

*A Discussion Guide*  
*based on*

**TECHNICAL**  
*Virgin*

**HOW FAR IS TOO FAR?**

BY HAYLEY DIMARCO



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# Introduction

Pledging abstinence until marriage can be dangerous. What? No, you're eyes aren't playing games. I said dangerous—and I meant it. The reality is that while teen girls may have decided to save sex for marriage, they may still be having physical encounters, just not going all the way. It's called "technical virginity" and it's a trend that's on the rise among today's youth. They think they are bending the rules and avoiding risk. But in fact, they are inviting risk. Not only can they still contract an STD or get pregnant, but they also will wreak havoc on their emotions and spirit. Even innocent playing around, like back rubs or tickle fights, could be setting the stage for something more. Now more than ever, teen girls need to know what purity really means. They need to know how far is too far and how they can get back on track.

The *Technical Virgin* discussion guide can help. It offers four complete sessions with questions and activities that coordinate with specific sections from my book *Technical Virgin: How Far is Too Far?* Together, we'll take a look at this thing called "purity" and help our girls see the truth.

I suggest you use this discussion guide over a four-week period. That gives you plenty of time to prepare and gives your girls plenty of time to read. And please feel free to use these activities and questions to sculpt your own discussion. You may find that students come with enough questions to fuel an hour's worth of conversation. Or you may need to rely on the questions provided here to keep the discussion rolling. How you want to use these questions is up to you. Just remember: the goal is to generate a healthy discussion about purity—not to simply get through the list of questions provided.

It's almost time to get started. But first, here are some helpful hints about using this guide in a group setting.

## BEFORE YOU START

Before using the *Technical Virgin* discussion guide, you'll want to do the following:

- » **Appraise Your Group:** It's helpful to understand where the girls in your group are coming from when it comes to talking about sexual activity. Before you hand out the book, consider giving the girls a quick and simple survey (like the one included in the handouts section of this guide) to find out their opinions on activities, including making out, oral sex, friends with benefits, etc. Using the survey results and your own intuition, determine what kind of group you have. Are the girls buying into culture's idea that a little sexual experimentation is ok? If so, you'll need to challenge them with a new understanding of purity. Maybe the girls in your group are already onboard with God's standards for



purity; then you may want to focus more heavily on helping them understand how they can stick to their beliefs. Chances are, a lot of the girls will be somewhere in the middle—and feeling a little confused about just how far is too far. Encourage them to use the *Technical Virgin* discussion group as a place to ask questions and seek answers about healthy physical boundaries.

- » **Talk to Parents:** Sex can be a delicate topic for parents and teens, so it's a good idea to give your parents a heads-up on your plans to discuss *Technical Virgin*. Hold a meeting or send out a letter informing parents about the contents of the book and offering to answer any questions they may have. Offer them a copy of the Table of Contents and share your vision for challenging the girls to follow God's standards for sexual purity. Remind parents of their tremendous influence on their daughters' sexual choices and encourage them to discuss the book with them as they read.
- » **Look in the Mirror:** As you talk about sexual activity with your group, they may have questions about your own choices in this area. Take time to think about your past and present choices—and how much you are willing to share about your sexual history. You should never lie about your past choices, but you shouldn't tell them all the gory details either. Try to focus on the lessons you learned from your experiences—both good and bad—rather than on the specific details that your girls don't really need to know. If you're especially nervous about the questions girls may ask, consider sharing your sexual history up front. That way, you will control how much you reveal while still creating an atmosphere of openness with the group.

## GROUP RULES

Remind your girls that this study group is a place where people are to be valued and respected. We suggest that you share these simple group rules with everyone before you begin.

- » **Practice confidentiality.** What's said in the group stays in the group.
- » **Respect other people's views,** even when they are different than your own.
- » **Listen. Listen. Listen.** Don't be the one who does all the talking. Let others have a chance to share their views as well.
- » **Don't interrupt.** Wait your turn to talk.

## TIPS FOR LEADING A DISCUSSION

Here are a few ideas to help you keep your discussions rolling in a meaningful way:

- » **Prepare.** Make sure you've read through the book chapters for each session. As you prepare for the sessions, consider one or two personal anecdotes you may be able to share during the group's discussion.
- » **Be yourself.** Thank students for sharing their thoughts and opinions, but don't feel that you need to agree with every one. Be honest with your students about the lessons

you've learned in your own experiences—even if they may not be what your students want to hear!

- » **Encourage students to go deeper.** When someone gives a simple response, ask them follow-up questions such as “Why do you feel that way?” “What do you mean by that?” “Tell us more.”
- » **Allow for silence.** Remember your students haven't read the questions ahead of time and they may need some time to process a response. Allow for about seven to ten seconds of silence before saying anything further, even when it makes you feel uncomfortable. If necessary, you can reword the question or move on to another topic.
- » **Include everyone in the discussion.** If it seems like the same two or three students are responding to all of your questions, look for ways to bring others into the conversation. Some students may need a little encouragement to share their thoughts and opinions. Invite them to talk by saying something like “Lisa, I'm curious what you think about this too,” or “Sara, I'd love to hear what you have to say about that.” Be sensitive to their feelings, though. If the student has nothing to say or looks extremely uncomfortable, give them an out by moving on to someone else.
- » **Be a good listener.** The goal is to have a true discussion, not just a “talk” by the group leader. Avoid putting words in the students' mouths or overreacting to comments that you may not agree with. Try asking “mirror” questions that challenge students to clarify or affirm what you've heard. For example, say “What I hear you saying is this. Is that what you mean?” or “So what you seem to be saying is this. Would you agree?”
- » **Bring God into it.** Pray for the students before and after each session. Ask God to direct your discussion and be open to the Spirit's leading. It may be that he takes you in an unexpected direction, so don't get too hung up on “the plan.” If students are genuinely interested and engaged in a healthy side topic, let the conversation go, saying a silent prayer for God to be working on their hearts as you go.



# Session One

## Introduction

### OPENING ACTIVITY: STEP BY STEP

Supplies Needed: Posterboard, Markers

For this activity, you should divide the girls into teams of two or three and give each group a piece of posterboard and some markers.

The groups should start by drawing a stairway on their posterboard. Have them label the top step “boy and girl meet.” From there, they will label the steps according to the physical progression a guy and girl generally take leading up to sex. You may give the groups a few suggestions for labels such as “flirting” or “kissing”, but encourage the groups to think for themselves what physical progression a typical couple takes.

Once they’ve completed their stairway, ask each group to draw the following lines across the stairway:

- » **Virginity Line:** Beyond this point, a person would no longer be a virgin.
- » **Just Friends Line:** Guys and girls shouldn’t go beyond this line as long as they are “just friends.”
- » **Dating Line:** Guys and girls shouldn’t go beyond this line while they are dating.

After the groups have finished their tasks, have them share their stairways with each other. Ask these follow-up questions as the groups share.

### FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

- » As you look at the other groups’ stairways, do you see any steps that you would add to your own illustration? How many of the steps would you say the average student goes through in their everyday interaction with the opposite sex?
- » Was it easy or difficult to draw the Virginity Line? Why?
- » How much difference is there between your Just Friends Line and your Dating Line? If a girl goes through many of the physical steps with guys who are “just friends,” how might that impact her dating relationships?

- » What standard did you use to draw your Dating Line? How did you decide how far a dating couple can go?

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

Before moving into further discussion, ask students to share any questions or comments they had as they read pages 9–36.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR SESSION ONE

1. Do you think you and your friends have a good sense for “how far is too far” when it comes to sexual activity or is this a blurry area for you?
  - » Is it important to have a clearly defined view on sex and how far you are willing to go? Why or why not?
  - » What outside influences shape your sense of how far is too far?
  - » Of the teens who have drawn a personal line for how far is too far, how many do you think have crossed over their line—either accidentally or intentionally?
2. Discuss this quote: “As I go through the different aspects of your sexuality, keep in mind that your goals should be pleasing God and protecting your reputation” (p. 12).
  - » How are the goals of pleasing God and protecting your reputation related?
  - » Is it important to consider what kind of image you are projecting to the world? Or is it better to not worry about what other people think of you?
3. In the introduction, Hayley suggests that there are two kinds of girls when it comes to relationships: the romantic and the recreational. (Check out p. 15 if you need the details). What would you say are the basic desires of each of these girls?
  - » How does the romantic girl see guys as a way to fill her needs?
  - » How does the recreational girl see guys as a way to fill her needs?
4. “The truth is that those of you who pledge abstinence are more likely to have oral and anal sex than other teens who haven’t made that pledge” (p. 21). Were you surprised by this statistic? Why do you think teens who pledge abstinence are more likely to have oral and anal sex?
  - » How do you think God views the “technical virgin” (see definition on p. 23)?
5. On p. 26, Hayley offers some specific actions that count as “sexual immorality.” Do you agree that all of these actions are sexual sin for someone who is unmarried? Why or why not?
  - » Are there any new trends that you would add to the list?
  - » What makes it hard to stay sexually pure and avoid doing the things on these lists?

- » Studies have shown that most teens who have had sexual intercourse wish they had waited. Why do you think this is?
6. Guys are visual beings: So to what extent are they responsible for their thoughts and actions? And to what extent are girls responsible for how their actions and dress impact a guy?
    - » When a girl is dating a guy, how do her sexual actions impact him? Is it ok to make yourself sexually tempting as long as you don't plan to act on it?
    - » Imagine a girl who has a positive impact on her boyfriend by avoiding any sexually tempting scenarios: How does she act? What does she do? What does she *not* do?
  7. Deut. 28:1-7 says that you will be blessed when you follow God's commands. What kinds of blessings come to girls who follow God's commands about avoiding sexual immorality? What are the benefits of living a sexually pure lifestyle?
  
  8. Chapter One ends with this thought: "Once you start to understand where your boundaries are, you will gain strength to stay pure" (p. 34). Why is this? How does an understanding of your boundaries help you stay pure?



# Session Two

## Danger Zones

### OPENING ACTIVITY: NOW SHOWING

*Supplies Needed: Paper, Pens, Posterboard, Markers*

Divide the girls into at least two different teams, and give a piece of posterboard, paper, and some markers to each group. Tell the teams to imagine that they are movie producers who are trying to pitch a film to a major Hollywood studio. They want to produce a romance movie for a female teen audience and they hope to recruit some major star power for their film.

Using their paper and pens, each group should write up a proposal sheet including the following details about their movie:

- » The Movie Title
- » The Plot (make a brief list of the major events that will take place)
- » The Main Characters (give a brief description of each)
- » The Celebrities (list who will play each role)

If time allows, the groups can use their posterboard to create a movie poster mock-up that will help them “sell” their idea to the studio heads.

Give the groups 10 minutes to finish their assignments, and when they’re done, let each group give a brief summary of their film. Use the following questions to spur some further discussion about movie romance:

### FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

- » Which one of the movies you created would you want to see the most? In general, what makes for a good romance movie?
- » To what extent did the chick flicks you’ve watched in the past influence the way you created your own movie plot?
- » What were the major similarities between all of your movie proposals? What are some of the major similarities between all chick flicks in general?

- » On a scale of 1–10, with 1 being “happens in real life all the time” and 10 being “would never happen”, how would you rate the films you created? In general, how realistic do you think romantic movies are?

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

Before moving into further discussion, ask students to share any questions or comments they had as they read pages 37–84.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR SESSION TWO

1. How might activities like backrubs, tickle fights, and napping together send a guy mixed messages?
  - » Do you think these activities are always unhealthy? Why or why not?
  - » How do these activities impact a person’s thought life?
2. Discuss this quote from p. 44: “It’s not enough to agree that sex is wrong: you have to agree that guys are visual creatures and that you have a huge responsibility in protecting them from your body. When you let them massage you or lay skin on skin with you but never intend to go further, you aren’t being abstinent—you are being a tease.”
  - » How are guys different than girls when it comes to sexuality?
  - » How can a girl protect a guy from her body while still letting him know that she’s into him as a boyfriend?
3. What would the ideal setting be for having a sexual relationship? How does the couple treat each other? How do they feel about each other? How does their relationship affect their spiritual lives?
  
4. Hayley reminds us that “Sex isn’t made for people who aren’t married, but sex is perfectly designed for one man and one woman in marriage” (p. 49). Why is marriage a better setting for sex than a dating relationship?
  
5. Do you think that it’s possible to have a Friends With Benefits relationship without having any emotional involvement? Why or why not?
  - » In what ways can a FWB situation turn into a more complicated relationship than if you actually date the guy?
  - » How does a FWB relationship cheapen sex?
  - » Does having a FWB relationship bring a girl closer to or farther away from God?

6. Why do you think some girls lie to themselves by saying they don't care about love and romance?
  - » Does getting involved with recreational sex and a FWB relationship give a girl more or less power in the relationship? How?
  - » How does saving her sexuality give a girl more power than when she gives it away easily?
7. In what ways is oral sex demeaning toward women?
  - » Why do girls engage in this activity anyway?
  - » How does giving oral sex affect your spiritual life? How does it affect the guy's spiritual life?
8. How do sexual choices affect the rest of a girl's life? How do they impact her future relationships?
  
9. How do you feel about Hayley's suggestion that chick flicks are like female porn?
  - » How much influence do chick flicks have on a teenager's view of love and romance?
  - » In what ways do chick flicks lead a girl to set unfair expectations about romance and guys?
10. Discuss this quote: "Romance is foreplay. It's preparation for falling in love, marriage, and forever. So maybe you might want to think about not taking it so lightly" (p. 81).
  - » In what ways does our culture take romance lightly?
  - » In what ways do teens tends to take romance lightly?



# Session Three

## The Emotion Factor

### OPENING ACTIVITY: GIRL THING OR GUY THING?

Supplies Needed: Paper, Pens, Posterboard or White Board, Markers

As the girls arrive to this session, hand them two sheets of paper and a pen or marker. Tell them to mark one sheet of paper with the words “Guy Thing” and then write “Girl Thing” on the other sheet.

When the girls have their papers ready, explain to them that you are going to read off a list of activities and you want them to vote on whether each one tends to be a guy thing or a girl thing. Tell them to vote based on what guys and girls are like *in general*, even though individual guys and girls may not always fit the stereotype.

After each item on the list, give the girls a few seconds to decide on their vote. Then have them hold up their papers at the same time and count up the number of votes to determine the consensus. If any of the votes are close, give girls from each side time to explain why they voted as they did. Ask one of the girls to keep track of the votes on a white board or a sheet of posterboard, marking down “guy” or “girl” behind each activity, according to the group consensus.

You may use the following activity list for the voting but feel free to add ideas of your own:

- » When they see each other in the hallway, they try to tackle each other or punch each other in the arm.
- » They daydream about what they want their wedding to be like.
- » When they’re upset about something, they want to take out some aggression in a physical way—such as taking a run or hitting something.
- » They enjoy talking to their friends for hours at a time.
- » They sometimes give fake compliments and/or talk behind people’s backs.
- » When they get together, they like to play video games or a game of hoops.
- » They are more emotional.
- » When they get together, they like to talk about relationships.
- » They’re really into their cars.
- » They’re more likely to undress a member of the opposite sex in their minds.

- » They love watching romantic movies.
- » They can shop for hours without getting bored.
- » They like to talk about sports.
- » When they're upset about something, they want to talk about it or write about it in a journal.
- » They're usually the one to push for more physical/sexual action in a relationship.
- » They act more mature.

## FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

- » Did your group tend to agree or disagree on whether these activities were a guy thing or a girl thing?
- » As you look at the list, do you think most of these stereotypes about guys and girls are true? Why or why not? Are there any other generalizations you would add to the list?
- » In general, how would you summarize the differences between guys and girls?
- » In what ways could these differences be a positive thing? In what ways can they be negative?

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

Before moving into further discussion, ask students to share any questions or comments they had as they read pages 85–112.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR SESSION THREE

1. In what ways do guys and girls tend to view dating relationships differently?
  - » Do you think guys and girls usually come into a relationship with the same sexual desires and expectations or are they different?
2. Do you think all guys are into dating because they want a physical payoff? Why or why not?
  - » Is it possible for a guy to put his physical desires in check for the sake of the girl he's dating? If so, what does that look like?
  - » How can you tell the difference between a guy who only cares about the physical payoff and a guy who cares more about the girl he's with?
3. How does sexual activity affect a girl's reputation?
  - » How do guys tend to view a girl once they get the physical payoff from her? Does she get more love and respect or less? Why?

4. On the differences between guys and girls Hayley says “. . . we [girls] are more turned on by the romantic than by the physical. We might enjoy the physical, but it isn't our ultimate goal like it is for the guy” (p. 89).
  - » In what ways do you think guys use romance to gain a physical payoff?
  - » Do you think girls tend to be sexually active with a guy because they really want to or because they feel some sort of pressure to do it? Do they ever feel like they “owe” the guy a physical payoff? Why or why not?
5. What do girls want from a relationship?
  - » Do you think any man can live up to all of a girl's expectations and desires? Why or why not?
  - » Is it better to seek acceptance and belonging from a guy or from God? Or can you do both in a healthy way?
6. What do you think it means to lose your “emotional virginity?”
  - » Why might it be a good idea to limit how much you invest emotionally into a relationship?
  - » How much is too much to share with a guy you are dating?
  - » Where else can a girl turn to satisfy her craving for talking, bonding, and being known?
7. Why do you think so many girls who are sexually active end up feeling depressed?
  
8. In what ways does having sex complicate a girl's life?
  - » How does sex affect her current dating relationship—and future dating relationships?
  - » How does sex affect her spiritual relationship?
  - » What about other sexual behaviors—oral sex, feeling each other up, making out, etc. Do these complicate relationships too? And if so, how?
9. What advice would you give to a friend who's been feeling bad about her sexual choices?
  
10. What practical things can a girl do keep herself from sexual sin?



# Session Four

## Starting Over, Starting Out

### OPENING ACTIVITY: A WAY WITH WORDS

Supplies Needed: Index Cards, Paper, and Pens

Before the session, write out the scenarios listed below on separate index cards. Make enough cards so that there is enough for every girl in the group. (You can repeat the scenarios if necessary—or make up some of your own.)

- » **Scenario 1:** Marissa has made some sexual mistakes with her boyfriend, but she's recently recommitted herself to sexual purity. He doesn't seem too happy about her decision. Now she's not sure if she should keep dating her boyfriend or break up with him.
- » **Scenario 2:** Kristi is feeling pretty depressed ever since she started having oral sex with various guys she's dated.
- » **Scenario 3:** Angela has been sexually pure in the past, but now that she's started dating someone seriously, she's feeling a lot of temptation to go farther physically than she wants to go.
- » **Scenario 4:** Kate just broke up with her boyfriend because he was pressuring her to go too far sexually. He's a pretty popular guy and now he and his friends are giving her a rough time at school. She's feeling pretty down about the whole situation.
- » **Scenario 5:** Trish has made a lot of mistakes sexually. She feels really guilty, and even though she wants to move on, she's having a hard time believing that God wants anything to do with her after all her mess-ups.
- » **Scenario 6:** Rachel and her boyfriend had been having sex together until a couple months ago, when she attended a purity retreat and decided she wanted to start living a more godly lifestyle. She confessed her sin and has been faithful about avoiding

sexual sin ever since. But now she found out that she has an STD that can be treated, but not cured.

- » **Scenario 7:** Anna gave up her virginity to Jeff because she thought he loved her. But just a couple weeks later he dumped her and moved on to someone else. He told a lot of his friends about it and now she's being labeled as a slut.
- » **Scenario 8:** Reese regrets some of her past sexual choices and wants to get back on track with God. But she's never really been all that spiritual and she's not sure where to start.

Put all the scenario cards in a bowl or basket and have each girl draw one card. Then have them divide into teams of two for the activity. Tell each team of girls to read their scenarios, and then choose one or two passages from the "Your Spiritual Entourage" section of the book (p. 139–153) that would be an encouragement to the girl in their scenario. They should then rewrite the verses they chose into their own words.

After the teams finish, let them take turns sharing their scenarios and the verses they would use as encouragement. Ask the following questions as you go along:

## FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

- » In general, do you think girls tend to be encouraging to each other in these situations, or do they do things that just make matters worse for the girl involved?
- » As you picked out Bible verses to share, how did it make you feel about God? What do those verses say about how God views these situations?
- » Is it hard to bring up the Bible with other people your age? Why or why not?

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

Before moving into further discussion, ask students to share any questions or comments they had as they read pages 113–138.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR SESSION FOUR

1. Discuss this quote from the book: "Having sex for the first time is a life-changing experience. . . . And it's never quite what you dreamed it would be when it happens outside of God's will" (p. 115).
  - » Why do you think sex so often fails to live up to a girl's expectations?
  - » How is sex different when it's outside of God's will?

2. Do you think people tend to look at sexual sins differently than they do other sins? If so, how are they viewed differently?
  - » Why do you think it's so hard for some people to accept God's forgiveness after messing up sexually?
3. Is it possible to take a strong stand against sexual sin while also sharing the message that God will forgive people who mess up in this area? Don't these two things contradict each other?
4. What are the two basic steps in seeking God's forgiveness?
  - » What role can other people play in this process?
  - » What's the difference between true repentance and someone who's just trying to find cheap grace?
5. What kinds of consequences might linger, even after someone has found forgiveness for their sexual sin?
  - » Why do you think God lets us live with the effects of our sin instead of just fixing everything and taking the consequences away?
  - » How should a person deal with these lingering issues?
6. Discuss the quote found on p. 133: "Wasting time deploring the past keeps God at a distance."
  - » Do you think girls tend to hang on to their guilt, even after they've sought forgiveness for sexual mistakes? Why or why not?
  - » How does hanging on to guilt keep God at a distance?
7. Whether you're starting over or just starting out when it comes to sexual choices, why do you think it's so important to draw a line sexually for yourself?
  - » In what ways has this book helped you think through how far is too far?
8. Look at the list of "getting physical" on p. 134–135. How can someone decide where they should draw the line?
  - » Do you think any of these physical activities are taken too lightly by teens today?
  - » How far down the list should a girl go with a guy who is just a friend?
  - » How far should she go when she's actually dating someone?
9. What steps can you take to help you stick to your line?



# *Handout*

# WHAT DO YOU THINK?

## **A quick survey on your thoughts about sex . . .**

*This information won't be seen by anyone except your group leader, and you don't need to put your name on this survey. Please rate the following activities according to this scale:*

1 = not ok/never

2 = not ok in most circumstances

3 = I'm not sure

4 = ok/sometimes

5 = always ok

\_\_\_\_\_ Making out with a guy who's just a friend

\_\_\_\_\_ Flirting with a guy you want to date

\_\_\_\_\_ Flirting with a guy you don't really plan to date

\_\_\_\_\_ Staying the night at a guy's house (no sex, though)

\_\_\_\_\_ Letting a guy feel you up, above your clothes

\_\_\_\_\_ Letting a guy feel you up, beneath your clothes

\_\_\_\_\_ Making out with a guy in public

\_\_\_\_\_ Having sex

\_\_\_\_\_ Having oral sex

\_\_\_\_\_ Taking naps with your boyfriend

\_\_\_\_\_ Mutual masturbation

\_\_\_\_\_ Rainbow circles

\_\_\_\_\_ Making out with a boyfriend

\_\_\_\_\_ Freak dancing

\_\_\_\_\_ Touching each other's genitalia, with clothes on

## ABOUT HAYLEY



**Hayley DiMarco** writes cutting-edge and bestselling books for teens including *Mean Girls*, *Mean Girls Gone*, *Sexy Girls*, *Technical Virgin*, *Dateable*, *The Dateable Rules*, *The Dirt on Dating*, *The Dirt on Breaking Up*, and *Stupid Parents*. Hayley also writes books for former teens including *Marriable* and *Mean Girls All Grown Up*. Her goal is to give practical answers for life's problems and encourage readers to form stronger spiritual lives. Hayley is Chief Creative Officer and founder of Hungry Planet, an independent publishing imprint and communications company that feeds the world's appetite for truth. Hungry Planet helps organizations understand and reach the multi-tasking mindset, while Hungry Planet books tackle life's everyday issues with a distinctly modern spiritual voice. For more information on Hungry Planet including leader resources and online communities that revolve around the books, visit [www.hungryplanet.net](http://www.hungryplanet.net).