



**ARTICLE SUMMARIES &  
FAMILY DINNER CONVERSATION STARTERS**

# LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents,

Our hearts and prayers are with everyone who has been affected by Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton. We want you to know that this issue was mostly written before the hurricanes even formed. After seeing the devastation, the Tuttle Times team discussed saving this issue about “choosing happiness” until next November. We realize that so many people are grieving the loss of loved ones, have lost their homes, have lost their belongings, and are displaced throughout this holiday season.

We had a long conversation before deciding what to do. Ultimately, we decided to publish this issue now because the core principle is still true, as hard as it is to imagine for some people right now. We always have the choice to choose happiness even when our circumstances make it extremely difficult.

Sometimes we’re choosing happiness while we’re grieving. Choosing happiness does not make everything perfect, it doesn’t solve all our problems, and it doesn’t stop the feelings of grief. Grieving and choosing happiness can occur at the same time though.

We hope this issue sparks beneficial conversations at the Thanksgiving dinner table, no matter what circumstances a family finds themselves in this year.

—The Tuttle Twins team



Be sure to check out our [November Issue Resources](#), which has links to the challenge badges, activity solutions, and more!

We would love for you (and your child!) to share your thoughts on this month’s issue with us. Find the survey links on the Issue Resources page!

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## Article Overviews and Dinner Table Conversations

We encourage you to read the *Tuttle Times* articles with your children, and we hope that the topics and big ideas bring about conversations that expand their knowledge and understanding of how the world works.

For each article, we give an overview or explain our reasoning for including it in this month's issue along with dinner table conversation starters. Bon appétit!

### Tiles of Smiles (Issue pages 3-7)

With fewer relatives coming to celebrate Thanksgiving and their plans scaled back, Emily and Ethan struggle to feel excited about Thanksgiving.

During a Scrabble game with their friends, the twins share their frustrations. Their friends offer different perspectives based on their own experiences. Through these stories, Ethan and Emily learn an important lesson: happiness doesn't come from a perfect holiday, but from appreciating and making the best of what you have.



### Dinner Table Conversation Starters

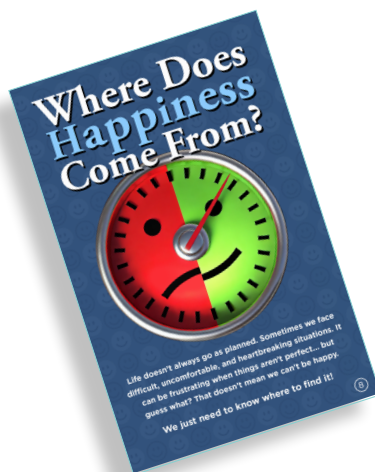
- What are some Thanksgiving traditions you enjoy, and how would you feel if we had to do something different one year?
- What are some ways we can choose happiness, even when things don't turn out perfectly?

### Where Does Happiness Come From? (Issue pages 8-10)

This article discusses the common beliefs that material possessions, modern comforts, or perfect circumstances are needed to be happy. True happiness doesn't come from accumulating "stuff." It often fades quickly.

While modern comforts like electricity and air conditioning are great, people have been happy long before these conveniences existed, and many around the world experience happiness without them today.

Happiness isn't tied to external circumstances, whether in the past, present, or future. Happiness is a choice we can make in the present by appreciating life's simple pleasures and our relationships.



### Dinner Table Conversation Starters

- Can you think of a situation where you had to choose to focus on the positive, even though things weren't going your way?
- What are some things we take for granted in our lives that we should be more thankful for?

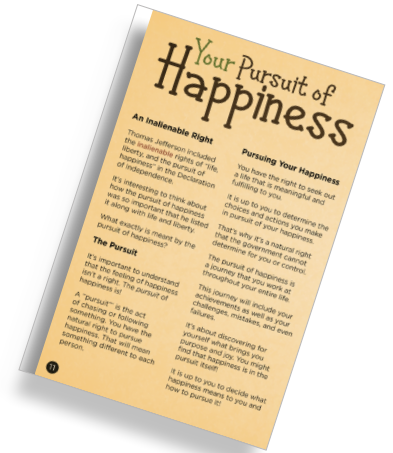
## Your Pursuit of Happiness (Issue pages 11-12)

This article introduces the concept of "the pursuit of happiness," as outlined by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence.

It explains that while happiness itself isn't guaranteed, the right to pursue it is fundamental. The pursuit refers to the personal journey of seeking a meaningful, fulfilling life. Each person's definition of happiness varies, and it's up to individuals—not the government—to make choices and take actions in pursuit of it.

### Dinner Table Conversation Starters

- Why do you think Thomas Jefferson included the pursuit of happiness in the Declaration of Independence, grouped with life and liberty?
- How can our challenges, mistakes, and failures help us in our pursuit of happiness?



## Latest Buzz: The Hurricanes and Hope

(Issue pages 13-14)

This article covers the impact of the 2024 hurricane season, particularly focusing on Hurricanes Helene and Milton. It highlights the devastating aftermath, including flooding, downed trees, and widespread power outages. Families lost homes, belongings, and, sadly, loved ones.

The article emphasizes how communities came together to support those affected. Neighbors, volunteers, and first responders provide aid like food, water, and supplies, while linemen worked tirelessly to restore power.

The key takeaway is that we should not rely on the federal government for help. When disaster strikes, it's the acts of kindness and service from individuals and communities that truly make a difference.

### Dinner Table Conversation Starters

- What are some ways we can prepare as a family for emergencies?
- What skills do you and your family have that would help your community during a disaster?





## Happiness Is a Choice

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on gratitude and celebrate togetherness. But sometimes the reality of the holiday doesn't match our expectations. The turkey might get burnt, travel plans might be canceled, or family dynamics could make things difficult. It's easy to get caught up in the little details or focus on what's missing, but Thanksgiving, at its core, is about something much bigger. And you can choose happiness, no matter the circumstances.

### Happiness Is a Choice

It's easy to believe that happiness is something that just happens to us when everything goes right. But happiness is often a choice we make, regardless of our circumstances. This doesn't mean ignoring real struggles or pretending everything is perfect. It means shifting our perspective and focusing on what matters most—the people around us, the moments we share, and the small joys we might otherwise overlook.

### The Perfect Details

We've all been there. We worry about having the perfect decorations, making everyone's favorite side dishes, and timing all the food to be ready at the same time. Those details are not what makes Thanksgiving meaningful. We can easily lose sight of the holiday's true purpose when we get bogged down in perfectionism.

When we focus too much on the small stuff, it can overshadow the bigger picture. This Thanksgiving, let's try to let go of the pressure for everything to be perfect. Maybe the pies don't turn out as planned, or your gathering is smaller than usual.

Try to step back and ask yourself: What really matters here? Are you present with your family or friends? Are you making memories? Those are the things that will last long after the dishes are done.

### Navigating Bigger Struggles

Of course, for some, it's not just about burnt turkey or broken traditions. Many are dealing with significant challenges—health issues, financial hardships, or personal loss. That can make it harder to feel grateful or happy. It's important to acknowledge these difficulties. We don't need to pretend everything is fine when it isn't.

But even in these phases of life, there is often something that brings us light. Maybe it's the support from family, friends, or even strangers. It may be personal resilience that we didn't even know we had within us.

### Celebrating Thanksgiving

So, how can we choose happiness this Thanksgiving? It starts with gratitude. When we focus on the good in our lives, it's harder for the negative details to bring us down. Maybe this Thanksgiving looks different than you expected. But finding joy in simple things—a conversation, a shared laugh, or a quiet moment—can help shift your mindset. This season, aim to let go of perfection and embrace what's in front of you. Choosing happiness doesn't mean ignoring the hard stuff. It is finding joy where we can.

# EXTRA RESOURCES

## Podcasts

[How Can Gratitude Make You Happier?](#) - Episode 174

[Why You Should Enjoy the Journey, Not the Destination?](#) - Episode 345

[How Can You Get Through Difficult Times in Life?](#) - Episode 565

[Why Is the Declaration of Independence So Important?](#) - Episode 11

## Tuttle Twins Books & eBooks

[The Tuttle Twins and the 12 Rules Boot Camp](#)

[The Tuttle Twins and the Medals of Merit](#)

# TUTTLE TIMES



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