



THE MAN WHISPERER

SPEAKING YOUR MAN'S LANGUAGE
TO BRING OUT HIS BEST

BY RICK JOHNSON

AN EIGHT-WEEK LEADER'S GUIDE

Welcome to *The Man Whisperer* leader's study guide! If you are volunteering to be a leader of a book or small group to discuss this title, you are desperately needed. Not only are you making a big step toward improving your personal relationship with the man in your life, you are helping to improve the relationships of those who attend your group. Many of the women who purchase this book are desperately trying to understand how to communicate with their man—and how to understand and effectively use the huge power of influence God gave them as women.

As you begin, please remember to take time to laugh and enjoy the material when it's appropriate. While you will want to avoid "male bashing," I hope you delight in this opportunity to discover the unique and wonderful ways God made men and women differently. Keep in mind as you begin this study that your goal will be to help women understand and communicate better with men. Your attitude will set the tone for your meetings and will insure that an uplifting view of masculinity is maintained at all times.

Lastly, it is my hope that if you are a follower of Christ, you will consider using this study guide as an opportunity to reach out to women who may not currently have a relationship with God. The book was written to appeal to women of all faiths, beliefs, and cultures. And what better topic for women of all ages and faiths to study together for fellowship and fun?

PREPARATION

BEGIN WITH PRAYER. Prayer is your most powerful tool—so make it a point to pray before you form a group, before each meeting convenes, and during the week for each of the participants.

DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS. Next, remember to show love to your group members. I suggest contacting each woman in the group at least twice during the study to encourage and love them. You can do this by telephone, by email, or in person. Take advantage of the extra time in the first and last weeks to build relationships; you should also consider having a family potluck or girls' night out at the end of the study.

HAVE A HUMBLE AND NURTURING ATTITUDE. One word I try to avoid when leading groups is “should.” I try to use phrases that are less threatening, such as, “I would like to encourage you to do this.”

When women answer questions or make comments, try to encourage, affirm, and thank them. Discussion during this study may cause strong emotions to surface, so keep plenty of tissues available as well as a good supply of compassion. If you are open, other group members will also be willing to be more vulnerable.

GROUP RULES: CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

1. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is the most important rule. Shared personal information should not be taken outside the group, even under the pretext of asking someone outside the group to pray for group members. Married group members should not share with their spouse what other group members have said.

2. GROUP MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone in the group must read the designated chapter and answer the chapter-end questions each week. Remind group members that they will get out of the study only what they put into it. In addition, each member should commit to attending at least three-quarters of the meetings. Some moms may need childcare, and you might consider providing this as a service through your church or consider hiring a few teenage girls to provide childcare each week.

3. GROUP DYNAMICS

Since your meetings will be no more than two hours in length, consider keeping the group size to a minimum. I suggest no more than five to seven women. This leaves enough time for everyone to express everything they need to discuss from the readings. As leader, one of your challenges will be to not let one specific individual dominate the discussion and to make sure that everyone is included. Finally, reach an agreement with group members that the purpose of the study is not to “fix” anyone or to serve as a counseling service. Keep advice general and refrain from giving advice to specific individuals.

GROUP MEETINGS

THE FIRST MEETING:

The first meeting serves as a “get acquainted” meeting. Pass out copies of *The Man Whisperer* to each member. Provide refreshments and ask each woman to share as much about herself as she is comfortable. Important information to know will include: how many children (ages and genders), marital status, family background, and occupation. This also provides information for members to use to pray for each other over the course of the weekly program.

I also encourage you to read the rules of the group aloud at the beginning of the first meeting, and then touch on them briefly throughout the duration of the study. For instance, you may want to remind the group several times that the information shared during meetings is confidential.

GENERAL MEETINGS:

Begin each meeting with a short prayer and ask a different member to lead the prayer each week. At the end of each meeting, I encourage you to pray as a group over one individual member. I have yet to find anyone, even non-Christians, who objects to being prayed over. I allow non-Christians to abstain from participating in the group prayer if they so choose, but again, I have not yet found anyone who has. Nothing is more intimate or brings people together faster than praying together.

Each week, begin by asking everyone what point in the book stood out for them and why. After giving each person a chance to respond, proceed by reading and answering each of the chapter-end questions one at a time. One approach

is to have one woman read each question aloud, and then give each woman an opportunity to answer. As leader, feel free to expound on questions or encourage others to ask questions not listed in the book. The only bad question is one not asked.

The following is a weekly outline for this study group:

8-WEEK STUDY OUTLINE

- WEEK 1 Group Introductions, Review Group Rules, Group Prayer,
 Chapter 1 A Woman's Whisper
- WEEK 2 Chapter 2 Authentic Masculinity
- WEEK 3 Chapter 3 Nine Qualities of Good Men
 Chapter 4 Nine Traits That Hold Him Back
- WEEK 4 Chapter 5 Speaking Your Man's Language
- WEEK 5 Chapter 6 Power Tools for Women
- WEEK 6 Chapter 7 The First Man in Every Woman's Life
- WEEK 7 Chapter 8 Sex is Not a Weapon
 Chapter 9 The Top 10 Things About Men That Drive Women Crazy
- WEEK 8 Chapter 10 Using Your Influence Effectively

CHAPTER STUDY QUESTIONS

CHAPTER 1

1. Have you ever wanted to "change" your husband? In what ways?
2. Do you believe your words as a woman have great power? In what ways have you used that power in the past? Share with your group an example of when your words either uplifted or discouraged your man.
3. What do you think the author means when he talks about the importance of "respect" to a man?
4. Do you agree with the author that a woman has incredible power to be a "completer" in the life of a man? How so?

CHAPTER 2

1. What do you think the term “authentic masculinity” means?
2. Do you think most men know how to be authentically masculine?
3. In what ways does our culture influence masculinity in males?
4. Why do you think most men are reluctant to be spiritual leaders in their homes?
5. Do women play any role in shaping masculinity within a culture? How so? How do you feel about that?
6. Do you think most women “choose” or “settle” for a man? Why?

CHAPTER 3

1. What kind of “horse” is your husband? In other words, what are some of his characteristics?
2. Of the list of good character traits in this chapter, how would you rank your husband on each—high, medium, or low?
3. In what ways can you help him develop more strength in those traits in which you scored him low? Share ideas among your group for ways that women can help their man grow in each of those character traits.
4. Discuss with your daughters ways to recognize character and healthy masculinity in males.

CHAPTER 4

1. Share any examples you can of men who exhibited one or more of the nine examples of poor character traits from this chapter.
2. Can you think of other character traits in men that are unhealthy or destructive? What are they and how did they impact the man and those close to him?
3. Do you believe a man can “change?” Can a woman change a man? Do many women think they can change a man? What have been the results in the situations you have observed?
4. Why do men exhibit anger so often? How can a woman productively help her man recognize and understand why he is angry?
5. What do you think about the term “feminized men?” Do you think that few or many men are feminized in our society today? What do you think the consequences are of that, either good or bad?

CHAPTER 5

1. Do you like to talk? What happens (what feelings do you have) when you talk with your girlfriends? How is that experience different than when you talk with your man?
2. Divide your group into pairs. Pick a partner in your group to role play with. In front of the group pick a topic

to discuss. One partner will play the role of a man and one will play the role of a woman. Begin to discuss this topic in character as you believe each person would respond. In other words, the partner playing the role of a man should respond the way a man typically would and the one playing a woman as a female would. Have fun with this activity.

3. Divide your group into pairs again to practice “Speed Whispering.” Each pair should select one or more of the 10 Keys to Successful Communication until they are all chosen. One pair at a time should choose a key and begin to practice being a speed whisperer by quickly saying short sentences that illustrate that key to successful communication. Each partner should be able to come up with at least three variations on how to speak a man’s language. The other members of the group should critique the speed whispering efforts of that pair. Each pair in the group should practice this in front of the group until all ten keys have been covered. Have fun with this exercise.
4. Share with the group ways you have used your superior communication skills with your man in the past. What do you think of the author’s statement, “A woman’s sharp tongue can be just as scary to a man as his dominant physical strength is to her?”

CHAPTER 6

1. The most powerful tools that a woman has at her disposal to influence her man are Respect and Admiration. Discuss with your group ways that these two tools can be used in everyday circumstances to positively motivate and energize a man.
2. Under the section for the tool “Praise,” a sidebar lists nine phrases a woman can use to “Super-charge” her man. List at least three other phrases and share them with your group.
3. Under the section “What Doesn’t Work?” a number of ineffective ways, such as nagging, of influencing your man are listed. What other ways or behaviors have you discovered not listed in the book that are ineffective with men?
4. Men do not like to be told what to do—even indirectly. With a partner, practice other ways of saying things to a man without using the “should” word.
5. Be honest—do you have a tendency to be dissatisfied and complain about things? If it’s true that much of a man’s self-esteem comes from his ability to make his wife happy and contented, how do you think this attitude would affect his esteem and demeanor?

CHAPTER 7

1. Briefly describe what your father was like. (Leaders—this will likely be a very emotional and difficult assignment for many of the group members. Be prepared to spend extra time in prayer with the members that need it.) What is the best memory you have of him? What is the worst? (Leaders--some members may choose not to answer this question—see question #4).
2. Consider in what ways your husband is similar to your father and in what ways he is different. Can you see any influence your father may have had on the men you have chosen to become involved with during your life?
3. Spend extra time in prayer this week asking God to give you insight into your relationship with the three men in your life; your earthly father, your husband, and your heavenly father. Ask God to clearly show you his unconditional love for you.

4. If you have unresolved issues with your earthly father it is imperative that you find a way to resolve them. It is difficult to grow and develop healthy relationships if we have a wound that has not been healed. Talk with a member(s) of your group that you trust about your issues. If you were subjected to abuse from your father you may need to seek professional counseling. Secrets that are kept in the dark grow and fester. Healing can only begin when light is shined upon them.

CHAPTER 8

1. Many women say they are frustrated because their husband wants to have sex all the time. From the information in this chapter list three reasons why this might be necessary. Why might a man who is feeling insecure at work be sexually needy?
2. While sex is a strong physical need for a man, it also fulfills a powerful emotional need for your husband. Consider some powerful needs that you have that might equate to a man's strong need to be wanted physically by his wife.
3. Do you think having sex with a man before you are married is an effective way to get him to commit to a relationship? Why do you think so many women might feel compelled to resort to this strategy?
4. Most women seem to be insecure about their physical appearance regardless of age, race, background, faith, or body shape. If lust is a battle that most men struggle with, in what ways could a woman's insecurities in this area be exacerbated by this tension.

CHAPTER 9

1. Which of the "Top Ten Things About Men That Drive Women Crazy" applies to your home? Which ones are not an issue in your home?
2. What other issues drive you crazy about the man in your life?
3. Why do you think that the items listed (and others) cause women such distress? Are most of them relationship-oriented?
4. Compared to utterly destructive behaviors such as infidelity, abusive behavior, addictions, financial malfeasance, compulsive lying, and slanderous behavior, do you agree with the author that these traits are really just minor aggravations in a relationship?
5. Make a list of the good things that your husband does, such as provide for his family, fix stuff around the house, kill bugs, etc. Then keep that list in a handy place such as your makeup mirror where you will see it every day.

CHAPTER 10

1. What are the expectations you have for your relationship? What do you think your husband's expectations of your relationship are? Have you ever asked him before?
2. Do you encourage or discourage your husband to have friendships with other healthy men?
3. Many men are reluctant to be spiritual leaders in their homes. Do you allow your husband to be a spiritual leader and leader in other ways in the home? In what ways might a woman actually discourage a man from

taking a leadership role in the home?

4. Do you encourage your husband's dreams?

5. Do you pray daily for your husband and for your marriage? Do you pray with your husband daily? It is reported that only 1% of couples that pray together get divorced. Praying for and with your husband will change your entire attitude about him and your relationship.

This Leaders' Guide courtesy of Rick Johnson, author of *The Man Whisperer: Speaking Your Man's Language to Bring out His Best* from Revell, © 2008.

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