



How To Understand Women

Bottom Line: A man can have a great relationship with his wife or girlfriend and it's not as complicated as he thinks.

Key Scripture: Ephesians 5:25, 33

A Note To Group Leaders:

Keep in mind the goal of every meeting is to create meaningful conversation and connection. Feel free to choose a few questions for discussion and adjust questions as needed.

The Setup

Many men joke about being clueless when it comes to understanding the mind and emotions of a woman. However, behind the jokes, most men genuinely desire to better understand their wife or girlfriend and become a better husband or boyfriend. The following notes and questions are based on an interview between best-selling author of "*For Men Only*", Shaunti Felhahn and Stonecreek's lead pastor, Ken Murphy. The scripture verses and questions are provided to help you begin a dialogue and should raise some interesting ideas on how to understand women. To go further than these questions, we encourage you to purchase the books and discussion guides to "*For Men Only*" as well as "*For Women Only*" from www.shaunti.com.

Thought Starters

If you are married or currently dating someone, describe your first date. What did you do? Where did you go? What were you thinking, feeling and worried or excited about?

What is the hardest thing you have ever tried? Explain. Would you consider understanding the opposite sex as easier or harder? Why?

What would you say is the number one "need" among the opposite sex? *[How close did everyone come? If you're in a mixed group or couples group, have the men respond to the women's answers and vice versa. If this is a women or men-only group, have the members ask their partner and then report back the next session.]*

Questions For Reflection

Love and Reassurance | *Read Ephesians 5:25, 33*

In the Bible, there are three types of love mentioned; 1) Agape (unconditional love), 2) Eros (sexual love) and 3) Phileo (brotherly love or personal affection). Jesus uses the word for *Agape* love in these verses as His love for us is unconditional. Men know that women want to feel loved and cherished, but don't realize most women have an underlying insecurity about whether they are really loved by their man.

What does the idea of unconditional love mean to you? How does it look?

For a marriage relationship:

- How can a husband love his wife unconditionally?
- What is required of a wife to receive unconditional love?
- Men, describe an instance when your wife needed to be reassured of your love and you met the opportunity? What about when you didn't? What happened in each?
- Women, how did each of the situations mentioned by your husband in the prior question affect you?

For a dating relationship:

- Is unconditional love possible in a dating relationship? Why or why not?
- If it is, how can a boyfriend show his girlfriend unconditional love and how can a girlfriend receive unconditional love?
- Men, what words or actions have worked best in reassuring or pursuing your girlfriend or past girlfriends? What didn't work?
- Women, what words and actions have served to provide you reassurance from your current or past boyfriends?

Security | *Read Proverbs 15:16-17, 20:27-28*

When married women were asked if they would rather endure financial struggles or struggles arising from insecurity or lack of closeness in their relationship, 70% chose to endure financial struggles.

What is it you desire most for your relationship in your "inmost being?"

How would you define "emotional security?"

Which do you believe is more important in a relationship – financial security or emotional security? Which do you believe is more important to God? Explain.

What actions or words on your part could develop a greater sense of emotional security in your relationship? How can you tell if these efforts are successful?

Application In Your Life

Read Genesis 3:22-23

These two verses are used in marriage ceremonies around the world, yet how many husbands and wives truly feel this connected and intimate? God did not want us to be confused with each other, but conformed into each other - one flesh.

In the book, '*For Men Only*,' Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn write about their findings on the six key areas in a relationship between a husband and a wife: Reassurance, Emotions,

Security, Listening, Sex and Beauty. The following table is an adapted version of the high-level overview found at the front of the book. As you read through this table, think about the times in your relationship you have experienced these circumstances and/or feelings of uncertainty and the need for reassurance. After you review the table, answer the questions that follow.

Reassurance	Why does she...?	Here's why:	What to do:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask, "Do you love me?" even though you just said "I love you" this morning? • Take your need for space as a signal that you're upset with and trying to get away from her? • Want to talk about your relationship mostly at those times you least want to? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women often have an underlying security about whether their man really loves them. • When that latent insecurity is triggered, women often are preoccupied with getting the relationship back on track. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassure her that you love her. • If you need space, say something that will ease her mind, like, "I need space right now, but I want you to know that we're okay. I will be read to talk about this soon."

See Chapter 2, "The Deal Is Never Closed," in 'For Men Only' for explanation and "how tos."

Is Reassurance an issue or non-issue at this moment in your relationship?

- If both of you feel uncertainty and the need for reassurance in your relationship is a non-issue, why do you feel this is the case? Men, what can you continue doing to keep this a non-issue in the future? What can your partner keep doing?
- If one or both of you feel uncertainty is an issue in the relationship, it's time to talk it out.
 - Men, what are some things you can say or do to try and reassure her of your love and affection? If you're not sure what to say or do, what options do you have?
 - Women, how can you help reassure him of his words and actions?

Something To Do Before The Next Group Meeting

The following are a couple of additional resources to help you better understand your partner and grow closer to the relationship God ultimately intended.



READ 'For Men Only' and 'For Women Only' by Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn.

These two books provide a look into the mind and heart of the opposite sex in order to help husbands and wives make each other happy and come alive within the relationship. Discussion guides are available for both books. Learn more at www.shaunti.com.



FIND OUT more about pre-marital and marriage retreats through WinShape Marriage at www.winshape.org/marriage. WinShape Marriage is a safe haven for couples to rekindle passion, grow stronger and be restored. It's a place to put the world on hold, to experience God and to be transformed.