

Wanda E. Brunstetter

Lose Your Heart in the Amish Life.

*New York Times best-selling author.*

### **Discussion Questions for *A Merry Heart***

1. Amish schoolteacher, Miriam Stoltzfus, became a bitter old-maid when her boyfriend moved away and married someone else. How did Miriam's bitter spirit affect her relationship with the children she taught, and with her family and friends? When things don't go as planned, what are some ways we can rise above our bitter feelings and learn to be happy and content?
2. When disappointments happen, it's easy to become bitter and question other people's motives. How did Miriam's skepticism affect her relationship with Amishman, Amos Hilty?
3. While it appeared that Amos wanted Miriam because he needed a wife to care for his home and a mother to care for his daughter, what was the underlying reason he wanted to marry Miriam? Why did Amos keep the truth about his feelings for Miriam hidden so long? Have you ever kept your feelings hidden because you were afraid of someone else's reaction to the truth?
4. Englishman, Nick McCormick, was fascinated with Miriam and saw her as a challenge. What would it take for a relationship to work between two people of opposite worlds such as theirs?
5. Miriam felt guilty for the accident that happened to her young niece. Was the blame she placed on herself justified? How did she deal with that guilt? How have you or someone you know dealt with a guilty conscience?
6. What caused Miriam to come to the conclusion that she didn't need God in order to get through life? Did she really believe she could reach inside herself and face life head-one alone, and if so, what caused her to realize that? What might cause a person to reach this point in their thinking, and what would it take for them to realize they can't do it in their own strength, but need God's help?

7. When Nick did some things Miriam didn't approve of, how did it affect their relationship? Was her irritation with Nick justified, or did she expect too much from him? How much of their problems were caused by misunderstandings? What is the best way to deal with misunderstandings, and how can we keep from having so many in the first place?

8. Sometimes the innocence of a child can break down barriers that others cannot. How did Miriam's relationship with her niece, Rebekah, make Miriam a better person? How did Miriam's relationship with her student, Mary Ellen, affect Miriam's decision to marry?

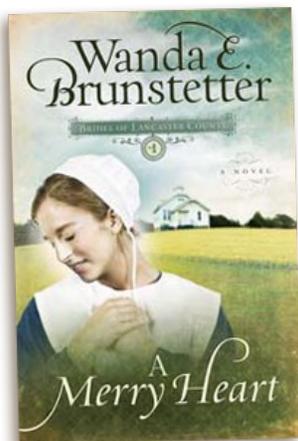
9. What can we learn about unconditional love from Amos Hilty and the way he treated Miriam?

10. Miriam liked to be in control of situations. How did her brother's upcoming marriage threaten Miriam's control? Was Miriam's decision to get married a result of her inability to give up control of her home? How might the need to control affect our relationships with others? With God?

11. It took a serious accident to make Miriam see the truth about her relationship to God and to her husband. What is there about tragedy that can make people become more receptive to God's love?

12. The need to find joy in life is emphasized in *A Merry Heart*. What are the benefits of having a joyful heart? Why does God want us to find joy in life?

13. What spiritual or emotional lessons have you learned from reading *A Merry Heart*?



Wanda Brunstetter is an award-winning romance novelist who has led millions of readers to lose their heart in the Amish life. She is the author of almost 50 books with more than 5 million copies sold. Many of her books have landed on the top bestseller lists, including the *New York Times*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *CBA*, *ECPA*, and *CBD*. Wanda is considered one of the founders of the Amish fiction genre, and her work has been covered by national publications, including *Time Magazine* and *USA Today*.

For more information, visit [www.WandaBrunstetter.com](http://www.WandaBrunstetter.com)

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