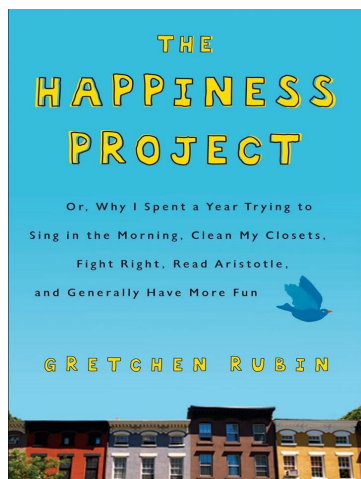




# Discussion Guide



## About the Book

Book Title: *The Happiness Project*

Author: Gretchen Rubin

Published by HarperCollins, 2009

Author Website: [www.gretchenrubin.com](http://www.gretchenrubin.com)

Book Website: <http://www.gregorymaguire.com/books/wicked.html>

Available on: Amazon/Kindle/Audio, Barnes and Noble/Nook/Audio, IndieBound, iBooks

## Questions for Discussion

- 1. Gretchen writes about her work to make her own life happier. Which of her projects did you find delightful?**
- 2. Do you think Gretchen accomplished her goal of becoming happier? Why or why not?**
- 3. During her project, she encountered some people who argued this was not a good focus for her; that she should be trying to make peace, or work for social justice, or to save the environment. Why did Gretchen disagree? What are your thoughts on this?**
- 4. On page 295, Gretchen lists some questions for you to consider if you'd like to embark on your own Happiness Project. Is this something you'd like to do? Why or why not? If you did, which two of her goals would you want to include in your own project and why? Which two of her goals would you be least likely to include in your project?**
- 5. Read over the MAMs comments. Which of the MAMs do you most agree with and why?**
- 6. Would you recommend this book for other Book Clubs? Why or why not?**
- 7. In what ways, if any, will this book change your life or perspective?**

*The author's website has many more questions at:*

<http://www.gretchenrubin.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/ReadingGroupGuide.pdf>

## Nancy and the MAMs discuss the book...



**NANCY:** Ah, what am I going to do with my one wild and precious life?

Thank you Gretchen Rubin, for inspiring me to continue to find the best ways to live my life in a meaningful, serving and happy way.

Like Gretchen, I was born with an inner disposition to be happy. And like Gretchen, I do spend a lot of time working to make my life as productive as possible, following my passions and enjoying each day. I have a passion for nature and people photography which helps me notice the amazing creation and faces around me. I enjoy the hammered dulcimer, learned to play, joined a dulcimer group to make music and now also like to fiddle with them. I love spiritual reflection and prayer and connecting with God, so I take time each day to do that. I also seek out spiritual groups and experiences in faith communities. I've always wanted to make the world a better place, so I've worked for peace and justice and now I am really beginning to focus on the environment. She reminds me I have to continue to laugh my way through this important work. She challenges me to live my best life.

I found her book delightful, encouraging, life giving. The next time I'm in a slump, I'm going to start a little happiness project of my own!

Thank you, Gretchen, for your research and example of living a happy, productive life!



**SALLIE:** The teacher in me says, "Yes!" I loved her way of learning to play again and really being present to her children. She has some suggestions that all parents could take to heart. Look at pages 98 and 99. She gives creative ways to respond to children's emotional outbursts.: Don't try to control them. Cuddle them, without words. Don't say "no" or "stop." Admit their difficulty. Say you'd like to wave a magic wand and make the change they want.



**MOLLY:** : Aim Higher. Set Goals. Chart Progress. I was impressed with her focus on her work in March. She focused on: Enjoy the fun of failure. Ask for help. Work Smart. Enjoy now... She launched a blog. She inspires me to get off my duff and start to do those things I'm always dreaming about. Tom and I spent some time working on our dream last night of starting a Triple Bottom Line business. We're thinking about starting with an Organic Farm on some property he inherited.



**PRISCILLA:** Way to go, Gretchen! Projects bring happiness. I loved her birthday dinner party project for her mother-in-law, her happiness box collection, the bluebirds of happiness collection to display in her house, and her de-cluttering to make her home happier. She inspires me to do home projects!



**KATHARINE:** I found this book very compelling. Although we each have a genetic predisposition to our emotional state, situation experiences contribute to our happiness, also. Important to keep in mind. Gretchen's research uncovers that we each do have 30-40% of the contribution to our emotional state, based on how we think and act. So, I loved her work to uncover ways to become more happy. She's quite a scholar and avid reader, and I appreciated her work to share this research with us.



**JANE:** Boost your energy! Yes! I loved January the best. It's really important to analyze what helps make you more energetic so you can get the most out of life and be productive. More sleep, exercise, healthy eating. Not rocket science, but fundamental to a goof life! January's coming up. I'm going to have an energy boosting plan for my new year. And, no, Sally, I didn't read the rest of the book! Too busy training for a marathon.



**ABIGAIL:** I loved her contemplation of Eternity in August. Preparing for death helps one treasure life; developing an attitude of mindfulness and gratitude. Life is all about living and enjoying each moment. I also liked her decision to choose a spiritual model—St. Therese of Lisieux—and read 17 books about her. The teaching for her from St. Therese? "Do each small task with great love." Wonderful!