

More than 1 Million Copies Sold!

Shaunti Feldhahn

From the Author of the Bestselling *for men only*

for

What You Need to Know About the Inner Lives of Men

women

*"What an important book!"*

—**Beth Moore**, author and speaker

only

REVISED AND UPDATED EDITION

FOR WOMEN ONLY

PUBLISHED BY MULTNOMAH BOOKS

12265 Oracle Boulevard, Suite 200

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921

Scripture quotations are taken from the following versions: King James Version. The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com). The Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-1-60142-445-7

ISBN (electronic)

Copyright © 2013 by Shaunti Feldhahn

Cover design by Mark D. Ford

Published in association with the literary agency of Calvin Edwards, 1220 Austin Glen Drive, Atlanta, GA 30338 © 2004 by Veritas Enterprises Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Published in the United States by WaterBrook Multnomah, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Random House Inc., New York.

MULTNOMAH and its mountain colophon are registered trademarks of Random House Inc.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

[To come]

[To come]

[To come]

[To come]

Printed in the United States of America

2013—Revised Edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

SPECIAL SALES

Most WaterBrook Multnomah books are available at special quantity discounts when purchased in bulk by corporations, organizations, and special-interest groups. Custom imprinting or excerpting can also be done to fit special needs. For information, please e-mail [SpecialMarkets@WaterBrookMultnomah.com](mailto:SpecialMarkets@WaterBrookMultnomah.com) or call 1-800-603-7051.

# READING HIS SIGNALS IN A NEW LIGHT

*We've all heard comments similar to these from a husband, boyfriend, or son:*

- (frustrated) “I don’t know what I’m thinking right now!”
- (wearily) “I just need a few minutes to decompress before you hit me with your day.”
- (angrily) “I figured it out already, okay!”
- (pleading) “Can we *please* talk about this later?”
- (in front of the television) “Sorry, honey... Did you say something?”

No matter how they strike us at the time, these are not necessarily signals of a lack of care or a lack of desire to address important issues. More than likely, they are signals of one of four significant differences in the way men seem to process and talk about thoughts and emotions—differences largely related to the wiring of the male brain.<sup>5</sup>


## Processing Difference 1: Men Often Have to Think Something Through Before They Can Talk It Through

Women tend to be verbal processors—we usually think something through by talking it through. We have lots of connections between the left and right hemispheres of the brain, allowing us to do fast, surface-level processing—and talk about—many thoughts and feelings at the same time.

For example, if I need to figure out how to handle an upsetting situation with the kids, thinking out loud and talking it

through with someone helps me deepen and clarify my thoughts. As I circle through the options (probably several times), I get more and more clarity. I also feel better because I have talked through—and thus processed—all those feelings.

For most men, however, that process can be bewildering—and is certainly the polar opposite of their own. Men tend to be internal processors. In most cases (although not all), it is actively difficult for a man to think something through by talking it through. He can choose to do so, but the more important or emotionally demanding the issue, the more difficult that becomes. A man's brain is wired to process one thing at a time, going deep within each one, rather than having all the interhemisphere connections that easily juggle many functions at once. So he's more inclined to (a) talk about something, or (b) think about it, or (c) feel something about it. His brain will tackle each task deeply over a period of time, but it won't easily do any of them together. (That is, if it is something requiring any thought. Rhapsodizing on his team's last-second win doesn't count.)



In most cases, it is actively difficult for a man to think something through by talking it through.

In practice, then, if someone (ahem) presses your husband, son, or boyfriend to talk, that makes it harder for him to think

things through. If feelings are swirling around, he'll struggle even more. That's why many men have learned that it usually works far better to get some distance to think about something first.

Let's say he's wondering how to handle a tricky situation with the kids. Here's how guys have described it to me: He will think through each option deeply, finish that thought, with all its implications, and then move on to the next one. Then, perhaps, he'll move on to exploring his feelings about the matter. Only when he has processed the issue internally will his brain be able to move on to the next item in line, which is being able to talk about it. And only then will he feel capable of the type of robust and multilayered discussion that is likely to occur when he finally does talk with his mate.