

Lies of the Magpie  
Book Group Discussion  
Chronological Questions by Chapter



1. In the Prologue, the author describes having big dreams and ambitions to grow up and be wildly successful. When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? Like the author, did you feel “kissed by destiny” to do something special in your life?
2. Why do you think the author began Chapter 1 with the sentence: “The road ahead is long and isolated, winding through a vast panorama of nothingness.” How does the story of her drive alone across the desert relate to the theme of the book?
3. In Chapter 4, the author describes getting married and having children as becoming an “overnight failure.” What surprised you about marriage and motherhood? What was different than you had expected?
4. In Chapter 10, Maleah is “left at the table” during an award banquet. Has anything like this happened to you that made you feel forgotten or insignificant?
5. Chapter 11 After the table incident, Maleah decides to say “yes” to everything people ask of her. Have you experienced a time when you said “yes” to everyone and took on too much? Why did you do it?
6. In Chapter 16, Maleah finally delivers her baby. When you began reading, what did you predict would happen to Maleah and her baby? Did the outcome surprise you?
7. In Chapter 17 we see that Maleah made it through the music conference, but ultimately ended up missing her son’s kindergarten graduation. What significance do you think this outcome had for the author? What does it mean to you?
8. Chapter 18 After Jack’s birth, Laiah arrives in Arizona and spends a lot more time with the author. What are your thoughts about Laiah in Part 2 compared to your feelings of her in Part 1?
9. Chapter 18 When Jack is three-weeks-old, the Warner family packs up for a summer of traveling. What are your thoughts about the postpartum recovery period? If you’ve given birth, what was your postpartum healing experience like?
10. In Chapter 22, the author escorts the reader through one day in the life of a mother. Can you think of other books that capture the day-to-day rigors of motherhood? Do you think it’s important to have books with mothers as main characters? Why?
11. Chapter 24 At her postpartum checkup, Maleah is hesitant to ask about “it.” What do you think “it” is? Why do you think “it” is so hard for the author to put into words?

12. What were your thoughts as you read Maleah describe various “episodes” in Chapter 25, such as getting out of a car in the middle of a busy intersection.
13. In Chapter 27 Maleah goes to the home of an acquaintance after midnight. Do you have an “Amanda” in your life? Have you been an “Amanda” for another woman?
14. Chapter 27 Why do you think the author resisted taking a prescribed antidepressant? Why would she rather be diagnosed with cancer than depression? Have you had positive or negative experiences with prescription antidepressants?
15. Chapter 29 is an exhaustive retelling of hosting family for the holidays. Have you ever hosted a large group of people at your house? How was the experience?
16. Chapter 31 Maleah struggles to get herself to a doctor. Do you think it’s difficult for women to find good medical care today? Do you have a good doctor? What do you think are the best resources for women’s health today?
17. In Chapter 41 Maleah finally sees Laiah. Who do you think Laiah is? What thoughts come into your mind that aren’t true? Where do these thoughts come from? How would your life be different if you recognized and challenged more of your lying thoughts?
18. In Chapter 42, Maleah ends up taking antidepressant medication. Did she make the right decision? Do you think her homeopathic treatments were a waste of time and money?
19. Chapter 43 The Warner family finds comfort and reprieve in puppy-sitting the Labrador named Grace. How have animals had a healing impact on you or your family?
20. Chapter 44 The author is introduced to yoga. Have you ever tried yoga?
21. In Chapter 45 the author discovers the power of gratitude for healing her mind and retraining Laiah. Why do you think the practice of gratitude is a powerful healing tool?
22. In Chapter 46, the author learns how to open her heart and explore her own needs and wants. Why can this be difficult for mothers to do? Do you know what you need? Do you know what you want?
23. Chapter 47 Maleah overcomes a long-standing personal aversion to therapists and makes an appointment with Greg LeBarron. She brings Aaron to counseling with her. Have you had positive or negative experiences with individual or marriage counseling?
24. Chapter 48 At last the author receives her letter from God. What did her personal message tell her and how did it change her perspective on being a mother? What would you want a personal message from God to tell you?
25. In the Epilogue, Maleah tells Laiah that she wishes Ms. Wichersham could see what happened when an ambitious girl grew up to become a mother. How do you think Maleah changed most in the book? Were her struggles worth the lessons she learned in the end?

