

DISCUSSION GUIDE



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Flying Sideways tells the thrilling but heartfelt story of how a misfit boy with nothing but a dream breaks the rules, beats the odds, and learns to bet on himself. Against a vibrant global backdrop that touches down everywhere from New York City to Mongolia to Madagascar, we follow Fred as he deserts the French Army (in roller skates), talks his way into flight school, becomes chief pilot for the world's greatest rally car and adventures races, gets mixed up with DEA in Miami, dodges death (many times), and—perhaps most improbably—falls in love.

Flying Sideways is a nonstop thrill ride, reminding us that the most dangerous thing we can do with life is give up on it.

FRED NORTH is a world-renowned helicopter stunt pilot with over two hundred movies in his portfolio. He has worked with the industry's top directors and logged more than fifteen thousand hours shooting feature films and commercials. In 2002, he became the world record holder for altitude with a helicopter. He is licensed to fly across the world, and his Motion Picture Safety Manual has been approved by the FAA.

Originally from Paris, France, **PEGGY PERE NORTH** grew up around the film industry. She is a trained pilot with years of experience as an aerial coordinator and stunt double. Her portfolio includes action films such as *Fast Five*, *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*, and *Battleship*.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Q1.

Throughout his life, instead of asking “what if it’s impossible?,” Fred reframes this question to ask “but what if it is possible?” Have you ever done something you were worried would be impossible? What was the result and what did you learn about taking risks? If not, is there something you are currently afraid to do because it seems impossible? How can Fred’s story help you reframe your thinking of what’s possible?

Q2.

From the first time he flies in a helicopter as a young kid, Fred knows he wants to be a helicopter pilot. Have you ever experienced a moment like this? When did you realize what you wanted to do with your life and what did you do to pursue that?

Q3.

As a child, Fred was often punished for questioning things and challenging authority, ultimately leading him to pursue his dream of being a helicopter pilot. How have your childhood behaviors and experiences impacted your life and career today, either positively or negatively?

Q4.

Fred’s family was not supportive of his dream to become a helicopter pilot, however, he continued to chase it wholeheartedly. Have you ever had a dream that others were not supportive of? How did you deal with that adversity? How have you been supportive or unsupportive to the dreams of others?

Q5.

Fred writes, “I have no fear of flirting with death, so long as I’m in control of my destiny. I’m afraid of losing the one thing in the world I understand. I live with the risk because I can’t live without it” (89). What is your greatest source of motivation? In other words, what can’t you live without?

Q6.

Fred continuously gives things up and puts himself in less than ideal situations to follow his dream of being a helicopter pilot. What risks have you taken or sacrifices have you made to follow your dreams?

Q7.

In *Flying Sideways*, we are able to follow much of Fred’s life from childhood to the present day. Did you notice any changes in Fred’s mindset or in the way he conveyed his story as he matured? If so, what were they?

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Q8.

We get a look into the various relationships Fred has had over the course of his life with his family, mentors, romantic partners, and more. How did you notice each of these relationships shaping Fred's life? Which of the relationships in your own life have been the most impactful?

Q9.

Throughout Fred's story, he continues to reach for new heights and push the limits of what he is capable of. What areas of your life do you feel like you could continue to grow in? What steps can you take to do so?

Q10.

Fred ends his Author's Note with the classic disclaimer: "Don't try this at home." While still heeding his warning, what did you gain from reading this book that you can apply to your life? How did his story inspire you?

"FLYING SIDEWAYS IS A CAPTIVATING MEMOIR, ONE THAT COVERS ITS AUTHOR'S PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY TO THE TOP OF HIS GAME AND THE HEIGHTS OF OUR INDUSTRY."

-SHAWN LEVY, DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER



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