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A Moscow School That Turns Frogs into Princes

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Questions of personal development and picking up women being discussed at a nationwide Russian forum.

Shy young lads frightened of the fairer sex, brash businessmen with little free time for traditional courtship, married men in their 40s looking to snap up a few lovers on the sly — all manner of male disciples flock to RMES (Russian Model for Effective Seduction) training courses to have the inner secrets of the seduction arts revealed to them.

But the key to success isn't a good pickup line.

Running for its 13th year, and having led training in over 87 cities worldwide, RMES offers "Basic" and "Master" level courses teaching what many believe to be unteachable.

Potential new students may be skeptical of RMES' claims that their techniques can guarantee successful seduction. Can they really date models without looking like Brad Pitt or lavishing

them with riches? The "former pupils" segment of the introductory slideshow puts these questions to rest. Slide by slide, "before" photos show scruffy, ill-clothed men. The "after" photos depict suave, dashing men, posing in swanky clubs with a gorgeous woman hanging on each arm.

But there's no magic bullet involved, RMES staff say. "The main focus of our teaching," trainer Denis Shalnov told The Moscow Times, "is on how to become a better man." A major part of this, he explained, is helping men get over their fear of women, and teaching them to communicate with them in a genuine and confident manner. "There are four key factors in being able to attract a woman," Shalnov explained. "Your appearance, how you feel, how you speak, and what you say." The last two are often key stumbling points for men attempting to attract a woman.

"One of the biggest mistakes men make," trainer Petr Kuznetsov said in an interview, "is to think that women are the same as men. But we have a different mentality, a different language. We're just different."

In addition to training in body language, vocal tonality, conversational technique, the RMES trainers — all of whom have diplomas in psychology — teach more specific methods of seduction. A four-hour seminar lectures men on how to successfully pick up women in nightclubs. The students eagerly jot down advice on how to dress, how to get correctly psyched up, how to pre-party, how to get past face control. Trainer Sergei Bogdanov schools them on how to conduct themselves in a club. They are advised not to dance unless they are able to. They are taught to initiate conversation with a woman sincerely, avoiding the use of scripted openers. They are taught hacks to overcome their fear of approach and how to persuade a woman to come home with them that night. They are even taught how to have sex with a woman they have just met.



RMES

Success with women is a matter of confidence, honesty and a few skills.

For a modest price, students get the opportunity to put the theory into practice before the mentors during an in-field workshop at Moscow's Jagger club. A table is booked, limousines wait outside, and at 1 a.m., the trainers tell them their missions for the night. Some are simple: chat with a girl and make her smile once during the interaction (do this with four girls). Others are harder: get a girl to make out with you for a photo, or to join you for a late-night limo ride. "Out of 20 guys, about six or seven had sex with a girl that night," Bogdanov said of July's workshop. "That's a good result; most of them had never had sex with a girl from a club before."

Despite the marketing emphasis on seduction, RMES trainers eschew the term "pickup" to describe what they teach. This is partly because RMES offers a variety of training, such as business communication and relationship coaching. "Teaching men how to meet women is only part of what we do now," Shalnov explained.

Moreover, for many people the term "pickup" has a negative connotation, associated with companies and trainers whose teachings are seen to be misogynistic and immoral.

As Bogdanov said, "There are many training courses out there which do teach you bad things. I call it 'The Dark Side.' We teach men to love and respect women and to do everything to ensure that the woman has a good time too."

Nor, according to Shalnov, does RMES advocate manipulating or lying to women. "We teach men not to lie to women," he explains. "Lying is not an effective strategy, nor is it correct behavior." The one exception to this rule is the trainers' non-judgmental stance toward men who are looking to cheat on their wives or girlfriends. "To each his own," they say.

Several of the trainers themselves are now in happy, long-term relationships, and attribute this to their own passage through RMES training, which gave them the skills and confidence they needed to finally find and win over the right woman. Bogdanov is one such example, and strongly urges men to develop themselves and improve as individuals. "The ability to attract people isn't just a couple of skills," he said. "It's your whole life."

RMES courses are conducted in Russian, but individual coaching is available in English. See rmes.ru *for details.*

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