Something’s Not Right Discussion Questions

1. Wade defines abuse as whenever “someone treats you as an object they are willing to harm for their own benefit.” Up to this point, what has been your definition of “abuse”? How does this description change your understanding of either your own experiences or the experiences of your loved ones?

2. Have you ever had an experience with an individual or organization that didn’t feel right, that would be considered abusive in some form? How did that experience affect you physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually?

3. Wade suggests that, to a degree, we all use impression management tactics in our everyday interactions. Can you think of a recent instance of this in your own life? Why did you do this, and what was the result?

4. Like many charms, flattery isn’t inherently an indicator of abuse. When have you experienced harmless flattery—and when has flattery been used as a predictor of harm?

5. What are some ways we can protect one another’s identity and agency in our community so that it is more difficult for abusers to dismantle?

6. In your experience with survivors, what has been the biggest reason that they didn’t share or report their abuse?

7. What makes a person or community a safe space for survivors to share their stories or report abuse? How can you contribute to this kind of space in your own community?

8. In chapter 7, Wade provides a helpful template for an authentic apology: the SCORE card. Which apology “letters” do you have the most trouble with in your own life? What is one way you can work to improve this the next time you have to apologize?

9. After abuse is exposed, the abusive individual or organization will likely try to demonstrate their goodness or how they’ve changed since the abuse occurred. In your experience, what makes the difference between an authentic change and one that’s done simply to win back favor?

10. If you’ve been in an abusive situation or community, what does recovery look like for you? What is one step you can take toward healing today?

11. Wade asserts that learning to cultivate beauty is a great resource in the journey to healing. Is there anything beautiful in your life right now? What beauty are you hoping to see in your future?