

Discussion Questions



THE PUTTING GREEN WHISPERER

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About the Book

Suddenly unemployed, Allie Masterson returns home to Cary, North Carolina where she caddies for her father on the PGA Seniors Tour. There, she encounters a man who possesses an alluring gift of reading the contours of the green.

Fascinated with his uncanny ability, Allie is excited to meet the Green Whisperer—until she discovers that the easygoing caddy is actually Shoo Leonard, the boy who teased her relentlessly when they were kids.

Despite Allie's reservations, when Shoo is faced with having to overcome a hand injury, she agrees to use her sport science degree to become his trainer...and then she falls for him.

Shoo Leonard is grateful to Allie for her singular determination to get him ready for the PGA tour, but he isn't ready for anything more. Still raw from a broken engagement and focused on his career, he's content to be her fist-pumping buddy...but then he falls for her.

What seems like a happily-ever-after on the horizon takes a turn when Allie decides she's become a distraction to Shoo's career. Is it time for her to step away or can The Putting Green Whisperer find the right words to make her stay?

TITLE: The Putting Green Whisperer
Discussion:

Question 1: What do you think is behind Allie's affinity for golf?

Answer 1: Golf is something she can control, demonstrates her self worth, and represents the times she was happiest with her father.

Question 2: Allie, her father, and Shoo have made mistakes that have affected each other and themselves. What do you think were (or are) their most harmful mistakes?

Answer 2: Mill chose to send Allie to her Aunt Mae's rather than mourn and heal with Allie. His choice allowed him to sink further into depression and made Allie feel shut out. Too often Allie reacts quickly according to how she judges events. She makes mistakes when she thinks Shoo cheats to allow her father to win, Shoo has stood her up for a golf groupie, and Shoo's father is his biggest problem. Shoo is hurt that she doesn't believe the best about him. Shoo let young Allie out of the locker, but snuck away without telling her the truth. She has hated him for years. He takes Allie to his home without giving her warning. In her vulnerable state, she thinks Steve tells her to get out of Shoo's life. Also, in Shoo's blindness to Allie's romantic feelings, he hurts her when the dates he asks her on aren't dates.

Question 3: Shoo respects Olympic runner Eric Liddell as his role model and wants to be a good sports example for youth. How important do you think sports role models are for youth today? What are the pros and cons?

Answer 3: With so many fathers absent from homes today, I think children are going to look to celebrities for role models. I've observed my son admiring faithful Christian football players, making him want to be a better Christian. Sports role models have the opportunity to display perseverance, team loyalty, and honesty. However, when an athlete succumbs to such vices as spouse abuse, game gambling, adultery, lying, or addictions to alcohol, drugs, or sex, this can devastate youth, who either think doing these things is OK or give up trying to be better persons.

Question 4: Allie doesn't intend to fall in love with Shoo. Whether she realizes them or not, which of his qualities do you think draws Allie to Shoo?

Answer 4: He loves golf as she does, his golf ability is exceptional, he shows interest in her as a person, he welcomes her to use her expertise to help him, and he doesn't allow her wrong judgments to drive him away.

Question 5: Because of his past family problems, Shoo's pro golfer father advises Shoo to choose a career other than pro golf, but Shoo believes God's calling him to be a golf role model. He wants to honor his father and God. He wants to play pro golf and have a family. Have you experienced a similar dilemma? What were your opposing options, how did you resolve your predicament, and what were the results?

Answer 5: I believed God called me to befriend a widow in her eighties. I worked a demanding job and didn't want to give up part of my Saturdays to visit her. I obeyed God and was blessed by our ten-year friendship.

Question 6: How does Shoo's relationship with Allie change and grow, and how is his relationship with God involved in this process?

Answer 6: At first, Shoo sees Allie as a ministry. His belief that God has called him to befriend her, keeps him going when she wrongly judges him. When she loyally joins him in his golf goals, he considers her his best friend. He believes God has orchestrated her to be his trainer, affirming his golf career. As in a team or marriage, he begins to depend on her and wants to spend non-golf time with her and take her home to meet his family. When his eyes are opened to her romantic love for him, he believes God has chosen her for him and that he can have a career and a family.

Question 7: How does Allie's involvement in Shoo's career change during the story, starting from when she first witnesses his green-reading gift?

Answer 7: She wants to meet the golf wonder; his golf expertise and his past ill treatment of her cause inner conflicting feelings; she knows her expertise could help him; she's excited to be his trainer; his career success becomes her goal; she considers his father or any obstacle to his career and success an enemy; she overstep boundaries in expressing her opinions; she becomes his main source of encouragement; she's willing to do anything to get him ready; she's willing to take her "enemy's" advice for Shoo's good; she sacrifices her love for Shoo for his career; she wants to do her job as his caddy; and she submits to Shoo's belief that their relationship with each other and Jesus is more important than golf.

Question 8: In Chapter 8, Shoo refers to Proverbs 27:17: As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another (NIV). What do you think Shoo meant by this verse in referring to Allie?

Answer 8: Allie willingly comes alongside of Shoo, trains him, and pushes and encourages him, helping him to be the best golfer he can be.

Question 9: Under her shirts, Allie wears a cross pendant. What do you think the cross symbolizes about her faith?

Answer 9 She's angry with God and delegates Him to the "closet" beneath her shirt. It also represents her Christian mother that she keeps close to her heart. She's forced to bring God out of the "closet" to help others. When it's lost it symbolizes her state of being a lost sheep and what a tragedy it is to lose faith.

Question 10: What characteristics make Allie and Shoo so opposite?

Answer 10: Shoo is patient; Allie rushes into everything. He's calm; she's intense. Shoo has a strong relationship with God; Allie is angry with God. Shoo thinks his career is important, but so are his relationships with family, friends, and God. At first, Allie harbors distrust with her father,

Karen, Shoo, his friends, and his father and then, if they pass her judgment, she becomes loyal to them. Shoo doesn't want a romantic relationship and enjoys his friends, including Allie. Allie doesn't want a romantic relationship, including one with Shoo, but falls hard for him.

