Still Alice is a compelling debut novel about a 50-year-old woman's sudden descent into early onset Alzheimer's disease, written by first-time author Lisa Genova, who holds a Ph. D in neuroscience from Harvard University.

Alice Howland, happily married with three grown children and a house on the Cape, is a celebrated Harvard professor at the height of her career when she notices a forgetfulness creeping into her life. As confusion starts to cloud her thinking and her memory begins to fail her, she receives a devastating diagnosis: early onset Alzheimer's disease. Fiercely independent, Alice struggles to maintain her lifestyle and live in the moment, even as her sense of self is being stripped away. In turns heartbreaking, inspiring and terrifying, Still Alice captures in remarkable detail what it's like to literally lose your mind...

Reminiscent of A Beautiful Mind, Ordinary People and The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time, Still Alice packs a powerful emotional punch and marks the arrival of a strong new voice in fiction.
Lisa Genova graduated valedictorian, summa cum laude from Bates College with a degree in Biopsychology and has a Ph.D. in Neuroscience from Harvard University. She is the author of the New York Times Bestselling novels STILL ALICE, LEFT NEGLECTED, and LOVE ANTHONY.

STILL ALICE spent 41 weeks on the New York Time bestseller list. It won the 2008 Bronte Prize and the 2011 Bexley Book of the Year, and it was nominated for the 2010 Indies Choice Debut Book of the Year by the American Booksellers Association. It was the #6 Top Book Group Favorite of 2009 by Reading Group Choices, a 2009 Barnes & Noble Discover Pick, a 2009 Indie Next pick, a 2009 Borders Book Club Pick, and a 2009 Target Book Club pick. There are over a million copies in print, and it has been translated into 25 languages. It was chosen as one of thirty titles for World Book Night 2013.

LEFT NEGLECTED, also a New York Times bestseller, was the #1 Indie Next Pick for January 2011, the Borders "Book You'll Love" for January 2011, and the #4 Indie Reading Group Pick for summer 2011. It was chosen by the Richard and Judy bookclub in the UK.

Lisa's third novel, LOVE ANTHONY, also a New York Times bestseller, was an Indie Next Pick for October 2012 and a People Magazine Great Read.

Lisa travels worldwide, speaking about Alzheimer’s Disease, traumatic brain injury, and autism. She has appeared on the Dr. Oz Show, the Diane Rehm Show, CNN, Chronicle, Fox News, and Canada AM and was featured in the Emmy award-winning documentary film, TO NOT FADE AWAY.

Lisa’s fourth novel focuses on Huntington’s Disease. She lives with her family on Cape Cod.
“After I read Still Alice, I wanted to stand up and tell a train full of strangers, ‘You have to get this book.’” – Beverly Beckham, The Boston Globe

“This book is as important as it is impressive, and will grace the lives of the affected by this dread disease for generation to come.” – Phil Bolsta, author of Sixty Seconds

“With a master storyteller’s easy eloquence, Lisa Genova shines a searing spotlight on this Alice’s surreal wonderland. You owe it to searing spotlight on this Alice’s surreal wonderland. You owe it to yourself and your loved ones to read this book. It will inform you. It will scare you. It will change you.” – Julia Fox Garrison, author of Don’t Love Me this Way

“A work of pure genius.” – Charley Schneider, author of Don’t Bury Me, It Ain’t Over Yet

“A masterpiece that will touch lives in ways none of us can even imagine. This book is the best portrayal of the Alzheimer’s journey that I have read.” – Mark Warner, Alzheimer’s Daily News

“With grace and compassion, Lisa Genova’s writes about the enormous white emptiness created by Alzheimer’s.” – The Improper Bostonian

“Heartbreaking.” – The Cape Cod Chronicle

“Heartbreakingly real…. So real, in fact, that it kept me from sleeping for several nights. I could put it down…. Still Alice is a story that must be told.” – Brunonia Barry, New York Times bestselling author of the Lace Reader
Book Club Discussion Guide

Discussion Questions

*Note that these questions reveal much of the novel’s plot; to preserve your reading pleasure, please don’t look at these questions until after you’ve finished reading the book.

1. When Alice becomes disoriented in Harvard Square, a place she’s visited daily for twenty-five years, why doesn’t she tell John? Is she too afraid to face a possible illness, worried his possible reaction, or some other reason?

2. After first learning she has Alzheimer’s disease, “the sound of her name penetrated her every cell and seemed to scatter her molecules beyond the boundaries of her own skin. She watched herself from the far corner of the room” (pg. 70). What do you think of Alice’s reaction to the diagnosis? Why does she disassociate herself to the extent that she feels she’s having an out-of-body experience?

3. do you find irony in the fact that Alice, a Harvard professor and researched, suffers from a disease that causes her brain to atrophy? Why do you think the author, Lisa Genova, chose this profession? How does her past academic success affect Alice’s ability, and her family’s to cope with Alzheimer’s?

4. “He refused to watch her take her medication. He could be mid-sentence, mid-conversation, but is she got out her plastic, days-of-the-week pill container, he left the room” (pg. 89). Is John’s reaction understandable? What might be the significance of him frequently fiddling with his wedding ring when Alice’s health is discussed?

5. When Alice’s three children, Anna, tom and Lydia, find out they can be tested for the genetic mutation that causes Alzheimer’s, only Lydia decides she doesn’t want to know. Why does she decline? Would you want to know if you had the gene?

6. Why is her mother’s butterfly necklace so important to Alice? Is it only because she misses her mother? Does Alice feel a connection to butterflies beyond the necklace?

7. Alice decides she wants to spend her remaining time with her family and her books. Condensing her devotion and passion for her work, why doesn’t her research make the list of priorities? Does Alice most identify herself as a mother, wife, or scholar?
8. Were you surprised at Alice’s plan to overdose on sleeping pills once her disease progressed to an advanced stage? Is this decision in character? Why does she make this difficult choice? If they found out, would her family approve?

9. As the symptoms worsen, Alice begins to feel like she’s living in one of Lydia’s plays: “Interior of Doctor’s Office. The neurologist left the room. The husband spun his ring. The woman hoped for a cute.” (pg.141). Is this thought process a sign of the disease, or does pretending it’s not happening to her make it easier for Alice to deal with reality?

10. Do Alice’s relationship with her children differ? Why does she read Lydia’s diary? And does Lydia decide to attend college only to honor her mother?

11. Alice’s mother and sister died when she was only a freshman in college, and yet Alice has to keep reminding herself they’re not about to walk through the door. As the symptoms worsen, why does Alice think more about her mother and sister? Is it because her older memories are more accessible, is she thinking of happier times, or is she worried about her own mortality?

12. Alice and the members of her support group, Mary, Cathy and Dan, all discuss how their reputations suffered prior to their diagnoses because people thought they were being difficult or possibly had substance abuse problems. Is preserving their legacies one of the biggest obstacles to people suffering from Alzheimer’s disease? What examples are there of people still respecting Alice’s wishes, and at what times is she ignored?

13. “One last sabbatical year together. She wouldn’t trade that in for anything. Apparently, he would” (pg. 223). Why does John decide to keep working? Is it fair for him to seek the job in New York considering Alice probably won’t know her whereabouts by the time they move? Is he correct when he tells the children she would not want him to sacrifice his work?

14. Why does Lisa Genova choose to end the novel with John reading that Amylix, the medicine that Alice was taking, failed to stabilize Alzheimer’s patients? Why does the news cause John to cry?

15. Alice’s doctor tells her, “you may not be the most reliable source of what’s been going on” (pg. 54). Yet, Lisa Genova chose to tell the story from Alice’s point of view. As Alice disease worsens, her perceptions indeed get less reliable. Why would the author choose to stay in Alice’s perspective? What do we gain, and what do we lose?
Book Club Discussion Guide