going on in this day and age that could not have even been fathomed back in the late 80's. In all seriousness, my own dad came home in a shoebox from the hospital. I used to think that was just a story he told us to make our little eyes bug out of our heads, but it wasn't. He was such a tiny baby that my grandmother put him in a large shoebox, in the car, on her lap! The car seat stickler in me cringes at the thought of that actually happening. It goes back to a different time in the world and an energy that was emanating from our parents, and grandparents that whispered, "the kids are gonna be all right." Having said that, my current generation of parents tends to hover in the arena of the metaphorical shouting, "Are the kids gonna be all right???"





My family lives on over an acre. We have a tractor and the chickens free range. Shoes are rarely worn, and baths are given on a desperation basis only. Sometimes our guests will hesitate to let their own children graze the yard in the way mine do, but we try to encourage it. Even though I live in this type of environment, I'll admit that I have my own stipulations for outside time. I hesitate to send my kids outside to play if it's below 32°F. This unspoken rule of mine would likely make the parents in Norway laugh their heads off seeing as their children often play in subzero temperatures quite often. My Minnesota friends laughed at me when I said "My kids don't play outside when it's below 32°F outside!" To which they adamantly replied, "Girl, that is not cold—kick them outside!" When they told me that, I wondered if I was doing my kids a major disservice? Was I creating less resilience in them? I asked myself what I could give them by implementing the well spoken line, "Get your coat on, and go outside. You'll be fine." What exactly was my hesitation to not asking them to play outside in cold weather? They'd get cold, or they would be just fine roaming about the yard learning to play in a colder climate. My own dad clearly had no "Dad Guilt" when he'd tell my sister and I to run around outside when it was 105°F outside.

What if we let go of the pressure of society "norms" and just let our kids lead a little bit more when it comes to play time? Remove the tether that holds them in a certain proximity of home and their parents. Children in all of their wiggly, giggly glory are not meant to be tethered. They are meant to try things and draw conclusions from the very experience they just tried. Isn't this the main goal of raising our kids anyway? To teach them lessons, love them, and metaphorically set them free (and fingers crossed they become good humans). Parenting styles somehow over the last 20 years became a measurement of how much you love your kids. As if one style of raising children is better than another, or is indicative of how much your child is loved. Perhaps that thought process comes from a place of privilege on my end, because of where I live and who I am. But to some degree parents are aware that children will push boundaries whether they are loudly spoken or subtle, or if they live in poverty or in the country—because this is a biological norm, one that can make parents feel really uncomfortable.

The argument bears pondering, as there seems to be a direct correlation between kids who have had the opportunity to face situations that may be considered risky, and the ability to be more open minded and braver throughout their lives. Mariana Brussoni a professor at the University of British Columbia in Public Health and Pediatrics, did a study on "risky" play. Brussoni determined "that play environments where children could take risks promoted increased play time, social interactions, creativity and resilience."

Allow kids to roam a little, opt outside, and get messy. In turn the potential result is a child that is connected to their own limits in a very rooted way to their environment and their surroundings, just like the tree they continue to climb.

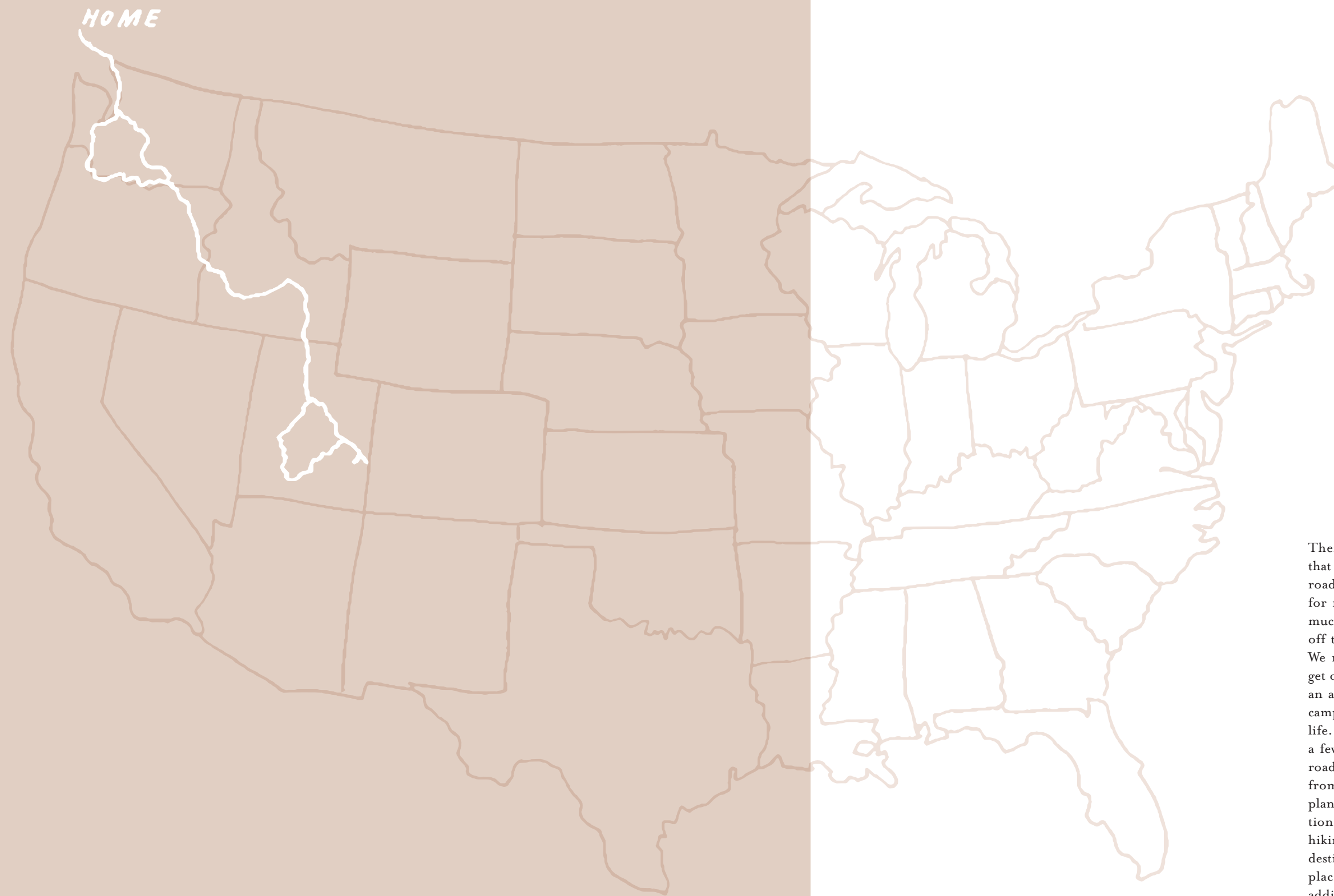
Before you stop your child from climbing too high, or tell them that they should "Get down from there," try this instead—Step back a little. Take a deep breath and think of all the good that can come from letting them do the thing you feel is too unsafe, dangerous, or scary. You see, children don't see fear when they see a boulder to scramble over or nature to roam about in. Little ones see opportunity to use their imagination

and use their bodies, exerting energy in a beautiful way. To be clear, it's also important that we as adults assess the risk and make sure that the kids aren't juggling knives as they climb said boulder. In other words it's good to let kids test limits, up until threat of death! Children feel pride and accomplishment when they get to the top of a jungle gym. Not only that, every time a kid does something that is a little out of their (or their parents') comfort zone, they realize that they can do hard things. I will admit I don't know if there is one right way to raise braver kids. Yet when we ask our kids to ditch the idea "if it's hard to do we should avoid doing it," we find that they are more likely to be outspoken about the things that are really important. Kids start to speak up more, they will find their voice in thorny situations, they become less risk averse to doing what is right even if the majority says it's unpopular. Next time we ask, "Are the kids gonna be all right???" Know that they'll reply with a resounding cry of, "Yes, but let us play!"

UNTANGLED

Words and Photos: Sarah Kehler | Artwork: Andi Allison





There is an unmistakable feeling of freedom that grips you in those first few hours on the road, clearing your mind and setting the stage for real memory making. Travelling gives us the much-needed opportunity to uproot and shake off the bits of life that are no longer serving us. We make it a priority in our day to day lives to get our kids out in the wild. An hour in the yard, an afternoon at the beach or a couple days away camping crammed in amongst the hustle of daily life. But once a year we hit the road—armed with a few weeks vacation time, our home on wheels, roadmaps and a longing to untangle ourselves from the day-to-day grind. Most of our road trip planning comes from our kids. Their fascination with wild places, discovering new landscapes, hiking and mountain biking seem to grow our destination choices exponentially. By checking a place from our bucket list, it usually leads to adding three more in its place. So, with a handful of ideas in mind we planned our route to Utah.



Our trips usually begin with a few days of trailblazing, in search of better weather and to put on some miles quickly. Interstates, good playlists on repeat and all the cold brew coffee and popcorn we can handle. Red rock landscapes and crystal-clear blue sky have always drawn us in. We seem to find ourselves back in the Moab area every few years for our dose of desert life. On our path to Utah we decided to swing toward Craters of the Moon National Monument.

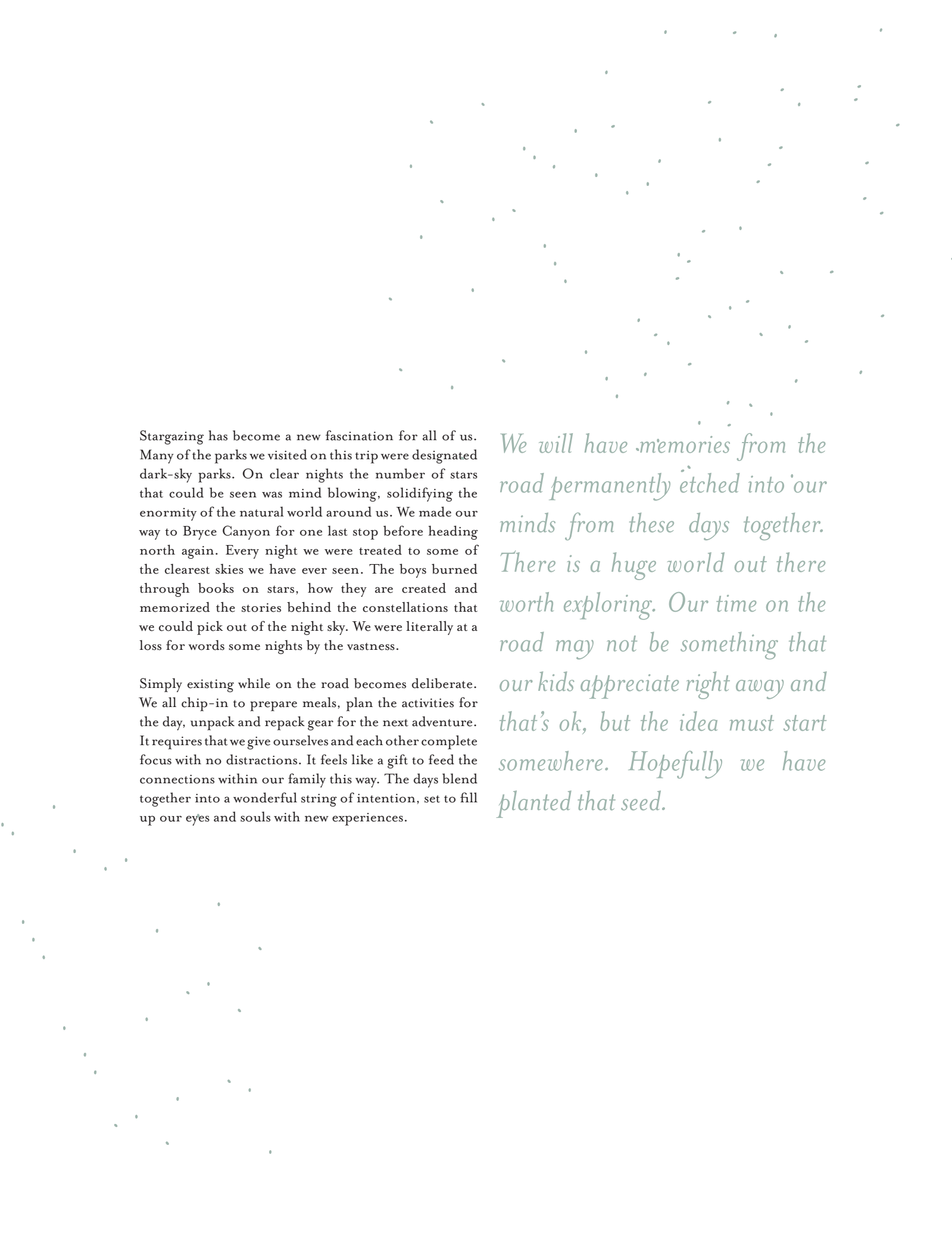
With two boys aged five and six, the prospect of starry skies, lava flows, natural hot springs and super volcanoes made it an easy sell. We spent the mornings exploring the park and the afternoons floating at the nearby hot springs.

Pure bliss.



After getting our fill of the unearthly views in Idaho we rambled on south to a campsite outside of Moab. For us, returning to the desert will always feel like returning home. We easily spent our days discovering the valley—hiking, biking and occasionally making a pit stop in town for the laundromat, the local coffee roaster, and a well earned \$5 shower at the recreation center. The setting of the Arches National Park is surreal. The sites are nestled among incredible rock fins, sagebrush and Utah pine with a backdrop of the La Sal mountain range. The terrain is so completely different from what we are used to in the PNW. The scorched ground and wide-open skies are a dramatic change for us—and what keeps drawing us back.





Stargazing has become a new fascination for all of us. Many of the parks we visited on this trip were designated dark-sky parks. On clear nights the number of stars that could be seen was mind blowing, solidifying the enormity of the natural world around us. We made our way to Bryce Canyon for one last stop before heading north again. Every night we were treated to some of the clearest skies we have ever seen. The boys burned through books on stars, how they are created and memorized the stories behind the constellations that we could pick out of the night sky. We were literally at a loss for words some nights by the vastness.

Simply existing while on the road becomes deliberate. We all chip-in to prepare meals, plan the activities for the day, unpack and repack gear for the next adventure. It requires that we give ourselves and each other complete focus with no distractions. It feels like a gift to feed the connections within our family this way. The days blend together into a wonderful string of intention, set to fill up our eyes and souls with new experiences.

We will have memories from the road permanently etched into our minds from these days together. There is a huge world out there worth exploring. Our time on the road may not be something that our kids appreciate right away and that's ok, but the idea must start somewhere. Hopefully we have planted that seed.



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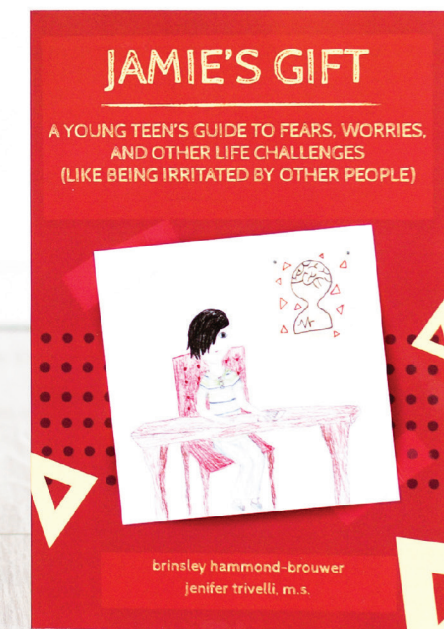
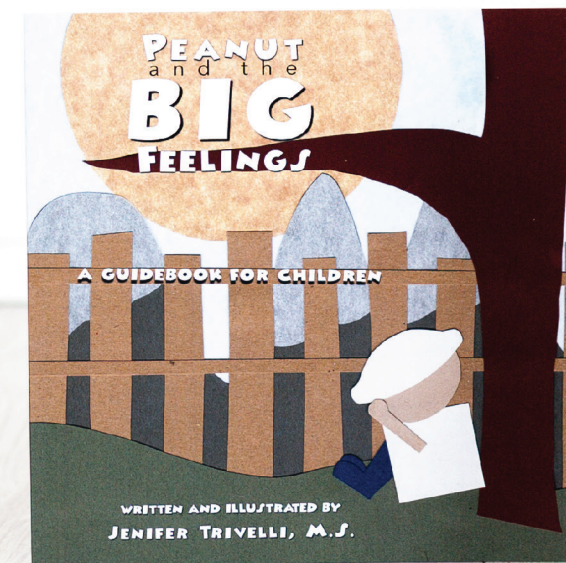
I wish more parenting books were this useful!

- REVIEW OF *PEANUT AND THE BIG FEELINGS*

“

Jenifer and Brinsley offer real life situations that young teens can relate to, while also integrating the wisdom of neuroscience in terms that are understandable and applicable.

- REVIEW OF *JAMIE'S GIFT*



Jenifer Trivelli, M.S. is an author and educator who specializes in social-emotional education.

She is also the founder of WiseMind Educational Services. Learn more at WiseMindServices.com

***Peanut and the Big Feelings* and *Jamie's Gift* can be found on Amazon.com**



A NEW PATH

Words and Photos: Kate Saffle

As I gripped the armrest, my other shaking hand resting over my wildly palpitating heart, I ventured a peek at the crashing waves down the sheer cliff below. Mere inches separated our truck and travel trailer from the edge of the road, the line between transformative joy and crippling anxiety as blurred as the horizon between sky and ocean. Glancing back at our three children, buckled safely in their carseats, I saw our home precariously swinging behind our truck as we wound through tight curves in the road. It would take just the tiniest of slips to find ourselves falling into the Pacific Ocean off of Highway 1. My anxiety was nothing new, but became more pronounced as the noise and busyness of our traditional life faded away. Daily I vacillated between unbridled fear and deep gratitude for our new life of full-time travel, unaware of how my family's adventure on the road would ultimately be the catalyst for my own growth as a mother and woman.

Four years prior, I was undeniably restless. As a mama of a newborn and a three year old, my home and our relatively stable life should have been my rock. Instead it felt like an anchor submerging me in murky depths. We had enviable community, the quintessential starter home in a well-regarded neighborhood; in other words, we should have been happy having everything we had worked so hard to build in our twenties. But I couldn't shake the feeling that something was missing.

I taught humanities for the local university, but had recently been relegated to teaching online after giving birth to my youngest. This was both relieving and unmoored me as I no longer had the classroom to

balm the anxious parts of my mothering soul. There had always been this tension between the mother I envisioned myself to be and the hard truth of the way motherhood both drained and enlivened me. Being home all the time was like a spotlight on those rough edges of motherhood. Some days were harder than others, and I knew in my heart that there had to be a better way.

It was on one of those days, a steamy hot day in May that I came across the story of a family traveling full-time around the United States in an Airstream. Having realized they had everything they could materially want, but felt the lack of family connection and time in nature, they sold everything for a new life.

Have you ever experienced a transformative moment that knocks you off your figurative rocker? I closed my laptop and laid down on the cool slate floor of our sunroom and cried. I hadn't realized what I was missing in my life until that moment, and I finally had a solution to the gnawing I had experienced my whole life.

Travel, unapologetic exploring of our country with my young family. It seemed both self-indulgent and the kindest balm I could give my anxious soul. As a child, I was fascinated by motorhomes and spent a summer saving spare change in a coffee can to buy one someday. It wasn't until I was reminded of that fascination that I saw the way in which my childhood dream was fueling my future. Somehow we had followed the American dream, but it wasn't ours to live. Instead the road called with a new journey to take.

If you've ever gone all in on a dream, you know then that the path from here to there is strewn with obstacles. We experienced it all—financial struggles, job loss, marital discord, home repairs that drained our savings account, and health issues—in the four years it took us to manifest our dream. I gave birth to our third son in the midst of this journey from who we were to whom we were to become; these challenges helped us let go of the old version of ourselves to birth a new family identity. We gave our new son the middle name of Phoenix to represent the spiritual rebirthing of our family onto a more intentional life path. With our two daughters and our little firebird in tow, we made the leap.

We hit the road one snowy March day, pulling out of our Indiana driveway with our tiny trailer behind us and our house sold to another family. The stability, the forever home—all that you're supposed to want—was sold to purchase the most delicious turn of freedom a young family can experience. The miles flew under our dust-coated wheels as we headed West, the land curving into red rock formations, the nights exploding in stars so bright my eyes blurred just staring at them. We fell asleep each night looking at the pitch black of the rolling night sky, the steady, rhythmic breathing of our children just steps away, and the wind gently rocking our little home on wheels.

I often imagined that this must be what Ma from Little House on the Prairie felt: everything she needed was within arms reach and so little was needed to be truly happy.

When you reduce your world to your people and a few beloved possessions, the noise happening outside of your sphere melts away into nothingness.





About six weeks into our travels, I woke up one morning and realized that for the past few days I had struggled to get out of bed. The sensation of feeling too exhausted to rise had crept up on me, and the realization startled me. On the weekends our explorations of the West Coast were exhilarating and liberating, but during the week I felt like a different person. I began worrying about everything from how I mothered, to the safety of my kids, to what others thought of us. My life of freedom was turning on me, and the smothering of anxiety was terrifying. It wasn't the result of our new lifestyle, but the conscious removal of all the distractions that had cluttered our days previously. This lifestyle magnified all of the struggles I had always had in motherhood because there simply was nowhere to hide. It was time to face them head-on, and in that transformation, grow into the mother and person I so desired to be.

As I cried to my husband, Kirk, one evening about how I felt that I wasn't cut out to be a mother, that my anxiety was ruining our travels and that perhaps we should stop and put our kids in school and buy a house again, he put his hands on my shoulders and asked me a question that completely transformed my life.

WHAT KIND OF MOTHER DO YOU WANT TO BE AND WHAT KIND OF LIFE DO YOU TRULY WANT TO LIVE?

It was in that very vulnerable moment that I was able to voice a vision of how I hoped to mother and the childhood I wanted to create for our children. It was deeply rooted in *freedom* for them, and us, for plenty of free play and time outdoors, for them to learn in ways that suited their unique selves and to appreciate the wealth of knowledge all around us. It wasn't contingent on the perfect home in the perfect neighborhood, but on realizing that home is always with us because *we as a family are the home*. My vision for our life had been there

all along, but my anxiety and the physical clutter of our lives had often obscured it.

HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED GETTING RID OF THE MAJORITY OF YOUR BELONGINGS IN THE HOPE THAT IT WOULD BRING YOU NEWFOUND FREEDOM AND PEACE?

There is such beauty and worth in the streamlined, pared-back lifestyle; when we manifest our version of freedom through the conscious letting go of physical goods, we ultimately become creators. Our destiny is not shaped by how life impacts us and our decisions, but rather by how we mold the clay of our days and years into our own artistic vision.

I found through my own experience with minimalism and intentional living that this process will ultimately uncover the deep parts of your soul that were hidden under Netflix binging, busy schedules, and the messy kitchen. Our physical clutter often hides our emotional instabilities and removing those items will bring any problems to the surface. This is a beautiful blessing as it forces you to address the past and its emotional currents and rise in your own strength as you move forward. If it's not addressed, the current will begin pulling you under, as it did me.

So I got help for the anxiety.* I began to daily visualize how I wanted my day to go and shaped my thoughts to reflect that reality. I responded to my children in the way I wanted to rather than reactively. I found courage to be vulnerable with them and to ask forgiveness when it was definitely warranted. We gave our kids more freedom to roam and explore, and I grew to trust their newfound courage. Kirk reminded me daily of our vision for our family and my worth as their mama, and I spread my wings into that delicious reality. Six months of travel felt like a lifetime of personal growth.

It was never an easy lifestyle, and I still often wondered why we felt so called to the road. But then we would discover a stream and lose an afternoon splashing and tossing pebbles or hike to a hidden waterfall and marvel at the butterflies drawn to the bold prints on my children's swimsuits. It was in those moments, the sun radiating its warmth onto and through my body, my children glowing with happiness and all of us losing ourselves in the present moment, that I knew all of the stress, my struggles with anxiety and doubt, were worth it. We crafted a new version of our family from the dust of the old, and we will never be the same.

If you feel that uneasy sensation inside of your soul whispering that it's time to find a new path and turn your dream into an action plan, don't ignore it. It's never easy to consciously step off the treadmill of modern society and run toward your truth path, but all our days are numbered. What will you do with yours?

Now as we settle into a house again and tentatively put down roots, I realize that it was never the container, our physical home, that needs constant tending and attention, but rather the delicate green shoots working their way up through the soil. Giving up our house gave us the freedom to focus on just our family. I will probably always struggle with anxiety and the tension between the life I am living and the life I'm in the process of intentionally creating. You may experience this too; use it as a road sign marking your true path. Full-time travel, or any other sort of radical lifestyle, is not the solution for everyone; living intentionally and with purpose is. Ultimately, no matter where we live or how, we'll keep tending to the growth of our family and nurturing this fresh start we created from chasing the horizon that year we traveled full-time.

*If you're struggling with anxiety or depression, please know that seeking help from a trusted professional can be a life-saver. I supplemented my daily mindset work with partnering with both a life coach and a certified counselor.





ROAMING CHARGES

Words: Rachel Martin / Artwork By: Andi Allison

Do you remember roaming charges? I lived in a major metro area when I had my first cell phone, so I didn't encounter them often, but the one or two times I did, they left an impression. They would double your bill in no time! We don't have those anymore, and you may remember the ad campaigns that celebrated their demise. We have the freedom to go anywhere we want, without ever severing our ties to civilization! Can you hear me now?

I've lived in Oregon's Willamette Valley for five years, and when I moved here you couldn't drive 60 miles from your home base without losing signal. Now, you barely go through dead zones driving to rural, small towns hundreds of miles away! That's a pretty strong shift in a fairly short time-frame. Change is never without a ripple effect, so what does that look like in our lives?

I'M DEEP INTO THE SEASON ENTITLED

“THE DAYS
ARE LONG
BUT THE
YEARS ARE
SHORT”

I feel trapped and isolated by parenting small children, and my cell phone has served as a lifeline to other adults, but it is also an overbearing presence in my life, my family, and my marriage.

Something in that mix needs to take a back seat, and while it's never been hard to see which piece needs to move down the priority list, it's proving to be a very hard habit to isolate. Need to set a timer on your kids taking turns (fighting)? Phone. Need to know how to convert your measurements because your tablespoon measure is dirty? Phone. Need to set a timer on your dinner? Phone! I imagine that in a previous decade, moms would've used for those situations: some completely arbitrary and made up amount of time, a cookbook, and... a timer. It's completely handy that I have a single device that does it all for me, but it sure has wormed its way into my life. When my oldest child discovered computers at school and was telling me all the things she could do with them, I reminded her that there's another way to do all the things that she's learning to do on the computer. Fortunately for me, she's still a little too young to see the hypocrisy in that!

I read a book recently called *How to Break Up with Your Phone* by Catherine Price. In the second half of the book, Price takes you step-by-step through a process of how not to reach for your phone first. Need an alarm in the morning? Get an alarm clock. Precisely what I told my daughter: there's another way to accomplish things. The first half of the book is dedicated to laying out the ways we've changed as a result of these devices. The best part is that she does it all without shaming people or vilifying the devices. They are wonderful, but they are absolutely designed to captivate us, and at what cost? I haven't worked the steps laid out in this book just yet, but I've gotten better about putting it down in another room. I recently put my youngest to bed without scrolling while we sat in her chair, and she commented on it. She's barely three years old. I asked if she liked having bedtime without my phone and she looked so delighted that I nearly went and threw it in the garbage.

My husband and I run a company and a household and are trying to shape tiny humans into the kind of people we want to see more of in this world. But at the end of the day, we don't debrief with full attention. We listen while we scroll. I half listen to his report on the happenings with our employees and clients while I reply to a message in the group text. He says "uh huh" to my day's pitfalls while scrolling Twitter. We had flip phones when we got married so this was in no way factored into our vows, but I'm pretty sure this is not the best we can do for each other.

When we had those flip phones, we could call and text, which we did. Plenty. Texting was already becoming an issue with drivers, back when our phones had very little to offer. We got smartphones shortly before we had our first kid, because "we need to take pictures." We had cameras, but never mind that! We needed the fancy phones. Shortly after that, we launched our company. The phone was an amazing tool in this process, as the people we were communicating with were in various time zones and we probably had the least power in the equation, so not missing calls or texts or emails really did matter. But I don't have to tell you how quickly that became a permanent mindset. The next thing we had to do at all hours was manage our social media presence. And respond to any leads on our email. And communicate with employees. And, and, and... And now my 3-year-old thinks it's novel when I put her to bed without my phone in my hand.

There's a theory I've heard, and my friends who work with adolescents don't disagree, that teen depression would be alleviated by less parental use of devices. Not just by the teens themselves, but by their support system. This makes perfect sense to me. How will my kids feel heard if I'm only giving them a fraction of my attention? And what happens to the psyche when a person doesn't feel heard? This mom/wife/business-owner can make an educated guess at that one! Anxiety. Depression. Yelling at people to get in the car for the love of all the things.

My oldest will be seven this fall. I have time to get it together still, but not much. She's just starting to have

real conversations with me, (I'm plenty entertained by the ramblings of my toddler, but I do not find it engaging. I am not that brand of mom.) and I know full well that if I want her to talk to me, I need to appear available.

My husband and I were born in 1978 and 1980, which means we have the distinct advantage of the analog childhood. It will never feel "normal" to us to stare at a screen as often as we do. If we didn't have that experience to anchor us, I imagine it would be much harder to redesign our relationships with our phones. And that's a big factor in how we make technology decisions for our kids. We want them to have a hardwired sense of "normal" that doesn't hinge on screens. And what's the best way to learn something? Teaching it to someone else. Their questions about why they don't have tablets or why I'm looking at my phone during their sports practice (but come on now, I'm not going to quit numbing the pain of sports practices) are an opportunity for us to give thoughtful responses and then act on them.

So, if I buy the idea that the device isn't pure evil, I need to design its role in my life with a big old heap of intention. I probably won't charge it in the kitchen overnight, because listening to a podcast is how I handle my occasional insomnia. I'm getting better at putting it down sooner and picking it up later, which I feel are the less desirable effects of nightstand charging. And that is exactly the game: make decisions about your phone usage that find the balance of maximizing what the device can enhance and minimizing the negative effects and addictive behaviors. I've started to leave it plugged in until I'm getting in the car to leave for the day. My husband has been caught charging his in another room while we watch a movie after the kids are in bed. This summer I plan to go through the 30-day program outlined in Price's book and see exactly where that balance lives for me. Ideally, the digital detox portion of this plan would involve a weekend retreat to somewhere off the grid, but I'm having a hard time finding places to go where I'll lose signal. Progress, right?



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AN INTERVIEW WITH KATIE DAVIS OF PONDEROSA & THYME

Words: Erica Martin and Katie Davis | Photos: Iuy & Gold Photography

On a drizzly day in March, I took my place in a corner of the floral print vintage sofa in Katie Davis' bright classroom in downtown Salem, Oregon. She fixed me some peppermint tea and curled into the opposite end of the cozy sofa once she was satisfied I was sufficiently cared for.

Katie is the founder of Ponderosa & Thyme, a floral design and education company she birthed from her innate creativity and desire to love and care for people well through her artistry. She's gained a massive social media following with the unique way she's able to show up on a screen and make the people on the other end of it feel like they're meeting a long lost best friend. Her work is stunning and original, but I showed up in her studio in March to hear her thoughts on her extensive travels as I had been watching her photos scroll through my feed, noticing her working in England, Ireland, Italy, and Australia last year alone and I began to wonder how her floristry had taken her from her hometown in Oregon to an international career.

HUCKLEBERRY: HOW DID PONDEROSA & THYME BEGIN?

Katie Davis: Ponderosa & Thyme is a natural extension of my creative process and desire to have a community of artists/creatives around me that collaborate and love each other well. It started out of that desire to create beauty. And I love to serve people...I like the idea of creating an atmosphere for people to step into and feel really loved by. I love the collaborative aspect of a wedding. I love that I'm not the only vendor; there's a photographer, and a caterer and a filmmaker and if the team is working really well together, it feels like this really joyous thing we're doing for our client. That's how I started, working in weddings and events, then slowly discovered that wasn't enough for me. While I really loved it, I needed something that was deeper from my community. So I started offering community classes. I started with a wreath making workshop in my living room and I remember wondering if I could take everything I'd learned about teaching—I had taught preschool, then kindergarten, then creative movement, then dance for years and I wondered if everything I'd learned about teaching from those years using a lot of nonverbal teaching methods with little kids and with movement, if it would translate well to flowers, and it did. That was the beginning of me feeling like I was stepping into something I was really meant to do.

HOW DID YOU FIRST FIND YOURSELF TRAVELING?

I discovered that other florists were really interested in learning my style of floristry, so I realized I truly had something I could teach to other artists and creatives. I was invited to a photography workshop in Ireland to work as a stylist and they happened to have a space in the schedule, so I offered to teach about flowers to their group of photographers and they thought it would be interesting, so I stepped in and taught these photographers about flowers even though I'd never done a live demo before and not only did it translate well, but it was really impactful for the people there. For years after I had people messaging me, saying how impactful that session was for them and I thought, "wow, there's something really interesting here." I began to understand

that my world was going to be bigger than florists, and the people I wanted to influence and love was the creative community in general, not just the floral community whom I love, but the broader art industry opened their doors to me.

When I had written down some of my goals at the beginning of that year, Ireland was on that list. Ireland had always been there for me, so when that opportunity arose for me to go, I knew the answer was yes. Even though there was a lot about it that made it a big leap of faith...I didn't even have a passport at the time...I knew the answer was yes. And I'm so glad I went because things fell in line from the moment I got there. I met a bunch of people I needed to meet and the doors to Europe were opened to me from there.

The following April we were doing our first international workshop in England.

THINGS TOOK OFF FOR YOU FROM THERE. HOW DID THAT TRANSITION GO?

My business really just launched itself out into the world, and I turned my focus to building an audience in Europe which left my community at home shifting. It never really went away, but it shifted. It was painful to not have greater connections at home, but I knew I was doing what I needed to do, not only for my business, but for myself personally—fulfilling that desire to connect with people all over the world and understanding that my community is a global community and not based in just one place.

It's really humbling for me to teach a workshop and see 8-12 different countries represented. That's a phenomenal thing. It's beautiful and it's such a gift that social media has given us that we can be a global community. We can start to understand each other's differences and similarities—it's beautiful.

That's been the last few years: me figuring out how to navigate these other countries and cultures and connecting with people from all over the world. Teaching florists and creatives about the creative process and floristry has been beautiful.



What do you think the benefits are for a person to see cultures beyond their own?



I think travel opens your eyes to how other people live. And I think the purpose of life is to have relationship, to be in relationship. I think it's to understand each other and love each other better. I think all of us in the deepest parts of us, want to be known and be understood. And ultimately, we want to know and understand others too. We want relationship, we want depth. We don't want to be living these surface lives without meaning. When we can understand humanity on a deeper level, and see how broad the world is, we can begin to value other people more.

When I experience how somebody cooks a meal in a different country, how they chop their vegetables is different than how I might do it, how they braise the meat, or the seasonings they might use are different. I watch the process and I compare the differences, and it challenges me, it broadens my mindset and informs how I might encounter somebody from that culture when I'm back home in America. I have a whole new perspective on who they might be as a person. I feel more excited to be in relationship with them because I understand them better. I think the more we can understand each other, the better we can love each other. The less the differences matter.

I love feeling loved by other cultures. It teaches me how to love other people better. Italians have taught me how to be more hospitable. Scottish people taught me how to be more cozy—I never thought about using woolen layers the way they do, or building a fire everyday, which they do. I needed that here in Oregon! Every place I go, I try to bring one idea home with me. I don't need to soak in everything, I can always go back and learn something else new, but I always bring back one thing that changes me. Every country has given me something different—a gift that I bring home with me. Everything from a new appreciation for craftsmanship and architecture, to a new way to make breakfast for my kids.

HOW HAS YOUR TRAVEL AFFECTED YOUR FAMILY AND 3 KIDS?

It's been a challenge in that I haven't been able to take my kids to a lot of these places yet, so I've been able to introduce ideas and cultural concepts to them, but I'm always talking about experiences they haven't yet had. And of course, I miss them. That's been the most difficult thing about traveling for me: missing them and learning enormous life lessons separate from my family.

I've been able to forge new relationships and business connections that will make it possible for me to take my family in the future, and that's just now beginning, which is exciting.

When I started traveling, my family was in a stable place and we had the family support necessary to allow me to travel, but that season is shifting. I feel my kids moving into a season where they're going to need me around a little bit more and we're preparing for that. You have to just evaluate the season your family is in—maybe you have space for one international trip that year, or maybe you have room for four, it's always going to be shifting.

HOW ARE YOU BUILDING IN ROOM TO BE AT HOME MORE IN THE UPCOMING SEASON OF LIFE?

Sometimes it takes you going outside your immediate surroundings to understand how special it is. At this point I've seen some of the most beautiful places I think I'll ever see, but it only confirms this knowing that I live in an incredible place. Oregon is beautiful! What we have available here in Oregon is beautiful and I wanted to be able to create a place where people could come to me and I could host them. So, when

this space, my studio space came available in the heart of the creative movement that's happening in Salem, it felt significant. It feels missional in that we get to create a space that's full of beauty and love and it gets to stay that way. When we go to venues all over the world for our workshops, we create incredible environments for people to have an experience one time. And then it's done. Four perfect days and it's an amazing experience, but there's something really hard about leaving it behind. So, I wondered if we could put our hearts into one physical location that we wouldn't ever have to close the door on. We could just keep putting our love and energy into it and it could become a haven that people could come see and then continue to return to. Knowing we can invest here and that investment can continue to bless people long term feels really good. And it can still serve that adventurous need for others, so even though I'm not traveling as much, I'm not having that adventure experience, its providing it for others and that's still fulfilling for me.

As a child I would walk down this very street and always felt like I belonged here. There is zero surprise to me that we wound up here. This building was empty for 60 years and when it was renovated and finally available, it was like it was waiting for me to inhabit it and bring the global community of creatives to it. Creatives are using this space now for their own workshops—for gardening, calligraphy, embroidery and then we teach floristry classes here for both community members as well as professional floral intensives. I also offer an online classroom on my website where I teach floral design and meditation and I film those segments in this space so when people come visit in real life it already feels like home. So, I still have to travel for my job, I have built Ponderosa & Thyme that way, and thank god I love it. But in this next season, I'll be traveling less and investing a lot here.





WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO OTHERS WHO DREAM ABOUT TRAVELING, FOR WORK OR PLEASURE, BUT HAVEN'T STARTED?

Travel when connected to a job is a lot less glamorous than traveling for pleasure. I mean, I want to be really clear: it is super exciting to travel to a country I've never been to, or to return to a country I love. It's always joy. I will always find these moments of "Oh my gosh, I can't believe I'm here. I feel so lucky." But, traveling is hard. It's a cool job, but it's not glamorous. It's not a vacation. Sourcing flowers all over the world is hard work.

If you're in an old castle, you might be walking seven flights of stairs to source water for your flowers, so we sacrifice a lot of our bodies and our mental energy to do these incredible things in the places we're bringing them because we want to give people these amazing adventures and experiences.

But for us, behind the scenes, there is a lot that goes into it that isn't glamorous. It's fun, but it's hard work. There are so many variables when you're traveling... you have to really love adventure to travel for work. You have to be really flexible, you've got to be ok with everything going wrong, you've gotta be fine thinking on your feet, navigating cultural differences and choosing to love yourself well. If you're going to travel for your job, it can be a recipe for burnout. I love to travel, but that could easily turn sideways for me if I don't protect it and I do that by working in at least one

day where I can get outside the venue and see things. And I don't try to see everything. I allow myself just to enjoy, to really be present for the one or two things I've chosen to see and it takes the pressure off. The mindset that there are once-in-a-lifetime experiences is just false. We live in a world where you can get a plane ticket from one continent to another for a few hundred dollars if you're watching plane prices. If you have a free weekend and a few hundred dollars, just go. And I know it's not always that simple, but also it kind of is!

If you can travel for fun, do that! See the things you want to see and travel at your own pace. Just go to France to go to France, if you can. Travel was a goal for me, and I did it, and so can you! I don't want people to feel jealous of me, I want them to understand they can do it too. Often people make it way more complicated than they need to. All you need is a passport and a little bit of money. It doesn't always have to be a luxury vacation, you can travel fairly inexpensively, and honestly, if you're an adventurer at heart, you might not want a luxury vacation anyway! If you want something that's real, you can get that pretty fast. I challenge that once-in-a-lifetime mindset every day. People tell me, "you're so lucky, you get to travel for your job," and I say "do you have a passport? Where do you want to go?" It's that simple. You can go see sunflower fields in France over the weekend, and then go back to see Paris. We are not limited by once-in-a-lifetime thinking.

OFF THE MAT

Reflections on How the Practice of Yoga Changes
your Parenting, Partnering, and Path

Words: Jenifer Trivelli | Photos: Erica Martin



#YOGA

67million Instagram Tags

#YOGAINSPIRATION

8million Instagram Tags

#YOGALIFE

8.5million Instagram Tags

#YOGALOVE

8.9million Instagram Tags

#YOGAEVERYWHERE

6.4million Instagram Tags

#YOGAEVERYDAY

5.6million Instagram Tags

Although #yogaoffthemat seems to be taken more literally by Instagram users, many of us who practice yoga regularly understand the phrase to mean something else entirely. Let's start with a brief introduction to some facets of yoga; some commonly known, some lesser known, and so not to disappoint, we'll throw some neuroscience in there too.

Key yoga practices you're probably already aware of center on connecting mind and body through breath, movement, and focused awareness.

Lesser known principles of yoga include ideas of how to relate to others and relating to ourselves. The ones that aid us in our relationships include values of non-violence, truthfulness, and respect for the other person's sovereignty. Guidance from yoga principles for our inner path centers around caring for our minds and bodies, being content, self-discipline, self-study, and surrender. Many books have been written on the study of these concepts.

In neuroscience terms, connecting your awareness to the sensations in your body wires up pathways in your brain to your Wise Mind (prefrontal cortex). This part of your brain is responsible for knowing yourself, regulating your emotions, and empathy towards others (among many other things). Out of all of those things, I find it most interesting that by tuning into the felt sense of your own body, you are developing more care and understanding for others. (See previous issue for more on the neuroscience of yoga.)

Neuroscience and yoga together show us our practice helps us broaden our capacity to handle stress. Think of a time you were in a pose (plank is an example many can identify with) and you noticed your muscles starting to tremble. Perhaps you became aware you were holding your breath, and perhaps you had some mental activity advising some variation of BAIL!, and somehow you got through that. You made some adjustment in that moment to survive it, and you learned something about your capacity in that moment.

Maybe you avoided it the next 10 times you did yoga. Maybe you found some inner strength to anchor to and

were able to stay with it a little longer. And perhaps, after coming back to it over time, one day you surprised yourself with what you could do.

How does this all look off the mat? It looks like being able to say no where you've always said yes. It looks like noticing when you want to fix big feelings in your child or your partner/friend, and instead breathing and being with them. It looks like knowing yourself on such a level you don't depend on others to make decisions. It looks like tapping into your inner strength and finding the courage to lean in to difficult conversations and show up in big ways. It looks like being in charge of your reactions and emotions and being able to direct them in life-giving ways. It looks like recognizing you're not at your best and taking time-in to re-center, instead of taking it out on those around you. It looks like noticing thoughts that are self-criticizing, self-shaming, self-inflating, and holding yourself with fierce kindness instead of acting on them. It looks like honoring that feeling in your gut that something isn't right, being willing to sit with it and peel back the layers of what the feeling is all about, and finding the best solution for you to move forward with. It looks like committing to your own personal growth process, and that naturally rippling out into more full and meaningful connections, both with those you hold dear and each level of community around you from there.

It looks like knowing these practices are just that: a practice. A daily, living, breathing practice. And that perfection and rigidity do not promote a successful practice. It's the surrender piece of trusting the process as it unfolds and bearing witness to your unfurling evolution as a person, as a parent, as a partner, and as a tenant of this planet.

When we take what we've learned on the mat out into our everyday relating with others, remembering to breathe, to move, to connect to our inner sense of grounded strength—before speaking, before acting,—we are creating a world worthy of our children and a future with a heart of connection and authenticity.

What has yoga taught you about life?

ALICIA.KUENY | What it means to be embodied. Learning how to connect to my body and feel aligned with the truth of who I am. I had learned to tap into that with meditation and breath work, but it was the movement of yoga that made it all click.

GOOSEHILLGIFTS | How important my own physical strength is and to just breathe, be present to my body and let my head stuff go!

DRMARIALPC | Letting go is the way through pain.

MISSYLINDLEY611 | Yoga has taught me so much! The thing that stands out today is interconnectivity. There is a "magic" in the poses that facilitates a connection within between body/mind/soul that I've not experienced in another way. It also opens up that connectivity to others, the environment and spirituality for me, too.

LISANNRYAN / IRIS R. AGE 8 | That sometimes when things are bad or sad you can find a way to feel better...

JORGE LARA | Remember to breathe.

JOY LAMOTTE MADDY | Balance is important

CHANTAL BARTON | Self-love and how much honesty rooted in non-violence changes everything for the better.

ROBYN SAUNDERS WILSON | It's a-okay to stop and reset.

KIM HOLMAN | Self-care





SIMON SAYS MOVE LIKE YOUR KIDS

Words: Cara Turnquist, Movement Duets | Photos: Erica Martin

Moms get a lot of advice. One of our favorite pieces of advice is to let your children teach you! We believe that our children are some of our best teachers. Along this line, one of the things that we have done to stay sane as moms of toddlers is to pretend that they are an adult when they are doing the most ridiculous toddler things. It's hilarious and we highly recommend it.

Your toddler is throwing a fit in the grocery store? Imagine that they are an adult stomping around and throwing themselves onto the floor. Your toddler is smearing his dinner all over his face? It's the next big thing in skin care!

The image of grown adults being as ridiculous as toddlers might seem nonsensical, but maybe our children can teach us a thing or two about movement!

As we watch our kids get off the couch it occurs to us that perhaps in some ways adults should behave more like toddlers. You see, getting off the couch as a toddler is not the simple dismount that you have come to know and love as an adult. Getting off the couch looks more like a belly slide into a handstand with one hand balance and a twirly, twisty tuck and roll dismount.

Whew! If we, as adults, were to attempt this we might need to be hospitalized after a move like that!

In all seriousness, most adults could really benefit from moving with a lot more variety, just like our kids! When we are little we explore movement, push boundaries and play.

As we become adults we stop playing and start sitting. Even regular exercise seems to miss the mark as it reinforces linear, limited movements. Katy Bowman in her book, *Move Your DNA* encourages us to think of exercise like taking a vitamin. It certainly supports our health and function, but we still need regular meals and nutrients throughout the day!

When it comes to our "movement nutrients" a lot of us adults are on a steady diet of sitting and slouching! Could watching how our children move help us get more "nutrients"?

Play is a great way to get those nutrients! Play helps us develop core function and move with more variety. Playful movements can fill in the gaps that are often present in many traditional fitness programs. It also builds unique strength in our bodies, helping build confidence that we can do more of the things that we want and like to do, without pain and dysfunction. This empowered embodiment can also encourage a growing intrinsic acceptance of our bodies. And, we have found that a lot of moms could really benefit from feeling a little better about themselves!

Play can give our bodies more opportunities to move in the ways that we were made to move...like our toddlers move! When we capitalize on the variety of movements for which the body was made we feel better.

Rolling, crawling and playing can help our bodies "remember" how they should function, when certain muscles should fire, and which muscles should work in concert with one another.

CRAWLING

Seems pretty simple, right? Maybe not as simple you think! We give this exercise to a lot of our mama clients to help with core timing, hand-eye coordination and overall reflexive strength. While it looks simple many of our clients end up saying, "This is a lot harder than it looks!"

Give it try: Get down on the ground with your hands underneath your shoulders and your knees underneath your hips. At the same time, pick up one hand and the opposite knee. Moving forward, place that same hand and knee down at the same time. Pick up the other hand and knee at the same time and repeat. For an added challenge try going backward and even sideways. This can quickly become as much of a mental exercise as a physical one! Crawling quickly becomes a game of "horsey" in our houses!

UP AND DOWN

Getting up and down from the floor. In fitness this is often called a Turkish Get Up. And many fitness professionals meticulously practice and teach this exercise. However, if you watch a toddler get off the floor, they seem to do this "exercise" perfectly! We talk you through part of a Turkish Get Up here.

Start in a half kneeling position.

Imagine that you are launching yourself off the floor and come to standing. Watch the variety of ways your children get up off the floor. Try to copy one!

HANGING AND CLIMBING

In the summertime we often meet clients at the park for workouts. A playground is a great place to explore movement and hang (literally) with your kids. There are usually lots of opportunities to hang, which is an often underused movement that helps a lot with posture.

Our children are amazing teachers. When they come into the world they have the power to inspire awe, wonder and even help us heal and strengthen our own bodies. If we were to spend more time adding the variety of playful movements that we see in our children to our own daily routines we have the opportunity to not only improve strength, mobility, balance and coordination, we have the opportunity to just have more fun! And who doesn't need more fun in their life?



MODERN NOMADS

THE VAN LIFE SERIES

CHRIS, BRITNI & ELEANOR JENSEN
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Little did I know that a childhood dream of owning a VW van would change my life completely as an adult. Just a few weeks after bringing our van home, we were camping with some friends who told us about an event called Descend on Bend, a gathering of hundreds of VW vans, busses and adventure rigs for a weekend of camping around the Hole in the Ground. We registered immediately and excitedly waited for the day to come. When it came time to pack up the van we didn't have much besides a change of clothes, a gallon of water, a pound of coffee, and a box of donuts—you know, the essentials.

I remember exchanging grins from ear to ear with Chris while we looked in front of us and saw nothing but hundreds of vans and other vehicles upon arrival. It was like taking the Street of Dreams tour but with vans, each vehicle as unique as its owner. It didn't take long for us to start exchanging stories from the road and sharing hopes and dreams with some neighboring campers. Soon, small talk turned into meaningful conversations and invitations to caravan to the next camp spot after Descend. Being among such like-minded individuals was eye opening as every person we encountered was so positive about their decision to live on the road. This further pushed our desire to become full time van-lifers.

The last year on the road has been inspiring because of the community; everyone has a different driving force to why they live on the road and it is fascinating. Single people, couples, and families all doing more, with less. All stepping outside of society's boundaries for how our lives should be laid out and focusing on what really matters: happiness in all aspects of life.

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Back in 2012, just a few days after graduating from college we packed up our Honda Element with some hand-me-down camping gear and hit the road on our meager savings. Neither one of us had spent much time outside the southeastern US and we were ready for a change in scenery. Our plan was to travel the lower 48 and shop for a new part of the country to call home. Over the six months we spent traveling and tent camping we realized that we were falling in love with the movement rather than any one particular place. Sadly our savings soon ran dry forcing us to come off the road and back into a 9-5 lifestyle. We were desperate to find a way to get back to the road but do it in a way that was financially sustainable so we would never have to witness our dreams come to an end again.

After taking two and a half years to plan and prep our new life on the road, we've now been on the road for over three years. We travel and work full-time from a 2019 Toyota Tundra with a Four Wheel Camper flatbed. Our home on wheels is the perfect setup for our long term plans to travel far outside the US borders and to new and distant continents. Even the most challenging days on the road are rewarding because we know that we chose this life and made it a reality.

We are Naomi and Dustin, eco-vanlifers, digital nomads and outdoor enthusiasts. Over three years ago we hit the road in our 1985 VW Vanagon. This was the most radical thing we'd ever done. For a long time we felt we were living a life that wasn't our own—chasing someone else's idea of success and happiness, consuming too much and not living enough. Since then, we've found ourselves drawn to less, with a realization that we don't need much to be happy. And the things we value now are not things at all.

Granted, pursuing this wild dream has not been all smooth roads and epic sunsets, as it's often romanticized on social media. There are the inevitable breakdowns and personality differences that are heightened when sharing 80 sq ft with another person. During these "in-between" times it's hard not to wonder "what the hell am I doing with my life?" Though, what we've learned is that you don't get the smooth roads, the epic sunsets, and the freedom without the breakdowns and discomfort. Through it all, we get to decide what we want to be. Bottom line, there are many ways to live a good and happy life. This is what ours looks like.

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We had been living the 9-5 hustle we were told would make us happy and successful. We bought a house in the suburbs of St. Louis, Missouri. John was working his way up the corporate chain, studying to get this promotion, working overtime to get that promotion, and was even about to go back to school for even more promotions. Jayme was juggling multiple jobs at once—working at a nonprofit, babysitting, waitressing, and more.

Then we discovered #vanlife. After some teeter-tottering of “Can we really do this?” we finally pulled the trigger, found our van for \$1,500, drove 6 hours roundtrip to get it—and now here we are, 2 years later—we have sold our house, built our online businesses where we chat about how to build a van and how to live in it, and are making more money than our former 9-5s and our health, holistically has improved immensely.

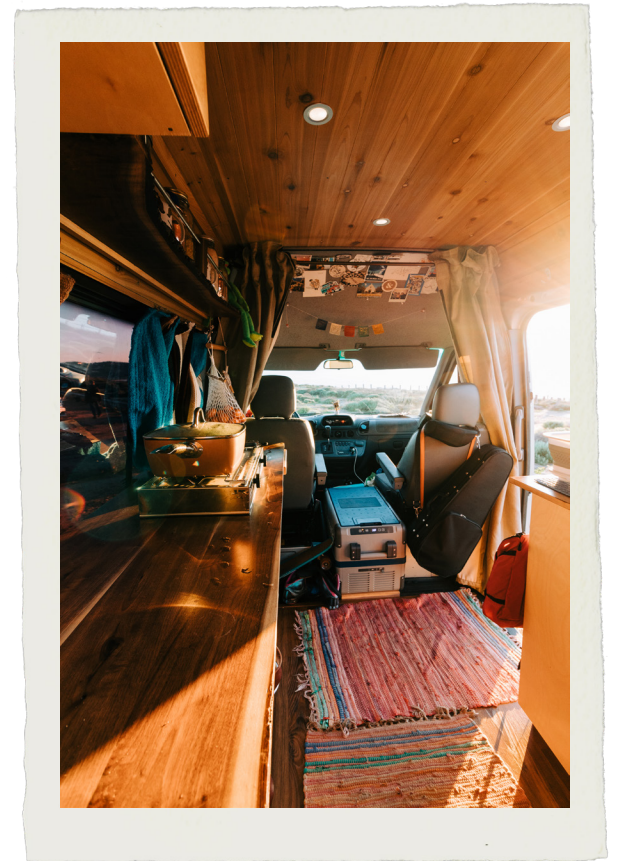
The community is also a stellar part of this lifestyle. The humans you meet on the road are truly one-of-a-kind. People have moved into their vehicles for the happiest and most traumatic of reasons. The stories these people share and the passions this community carries will always be a motivation for us. This is one of the most beautiful communities we’ve been blessed to be a part of.

It’s the mindset that is going to make or break one’s life experiences whether they are living in a van or in a mansion. This lifestyle has transformed us from burnt out and drunk to energized and sober and we will be forever grateful we have made the jump into a lifestyle which gives us full control over where we are, where we would like to go, and the confidence and flexibility to get us there.

We have called our van home for the better part of a year. After flirting briefly with the careers our college degrees implied, we hit the road to make everywhere our backyard and everyone our neighbor. If you squint hard enough, you'll see this whole thing is really just a naked compromise to combat our own indecision. That's the thing about compromises, though; we don't get to go on every adventure and we don't get to make every birthday. Our most alternative and traditional selves are so often at odds, but we do get to enjoy more of both than most. I stay thankful that this gas tank can humor our binary souls. That Haley's pictures or my paragraphs can sustain us. That our feet can take us where our wheels cannot. That, above all else, we are free to roam.



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House of Huckleberry hosted our first Gardening Essentials Workshop in April of this year in the beautiful venue of the Ponderosa & Thyme Classroom in downtown Salem, Oregon.

We held an intentionally intimate gathering of incredible people who showed up to learn how to begin growing their own food and flowers in whatever space they had available. With curriculum designed and taught by Huckleberry co-founder, Jill Snell (and baby Clementine) this intimate group dug first into the social sciences of growing—how the practice changes us as people and what it means to connect to the soil and present ourselves with new challenges before digging deep into biological growing sciences. Jill, our resident badass mama, taught with her brand new family addition





Attendees left with a reference workbook, a volume of the Spring, Flourish edition of Huckleberry, a seed catalog from Johnny's Seeds and tens of organic plant starts sown in Jill's own greenhouse to get their gardens started right.

We cherished our time with you, our inaugural attendees—thank you from the bottom of our hearts for choosing to *grow together*.



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