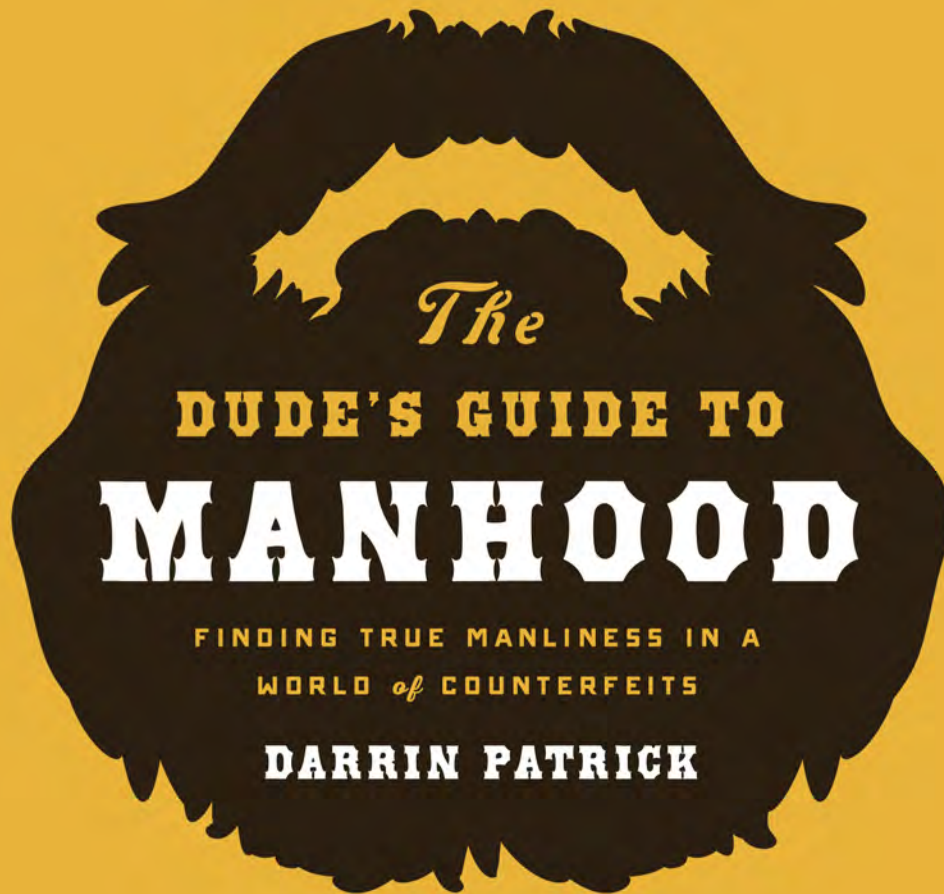


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The

DUDE'S GUIDE TO

MANHOOD

FINDING TRUE MANLINESS IN A
WORLD *of* COUNTERFEITS

DARRIN PATRICK



**DISCUSSION GUIDE
FOR
THE DUDE'S GUIDE TO MANHOOD**

Use this companion piece for yourself or as a group to help foster discussion and reflection upon the lessons in each chapter. Enjoy!





INTRODUCTION

1. Where have you found the most guidance for navigating life?
2. How have you run from your father or potential father figures?
3. Describe an area of your life that you are struggling to figure out on your own.

CHAPTER 1 DETERMINATION

1. Name one significant goal you have and specifically describe how you are pursuing it.
2. Who or what usually gets in the way of accomplishing your goals?
3. How do you cope when the weight of your responsibilities feels unbearable?
4. To what area in your life are you giving minimal attention when it needs significant rehab?
5. What choices are you making with your time that are not helping you become the man you want to be?



CHAPTER 2 COACHABLE

1. What weaknesses in either your character or skills have you stopped doing anything about?
2. Describe the last time you reached out to someone to help you shore up an area of weakness.
3. When is the last time you tried to convince someone that you had something under control when that was really an illusion?
4. Who are the men around you whom you respect the most? How could you make space to develop relationships with one or two of them?
5. Name one area of life that you want to receive focused coaching in over the next six months.

CHAPTER 3 DISCIPLINE

1. Think back to your last New Year's resolution. How long did it last? What prevented you from staying disciplined? Rethink how you could pursue this resolution.
2. Where are you the most disciplined? Where are you the least? Why is it harder for you to be disciplined there?
3. Describe a time you've taken a shortcut or tried a quick fix that you've kept hidden.
4. Who around you—family, friends, coworkers, neighbors—is suffering because of your lack of discipline or self-control?
5. If you had greater self-control, what would you be freed to pursue and accomplish?



CHAPTER 4 WORK

1. In what ways do you feel the curse on your work? Where do you see “soil” that has the potential to produce “fruit” that will bring joy and happiness to others and to yourself?
2. Where in your job have you pressed the cruise control button? What caused you to start coasting?
3. List all the jobs you’ve worked. Name some way that each one has prepared and equipped you for what you are doing now.
4. How often do you use work as a reason for not connecting with your spouse, your children, your family, or friends? Where do you need to admit that you care more about your own success than relationships? How could you be more efficient in your work to free up more space in your life?
5. Who in your workplace could benefit from your regular encouragement and assistance?



CHAPTER 5 CONTENTMENT

1. How has your family celebrated significant milestones? How has that contributed to your sense of completion and accomplishment in life?
2. Describe the future version of yourself. Is there anything that needs to be erased from that picture because it is preventing you from enjoying the “present” you?
3. Recall the “Assassins of Contentment.” Which one has the greatest influence over you?
4. Look at your weekly or monthly calendar. Do you have any blank space? Is there some activity or responsibility that you could cut back on that is sapping your energy for your primary work and preventing you from resting? Is there an afternoon or evening that you could regularly block out to rest and connect with family and friends?
5. Pause and reflect on your life. Think about the good gifts from God that you have been taking for granted.



CHAPTER 6 DEVOTION

1. Think about the last time you were tempted by a “tourist trap” or fell into one. Why were you drawn to it? How long did the satisfaction last?
2. If you are single, think about the relationships you’ve been in. What drew you into those relationships? What caused them to stall out?
3. For you newly married guys, what aspects of devotion to your wife have faded as you’ve experienced greater sexual devotion?
4. For you men who have been married for a while now, where have you become passive? How have you “outsourced” your wife’s physical, emotional, or spiritual needs?
5. If you are single, how are you occupying your time? What skills or interests could you practically and intentionally pursue that would help you love a future spouse?



CHAPTER 7 FAMILY MAN

1. Which of the two “ditches” have you regularly fallen into in your parenting? Passive avoidance or chauvinistic demands? Now, think about your own father. Are you swinging the pendulum over too far in the other direction?
2. What aspects of your own character—such as, lack of discipline, anger, self-centeredness—have you regularly excused but diligently monitored and policed in your children’s lives? If your children were here to list your shortcomings, what do you think they would be able to point out from watching you?
3. When is the last time you wronged one of your kids recently but then justified it as your “right” as the authority figure? How often do you ask for forgiveness from your kids?
4. Discuss something that is causing your son or daughter to feel anxious or insecure. Brainstorm how you can encourage your child and lead him or her through it.
5. On most days, how much time and energy do you spend planning ways to intentionally instruct and play with your children, shaping their “work” and rest?



CHAPTER 8 CONNECTED

1. Using the categories from this chapter, do an inventory of the relationships you are currently in. Outside of work, in what way do you spend the majority of your time relating to others? How many people—not including your spouse or family—really know you in your glory and in your garbage?
2. Are you in any one-way relationships right now? What is preventing you from challenging those friends to give and not just receive? What risks in those relationships could you take to keep from settling into a rut?
3. When was the last time you asked a friend to help you in a time of need? Think of a current struggle or pressing task you're facing that you could invite some friends in for help.
4. Think of a good friendship you once had that has drifted over time. What caused the drift? A change in location? A career change? Marriage? Children? How could you renew that friendship and enter into it with different expectations?
5. Who in your life could you develop a friendship with, but have avoided because they don't quite look like you, or act like you, or have your same interests and outlook on life?

CHAPTER 9 EMOTIONAL

1. Think back on your family of origin. Most families allow some emotions to be expressed while suppressing others. What emotions were acceptable? What emotions were avoided? How do you respond to those emotions now?
2. When you feel disappointment, what do you do to numb or block out that feeling?
3. During a typical week, when do you experience the greatest intensity of emotion?

CHAPTER 10 FIGHTING

1. In what arena(s) in your life do you feel like you can “go the distance”? In what arena(s) do you keep getting knocked out during the first round? Where are you just hiding out in the locker room?
2. In what ways are you resting in your success(es)? What arena(s) of life are you ignoring or diminishing because of that success?
3. Some fighters win through sheer force, but the majority of them go into the ring with a plan of attack. What arenas are you entering into blind? Develop a strategy. Who could you hire as a coach? Who could be your sparring partner?
4. What source motivation do you operate out of regularly? Give a snapshot of your life’s story with that source motivation as the main character.
5. With what aspect of your character do you find yourself in an ongoing battle?

CHAPTER 11 HEROIC

1. For whom are you trying to be a hero but are feeling crushed by the weight of that person’s needs and demands?
2. Recall the “self” sins of pride. How are you attempting to be heroic but in all honesty are trying for yourself and not for others?
3. What feature of Jesus’ manhood have you never considered before? What surprises you most about Jesus’ manhood?
4. What are you doing about the claims of Christ over your life?



CHAPTER 12

THE FORGIVEN MAN

1. What has been causing bitterness in your life that you need to forgive your father for?
2. How have you been in bondage to envy? pride? lust? anger?
3. What has been your experience with church? How have you isolated yourself from Christian community? In what sense have you focused too much on what you can get out of the local church rather than ways you can engage?
4. How could you step up your relationship with your church?