



Reader's Guide

*Tips for Running a Successful Book Club Discussion
for Daddy Needs a Drink (The author wrote this part)*

1. Consult *Life Is Meals* by James and Kay Salter. A good book club should have the feeling (and aroma) of a dinner party. Wine is always a good lubricator or, if you're weary of the noble rot, try making mojitos. It's fun (and multicultural) to say if conversation grows dull. Just shout "Mojitos!" and raise a glass. All the hip people are doing it.
2. Dress Up! There's nothing more civilized than discussing a good book in an ascot or swathed in taffeta. Dust off those pearls or monogrammed cufflinks. If you feel the need, speak with a hint of a British accent like Madonna. We all sound smarter that way.
3. When you go to the bathroom, it's perfectly permissible as an enlightened reader of fine literature to look in the medicine cabinet. Flannery O'Connor did. Hunter S. Thompson sampled from them. However, you may only peek if you wash your hands thoroughly afterward.



Note to host: It's not a bad idea to post a sign that reads: **Readers Must Wash Hands Before**

Exiting Restroom. Makes everyone feel a little better knowing such a fine work is being handled with clean hands.

4. If you get cut off, flip off! There's nothing worse than not being able to finish off a brilliant insight or relevant anecdote. Establish at the beginning of the discussion that you will flip someone off if you're not finished speaking. Tell the other members of your group that they can do the same. This clear signal will eliminate any awkward pauses or hard feelings.
5. There should be frequent dance breaks if possible. After twenty minutes of deep and pithy discussion, the host should yell, "Dance break!" and play an upbeat song. The host must be careful not to interrupt; otherwise a bouquet of middle fingers may be directed at such host. If agreed upon in advance, someone yelling "Mojitos!" may also trigger dance breaks. Playlist for dance breaks can be agreed upon via email ahead of time or the host may keep list secret to introduce the element of surprise. Some bands may include but shall not be limited to: Earth, Wind, and Fire; Outkast; De La Soul; The Ramones; The Wiggles (big surprise); Van Morrison; C+ C Music Factory; Gorillaz; MC Hammer (could be considered an unwelcome surprise); The Jackson Five (you know you love them); Britney Spears (that poor, poor girl).

Note: The following people may or may not be available via conference call to answer questions about *Daddy Needs a Drink*: Robert Wilder (author), Ben Wilder (father and slight curmudgeon), Crazy Eddie Wilder (brother, shaman, actor, and general wackjob), Poppy and London Wilder (cute though often unreliable children), Tom G-Funk (Rob's smart Southern friend), Regina (the pregnant woman who cuts Wilder's hair), Lauren (the pregnant friend of Wilder's who designed his website), and Shireen (Wilder's Zoroastrian friend who is related to the man who coined the phrase *Don't Worry, Be Happy*).

Discussion Questions

(The author wrote this part but please pretend it was someone taller maybe, with silver facial hair, fewer chins, and bifocals)

1. In the first essay of the book, "Hoarding Names," Wilder discusses the madness that ensued while trying to name his two children, Poppy and London. Discuss which names each book group member discarded when he or she finally named his or her kids. Check to see if anyone in the group used those names and, if not, make fun of all the discarded names. Then elaborate on how those names would not fit any human or animal regardless of physical characteristics, religion, or region of the country. Then throw your heads back and laugh like a pack of hyenas.
2. In "Baby Oh Baby Monitor," Wilder quotes enough profanity to make even his publisher nervous. Divide the group into two sides: those for profanity and those against. For those who don't mind a bit of swearing, list all the dirty words you know and say them with

varying degrees of intonation and volume. For those who are offended by the profane, grab a Sharpie and cross out all the words you don't like (only in that essay please). After about ten minutes, someone yell "Mojitos!" and play the radio mix of 50 Cent's "In Da Club."

3. In one of his more sentimental moments, Wilder writes about three different places he sees people (including himself) cry. Discuss all the places you see others weep. Where do you weep? Award a prize to the book group member who can cry on command. Prizes may include but shall not be limited to: a 16 pack of Kleenex, two free rentals from Netflix chick-flick list, a plate of brownies, a sheet of feline-themed stickers, a large baby bottle full of stolen airplane liquor, and lunch with the cast of *What about Brian*.
4. In the essay titled "Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle Hot-Sauces the Baby Jesus," many different types of child discipline are discussed by many different types of folks. What methods have you used to halt thumb sucking or prevent temper tantrums? What about nose-picking? Shoplifting? Arson? How did you get your kids to stop watching *Doodlebops*? Feel free to expand the discussion to include other groups outside your immediate family. For example, how did you get you in-laws to cease mispronouncing all the street names in your hometown or your dry-cleaning attendant to stop staring at your tidy little chest? Coerce your neighbors to quiet down during their nocturnal sexy-time sessions? That sort of stuff.
5. Who is the most annoying child actor in television history? Now guess at the felonies such child star has committed. Mojitos!
6. Supernanny: Savior or fascist?
7. Dr. Phil: same question as # 6.
8. Morality question: Would you spank another person's kid if he was uttering profanity while performing stem cell research on a cloned sheep that had been drinking breast milk with some alcohol in it?
9. *Daddy Needs a Drink* is set mostly in Santa Fe, New Mexico, but flashbacks include Sarasota, Florida, and Westport, Connecticut. If you had twenty dollars, a shivering Chihuahua, and were dressed in a yellow jump suit (no sword, sorry) like Uma Thurman in *Kill Bill*, in which of these locations would you rather be stranded and why? Follow up question: would you run to or run from David Carradine? Darryl Hannah?
10. Worst Case Scenario question: If you were in the men's room at the Macaroni Grill without a diaper bag, explain how you could bathe, swaddle, and diaper your child using only objects found therein. You may not be wearing Depends undergarments at the time.
11. Leashes for kids who run: pro or con? Discuss.

12. Leashes for toxic celebrities like Lindsay Lohan, Paris Hilton, and Britney Spears (that poor, poor girl): pro or con? Discuss.
13. Go around and have each member tell a personal story about raising children that includes one of the following scenarios: a) farting in the bathtub, b) projectile vomiting, c) peeing on an adult, d) exploding diapers, e) losing and/or damaging a household item because of sleep deprivation, f) sore nipples, g) fussy eating habits, h) mispronunciation of common and/or uncommon words or phrases by toddler, i) unrelated answer to simple question by toddler or sleep-deprived adult, j) mimicry of adult speech and/or mannerisms by toddler or the reverse by tipsy and/or sleep-deprived adult, k) botched plastic surgery.
14. If time allows, pull out baby pictures of your children and respond with one of the following: “Oh, how cute!”; “They grow up so fast!”; “I really miss that stage”; “Where did you buy that comforter?”; “The caul will fall off, right?”
15. At the end of the gathering, hand out extra copies of *Daddy Needs a Drink* as parting gifts. It’s a display of damn fine manners and a great way to remember such a damn fine book club meeting. Those little gems can then be spread throughout the land like other essential texts. Leave them in hotel rooms, Laundromats, and/or your pediatrician’s waiting room. Slip them inside those Koala Kare changing tables at airports and restaurant restrooms. As Wilder’s brother Crazy Eddie the Shaman would say, “Spread the love and feel the love!” (Sanitary note: please insert *Daddy Needs a Drink* in a Ziploc bag when leaving in public restrooms)