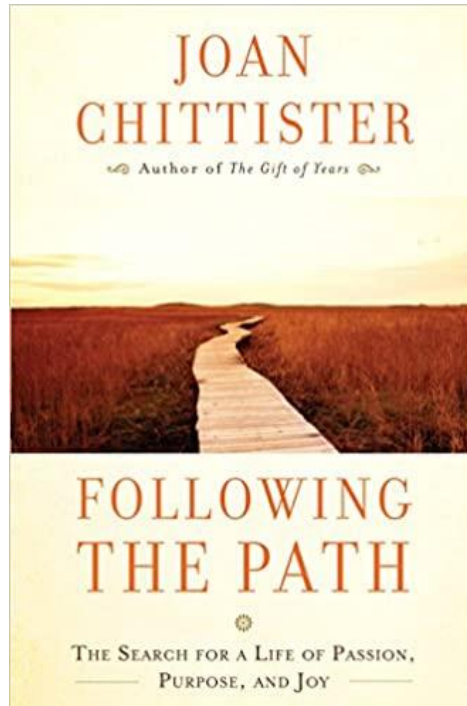


## Discussion Questions

# Following the Path



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## Introduction

### QUESTIONS:

1. Sister Joan shares a moment of happiness in this introduction. Can you remember a similar moment of happiness in your life? Share.
2. What sentence in this chapter most caught your attention? Explain why.

## Chapter 1

### QUESTIONS:

1. Write down your definition of happiness. Then Google “happiness quotes” and write down five that appeal to you. Sit with these definitions of happiness for a while. Choose the one that you like best and share your choice as well as your own definition.
2. What specific sentence in this chapter stood out to you? Why did you choose this sentence?

## Chapter 2

### QUESTIONS:

1. Sister Joan writes on page 38, “We can, as we’ve learned to say, spend our lives dabbling in a bevy of hobbies or we can embrace what energizes us and turn our hobbies-the things we love to do-into our lives.” What energizes you? How has embracing that increased the level of happiness in your life?
2. Plan an imaginary “happiness retreat” for yourself – an afternoon, a day, or a weekend. How would you spend the time? Listening to music? Reading? Writing? Dancing? Taking photographs? Walking? Being silent? Cooking a special meal? Tell us about your “happiness

retreat.” And, since you have planned it, you might want to actually do one.

## Chapter 3

### QUESTIONS:

1. “Our unfinished selves never stop calling to us,” Sister Joan writes on page 47. What do you feel is still unfinished in you? List three possible ways you can address these issues and come to greater wholeness and well-being.
2. What specific sentence in Chapter Three stood out to you? Why did you choose this sentence?

## Chapter 4

### QUESTIONS:

1. Sister Joan reminds us, “What was right for me at one point in my life may not be right at all at another point.” Is there anything in your life at the present that this insight speaks to—a spiritual practice, a job, a relationship, etc.” Keep it in mind and spend a few minutes a day for a month or so praying this psalm verse: “If today you hear God’s voice, harden not your heart.” (Ps.95)
2. Sister Joan reminds us, “What was right for me at one point in my life may not be right at all at another point.” Look back on your life and list three instances where this proved true.

## Chapter 5

### QUESTIONS:

1. Sister Joan writes on page 67, “Clearly, failure may, in the long run, be the only real key to success, the real test of what it takes to follow our real call.” Name one thing you consider a failure in your life. What did you learn from it? What did it teach you about yourself?
2. What specific sentence in Chapter 5 stood out to you? Why did you choose that sentence?

## Chapter 6

### QUESTIONS:

1. Sister Joan asks us to answer, “Why were you born?” Write a journal entry welcoming yourself as a newborn into the earth community telling yourself why you were born. You might make a collage or draw an image.
2. “What is it that we have that the world needs and is waiting for us to provide?” How would you answer this question at this point in your life?

## Chapter 7

### QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think are the three most important things Sister Joan says about passion in this chapter?
2. About what have you been most passionate in your life? What does this say to others about who you are?

## Chapter 8

### QUESTIONS:

1. How would you answer Chapter 8's title question: "Why does it take so long to find out who I am?"
2. What specific sentence in Chapter 8 stood out for you? Why did you choose that sentence?

## Chapter 9

### QUESTIONS:

1. Sister Joan suggests that a genuine gift is what we lose ourselves in. When we're involved with this gift, we lose all sense of time. Are there areas or things in your life for which this is true?
2. What specific sentence in Chapter 9 stood out for you? Why did you choose that sentence?

## Chapter 10

### QUESTIONS:

1. Sister Joan identifies Swami Raj and Jesus as encouraging us to follow our gifts. Are there models in your life who encourage[d] you to follow your gifts?
2. Share one experience you have had that made you realize you were gifted in some area of your life?

## Chapter 11

### QUESTIONS:

1. Name one time in your life when you felt a special call and made a difficult choice to follow it into the unknown. What happened as a result?
2. Was there a time in your life when you felt a compelling call and did not respond? What happened as a result?
3. Do you feel a special call at this point in your life or a hard choice that you feel must be made even if you are unsure of where it will lead?

## Chapter 12

### QUESTIONS:

1. Can you identify the “first call,” the “invitation to adulthood” that occurred in your life? Can you share what the experience was like?
2. What specific sentence in Chapter 12 stood out to you? Why did you choose that sentence?

## Chapter 13

### QUESTIONS:

1. Have you received a “second call” in life? Explain. What in your present needs to be nurtured or explored or renewed in order to move beyond it and begin again?
2. What specific sentence in this chapter stood out to you? Why did you choose that sentence?

## Chapter 14

### QUESTIONS:

1. Are you yet at a point in life where Sister Joan's statement about the third call, the "unanswered call that still lies unfinished within us" rings true for you? If so, describe in some creative way how this is happening for you? If not yet, imagine what might happen when it does.
2. Sister Joan states on page 131: "The only real question worth anything at all in the pursuit of our life's purpose is Does this path have a heart?" How would you answer this question for your path?

## Chapter 15

### QUESTIONS:

1. What is your vocation? What is your "blend of passion and purpose" that "speaks most deeply to the deepest core in you?" Is it (or was it) the same as your present or former job?
2. What specific sentence in this chapter stood out to you? Why did you choose that sentence?

## Chapter 16

### QUESTIONS:

1. "Passion answers the question what moves my heart? Purpose answers the question What can I do about it?" How have you personally answered these two questions?
2. What do you think your three most important gifts are? What are you doing each day to nurture them in order to share them with others?



## Chapter 17

### QUESTIONS:

1. Write a letter to Sister Joan responding to her question, “How do I know I’m Doing What I’m Meant to Do?”
2. Sister Joan offers seven dimensions of an authentic call. Which one or more stood out to you in particular? Explain why.

## Chapter 18

### QUESTIONS:

1. In this chapter, Sister Joan quotes Thomas Browne, “Life is a pure flame and we live by an invisible sun within us.” What does this quote say to you about the spiritual dimension of your calling in life?
2. On page 159 Sister Joan writes, “Nothing disquiets the soul more than a feeling of being unfinished, adrift, and rudderless at the same time.” What advice would you give someone who came to you and expressed these feelings?
3. After reading this chapter, how would you answer the question, “What does a sense of call have to do with the spiritual life?”

## Chapter 19

### QUESTIONS:

1. Look back over your life. How many “calls” have you already had in your life? What did you learn from each experience? Do you think you are settled now or are you expecting or open or pursuing a new call? Explain.
2. What specific sentence in Chapter 19 stood out to you? Why did you choose that sentence?

## Chapter 20

### QUESTIONS:

1. Sister Joan suggests that we become spiritual adults when we stop blaming God. Do you agree? Can you give examples from the stories of those whose lives are recognized as holy? Then can you give examples of your own experience?
2. Why do you think so many people of faith believe God is responsible for their suffering?
3. What specific sentence in this chapter stood out to you? Why did you choose that sentence?

## Chapter 21

### QUESTIONS:

1. “Clearly, ‘It’s too late for that now’ is too great a burden to bear. When is it too late to start over? Never. Not as long as we are alive and seeking even more out of life,” says Sister Joan.
2. Take a piece of paper and write three times:  
“It’s not too late for \_\_\_\_\_.”  
Then fill in the blanks. Choose one of your statements. Now write concrete steps you will take towards making it a reality.
3. What specific sentence in this chapter stood out to you? Why did you choose that sentence?

## Chapter 22

### QUESTIONS:

1. The last paragraph of the book is a beautiful summary of the will of God for us. Copy that paragraph into your journal or on a piece of

paper, but write it with “I” statements. For example, “It is coming to the completion of my best self, it is in following the magnet in my heart. . .” Then sit with the text. Comment if you’d like?