

the HAPPINESS PLAN

Note: These questions contain spoilers about the story, so we recommend that you wait until after you've finished the book to read the questions.

SUGGESTED MENU



**Slow Cooker Meatballs
Your Way**
(recipes follow)

1. With which of the three heroines did you relate the most—Heather, Daphne or Tori? Why? Which storyline touched your heart? Which made you laugh? What made the ending so satisfying?
2. Which of the three brothers would you fall in love with in real life? Why?
3. Have you read the first book in which Heather appeared, *Sisters by Choice*? Do you think your answer impacts your understanding of Heather in this story? Why or why not?
4. Although Heather broke up with Campbell prior to the start of *The Happiness Plan*, that moment was key to her reaching out to her birth father. How so?
5. Why do you think Heather was so afraid to trust? How did connecting with Fletcher and his family change her? How did it change her relationship with her mother, Amber, and her relationship with Campbell? How did you feel about how Jillian reacted to a new stepdaughter's sudden appearance in their lives?
6. Was Daphne fooling herself to think that she could handle a baby with her current schedule? What makes you say that? How did you feel about her giving up a job she loved—was that the right decision for her, or do you think she should have done something else?
7. Was Daphne having an emotional affair? Explain your answer. Did she do anything wrong? Did your feelings about this change as you progressed through the story?
8. How did you feel about how Brody and Daphne treated each other when they were angry with one another? Did they have good reason? Were you surprised they stayed together? Why or why not?
9. Have you ever been displaced like Tori and Grant were by the flood in their building? If so, for how long, and how did your experience compare to theirs? (If you fell in love with your temporary roommate, Susan really wants to hear your story! You can email her via the Contact Susan page at www.susanmallery.com, under the Members menu.)
10. Why did Tori resist her feelings for Grant for so long? What made her change her mind?
11. Susan's heart for animals is well known and shines through in her books. How did the animal characters in *The Happiness Plan* reveal things about the characters that you wouldn't have known?

READER DISCUSSION GUIDE

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Author's note: If Cinnamon Custard Yum-Yum sounds familiar, it's because Life's a Yolk was one of the settings of The Sister Effect. Although the two stories are unconnected, I thought this would be a fun Easter egg to hide for my most enthusiastic fans. I included the recipe for Cinnamon Custard Yum-Yum in the reader guide for The Sister Effect.

SLOW COOKER MEATBALLS YOUR WAY



In *The Single Rule*, Heather cooks frozen meatballs in a Crock-Pot for her joint birthday party with her new stepmother Jillian, but Susan Mallery never specifies the type of sauce used. So here are three different sauces you can pour over two 14-oz bags of frozen meatballs in a slow cooker. Cook for 2.5 to 3 hours, then serve. If you have a large enough book club, maybe you can have different members make different meatballs ahead of time, then bring their slow cookers to the group for everyone to try.

SWEDISH MEATBALLS

- 1 can of cream of mushroom soup
- 2 cups of beef broth
- 1 envelope onion soup mix
- 2 14-oz bags of frozen meatballs
- 8 oz sour cream

These are not authentic Swedish meatballs, so let's call them Swedish-ish.

Stir together mushroom soup, beef broth, and onion soup mix. Pour over meatballs in the slow cooker. Stir to coat, then cook on high for about three hours. Stir in sour cream at the end.

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BARBECUE MEATBALLS

Shortcut: Instead of making barbecue from scratch, feel free to cover with two jars of your favorite store-bought sauce.

- 1 Tbsp oil
- 1 small onion, minced
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- ½ to 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- 3 14-oz cans of tomato sauce
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp molasses
- 1 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp dry mustard
- 1 tsp liquid smoke, optional
- 2 14-oz bags of frozen meatballs

Heat oil in a heavy pan. Add onions and sauté until they begin to turn translucent. Add garlic and red pepper flakes and stir constantly for another 30 seconds. Add remaining ingredients and stir well.

Pour sauce over meatballs in slow cooker. Cook for 2.5 to 3 hours on high heat, stirring occasionally.

HONEY GARLIC MEATBALLS

- ½ cup honey
- ½ cup soy sauce
- ½ cup water, mixed with 2 tsp cornstarch
- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- 4 cloves garlic, minced – or 1 Tbsp garlic powder
- 1 inch of fresh ginger, grated or minced – or 1 tsp ground ginger
- 2 14-oz bags of frozen meatballs
- Sesame seeds, optional

Whisk together all ingredients except the meatballs. Pour over the meatballs in the slow cooker and stir to coat. Cook for 2.5 to 3 hours on high heat, stirring occasionally. If desired, sprinkle sesame seeds over the top before serving.