

Christian Book Summaries



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For Men Only

A Straightforward Guide to the Inner Lives of Women

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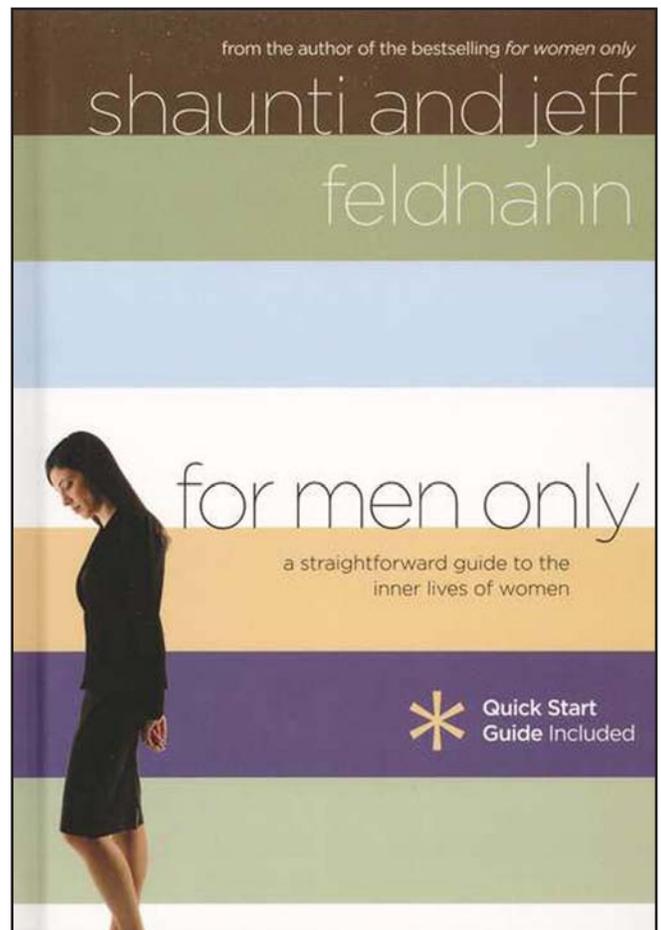
A Quick Focus

The Book's Purpose

- Reveal to men the true inner lives of women
- Provide real answers to the mysteries of female behavior and thought
- Help men establish effective strategies for loving and supporting their women
- Offer plans for building a strong marriage
- Show men how understanding six key findings about women can help deepen their love for their spouses

The Book's Message

Does it seem impossible to understand the woman in your life? Tired of trying to figure out what makes her tick and how to really connect? It is possible to unlock the mysteries of a woman's mind and heart. Six key findings, based on a national scientific study, give men the tools they need to love their wives the way they want to be loved.



By Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn

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Eight Main Points

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|---|---|---|---|
| ● Rethinking Random | 2 | ● Listening Is the Solution | 4 |
| ● The Deal is Never Closed | 2 | ● With Sex, Her "No" Doesn't Mean You | 5 |
| ● Windows...Open! | 3 | ● The Girl in the Mirror | 6 |
| ● Your Real Job is Closer to Home | 4 | ● The Man She Had Hoped to Marry | 8 |

rethinking **RANDOM**

*Why you need a new map
of the female universe*

Many men desire a better, more satisfying relationship with their wives, a relationship that's easier and less frustrating. Believe it or not, it *is* possible to understand the woman in your life and there are simple solutions to the problems that sometimes drive you nuts in your relationship.

You might think that women are just impossible to understand—even random. ***“See, guys think of a woman as a swamp: You can’t see where you’re stepping, and sooner or later you just know you’re going to get stuck in quicksand. And the more you struggle to get free, the deeper you get sucked in.”*** But our national survey, focus groups, and hundreds of interviews show that women can be known. There are six key ideas that will provide a roadmap men can navigate to understand the inner lives of their women. Many of these strategies are simple, but not natural. Be willing to work on it, give it a shot. And believe that amazing things can happen.

CBS

the deal is never **CLOSED**

*Why her “I do” will
always mean “Do you?”~
and what to do about it*

No matter if you have a terrific relationship, your woman is still likely to feel insecure about your love. In choosing a wife, you made the greatest deal of your life. But to her, it never feels like the deal was closed. She might *know* you love her, but she needs to be reassured regularly. And if a woman does not have frequent reassurance, she might give off “distress signals” that can drive a loving husband crazy.

In fact, many of the things our women do that we find frustrating are really signals of their need for reassurance that they are loved—like when they ask over and over if we love them, think we’re upset with them just because we want some space, or want to talk constantly about the relationship. Most men are surprised to find out how frequently women have these thoughts of insecurity and how much pain they suffer as a result.

So what happens to trigger these feelings of insecurity? Conflict. Withdrawal. Your silence, even if there’s nothing wrong. Or when her “emotional bank account” is overdrawn by exhaustion or a difficult day. When you’re gone a lot, her anxiety is triggered. Unresolved relationship issues are often at the root of insecurities. Thankfully, once we recognize these signals, there are ways to turn off the red warning light—simple ways we can give our wives what they need so they can rest secure in our love.

**“Two key solutions:
1) In the face of
insecurity, reassure
her. 2) Even after
you’ve caught her,
continue
to pursue her.”**

Regular reassurance is a highly effective way to show your love to your wife. During conflict, reassure her of your love, that you’re in this to stay. When you need your “cave time,” let her know that she’s not the problem. But realize that when *she’s* upset, she doesn’t want space, she wants a hug. If she wants to discuss your relationship, make every effort to listen and not get defensive. From all of our research, it’s clear that usually women are not labeling their men as failures, they just want to work on making

continued on page 3

“It’s irrelevant whether she should ‘know logically’ that she’s loved. If she doesn’t *feel* loved, it’s the same for her as if she *isn’t* loved.”

THE DEAL IS NEVER CLOSED

continued from page 3

the relationship better, stronger. And finally, when she's being difficult, keep on convincing her of your love; it's what she wants and what she needs.

Even more valuable is the strategy of continual pursuit. It shows that a man is still hot on the trail to capture his wife's love. *"Pursuit is action~it's what you did when you first saw her and wanted to make her yours. It prevents a lot of her insecurity. It fills up her emotional bank account. And pursuit is what she still deeply desires and needs in her marriage, even if us 'close the deal' kind of guys are already on to the next big deal."*

There is never a time when women feel fully and permanently loved. They believe that is what marriage is all about. They need to be pursued and loved every day, just as much as we guys want to feel sexually desired every day!

"Now that we know the chase isn't over, we just need to remember to do what came so naturally before... Ask yourself, 'what did I do when I was dating that made me so pickin' irresistible?'"

CBS

More than one husband has been frustrated when his wife brings up an argument from two years ago or overreacts about a memory from a long time ago, or suddenly turns a discussion into an argument. If an old issue has never been resolved, she is dealing with a "pop-up" that is very present and real. And until it is resolved, the best she can do is "minimize" that window.

Knowing this facet of the female brain helps explain things like her preoccupation with little things, how she frets over past arguments, and why she may say she's too weary or upset for sex. As one woman explained it, *"Try to understand~we're carrying around a lot that we need to get out of our heads before we can really even feel like sex." I don't know about you, but I don't even need my head to feel like sex.*

The great thing is, there are some easy responses that will go a long way toward helping your wife feel understood.

- Remember that she's not trying to annoy you with 14 things to talk about when you get home. She's got 14 windows open and needs your help to get them closed. Encourage her to process them by doing what works for her~talking through them with you listening.
- Keep in mind you're probably not the problem, but you can always check.
- Help her resolve those frustrating windows, and you'll be her hero.
- Take time to listen and hug and reassure, and it will pay off big time.

CBS

windows... OPEN!

What you should know about the fabulous female brain (a guide for lower life forms)

Women's brains are similar to busy computer screens~with multiple windows open at the same time, with frustrating pop-ups and scant ability to ignore any of it. They might be thinking about what the kids are up to, what to fix for dinner, how to write that report for work, and what to do about the argument they had with you this morning~all at the same time. For many men, this is difficult to comprehend. You might be wondering how women ever get anything done with all that thought and emotional activity going on at once. But this multitasking is how she thinks and part of what makes her so successful at many things. It also affects how she relates to you in every way.

Not only does she have multiple screens up, but she also encounters frequent pop-ups of unresolved emotions and issues from the present and the past. And, it seems that women face much more difficulty trying to close all these windows than men do.

"As one woman put it: 'There's never a time that there's nothing going on in my head. If I answer 'nothing,' it's because I'm mad at him!'"

your real job is closer to home

How your provider/protector instinct can leave her feeling more unsafe and less cared for

You've probably heard that women want security. As men we interpret that as financial security. But you might not know that they need emotional security and a sense of closeness with you even more, and many women are willing to live with less material security to get it.

For most women, it's not about a big house or money in the bank. It's about emotional security, which is feeling emotionally close to you and feeling confident that you are always going to be there for her. She appreciates your financial provision too, but it's not nearly as important as the relational connectedness.

Your woman is likely to care more that you're happy in your job than about the numbers on your paycheck, and this just doesn't make sense to most men. It's just not the way we think. But it's great news that the woman you love cares more about you and your happiness and is willing to live with less as a result. The "longer hours = more love" equation doesn't hold water; even if the reason you're working so hard is to prove your love to her, it can feel like you care more about work than her. She can be left feeling far away from you and unloved.

Fortunately, if we understand just what security means to our wives, we can provide for them both emotionally and financially. Here's the proven strategy~and be encouraged that it's actually easy!

1. Build a strong bond of closeness: (Heads up! Sharing a house and even having sex doesn't always mean she feels close to you!) How to do it: Do the little things that make her feel loved and remind her you are her best friend. The little things matter way more than the big romantic dinners. Hugs, encouraging words, sharing your feelings with her, being interested in who she really is. Every woman will be different, but you know what makes your woman smile.
2. Make one-on-one time together a priority. Make sure she knows you care for her *first*. You don't need to spend every minute outside of work with your wife, but make it clear that time together is a big priority to you.
3. Show your commitment. Make sure she knows you are there for her, no matter what.
4. Be proactive in your home life and in parenting. Staying away long hours to provide doesn't cut it when it hurts the very family for whom you are trying to provide. Be true partners in what goes on at home.
5. Make a great effort to provide well. While having lots of money is probably not her top priority, the effort you give to your job does make her feel very loved (as long as it leaves room for building that all-important emotional security).

"We must be willing to ask ourselves whether we are delivering what our family genuinely needs, or whether we've somewhere bought into some internal or cultural assumptions that might actually be sabotaging what matters most."

CBS

listening

is the solution:

Why her feeling about the problem is the problem, and how to fix your urge to fix it:

Ever had this happen? Your woman seems down, so you ask what's wrong. She tells what's bothering her, and since you care, you try to help. She gets upset and pushes you away, saying you don't care! Obviously, men sometimes don't get how to really listen and care in a way that really helps.

continued on page 5

LISTENING IS THE SOLUTION:
continued from page 4

"I believe that learning to listen in the way women need is a huge missing-in-action skill for most guys...but we're also just a few steps away from listening habits that actually work." Careful listening will often help our wives even more than the stuff we do best, rescuing and fixing.

It's really true that she doesn't want you to fix the problem, at least at first. She mostly wants you to listen and validate how she's *feeling* about the problem. And the problem is an emotional problem, not a technical one. Men have learned to push aside emotion and get to the real issue at hand. However, the emotion women experience *is* the real issue. They want those feelings to be heard and understood more than they want the problem solved.

"Just being able to share what's going on actually fixes something for a woman!"

So how do we know whether to fix it or just listen? Easy. If it's an emotional problem, use listening skills. If not, go ahead and fix it. An example:

"Something is starting to howl under the gear shift in her Toyota and what should we do? In such cases, you can safely put away your gender translation gear. You can even

forget her feelings~as in, 'Honey, how does that make you feel when the transmission does that?' Just go male and fix away to your heart's content~as in, 'I'll take it to the shop tomorrow.'"

Here's how to listen: think baseball.

- ***First Base: Give her your full physical attention.**
- ***Second Base: Give her your full mental attention.**
- ***Third Base: Listen for the right thing~how she *feels* about the problem.**
- ***Home Plate: Acknowledge and affirm her feelings about the problem.**

Here's some final coaching on this issue. There's not a wrong or right way to feel. If she's feeling something, it's counterproductive to try to tell her she shouldn't be feeling that way. Never tell her she's overreacting, analyze the facts, ask her if it's that time of the month, or try to give spiritual correction. None of that helps, as you probably already know!

It can be tough to handle all these emotions and not take it personally. As men, we're prone to jump to the conclusion that our wives are in husband attack mode. But remember a guy's performance isn't usually what's on her mind. Our wives need to process their stuff by talking about it and having us available to listen. And for that to work, we have to put our dukes back down and not take it so personally. Right in the middle of the conflict is a chance to really invest in our marriages and show our wives our love in a really deep way. Let's not miss that opportunity.

"One often-overlooked principle for a man who wants a happy relationship: *The person who listens well holds enormous power.*"



**with sex,
her "NO"
doesn't
mean
you:**

How her desires are impacted by her unique wiring, and why your ego shouldn't be

"I'm going to ask you to do two things, and do them at the same time: 1. Think clearly 2. About sex." Not an easy thing to do, right? Our big mistake is mostly that we assume males and females are basically the same, except for different but coordinating body parts. We don't always realize a key facet of women's sexuality~that they do not need to pursue sex as much as men do. Most women do care about what their husbands want and they do want a great sexual relationship. But we need to understand how different women are in order to have a truly fulfilling relationship.

Men have a powerful emotional need to feel that their wives desire them. If we feel wanted sexually, that gives us confidence, a sense of strength, and the clear knowledge we are loved. If we doubt our wives want or desire us, we become susceptible to depression, anger, and loneliness. But here's the surprising, unbelievable, but encouraging fact about our wives: ***"While you want to be genuinely desired by your wife, her lower level of desire for sex likely has nothing to do with your desirability."***

That doesn't make sense to us men. But according to our studies, it's true. One woman put it this way. ***"Just because I do not want sex as often as he does, I still love him deeply and find him very attractive."***

continued on page 6

WITH SEX, HER "NO" DOESN'T MEAN YOU

continued from page 5

Difficult for us guys to understand! But remember, we're trying to understand her perspective, and that will help us build the kind of sex life that satisfies both partners. The five revelations about women we uncovered will dramatically improve this area of your life together.

1. Physiologically, women generally have a lower sex drive than men, and most would change that if they could. That doesn't mean she doesn't enjoy it, or love it once it's happening. She just doesn't have it on her mind as much as you do. It's truly not *you*; it's less craving for sex. Our testosterone predisposes us to be assertive in our desire, where women's estrogen mix creates more of a "receptive" kind of desire. Women seem to lean toward being "available" but don't have as much desire to go after it. This also means she is more easily distracted from wanting sex by other concerns.

2. Warm-up time is more important for her than for you. ***"A guy's sexual motor is pretty much always running. Pop the clutch and go. Not so for a woman. But once her sexual motor is warmed up and running, she is fine and raring to go, just like we are."*** We'd like to think we're so desirable that our wives can't keep their hands off us, but it doesn't quite work that way. They need warm-up time to anticipate what's coming.

3. Women are not sexually aroused just by seeing a man's body (no matter how attractive he is). Her body is different than yours. Your naked body doesn't make her interested until after you're getting sexually intimate. Hard to take, maybe, because we just don't think that way. Our bodies alone aren't what turn them on.

4. Sex begins in your woman's heart. ***"Her body's ability to respond to you sexually is tied to how she feels emotionally about you at the moment. If she's not feeling anything in her heart, her body's sex switches are all the way over on 'off.'"*** How you've been treating her makes all the difference in how interested she is in sex.

5. Your wife wants to experience the ultimate pleasure just like you do, but if it's hard for her to get there, she may lose interest. Sometimes the struggle to reach sexual satisfaction is frustrating for women, and they hesitate to talk about it for fear of disappointing their husbands. But think how difficult that would be for men, if we weren't able to achieve the final goal. ***"But if a woman isn't crossing the finish line, running the race just isn't going to be as important to her—which only makes it easier to find excuses to sit it out."***

So~what do we do with these revelations about the inner workings of our women? Here are some practical ideas for applying what we now know.

- 1.** Make her happy outside the bedroom. Give her the attention she deserves, and do the little things that draw you closer.
- 2.** Pursue her. Her longing to be pursued romantically is as strong as your sex drive.
- 3.** Give her warm-up time. Drop hints, send an email, tell her how beautiful she looks.
- 4.** Give her affection just to love her, not just to get sex.
- 5.** Be a help around the house. Sharing the work prepares her heart for wanting you.
- 6.** Remember not to take a "not now, dear" as personal failure. Learn from it. Figure out why and do something about it.
- 7.** Be Mr. Clean. ***Quite a few women told us that the most basic hygiene would make the difference between wanting to be intimate or not."***
- 8.** If you're not sure, ask. It might be awkward, but it's helpful to ask your wife what she likes and what she doesn't. Make it clear that you care about whether she makes it across the finish line.



the girl in the

MIRROR: WIBBOB!

What the little girl inside your woman is dying to hear from you~and how to guard your answer well

"Inside your smart, secure wife lives a little girl who deeply needs to know that you find her beautiful~and that you only have eyes for her."

Did you know that even though she's mature, smart, and confident, your wife still wants to know the answer to the same question she asked her father when she was little. She still wants to know~"Am I beautiful in your eyes?" Most women taking our survey said that they had a "***deep need or desire to know that their husband or boyfriend found them beautiful.***" And in this culture, where women are expected to look perpetually young, slim, and sexy, your response to that is crucial. And it gives you a chance to build up the woman you love in a way that means so much to her.

continued on page 7

THE GIRL IN THE MIRROR

continued from page 6

Actually it isn't so much about looks, it's more about how a woman feels about herself. The man she loves has the power to either build her up or tear her down in this particular area. How often do we actually need to tell her? She needs to hear it *every day*. It doesn't matter how long you've been married or how smart and accomplished she is, or how often others tell her she's beautiful. She needs to hear it from *you*, the man who matters most.

This explains some of the mysteries of the universe~like why she stares into her closet full of clothes and says she has "nothing to wear." And why she buys new clothes when she's still got plenty that are not worn out. And why she wants to know if these pants make her look fat. It's also why it affects her so much when your eyes wander to look at another gorgeous woman.

There are five facts I've (slowly) learned about women and beauty~facts that, if you really get them, can make a powerful difference for good in your marriage.

1. The little girl is still alive and well in my wife, and she needs to know I think she's beautiful.
2. She is concerned about this every day~even subconsciously.
3. The only mirror that really matters is me.
4. I can choose to reflect back to her the words of affirmation she's longing to hear. If I fail to do this, it leaves her in a fragile state, open to her own doubts and outside pressure from a hostile world.
5. I hold a hammer that can destroy everything.

It's an ugly world out there regarding beauty in our culture. We might think women tend to be body obsessed or oversensitive, and we're probably right. But as men, we don't realize the extent of the pressure they feel. One woman writes, *"I'm guessing that my husband thinks I'm attractive, but I can't think of the last time he made it a point to tell me so. If he would, it sure would counter that secret negativity about myself I feel inside. Every day, we are bombarded with these images all around us of how we are supposed to look. We have this fear that we feel like we'll always have to live up to our husband's expectation of this perfect Hollywood body image and we know we can't do that...It's a very insecure feeling."*

A word of caution. You need to take the word "fine" from your vocabulary regarding how your wife looks. *"When she asks how she looks, we think she's wondering if she looks presentable. But what she wants to know is if she's still rocking our world~like she did on that first date."*

If there is an area she wants to work on~say losing some weight, be careful not to hurt her feelings over it, but be as supportive and helpful as you can be. Assure her that you love her no matter what, inside and out, but that you're happy to help in any way you can with her efforts. Encourage her and keep affirming everything about her that you do find to be lovely. Remember that she's trying to please you and stay in the center of your world, so any investment in that effort is good.

You have enormous power in your hands regarding how your wife feels about herself. But beware of the dark side of that power. If your wife sees you noticing the beauty of someone else, she no longer feels special. *"That's when the hammer hits the mirror of you~the most important mirror in her life~and shatters it."* Sure, some of it is just admiring something beautiful. But we all know how quickly that admiration can turn into something else, something more dangerous. Our women don't see our roving eyes as just a "guy thing" and brush it off.

"Sometimes I see him looking for quite a bit longer than just a glance at other, younger women. I cannot describe the hurt I feel when he allows his eyes to take in every detail...That figure my husband is looking at clarifies for me his deepest physical desires~and I look nothing like that. This leaves me feeling like I can never be what my loved one *really* wants."

Our survey showed that most women don't realize that men are so visually wired that it is difficult for them to *not* notice other beautiful women. It's hard for women to accept the fact that we'll always feel that pull to some extent. Remember how women already feel like they're competing against the rest of womankind. Your wife wants to be your beauty!

"A woman whose husband doesn't control his looking and lusting will start to feel like a failure. Why shouldn't she?"

THE GIRL IN THE MIRROR
continued from page 7

Beyond looking at whoever happens to go by is the issue of pornography. Obviously, getting into porn is a clear choice, a choice that leaves a woman with no doubt that she is not enough for her man. In essence, exposing yourself to porn is cheating on your wife. It's looking for satisfaction and thrills with someone else, and it does incredible damage to your wife and your marriage. Porn needs to be an area where we have zero tolerance.

“Each day your wife and mine hold out to us their intense, God-given, little-girl desire (and right) to be treasured. Each day she’s threatened on all sides by an offensive and abusive world. And each day~ with kind words and faithful yes~we too, can be our wife’s protector and hero.”

CBS

the man she had HOPED to marry:

***What the woman who loves
you most, most wants you to know:***

Now that you've got more knowledge under your belt about the inner workings of a woman's mind, the ball is in your court. As much as you'd like your wife to understand what's really happening in *you*, you can make an incredible difference in your marriage even if you're the only one taking steps for change.

But the most amazing and surprising thing about all this research was the response women gave at the end of the survey. Our final open-ended question was, ***“What’s the most important thing you wish your husband/significant other knew, but feel you haven’t been able to explain in a way he understands?”***

Overwhelmingly, their answer was, ***“You are my hero.”***

They expressed how much they admired, respected, and loved their husbands and wanted to make them happy. Many said how thankful they were for their wonderful husbands. In short, these women wanted their husbands to know they viewed their husbands as heroes. Nine out of ten women jumped at the chance to show how much they truly respect and appreciate their men. And that's something to be proud of.

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