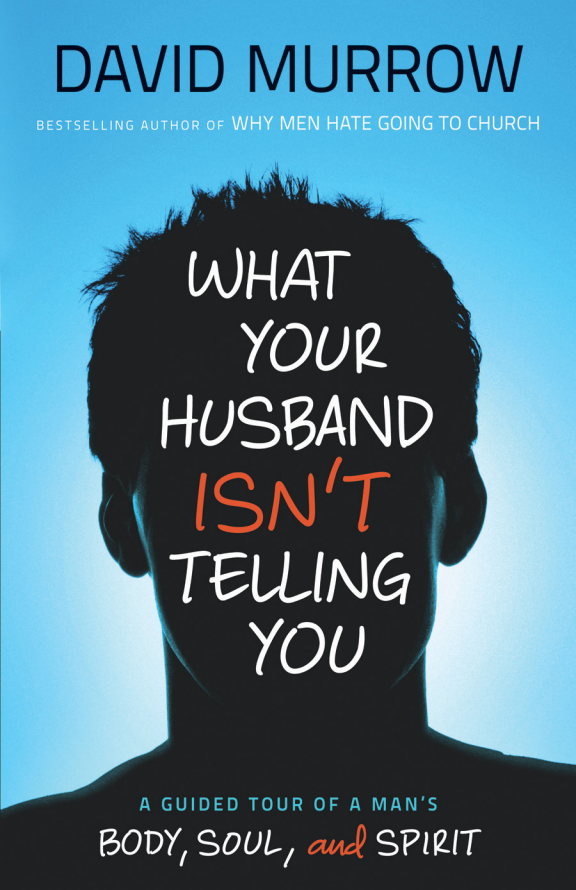


# DAVID MURROW

BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF WHY MEN HATE GOING TO CHURCH



WHAT  
YOUR  
HUSBAND  
ISN'T  
TELLING  
YOU

A GUIDED TOUR OF A MAN'S  
BODY, SOUL, *and* SPIRIT

# WHAT YOUR HUSBAND ISN'T TELLING YOU

A GUIDED TOUR OF A MAN'S  
BODY, SOUL, and SPIRIT

DAVID MURROW



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# Preface

## The Iceberg

A renowned psychologist once compared the human mind to an iceberg. We see only the tip, while the bulk of our thought processes are invisible, submerged in a deep region known as the subconscious. This seems doubly true for men, who tend to be less aware of their feelings than women are.

There are a number of great books that examine the tip of the iceberg. Authors such as Stephen Arterburn and Shaunti Feldhahn have revealed much about men by simply asking them what they think—polling them scientifically and capturing their responses in bestselling books.

But this approach only reveals what men *consciously* think. If the shrinks are right, about 80 percent of a man's thought processes are opaque—even to him.

This is why committed family men suddenly leave their wives for no reason. Why deacons smile at church and then scream at their children in the car all the way home. Why men who are normally wise with money sink their cash into

ridiculous Ponzi schemes. Why men who truly love their families suddenly abandon them—if not physically, then emotionally.

Oftentimes men have no idea why they do these things. Your man doesn't know what's going on under the waterline any more than you do.

In this book, we'll examine the tip of the iceberg (what men tell researchers) as well as its vast underside (what men feel but are unwilling or unable to put into words). By looking at the whole iceberg, you will emerge with a complete picture of what motivates your husband to do and think the things he does. Together, these are the things your husband isn't telling you.

# Introduction

## What's Really Going On Inside Your Husband

**P**icture your husband standing in the middle of a swiftly flowing river. Every day a steady current of joys, frustrations, compulsions, temptations, and pressures comes flooding downstream and washes over his heart.

It's exhausting work, standing against this current. Some disciplined men are able to do it pretty well. Others try to dam the river—but frustration eventually spills over the top. Some men eventually drown, taken under by pressures and sorrows they cannot fathom.

Most men have no idea where these feelings come from. Many try not to feel anything at all. Some are so skilled at denying their emotions they aren't aware they have any. Rare is the man who knows how to deal with his feelings in a healthy way.

So instead of living fully and freely, the majority of men resort to survival strategies in order to stand against the current. Instead of being honest about what they feel and asking



people to meet their needs, they learn destructive, manipulative ways of getting what they want. Game-playing. Displays of anger. Pointless bickering. Destructive behaviors. Habits they can't kick and don't even enjoy. It takes so much energy fighting back the current (or trying to control it) they can't be fully present in the moment. Many simply check out—becoming passive and unavailable to their loved ones. They veg out in front of the TV or computer—not because they don't care, but because there's nothing left to give.

Every man fights these currents. Even the good husbands. Even Christians.

I am such a man.

I'm what you'd call a nice Christian guy. I had it pretty good as a kid—middle-class upbringing, plenty to eat, a roof over my head. I made good grades in school and had lots of friends. But my mom and dad were caught in a spiral of codependence—he was a raging lion and she was a pacifying lamb. Dad was a ticking time bomb—and you could never predict when he would go off. Mom taught us various survival strategies: Don't upset your dad; be quiet; stay in your room; get outside; eat quickly; get good grades; be careful what you say; and most important, always be right.

I gave my life to Christ at age fifteen in large measure because I didn't want to become like my dad. I've been serving Jesus ever since. I went to a Christian university and married a Christian woman. We've been faithful churchgoers and have raised our three kids in Sunday school. God gave me the grace to forgive my father years ago, and when he died we were at peace.

But something still wasn't right.

For decades I did not know my own secrets. I could not explain the crazy dialogue that ran constantly through my head. I had a hard time expressing genuine grief or empathy. At times I felt so overwhelmed I could barely hold everything

together. Although I was mostly satisfied with my life, I occasionally fantasized about leaving everything behind—or ending it altogether. A secret death wish lurked just beneath my consciousness.

Then, one year ago, I was taken under. I landed in a residential drug and alcohol treatment program three thousand miles from home. I was cut off from my family. My phone and computer were confiscated. I was placed in an apartment block with seven other men, most of whom were addicts who had lost nearly everything.

Now you're probably wondering, "What did Murrow do? Was he an alcoholic? A druggie? Violent?" Actually, I was none of those things. I've never smoked a cigarette. I've never been drunk or high in my life. Never touched an illegal substance. Never struck my wife or kids. No porn. One hundred percent faithful to my marriage vows.

Nevertheless, I found myself in a rehab program. My self-image as a good husband and better-than-average father lay shattered on the floor of my dorm room.

In times past, I'd have become angry about my false imprisonment. I'd resort to one of my survival strategies to get through the indignity of my situation. I'd tell myself that I was right—and everyone else was wrong. Or I'd try to work the system and gain the upper hand over my captors (in this case, counselors).

But instead, I gave in.

At the age of forty-nine, I finally began the process of meeting the real me. My counselors taught me to begin asking the foundational questions: *What's bothering me? Why do I feel so ignored? Why is there always tension in my house? Why am I so afraid to speak up for my own needs? Why do I feel like I'm disappearing—and another man is taking my place? And why is this happening to a born-again Christian man, who is not supposed to have these kinds of problems?*

## Introduction

In terms of the river analogy, I finally stepped out of the current and climbed onto the bank. And I began the upstream trek to the headwaters of my soul. I went back to the source of my frustrations, wounds, and deadness of heart.

Once I discovered the source, the currents began to make sense. I realized I was still living out my survival strategies from childhood: Be quiet, stay in your room, get outside, eat quickly, be right. I was like a World War II Japanese soldier stranded on a remote island, fighting a war that's been over for decades.

Today the currents still buffet me, but they no longer overwhelm me. I know why I feel the way I do. I know who the real enemy is and how to fight him.

After seeing the change in my heart, my dear wife set off for the headwaters of her own soul. Turns out we were both in denial about how we were really feeling. We're getting healthy together. Instead of playing games or manipulating one another to get our needs met, we speak honestly and openly about what we truly think and feel. I'm finally willing to speak up—and she is finally willing to hear what I'm actually saying. Just as Jesus said, the truth is making us free.

Come with me to the headwaters. I want you to understand the powerful forces that shaped your man, and the currents that roil him every day. I want to teach you how to be honest with your husband as a way of helping him to be honest with you.

This book is so much more than a list of facts about men or the latest research on their attitudes (although I'll be quoting plenty of those). I want you to understand that thing that's bothering him. That thing that's motivating him. That thing that's frightening him. We're going back to the source.