

# Discussion Guides for

*It Is Abnormal To Live This Way*

*A Guide for Different Audiences: Adults*

This is a discussion guide part of a three-guide series for *It Is Abnormal To Live This Way*, tailored to a specific audience — students, adult community readers, or practitioners — and can be used independently or together as part of a multi-session series. All three guides share a commitment to honest, humanizing conversation about survival, systems, and what it means to truly live.

---

# Adult Discussion Guide

*A framework for deep, honest, politically aware conversation*

(Designed for community groups, book clubs, professional cohorts, and adult learners)

## I. Opening the Space

*These questions help adults locate themselves in the text and in their own histories.*

- **First Resonance** — What line, image, or moment hit you in the chest? Why that one?
- **Your Definition of Normal** — How have you personally been taught to accept the unacceptable as "normal"?
- **Emotional Temperature** — What emotional state did the book leave you in: anger, recognition, grief, clarity, exhaustion, something else?

---

## II. Systems, Power, and Survival

*Adults can engage more directly with structural critique.*

- **Systemic Harm** — Which systems (healthcare, policing, labor, education, family) show up most clearly as forces shaping the speaker's life?
- **Survival Labor** — What forms of unpaid emotional, physical, or bureaucratic labor does the speaker perform just to stay afloat?
- **Naming Violence** — The book refuses the term "microaggression." What does that refusal reveal about the scale of harm?

---

## III. Identity, Embodiment, and Witnessing

*This section invites adults to consider how identity shapes experience.*

- **Black Womanhood** — How does the speaker's identity as a Black woman shape the stakes of "normal"?
  - **Embodied Knowledge** — Where does the body speak truths that society tries to silence?
  - **Witnessing vs. Being Witnessed** — When is the speaker observing, and when is she demanding to be seen?
- 

## IV. Craft, Form, and Emotional Architecture

*Adults can handle deeper craft analysis and emotional nuance.*

- **Form as Survival Strategy** — How do fragmentation, repetition, or abrupt shifts mimic the experience of living under pressure?
  - **Humor as Blade** — Where does humor appear, and what work does it do politically or emotionally?
  - **Temporal Disruption** — How does the book play with time — pandemic time, trauma time, survival time?
- 

## V. The Politics of “Normal”

*Adults can interrogate ideology, not just experience.*

- **Normalization of Crisis** — What crises have we collectively accepted as everyday life?
  - **Collective Responsibility** — What responsibilities do we have once we recognize that "normal" is manufactured?
  - **Imagining Otherwise** — What would it take — structurally, emotionally, communally — to live in a way that is not abnormal?
-

## VI. Personal Reckoning

*Adults can engage with self-interrogation without being pushed into trauma disclosure.*

- **Your Abnormalities** — What parts of your life have you been told are normal but feel harmful, unsustainable, or dehumanizing?
  - **Inherited Scripts** — What beliefs about survival or suffering did you inherit from family, culture, or institutions?
  - **Naming the Unnamed** — Did the book give you language for something you've carried silently?
- 

## VII. Closing the Circle

*Bring the conversation to a reflective, grounded end.*

- **Return to the Title** — What does the title mean to you now, after discussion?
  - **What You're Carrying Forward** — What idea, question, or shift will you take back into your life or community?
  - **What Needs to Change** — On a personal or systemic level, what feels newly impossible to accept?
-