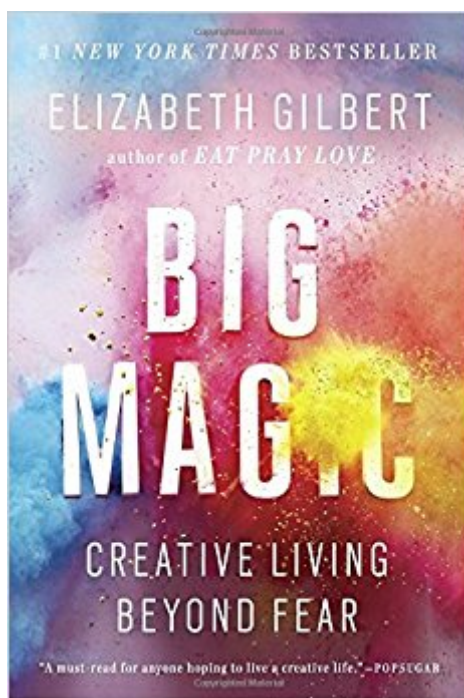


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# Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear



## Synopsis

The instant #1 NEW YORK TIMES Bestseller Named a Hot Fall Read by USA Today, Vanity Fair, Newsday, O Magazine, the Seattle Times, Minneapolis Star-Tribune, Mashable, Pop Sugar, and the San Antonio Express-News Named a Best Book of the Year by Brainpickings and Book Riot "A must read for anyone hoping to live a creative life... I dare you not to be inspired to be brave, to be free, and to be curious." PopSugar From the worldwide bestselling author of Eat Pray Love: the path to the vibrant, fulfilling life you've dreamed of. Readers of all ages and walks of life have drawn inspiration and empowerment from Elizabeth Gilbert's books for years. Now this beloved author digs deep into her own generative process to share her wisdom and unique perspective about creativity. With profound empathy and radiant generosity, she offers potent insights into the mysterious nature of inspiration. She asks us to embrace our curiosity and let go of needless suffering. She shows us how to tackle what we most love, and how to face down what we most fear. She discusses the attitudes, approaches, and habits we need in order to live our most creative lives. Balancing between soulful spirituality and cheerful pragmatism, Gilbert encourages us to uncover the "strange jewels" that are hidden within each of us. Whether we are looking to write a book, make art, find new ways to address challenges in our work, embark on a dream long deferred, or simply infuse our everyday lives with more mindfulness and passion, Big Magic cracks open a world of wonder and joy. From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for Big Magic: “The instant #1 New York Times Bestseller” —“Big Magic” is a

celebration of a creative life—Gilbert’s love of creativity is infectious, and there’s a lot of great advice in this sunny book—Gilbert doesn’t just call for aspiring artists to speak their truth, however daffy that may appear to others; she is showing them how. —*Washington Post* “In [Gilbert’s] first foray into full-on self-help [she] shares intimate glimpses into the life of a world-famous creative, complete with bouts of paralyzing fear and frustration, in an attempt to coax the rest of us into walking through the world just a little bit braver. —*Elle* “The Eat, Pray, Love author demystifies the tricky business of creativity. We’re all ears. —*Cosmopolitan* “Elizabeth Gilbert is my new spirit animal | I have profoundly changed my approach to creating since I read this book.” —*Huffington Post* “Gilbert leads readers through breaking out of their own creative ruts, finding fulfillment, and facing fear while finding balance between our spiritual and pragmatic beings in her forthcoming book. Yes, please. —*Bustle* “Big Magic will resonate with writers and artists who find the process of producing work to be particularly painful | Through anecdotes about her creative failures and resourcefulness, as well as those other artists, Gilbert encourages readers to pursue a creative life—that is driven more strongly by curiosity than by fear.” —*Daily Beast* “Gilbert demystifies the creative process, examining the practices of great artists to shed light on finding inspiration in the every day. —*Harper’s Bazaar* “Part inspiration, part how-to, it offers up both a philosophy of creativity and advice for living a more creatively fulfilling life. —*Fast Company* “Big Magic tackles the challenges of living the creative life | Reading it is a little like having a coach by your side, cheering on your efforts—whatever they are—candidly and selflessly. —*Christian Science Monitor* “Gilbert [writes] with sincerity and humility about the joy that creativity has given her... If you enjoyed Eat Pray Love, if you are drawn to self-help or inspirational books, or if you just like to bask in another person’s positive glow, you’ll love Big Magic. —*Minneapolis Star-Tribune* “Big Magic wants to help its readers live creatively—[Gilbert believes] creativity is inside all of us, it should be expressed, and it is not selfish or crazy or foolish to do so—it is in fact the best way to live a satisfying life... [Big Magic] constitutes good advice—in a voice that’s charming, personable, self-aware, jokey, conversational—and that Gilbert does so well. —*New York Times Book Review* “A lucid and luminous inquiry into the relationship between human beings and the mysteries of the creative experience | What makes her book so immensely helpful is precisely its lived and living nature—wholly

electrifying. [Brainpickings](#) "Gilbert tackles heavy, sensitive subject matter but keeps it light, making what's essentially a self-help book feel like a good talk with a friend rather than a sermon." [Associated Press](#) "Transformative." [Flavorwire](#) "Gilbert's trademark warmth and enthusiasm abounds...wise...[and] pointed." [Boston Globe](#) "Part pat-on-the-back, part slap-in-the-face, [Big Magic is] a permission slip for readers to stop making excuses and get to work a fresh and modern surprise that fans of her work will relish." [Wichita Eagle](#) "Funny. Insightful. Honest. Irreverent...But, of course, most of us have read Gilbert before and these qualities find their way into all of her works. The particular form of magic in Big Magic comes in a very unusual wrapping: hope and love...Big Magic read[s] like a devotional. Like a love letter to the earnest artist inside most of our hearts." [Books and Whatnot](#) "Distinctly refreshing." [TED Ideas Blog](#) "Big Magic will leave you feeling inspired to be curious, brave, free, and, most of all, creative." [Lauren Conrad](#) "Full of chatty advice, pep talks, amusing and inspiring stories...Gilbert's idea of living creatively may incorporate touches of magic, but she's practical in the extreme." [Miami Herald](#) "In her signature conversational style, both sassy and serious, Gilbert invokes high- and low-brow cultural references and recommends we channel our inner trickster [Her] manifesto is a book to read through quickly, and then start again to discover any big magic you may have missed." [KMUW](#) "Big Magic ripples with Gilbert's enthusiasm, choice metaphor, and humor." [LitHub](#) "Gilbert will completely change the way you think about the creative process." [Indienext](#) "The writing here is so friendly and funny that Gilbert's perspective on creative living goes down like lemonade in summer." [BookPage](#) "From the deeply self-aware, poetically gifted author of Eat, Pray, Love comes... the best nonfiction book I've read in years. For anyone who's ever struggled with feeling worthy to express themselves through art, or been discouraged by the absence of inspiration, I'm not being hyperbolic when I say this book might just change your life." [Mind Body Green](#) "Inspirational | Big Magic provides a guidebook for anyone wanting to live a more creative life. You don't have to be an artist to get value out of this book; it is for anyone who wants to live with more joy, love, happiness, and abundance in their world." [YAHOO! SHOPPING](#) "Gilbert, author of the wildly successful memoir Eat, Pray, Love and a successful novelist (The Signature of All Things) offers her prescriptions for unlocking the creativity within." [Seattle](#)

Times“Whatever your artistic pursuit, you’ll nod in agreement as Elizabeth Gilbert reflects on the elusive, frustrating and sometimes comically strange process of creativity. Thoughtful and funny, Gilbert makes an excellent case for doing whatever it takes to unlock your inner artist and find more joy in life.

• Woman’s Day“What Gilbert’s offering her fans [is] permission to be creative [She] is interested in the importance of creativity for the individual’s soul. When you hear the people who want to create, and the gratitude they feel toward [her], you can’t help feeling that she’s healed them—that she has, in fact, become the kind of guru she once sought.

• The New Yorker, on the "Magic Lessons" podcast series “The latest from Gilbert is all about you—that’s 268 pages of practical advice for tapping into your own creativity... Consider her your own personal life coach.

• Marie Claire “A must read for anyone hoping to live a creative life... I dare you not to be inspired to be brave, to be free, and to be curious.

• PopSugar“Elizabeth Gilbert is an exceptionally gifted author—and this book is remarkable. It is so densely packed with pearls of wisdom that I read it once for pleasure, and then again to unpack and outline the text just like I used to do in college. A must-read for anyone on the creative spectrum, from those who don’t think there is a creative bone in their body to those who make a living from their artistic expression.

• Yakima Herald“Reading Big Magic is the next best thing to hiring Elizabeth Gilbert [as your] coach.

• PARNASSUS BOOKS “A joyful ride through the enigmatic jungle of creative existence [Big Magic] is not just about the production of artistic works but about building a life that nurtures the creative being in all of us.

• CREATIV Magazine “Big Magic [is] fearless of voice and heart-opening in authenticity; in short, a book worthy of its name.”

• Literary Inklings “A conversational, intimate glimpse into Gilbert’s process and philosophy, as personable as a confab over coffee. Essential reading for anyone who wants to live a larger life, filled with more ideas, more projects, and more fulfillment. Big Magic is powerful stuff.

• Barnes & Noble Blog “A book-length meditation on inspiration.

• Newsday “Whether you long to write the great American novel or you just want to be more present and mindful in your daily life, you can find plenty of inspiration in this self-help tome. The can-do, optimistic tone makes for an uplifting read.

• All You Magazine “[Gilbert will] make you feel giddy about creation.”

• Medium “Gilbert mines her writer’s career to provide unique, inspiring and constructive

insights on how to navigate the wild ride that is the creative life...Â Her charming nuggets are wise, comforting and ultimately encouraging." Â About.com Â "Gilbert offers helpful suggestions for outwitting writer's block and perfectionism...and lets a tart sense of humor emerge." -Columbus Dispatch Â "Anyone living with some manifestation of writer's block (or any other artistic variant of such affliction) will find [Gilbert's] sage advice is effectively a worthwhile kick in the butt Â Without the smallest hint of narcissism, the mega-bestselling author shares the pinnacles and pitfalls of failure and success and how to wrangle the criticism, inside and out. Â Â Steamboat Pilot & Today Â "Gilbert sweetly yet powerfully nudges readers to release fear, summon courage and allow the Â strange jewels Â hidden within each of us to emerge and shine. The end result is the Â big magic Â Engaging storytelling mixed with personal anecdotes and astute insights make Big Magic a rewarding, motivating and delightful read. Â Â Â Success Magazine Â "There's nothing hippie-dippy about Gilbert's raw, honest, and downright hilarious observations of her own creative plight...This isn't a How-To guide for creative living; this is the story of how one woman simply figured things out for herself, and learned how to live in harmony with her own creative soul. All can find a kind of solemn peace and reassurance in her words. Â Â -Everyday eBook Â "A transformative nonfiction treatise on creativity Â Filled with her signature humor, big-heartedness, wild vulnerability and wisdom, Gilbert delivers a vibrant and inspirational book. Â Â -About Town Magazine" Â Â booster that will help you out of any rut. Â Â -Kansas City Star" The author of Eat Pray Love, who has already changed so many lives, now looks to change thinking on creativity." -The New York Daily News Â "Worth a read for any artist struggling for some peace and quiet in a head bursting with creativity." Â Â Bustle, Included in Â "9 Books To Help You Find Inner Peace Â Â "Some might call Elizabeth Gilbert by the name Queen Midas Â Â Everything she touches seems to turn to gold. A rare gift, this book acknowledges difficulty, but empowers its readers to transcend it in the name of the beautiful mysteries of existence. Â Â Â WNC Woman Magazine Â "A magnificent guide to how to be creative Â Â [and] a heartfelt gem Â Â I simultaneously wanted to quickly turn the page to see what was next while savoring the advice on each page Â Â Gilbert is determined to guide you into the light. Go with her. Â Â Â Â Â Jersey Journal" Irresistible Â Â If creativity is something you value highly Â Â both in others and as fundamental to your own existence Â Â you should find much to love in Big Magic, whether or not you typically gravitate toward creativity guides. Â Â Â Chapter 16" A non-fiction tour-de force...pragmatic, rational, and wholly convincing."

•Reader's Digest UK "A treasure map to unleash your most creative and expressive life."  
•Marie TV "Big Magic seeks to both inspire you and strip you of any excuse to not pursue your creative interests [it's] passionate, down-to-earth and bursting with Gilbert's obvious love for the subject matter and her readers | a delight to read."  
•Pop Mythology "An empathetic and inspiring guide to mustering the courage to live a creative life. | Nearly anyone who picks up this self-help manual should finish it feeling inspired, even if only to dream of a life without limits."  
•Publisher's Weekly (starred review) "Gilbert serves as an enthusiastic coach for readers who want more out of life. Highly recommended."  
•Library Journal (starred review) "Gilbert's wise and motivating book of encouragement and advice will induce readers not only to follow specific artistic dreams but also to live life more creatively, fully, and contentedly."  
•Booklist "The sincerity, grace, and flashes of humor that characterize [Gilbert's] writing and insights should appeal to a wider audience | warmly inspirational."  
•Kirkus "A

Elizabeth Gilbert is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Eat Pray Love* and several other internationally bestselling books of fiction and nonfiction. Gilbert began her career writing for *Harper's Bazaar*, *Spin*, *The New York Times Magazine* and *GQ*, and was a three-time finalist for the National Magazine Award. Her story collection *Pilgrims* was a finalist for the PEN/Hemingway award; *The Last American Man* was a finalist for both the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award. The follow-up memoir *Committed* became an instant #1 New York Times bestseller. Her latest novel, *The Signature of All Things*, was named a Best Book of 2013 by *The New York Times*, *O Magazine*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, and *The New Yorker*. Gilbert's short fiction has appeared in *Esquire*, *Story*, *One Story*, and the *Paris Review*. From the Hardcover edition.

Talk about receiving the right message at the right time. Wow. *Big Magic* is one of the most honest discussions about the creative process that I've ever read. Gilbert strikes a playful and conversational tone, but make no mistake, this is all straight talk. Her no-BS attitude helps do away with the unrealistic expectations and unnecessary melodrama attached to the concept of "creative living" (like how she so expertly pish-poshes the "tormented artist" ideal). And in its place, she asks all people who feel called to create (writers, painters, musicians, ice skaters, WHATEVER) to quietly and joyfully accept their creative

inclinations and ideas as gifts from the universe. She reminds them to approach their creativity with curiosity and openness, with playfulness and joy— even when it’s tough, even when there is no Pulitzer, no bestseller list, no Olympic medal, no call from the Met. Own that creativity, she encourages. Also, stay light with it. This was the message I (apparently) desperately needed to hear. I’m a stay-at-home mom with three young children. And when people ask me what I do, that is what I always tell them. But that isn’t what I want to tell them. What I want to tell them— what I want to shout from the rooftops, in fact— is that I’m a writer. Sure, barely anyone reads what I write, I’ve never been published, and it probably goes without saying that I’ve never been paid for a single sentence. In other words, no one really gets anything out of my work but me. But I love it, straight up. So I keep writing, regardless. Yet it feels weird to declare yourself “A Something!” when that something doesn’t earn you money or status or likes or hits or retweets. Which means even though this side-passion feels so authentically “me,” I hide it so people won’t think I’m a loser, an imposter, a wannabe, an embarrassment, a failure—and the list goes on. I guess this reality had been bumming me out more than I realized, because when I read the following words, they resonated with me in an unimaginably powerful and loving way—like I was receiving a cosmic hug: “Shake yourself free of all your cumbersome ideas about what you require in order to become creatively legitimate.” You do not need a permission slip from the principal’s office to live a creative life. Or if you do worry that you need a permission slip— THERE, I just gave it to you! Now go make something. In other words, Gilbert’s message is this: accept that you need to create. Accept that this is a part of you, that you are ALREADY “creatively legitimate.” And just do what you naturally feel compelled to do. Do it with joy— even when it gets difficult— and don’t worry about how it will be received (if it’s received at all). If you are called to be a maker, then you will just have to make. Own who you are, for better or worse. So that’s what I’m doing from now on. I’m owning it. This is me stating my intent: Hello, world. My name is Ladybug. I am a writer.

I’ve hit my happy...stride in this book... when reading a book that I absolutely don’t want to stop...I want to keep seeing flashing neon lights framed around the BIG MAGICal WORDS that spells, “YES



YES YES YES YES!"Thankfully, I'm also in the section where Gilbert reminds and affirms that LIFE doesn't always abide to how and what we want when we want it...but she also encourages that... if we are faithful lovers, that magical "IT" won't leave us either. So, I have 100 pages remaining, but am SO pumped and happy that I have this snippet of time to WRITE... a review.If you're passionate about your writing, your art, your whatever-makes-your-precious-heart-sing & be happy... I highly recommend Gilbert's book -- this one. For if you've stalled, set down, given up, cried privately, wondered if it's just too freaking late for you to be the artist, the receiver, a creator, because of the other practical life... here is an experienced wayshower who calls your bluff, your whatever you've told yourself why you can't. She's been rejected (tons), she's kept her day jobs, she's continued through deserts of unknown, silence, angst, doubt, about "the work"...and she's laying it out for us/me/you/your offspring/your friend... find your way.Find it. Because it IS there (patiently waiting, playing, whistling, digging in the sand with its toes) and it's probably not quite how you've framed it (if you've stalled).I am feeling this is my "eat, pray,, love writing" book. Thank you, Elizabeth (and I adored your comment, "Are you finished with that?" Thank you again ~

Given the success of her earlier works, it's probably no surprise that Gilbert has now entered the self-help book genre. I can easily see how her editors and publishers might have pushed her along this path and into creating this book. It's not without merit but it's one of those things where it might never have seen the light had it NOT been written by a best-selling author who does intersperse her thoughts with her real-life experience with the challenges of the creative process and who has the creds to speak with authority.Your response to this book is likely to be based as much on how many books/articles you've read on the topic of creativity rather than on what the author actually puts forth here--or your personal feelings about her life. If you've read a lot already, you'll know that there isn't necessarily anything "new" here on the subject but rather, as always, some clever packaging and a unique POV--and, as you'd expect of a good writer, some memorable quotes. What may keep you more interested are the various personal insights Gilbert offers on her own life and its creative path. She is honest about the difficulties and that alone helps "ground" her book and give it the credibility it needs to be a true inspiration.Big Magic is one of those titles that turned me off and not on. It's only the subtitle that drew me in: Creative Living Beyond Fear. Yes, that's the thing about creativity. It requires risks and comfort with the unknown. Fear is the killer and the dragon we must face to shape our best lives.If you come away with nothing more than a bit less fear about living your daily life as you would like, then the book is worth your time. Sometimes it's not about one's career or writing a book or screenplay or achieving world fame or success. Sometimes it's just about getting

all the joy and juice out of an average day and life. All inspiration is personal and subjective. If Gilbert's work has "spoken" to you, you're likely to both enjoy and benefit from her insights from her journey. Clearly she has been living a creative life on many levels.

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