

Hey there Book Lovers!

Thanks so much for choosing to read Mostly Happy.

After a few “asks” from clubs, some friends and I put together a wee list of ... questions to help kick-off some possible discussion of the book. Feel free to skip on over the ones that bore you or or just make you go, “HUH?”

If you have any burning questions about the book, or just want to say “hey,” drop me a line at pambustinATgmailDOTcom and I’ll answer you as best I can. I might even feature your question in the ASK PAM section of my blogthing. I’m also gathering pictures of Book Clubs for my website – so feel free to send me pics of you all with the book.

OK – let’s dive in, shall we? Remember – there are no wrong answers or silly questions and... I hope you all follow my personal dictum of “What happens at Book Club, stays at Book Club.” Discussing MH can raise some heavy things for people. I hope Bean and I and your fellow Book Club members can offer you solace if something heavy arises for you tonight.

Thanks again for choosing to spend some time with Bean and the gang. And me..

- Go easy - pam

Some things to chat about (AKA the very official discussion questions)

1. What do you think the significance of the title is? How do you feel about the title once you have finished the book, compared to beforehand?
 - Ⓜ Bean’s response to Prissy’s question at the close of the book is “Mostly.” Assuming Bean has chosen her word carefully – what does she mean? What is the difference between being *mostly* happy and being *almost* happy?

2. Bean is a bit of a chameleon – adapting to new situations without even really being conscious of what she is doing. Can you pinpoint instances of this in the book? Why do you think she did it?

3.
 - Ⓜ Do you think we all do this sort of thing to some extent?

 - Ⓜ Have you ever experienced this sort of thing in your own life?

4. Bean is fascinated by the lives of others – specifically the Petersons and the Guteleutes. What do you think she sees in them and what she is seeking in her relationship with these two families?

5. The story is told in Bean’s voice. Did you notice any changes or any evolution of the way she thinks and speaks throughout the book?

- Ⓜ Again, do you think this is something that happens to all of us?
- Ⓜ Have you ever noticed yourself speaking differently to a certain person, or group of people?
- Ⓜ Do you speak the same way at work as at home? With your family as you do with your friends?

6. Pam has said that she spent a great deal of time wrestling with WHERE/WHEN Bean was telling the story from. She didn’t want it to be an adult Bean looking back on her life, not really. She was aiming for something a bit more... complicated... trying to place Bean just slightly ahead of the action.

- Ⓜ Why do you think Pam tried to do this?
- Ⓜ Do you think she succeeded?
- Ⓜ How about the final moments of the book. What do you see happening (in Bean’s mind) as Bean is on the phone with Prissy?

7. Prissy might not be your idea of the perfect mother, but Bean still loves her. Can you find some lovable things about Prissy. Things that might redeem her in the eyes of those who would tear her down?

8. Goose is Bean's best friend – through the book and beyond. Their relationship has been compared to Duckie and Andie in *Pretty in Pink* and to Dill and Scout in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Does their friendship bring to mind any others for you?

- Ⓜ How about your own childhood friends? Are you still in touch? How has the relationship evolved over the years?
- Ⓜ Do friendships shape us as much or more than our blood families?

9. What do you make of Bean's relationship with God? Pam and her editor had quite the ... discussion... about this – especially the part of the book where Bean goes off to Bible School. Why do you think Pam struggled so hard to “get it right” and keep it in the book?

10. One more heavy one... Cody's death. This was another thing Pam and her editor ... discussed a lot. Why do you think Pam dug in her heels on this? What does his death signify to each character?

11. Finally – a quick round of **Broke My Heart** and **Almost Made Me Pee a Little**. Meaning do a quick round or two with each member telling a part that broke their heart or made them laugh out loud or at least SMILE. This works best after a few glasses of wine.

12. Now quick – while you are all still holding those ½ empty glasses of wine (or cups of tea, or shots of Wild Turkey) – TAKE A PICTURE of your club with the book or a bunch of treasures from your OWN suitcases and send them to Pam so she can start a BOOK CLUBS page on her blog <http://pambustin.com/>

Thanks again for choosing Mostly Happy.

Happy reading -p