

relationship **IQ**



# Leader's Manual

EQUIPPING YOUNG ADULTS  
FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

# Table of Contents

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>Preface</i> ..... | v |
|----------------------|---|

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| <i>Introduction</i> ..... | ix |
|---------------------------|----|

## PROCESS CHAPTERS: UTILIZING RELATIONSHIP IQ

|                                        |   |
|----------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Working with Young Adults</b> ..... | 1 |
|----------------------------------------|---|

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Leader Skills</b> ..... | 9 |
|----------------------------|---|

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Personal Presentation Style ..... | 12 |
|-----------------------------------|----|

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Presentation Techniques ..... | 13 |
|-------------------------------|----|

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Dealing with Difficult Issues ..... | 16 |
|-------------------------------------|----|

|                                                     |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----|
| Using Technology Effectively in Presentations ..... | 17 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----|

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Large-Group Presentation Skills..... | 19 |
|--------------------------------------|----|

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Small-Group Skills ..... | 20 |
|--------------------------|----|

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| <b>Starting rIQ</b> ..... | 25 |
|---------------------------|----|

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Involving Young Adults ..... | 28 |
|------------------------------|----|

|                             |    |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Formulating Your Plan ..... | 29 |
|-----------------------------|----|

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Implementation ..... | 31 |
|----------------------|----|

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Getting the Word Out ..... | 33 |
|----------------------------|----|

|                                                |    |
|------------------------------------------------|----|
| Flow Chart for Large-Group Presentations ..... | 35 |
|------------------------------------------------|----|

|                                                |    |
|------------------------------------------------|----|
| Flow Chart for Small-Group Presentations ..... | 37 |
|------------------------------------------------|----|

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| rIQ Mentoring ..... | 39 |
|---------------------|----|

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Follow-up and Assessment..... | 41 |
|-------------------------------|----|

|                                               |    |
|-----------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Connecting with Your rIQ Trainer</b> ..... | 43 |
|-----------------------------------------------|----|

|                                             |    |
|---------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Conclusion:</b> Goals and Purposes ..... | 47 |
|---------------------------------------------|----|

|                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Afterword:</b> How Relationship IQ Was Born ..... | 53 |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CONTENT CHAPTERS: SINGLE AND SIX-WEEK PRESENTATION BOOKLETS

**Intentionally Friends**

**Say What?**

**How to Date the Best**

**Does God Want Me? Created for Relationship**

**What about Sex?**

**Boundaries & Freedom: Drawing Healthy Lines in Relationships**

**Technology & Relationships**

**Adulting in Your Family Relationships**

# Introduction

## What Is Relationship IQ?

*Are you connected to young adults? Do they talk with you about relationships? Do you wish you could help them more? Relationship IQ (rIQ) is designed for you. It is a ministry that helps young adults develop healthy and godly relationships.*

Relationship IQ provides a powerful method of talking about relationships with young adults. When we say “relationships,” we mean ALL relationships—connections with God, friends, family, co-workers, professors, roommates, and romantic partners. The program is psycho-educational in nature—meaning participants learn relationship skills and concepts that can be applied to their lives—it is not therapy.

Relationship IQ is a whole-ministry package that you can custom fit to your setting (academic, church, or community setting), your audience, and your unique needs by choosing from a variety of different teaching modules and delivery formats. You can discuss dating in a small group, present material about meaningful friendship to an audience of 300, or chat one-on-one about healthy boundaries. The detailed lessons provide essential information about healthy relationships, and the suggested delivery formats equip you with multiple ways to connect.

Although **what** we teach is of ultimate importance, we believe that the process—**how** we communicate and teach about relationships—is just as important when working with young adults. In rIQ, we use a variety of methods to reach people with a variety of learning styles. We know that only God can create transformation. Michelle Anthony, in *Spiritual Parenting*,<sup>1</sup> encourages parents to create environments for the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of their children; similarly rIQ seeks to provide environments for the Holy Spirit’s work of transformation through interaction, activities, discussion, and personal application. This manual and interaction with your rIQ trainer will equip you with the skills and tools to lead eye-opening and life-changing conversations. (See page 45 for information about your rIQ trainer).

We want rIQ to be a tool for you, and we can help you learn how to use it to its full potential for your setting and your audience. You decide what works for you and implement as much or as little of the program as you have the time, energy, resources, and calling to do.

The results we have seen from using rIQ at Pepperdine University have amazed us, and we want to share this program because we believe you can benefit in the same way.

## WHY RELATIONSHIP IQ?

Why is rIQ needed? Why do young adults need instruction on relationships? What can older adults do to help young adults?

Research and experience have taught church leaders, counselors, psychologists, and almost anyone who works with young adults that relationships are not easy and that reaching a certain age doesn’t necessarily mean a person has learned

# Working with Young Adults

## Providing Intentional Space for Transformation

*Relationship IQ does things differently. We aren't simply imparting information—we are providing intentional space for transformation. We can't cause transformation; only God does that. We can, however, come alongside young adults and help create space for reflection, application, and intentionality. We don't lecture, preach, or rely only on group process—we teach in discussion and activities and experience.*

The process is just as important, and maybe more important, as the content. Knowing more information doesn't usually motivate change.<sup>1</sup> Experience motivates. Rick Richardson, in *Evangelism Outside the Box* observes that in our culture, "experience comes before explanation."<sup>2</sup> Many young adults don't care as much about the logic of faith; they want to hear how faith has impacted your life. They've experienced the pain of unhealthy relationship so they are ready to hear the explanation of why it was unhealthy.

Richardson also observes that "belonging comes before believing." He says, "People today are looking for a safe and accepting community in which to work out their identity."<sup>3</sup> Identity development and the ability to form intimate relationships are huge developmental phases in adolescence and young adulthood.<sup>4</sup> You get to be a safe place for them to ask questions and sort through the issues of identity and relationship formation. Young adults learn how to cultivate healthy relationships through their relationship with you. Having a relationship with you is a training ground for how to have healthy relationships with others.

## Authenticity

When I first started at the Center for the Family, I was fresh out of grad school and eager to show how much I'd learned. I tried to be what I now call "professionally cool," wanting others to recognize me as a trained professional and treat me as such. I kept myself at arm's length from students by talking about the theories and concepts I'd learned. The theories and concepts helped some people, at least for a while, but they never seemed to make a life-transforming difference in anyone's life. I also was hesitant to work with young adults because I wasn't cool like my college ministers, and I thought the students wouldn't like me very much.

Eventually, God taught me to share what He was teaching *me*. I've learned to be myself with my students and let God teach them through the work He has done and is doing in my life. What I've found is that the more I share who I really am with them, the more God uses me in their lives, and the more they not only like me, but love me. Not all of them, of course, but those with whom I get to share life. My small groups went from four or five to having a waiting list to get in. Students stop to talk with me regularly, are glad to see me, and ask for my advice and encouragement. The best part is, I get to see God transforming lives. None of it is about me or what I can do; God uses me in my weakness. God does the work, and I just need to have the courage to be vulnerable about what He has done in my life, pay attention to Him and follow His lead.

# relationship **IQ**

LEADER'S MANUAL



*Equipping Young Adults for Healthy Relationships*

# **What About Sex?**



**PEPPERDINE**  
Boone Center for the Family

# What about Sex?

## Single-Session Presentation

### Schedule

- |                              |         |
|------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Introduction              | (10-15) |
| 2. Your Brain on Sex         | (18)    |
| a. Dopamine                  | (5)     |
| b. Oxytocin                  | (5)     |
| c. Synapses                  | (8)     |
| 3. Relationship consequences | (14)    |
| 4. Cohabitation              | (3-18)  |
| 5. Breakups and Review       | (5)     |
| 6. The good news             | (5)     |
| 7. Conclusion                | (5)     |
|                              | <hr/>   |
|                              | (60-80) |

### Materials

Vignettes, modeling clay, blindfold or scarf, masking tape

### Setup

Hand out vignettes, put clay on table with instructions, have masking tape ready



#### Leader note

This can be a difficult topic for people to talk about. Discussion needs to begin with very safe questions, particularly in a large group. There are fewer discussion questions in this lesson because young adults tend to want to listen to the information before they engage. Be dynamic and engaging while presenting. Move around, change the tone of your voice, participate in the activities, and have a light-hearted approach. If you have a talkative group—great! Let them talk and interact as long as they are engaging in safe and productive conversation. Never let

someone be attacked when they share a view or experience.

As you listen to responses, accept whatever view is given. You'll have plenty of time to share other views. Listen and let issues be brought up. Resist the urge to correct or put down ideas.

As Lew Smedes in his book, *Sex for Christians*,<sup>1</sup> admits, "when we talk candidly about sexual morality, few of us can keep our cool." If you are uncomfortable talking about sex, practice this lesson in front of someone multiple times before leading it. If you are uncomfortable while presenting, your audience will be too, and the session will not be productive. Get comfortable with the material.

## Why Are We Talking about This?

Sex is a pervasive topic in our society and a very relevant issue for young adults. Statistics show dishearteningly high rates of unmarried young adults and teens are sexually active. Young adults need a safe place to talk about sexual issues, and they need adults in their lives who are willing to talk, listen, understand, and guide. There is so much in our culture that is untrue about sex. God has given us a beautiful gift in our sexuality, and we need to talk about how He does want us to use this gift. This lesson is designed to give helpful information in a way that young adults are likely to hear and understand. A great way to use this chapter is to offer the material from this single session and then host a small group for six weeks to explore pressing issues about how to live holy lives as sexual beings.

Written by: Hannah Parmelee

# What about Sex?



## Opening activity

For smaller groups: Using the modeling clay, create a representation of your idea of healthy sexuality.

For larger groups: Play opening slide show as people come in and find their seats. The slides are tips for healthy relationships, interviews with people about their relationships, or other information from your organization. (For ready-to-go slide shows see your rIQ trainer.)

## Welcome and Introduction



### Leader note

For large groups (100–400), have someone provide the opening welcome and prayer and introduce the speaker.

- Welcome the audience with energy and enthusiasm. Tell them you are glad they are here and what you are looking forward to in this session.
- Introduce your organization (if appropriate) and make announcement about upcoming events.
- Ask everyone to turn off and put away their phones, laptops, tablets, books, etc., out of respect for speaker and their neighbors.
- Pray.
- Introduce the speaker.



### Discussion Questions



(For smaller groups). Turn to someone next to you and share what you created to represent your view of healthy sexuality.

- What are some things you created?
- What is healthy sexuality?

(For larger groups, ask audience).

- What are ways healthy sexuality is defined by people today?

In our society, various people hold vastly different views of healthy sexuality. Some views are displayed more frequently than others through the media, at home, or at school. We each gravitate toward a certain view as we develop our own. Today we're going to talk less about what views are right and wrong and more about the science behind sex and the implications for relationship. We're also going to talk about a practice very much accepted by our society that is tied in with sex—cohabitation. The goal today is to give you some information that will help you make more informed decisions about sex and cohabitation. We make our own choices, and there is no judgment or condemnation in our conversations today.

## Biases and Experiences

We come to this conversation with our own life experiences and beliefs. As I talk about sex with a group, I never assume everyone in the group has or hasn't been sexually active. Typically within a group, there is a mix. Whatever your beliefs and experiences, you are welcome to this dialogue, and I am glad that you are here. I have my bias, and I'll tell you up front what it is: I believe sex is intended to be within marriage because 1) of my moral and religious convictions; and 2) because of the psychological, sociological, and neurological research that's been done. Let's turn now to the neurological research.

## Your Brain on Sex

God designed our bodies to respond to sexual encounters in specific ways. We're going to talk about synapse response and three neurochemicals: dopamine, oxytocin, and vasopressin. When we talk about sex, we aren't just talking about intercourse; the brain responses are triggered also by sexual behavior, including fondling, showering together, and oral sex. Most of this material is taken from the book *Hooked: New Science on How Casual Sex is Affecting Our Children* by Drs. McIlhaney and McKissic Bush.<sup>2</sup>

### Dopamine

Dopamine is the reward chemical in your brain. It gives pleasure, excitement, and exhilaration and is designed to help launch you into new exciting phases of life. When you left for college, you got a huge rush of dopamine to help you along and make you excited to take the next life step. Dopamine has some interesting characteristics:

1. **Dopamine loses its effectiveness over time.** The first time you ride a giant roller coaster, (pick a local roller coaster your audience will know) you get a huge rush of dopamine—*wahhhh, this is really exciting!* The tenth time you ride that coaster, you're kind of like *ehhh, okay what's next?* You then need to go find a bigger, better roller coaster (name a scarier roller coaster) to get the rush of dopamine again.
2. **Dopamine is values neutral.** You are going to get a burst of dopamine when you experience something exciting—whether or not that something is good for you! Your brain does not determine if the new exciting behavior is healthy before it releases dopamine. So, you are going to get a rush of dopamine whether you are riding a roller coaster for the first time or jumping off a bridge to kill yourself.

You can see how the combination of these two attributes can lead to an addictive and destructive cycle of seeking a dopamine release. This is how people get addicted to many things—gambling, drugs, alcohol, shopping, pornography—they have to experience more and extreme versions of a behavior to get the same sense of excitement and pleasure.

Of course, sex is one of strongest generators of the dopamine reward.<sup>3</sup> You can get such a dopamine high from sexual behavior that you want to do it more and more. You get hooked on it.

Initially, even small acts of intimacy can trigger a dopamine release, but as that dopamine high wears off, people tend to progress to higher levels of physicality in their relationships. The first kiss is like lightning; the 100th kiss is sweet, but not as exciting, and so we move on. And this dopamine release doesn't automatically reset when you start dating someone else, meaning you are likely to get more physically involved faster with your next romantic partner.

### Oxytocin and Vasopressin

Oxytocin and vasopressin are bonding chemicals: oxytocin for women, vasopressin for men. During sexual activity, oxytocin is released into a woman's brain causing her to bond with her partner, while vasopressin released into a man's brain performs the same function. Vasopressin has been called the "monogamy molecule" because it "seems to be the primary cause of men attaching to women with whom they have close and intimate physical contact."<sup>4</sup> These are also the chemicals that cause men and women to bond with their children. Oxytocin is also released in a woman's brain at the onset of labor and during nursing. It helps her want to be with her child and be willing to sacrifice for that child.<sup>5</sup> When the brain of a male prairie vole is flooded with vasopressin, he is more attentive and connected to his offspring. Oxytocin and vasopressin share a couple of important characteristics with dopamine:

1. **Both are values neutral.** Whether or not the sexual activity is good or even desired, the chemicals are released in your brain that initiate bonding to the other person. You don't get to decide which sexual partner you are

# relationship **IQ**

LEADER'S MANUAL



*Equipping Young Adults for Healthy Relationships*

# Does God Want Me?

**Created for Relationship**



**PEPPERDINE**  
Boone Center for the Family

# Does God Want Me? Created for Relationship

## Single-Session Presentation

### Schedule

- |                                          |       |
|------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Welcome and opening prayer            | (5)   |
| 2. Introducing the topic                 | (10)  |
| 3. Created for relationship              | (16)  |
| 4. Does God want a relationship with me? | (15)  |
| a. The Big God Story                     | (5)   |
| b. Core Woundedness                      | (6)   |
| c. Life experience                       | (2)   |
| 5. Does God really want <i>me</i> ?      | (12)  |
| 6. Do you believe it?                    | (15)  |
| 7. Why it matters                        | (10)  |
| 8. Closing thoughts and prayer           | (2)   |
|                                          | <hr/> |
|                                          | (85)  |

### Materials

- Magazines, blank paper, tape, pens
- Scripture verses printed and cut into separate slips: Jeremiah 31:3–4; John 3:16–17; Psalm 139:1–4, 13–14; Matthew 11:28–30; Psalm 23:1, 2, 6 (see handout packet)
- Vignettes printed and cut into separate slips (see handout packet)

### Setup

- Set out opening activity on a table
- Pass out Scriptures to individuals who are willing to read aloud at appropriate time
- Pass out vignettes to individuals who are willing to read aloud at appropriate time



### Leader note

This is the most important lesson in this manual. It is foundational.

As you lead this session, be relational. Don't just preach. Follow the Spirit's leading as you dialogue. Ask questions authentically and don't be afraid to receive difficult responses and challenging questions.

## Why Are We Talking about This?

No one can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:38–39). Too many people believe that God doesn't really care about them. In their minds, the idea of God's immense love for them is just religious talk. Young adults desperately need to know that they are created for relationship with God and others. Our relationship with God as his children is central to who we are. God doesn't just know your name and pay attention to you when you start talking to him or when you've messed up. God longs for you, pursues you, wants you to know him, and offers a depth of intimacy with you that you can't find in human relationships. The relationships in our lives are immensely important because they prepare us for right relationship with God. We aren't nice to people just because we are supposed to be nice. We are kind, generous, thoughtful, and respectful because through such attitudes we better reflect the image of God.

Written by Hannah Parmelee

# Does God Want Me? Created for Relationship



## Opening Activity

Make a collage (larger groups can write names or draw pictures) of people in your life who are important to you. Use the magazines to cut out pictures to depict important people in your life for your collage.

## Welcome and Introduction



### Leader note

For large groups (100–400), have someone provide the opening welcome and prayer and introduce the speaker.

- Welcome the audience with energy and enthusiasm. Tell them you are glad they are here and what you are looking forward to in this session.
- Introduce your organization (if appropriate) and make announcement about upcoming events.
- Ask everyone to turn off and put away their phones, laptops, tablets, books, etc., out of respect for speaker and their neighbors.
- Pray.
- Introduce the speaker.

## Introducing the Topic



### Discussion Questions



- Who are the most important people in your life?
- Why are they important?



### Leader note

Listen for responses that emphasize how relationships bring meaning, purpose, direction, and enjoyment.

Relationships bring meaning and joy into our lives. They are not always easy, but they shape us. The people in our lives in many ways define who we are. I cannot really know you without knowing the people in your life. If you didn't know that I was a (*list your roles – wife/husband, mother/father, son/daughter, sister/brother, friend, etc.*) \_\_\_\_\_, if you had never seen me interact with others, you wouldn't know me. The more people you actually know in my life, the more you understand and know me. Relationships define us. There is something deep in us that longs for relationship with others.

## Created for Relationship

### Adam and Eve

Adam had a perfect world around him; it was created by God, and it was good. Adam had direct relationship with God; he walked with God in the garden. And yet God said it was not good that Adam was alone. So God made Eve, and with the creation of Eve all was good. We are not made to be alone; we are created for relationship.

## DNA of Relationships

Dr. Gary Smalley says, “It’s in our DNA: we are made to need relationships. Even when they are hard, difficult, or just plain frustrating, we need relationships. It’s the way we are wired. We have a longing to belong to someone, to be wanted and cherished for the valued people we are.”<sup>1</sup>

A longing to be in relationship with other people sits at the core of who we are. Solitary confinement—no access to people for days or weeks or months on end—can literally drive people insane.

## Attachment Theory

We are relational from birth. We need connection with people when we are infants and throughout our lives. Lack of secure and meaningful connection causes long-term deficits in our mental, emotional, relational, and even physical health.<sup>2</sup> When babies were cared for in sterile institutions and hospitals, an alarming number of them died or suffered severe emotional and mental difficulties, not from lack of physical care, but from lack of relationship connection.<sup>3</sup> We are created with a need for relationships.

## Physical Need

Physiologically, research shows that our bodies are healthier and live longer when we are in healthy marriages. Across different countries and cultures, people who are married live longer, suffer fewer illnesses, recover from illness or injury more quickly, and are happier in general than are people who are single, divorced, or cohabitating.<sup>4</sup>



### Leader note

There are a lot of good guesses and reasons for why physical health is related to relational health. As participants share responses to the following question, look to highlight these principles: When our relationships go well, we tend to feel better about life and ourselves. When our relationships are strained, life does not seem as meaningful or joyful. There is a longing deep within us for relationships. Emphasize those concepts to the group before you continue.



### Discussion Question



Why do you think our physical health improves if we have relational health?

## Why Does This Matter?

Our great need and desire for relationships communicates how important they are to us. Yet at times we take our relationships too casually. Since we now know that relationships define us, shape us, and make a significant difference in the quality of our lives, what can we do to be intentional in making our relationships healthy?



### Discussion Questions



- What are some things you do to make your relationships thrive? [Offer these suggestions if you don’t hear participants giving them: spend time together, get to know each other better, serve each other, pray together.]
- How has technology helped or hurt your relationships with people? [Offer these suggestions if you don’t hear participants giving them: helped by providing more opportunity to connect, stay in touch about smaller details, don’t have to spend time catching up so can talk about other issues more deeply; hurt by making it harder to focus on an individual, increased miscommunications, don’t know how to connect face-to-face as well.]

# relationship

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Relationship IQ helps young adults develop healthy and godly relationships.

Relationship IQ integrates psychology and theology to provide a powerful approach to talking about relationships with young adults. When we say "relationships," we mean ALL relationships—connections with friends, family, romantic partners, coworkers, professors, roommates, and God. By using the curriculum, young adults learn relationship skills and concepts that can be applied to their lives. Relationship IQ is not therapy—it is a proactive method for building healthy relationships that has changed the lives of thousands of young adults.

#### CURRICULUM

Each of the eight Relationship IQ modules contain curriculum for leading six small group sessions and one large group presentation (total of 48 small group and 8 large group lessons). Lessons are designed to be highly interactive, thought-provoking, and personally applicable. The curriculum is composed of these eight modules:

##### **How to Date the Best.**

In dating relationships you not only want to find the best person, you want to be the best person. Learn how to start, end, and sustain a healthy romantic relationship.

##### **Does God Want a Relationship with Me?**

God designed you for relationship with Him, wants you to know Him, and gives you your identity, value, and purpose.

**Say What?** Sharpen your communication and conflict skills by learning how to say what you mean, tell yourself the truth, and listen well.

##### **Adulting in Your Family Relationships.**

Make the transition from being a child to an adult in the family by exploring how memories, birth order, and parents' perspective may have shaped family dynamics.

##### **Technology & Relationships.**

Learn how to use technology to help—and not hinder—your relationships with God, family, friends, romantic partners, and yourself.

**Intentionally Friends.** Bring out the best in your friends and become the friend you want to be. Bask in the delight of close friends.

##### **Boundaries & Freedom:**

**Drawing Healthy Lines in Relationships.** Can you say yes and no to the right things? Do you know what is your responsibility and what someone else needs to own? Learn how to enforce your boundaries and experience greater freedom.

**What About Sex?** Explore God's good gift, how our brains respond to sexual activity, cohabitation, relational impact of sex, managing sex drives, pornography, sexual addiction, and God's healing and redemption.

*The Relationship IQ Leader's Manual* is designed to accompany the eight Relationship IQ modules. The manual lays the foundation for why the Relationship IQ curriculum is critical and how to interact with young adults, lead small and large groups, and start a Relationship IQ program.

Please email us at [centerforthefamily@pepperdine.edu](mailto:centerforthefamily@pepperdine.edu) for inquiries about in-person or online Relationship IQ trainings for leaders of your team or organization.



#### Who Uses Relationship IQ

Relationship IQ started as a program at Pepperdine University to serve the relational and spiritual needs of the University's students. The program has since been extended and successfully used by academic institutions, churches, and other organizations—any group desiring to help young adults navigate relationships.

#### Customizing the Program for You

All curriculum can be used in either small group discussion format or in large group presentations.

The six-week small group lessons are designed for groups of about four to 12 young adults.

To make single session presentations best fit your group structure and needs, you choose how long the session will be and what sections of the curriculum to include. Each single session contains about 85 minutes of lectures, discussions, and activities. Present the sections that are most relevant and applicable to your group. Each section gives time estimates so that you can tailor the presentation to your audience.

