

The True Love Thing to Do

Seminar Workbook

**A Marriage Preparation, Abstinence &
Character Education Seminar**

by Peter Falkenberg Brown

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~ A World Community Press Book ~

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Seminar Workbook

This workbook is part of a curriculum kit that contains the workbook, a Seminar Graduation Certificate, the "True Love Thing to Do" Pledge, Free Membership Access to the True Love Thing to Do Website, at <http://worldcommunity.com/tl>, and an optional "True Love Thing to Do" T-Shirt.

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A Note for Groups or Individuals wishing to Host a Seminar:

Although the World Community Network produces some seminars as "in-house" seminars, the "True Love Thing to Do" Seminar has been designed as a seminar that can be hosted by anyone who purchases the material. The seminar is simple to produce, because it uses the "Reading / Discussion" format.

There are only two copyright requirements to host a seminar:

A - Purchase the material (copying is not allowed and is an infringement of copyright law.)

B - Even when the seminar is integrated into a larger event, please maintain a reference to the seminar name ("The True Love Thing to Do Seminar") and the publisher name (The World Community Network)

and the book Imprint (The World Community Press). That's all! So ... good luck in your next seminar!

A **World Community Press** Book ~ Published by The World Community Network

<http://worldcommunity.com>

Contact the author at peterbrown@worldcommunity.com

Visit the World Community Network web site at "worldcommunity.com". We publish an online journal called *The World Community Journal*, with columns on topics such as marriage, parenting, family, and society, as well as family humor columns, marriage resources and a discussion forum.

The World Community Network (WCN) is a publisher of "heartistic education curricula", such as this seminar workbook, under the imprint **The World Community Press**. We are currently working on a new seminar called "**Building a Marriage of True Love**", by Peter Falkenberg Brown. Additional publications include seminar talks on a variety of family oriented topics, available at our website. Mr. Brown is also available as a public speaker.

Ordering the Seminar Curriculum Kit



The True Love Thing to Do Seminar has been written for teenagers and young adults. The seminar kit is available for bulk purchase by schools, organizations, churches, government departments or other institutions. Individual copies are also available. **Note: you can make money as a "TL Campaign Rep"!**

To order, or for more information, please visit our website at <http://worldcommunity.com/tl>.



Table of Contents & Suggested Schedule

Quotes about the Curriculum	i
Purpose of the Curriculum: Note to Educators, Parents & Students	iii
A Note about the Language, Vocabulary & Examples Used in this Curriculum	iv
Note to Seminar Moderators: Recommended Seminar Format	v
The True Love Thing to Do Pledge.	vii
The True Love Thing to Do Annual Campaign & Contest	viii


Session One (20 minutes of Reading / 10 minutes of Discussion) . 1

 The True Love Thing to Do	2
 Sexual Activity and the Realm of Heart, Part 1	6
☺ Round Table Discussion Topics & Quotes to Live By	8




Session Two (20 minutes of Reading / 10 minutes of Discussion) . 11

 Sexual Activity and the Realm of Heart, Part 2	12
 Sex Should Be Unselfish	14
☺ Round Table Discussion Topics & Quotes to Live By	18
☺ 10 Minute Break	

Session Three (25 minutes of Reading / 10 minutes of Discussion) 21

 How to Save Ourselves 'til Marriage	22
☺ Round Table Discussion Topics & Quotes to Live By	30
☺ Optional 10 Minute Break	

Session Four (30 minutes of Reading / 10 minutes of Discussion) . 33

 Preparing to Have Children	34
 Becoming a Person of True Love.	35
 Building a Marriage of True Love	38
☺ Round Table Discussion Topics & Quotes to Live By	44
☺ Fill Out Evaluation Form	

Evaluation Form	47
Graphical True Love Thing to Do Pledge	49
Graphical Graduation Certificate	51

Quotes about the Curriculum

▣▣▣▣▶ **Quotes from Parents and Leaders**

(Note that some of these quotes reference the original name of the curriculum, which was titled “Abstinence Because of Love”.)

We’re always looking for additional quotes from parents, leaders and students. If you’d like to provide a quote, please email us or call us!

- ❖ “This booklet is a must read for those who want to learn a positive way to promote what for some has become a negative concept ... abstinence! Love is such a warm and fuzzy word, but this booklet will help you realize that true love will always demand sacrifice. To love someone enough to want the best for them, spiritually, emotionally and physically will involve hard work! To say no to sex outside of marriage is saying, ‘I want the best for you and the best for myself,’ and it can be difficult to do, but it will be so rewarding! Reward yourself and read *Abstinence Because of Love*.”

***Molly Kelly ~ National Lecturer on chastity and
a huge fan of today's teens!***

- ❖ “Today's society bombards young people with messages that confuse sex with true love. *Abstinence Because of Love* will help young people understand that true love, as defined by respect and lifelong commitment, is the key to long-term sexual and emotional fulfillment.”

Shepard Smith ~ Institute for Youth Development

- ❖ “Provides a clear, straightforward explanation of why abstinence and lasting love are interconnected.”

Richard Panzer ~ Founder of Free Teens, Inc.

- ❖ “Peter Brown has bravely tackled an important and difficult subject. It is a work that lives up to its stated goal of ‘examining life with an active mind.’ More importantly, the love and concern that have been infused into his writing come through clearly and in abundance.”

***Daniel K. Berman, Ph.D. ~ Harvard graduate
and former college instructor***

- ❖ “It has given me much to ponder...to add to the foundation for abstinence I already have formed. I see the unselfishness of which he writes so strongly in his family, and now understand the depth of love I also see.”

Lesley Austin ~ Mother and parent of two boys, Virginia

▣▣▣▣ **Quotes from Students**

- ❖ “It’s refreshing to see a positive curriculum that provides real answers for today’s teens. I give it an A+.”

*Ms. Lena Daugherty ~ age 18 ~ student,
Tidewater Community College*

- ❖ “I thought it was an awesome, awesome curriculum. It was a good message, especially for teens like me, who don’t know how important purity is. It should be spread throughout the nation.”

Ms. Whitney Edwards ~ age 15 ~ High School student

- ❖ “Before going to the *True Love Thing to Do* seminar, I had already had a belief in abstinence. After going to the seminar, my beliefs were reinforced and I had a better background to share my beliefs with my peers. It was very enjoyable, with its discussion type format. I was given many facts about abstinence.”

Ms. Kay Peemoeller ~ age 18 ~ student, University of Virginia

- ❖ “I think the program is very helpful, and has given me a new perspective on dating, abstinence and marriage.”

Mr. Shori Matsumoto ~ age 15 ~ High School student

- ❖ “What I liked about this booklet is that it scientifically and logically explains how free sex is socially damaging, and how it shatters that old idea, ‘do what you feel, and if it’s not hurting anyone else, it’s okay’. I also liked how this booklet empowers young adults, teenagers and preteens that are planning to stay virgins until they marry. I think this idea should be taught in public and private schools.”

Mr. Freeson Daugherty ~ age 17 ~ High School Student

- ❖ “*The True Love Thing to Do* is a real jog back to reality, and clears up and explains why abstinence is the true love thing to do. A must read for teenagers who are struggling with dates, and intimate relationships that could lead to hurt.”

Mr. Tymon Brown ~ age 14 ~ Jr. High School Student

Purpose of the Curriculum:

Note to Educators, Parents & Students

The True Love Thing to Do is a Marriage Preparation, Abstinence and Character Education Seminar that serves three purposes:

- **Marriage Preparation:** *Although the curriculum contains a substantial emphasis on sexual abstinence prior to marriage, it also provides an overall viewpoint of unselfish love in marriage, as well as a section specifically about marriage (“Building a Marriage of True Love”, a subset of a larger seminar on marriage that WCN produces).*

*For this reason, we have decided to position this curriculum as a “**Marriage Preparation, Abstinence and Character Education Seminar**”, rather than simply “abstinence education”. Abstinence education is vitally important – but we believe that young people need a long range vision of ethical life, true love and marriage that goes beyond the difficult, relatively short-term period of abstinence until marriage.*

- **Abstinence Education:** *The curriculum seeks to educate teenagers and young adults about the emotional and “heart-centered” reasons to remain sexually abstinent prior to marriage, in order to prepare for a healthy marriage and to avoid the risks inherent in pre-marital sex.*

*Although many abstinence education programs provide important information about AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, this curriculum seeks to fill a niche in its coverage of the healthy maturation and maintenance of love as a primary **motivator** for young people to remain abstinent until marriage, and then remain faithful within marriage.*

- **Character Education:** *Because the curriculum deals with the ethics of unselfish love and unselfish human relationships, we believe that the curriculum will help provide young people with direction for the growth of their characters. It will help them manage their everyday relationships in an unselfish and ethical manner, and will positively influence the issues of conflict resolution, responsibility and honesty in the home, in schools and in the workplace.*

We believe that training young people to adopt the “True Love Thing to Do” ethical viewpoint of unselfish love and service will be of great benefit to employers in both small business and larger corporations.

☞ *Our hope is that young people will gain a new vision and understanding of marriage that is centered upon true unselfish love, and will thus gain the hope and emotional power to maintain their purity and prepare themselves for marriage, parenting and an unselfish life that will contribute to a world of peace.*

*The “**True Love Thing to Do Pledge**” attempts to highlight these long-term goals.*



A Note about the Language, Vocabulary & Examples Used in this Curriculum

This curriculum was written for teenagers and young people in their twenties.

Our goal is to publish the curriculum in multiple languages, including Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Japanese and other languages. (If you're interested in translating it, please contact us.)

Because of the difficulties in translating idiomatic English or the current brand of teenage "slang," we have decided to stay away from using "way cool" phrases that might be difficult to translate. Instead, the author has written the curriculum in standard English with the intention of making the meaning as clear as possible.

The vocabulary is as standard as possible. Some of the words might be a bit tough for a 13 year old – but should prove easy enough for older teenagers. Even 13-year-olds will probably have read books such as *Wind in the Willows* or *Tom Sawyer*, which include phrases such as:

“... the brutal minions of the law fell upon the hapless Toad...” and

“... when he [Tom] climbed cautiously in at the window, he uncovered an ambuscade, in the person of his aunt; and when she saw the state his clothes were in, her resolution to turn his Saturday holiday into captivity at hard labor became adamantine in its firmness.”

The author promised that he wouldn't use the words “ambuscade” or “adamantine” anywhere in the curriculum. However, he did insist on using the word “minion” :-).

We've also included a glossary of definitions at the bottom of pages that contain words that may require more explanation.

The examples in the curriculum are also written for clarity of meaning – for multiple cultures. Thus, one might say that some of the dialogue in the examples might be different in real life – and that will be true. The reader has full license to adjust the dialogue to fit his or her local culture. How do you say, “Radical, dude!” in Chinese?



~ mini-on: *n.* An obsequious follower or dependent; a sycophant.

~ am-bus-cade: *n.* An ambush.

~ ad-a-man-tine: *adj.* Unyielding; inflexible.

Note to Seminar Moderators:

Recommended Seminar Format

Schedule (*see the Table of Contents for a Schedule Breakdown*)

“*The True Love Thing to Do*” Seminar has been created to follow the “Reading / Discussion” format. Students follow the text in their workbooks while one or more “Readers” in the front of the room read the text. Although the seminar is broken into four sections, it works well to divide the seminar into Part 1 and Part 2, with a ten minute refreshment break in between. It’s also possible to host the seminar on two different days, divided into the same two parts. Each section consists of readings and round table discussions. The seminar takes approximately 2½ hours in total.

Moderator

The entire seminar may be staffed by one adult, who serves as a moderator. The function of the moderator is minimal but important. The more that the students do, the better. The moderator’s main jobs are to keep things moving on time, to answer questions that arise, to help select readers, discussion moderators and table reporters, and to generally ensure that things go smoothly.

Readers

Although it’s possible to conduct the seminar with one reader for all four sessions, it provides variety if each session – or at least each part – has a different reader. The dialogue section on “Apollo Stone” can also be acted out, with two students reading each character (it’s fun, and provides variety).

The quality of the reading is critical to the success of the seminar, i.e., readers should read at the right pace and should enunciate. Thus, the moderator should choose the readers with care (if possible). *Note that the Discussion Questions can also be read by the reader, to prepare the students for the round table discussions.*

Round Table Discussions

After the text and questions are read, the students participate in “Round Table Discussions” (which are facilitated by arranging the seating at round tables). Note however that the essential point is that the students talk over the discussion topics in small groups, even if the tables are rectangular, or even if you have no tables at all. The Round Table Discussion Topics are meant as guidelines, and can certainly be modified by an experienced moderator.

Depending upon the length of the seminar, it may not be possible for each group to cover all of the topics listed. At the discretion of the seminar leader, each group may pick the topics that they want to discuss. It’s not necessary to cover all the topics – the main point is that the students engage in a lively discussion. Ten minutes is a good time frame for a discussion, in order to limit the total seminar time to two and a half hours. The moderator should issue a “one minute” time warning toward the end of

each discussion. It may be appropriate, depending upon the age of the students, or the opinion of the seminar leaders, to divide the round table discussion groups by gender. (We recommend it.) The seminar does **not** cover anything explicit, and thus, should not ordinarily cause embarrassment. Because the seminar's focus is on complete sexual abstinence before marriage, character education, and marriage preparation, we believe that students will find the discussions inspiring and tremendously helpful.

Discussion Moderators

We recommend that each table or group have a discussion leader or moderator who will make every effort to keep the discussion on track and moving forward. It's important that each student has a chance to voice his or her own opinions; thus the table moderator needs to guide people to not talk too long, and to be considerate of other's opinions. If there are no discussion leaders on staff, then we suggest that the group choose a discussion leader from the students seated at the table. In fact, the students are usually pleased to be selected as discussion leaders and reporters.

Table Reporters

Each table should have a student note taker, who writes down brief bullets or prose about each person's comments. The table reporter may then be called upon by the seminar leader to report to the entire group about the conclusions or views that were expressed at the table. Note that not every table needs to report; it's entirely dependent upon time. The reports should be brief, usually one or two minutes, and the reporter should read the questions that the comments covered.

Special Speakers

As an optional element, special speakers can present short ten-minute talks after each reading, prior to the discussion, to lend an additional flavor to the seminar. Without additional speakers, and with two ten minute breaks, the seminar should last approximately two and a half hours.

Evaluation Forms

An evaluation form is included at the back of the workbook. Feedback from students and moderators about the seminar content, as well as the overall impression of the seminar, is extremely valuable. (*We also like getting quotes about the seminar, or one of the topics, to include in revised versions in the future.*) Please ask the students to fill out the evaluation forms, and hand them in to the moderator. If the moderator could mail them to our office, with a note about how many students attended, and their reaction to the seminar, we'd truly appreciate it.

After the seminar, the students are encouraged to read and adopt the "True Love Thing to Do Pledge". Moderators are encouraged to clip out and present to the students the graduation certificate and pledge that are included in the back of the booklet. True Love Thing to Do T-Shirts are available for graduates. Graduates and other interested persons are encouraged to participate in the True Love Thing to Do Contest as "Campaign Reps". ☞

The True Love Thing to Do Pledge

Graduates of the True Love Thing to Do Seminar are encouraged to adopt the “True Love Thing to Do Pledge” as a way of life, in order to educate themselves to become individuals of true love – and to prepare for a marriage of true love in the future. A special formatted copy of the True Love Thing to Do Pledge is included in the back of this booklet, as well as a Graduation Certificate.

The True Love Thing to Do Pledge

Building a marriage of true love and a family of true love is central to a lifetime of happiness. Because I believe in the value and power of God’s true unselfish love,

- 1 ~ I will maintain my purity before marriage and will maintain fidelity in marriage.*
- 2 ~ I will educate myself to become a person of true love and will live for the sake of others by expressing unselfish love to all people, throughout my daily life.*
- 3 ~ I will learn how to resolve conflicts and build unselfish relationships of peace through the power of true love and service – and will thus prepare myself to build a marriage of true love in the future.*
- 4 ~ I will encourage others to adopt the true love way of life as a foundation for marriages and families of true love and as the foundation for a peaceful world.*

The True Love Thing to Do Annual Campaign & Contest

Each year (at the discretion of the publisher), the World Community Network hosts the “True Love Thing to Do Contest”, ending on December 1st of each year.

The seminar graduates are encouraged to participate in the True Love Thing to Do Campaign and Contest. The spirit of the campaign and contest are expressed in the fourth *True Love Thing to Do Pledge*:

“I will encourage others to adopt the true love way of life as a foundation for marriages and families of true love and as the foundation for a peaceful world.”

The contest is simple: seminar graduates (with their parents’ written permission if they’re under age) and other interested persons are asked to become “True Love Thing to Do Campaign Representatives”. As Campaign Reps, they are asked to reach out to churches, schools, organizations and neighborhood organizations, and persuade the leaders of those groups to purchase quantities of the seminar curriculum at a wholesale price so that the groups can hold seminars for their teenagers.

By doing so, TL Campaign Reps have the opportunity to touch the lives of many other teenagers and young people. At the same time, TL Campaign Reps get a commission for each copy of the curriculum that they sell! This is a great way for teenagers to earn extra money.

The winners of the contest are the Campaign Reps who sell the highest quantity of curriculum booklets during the year, that match or exceed the posted contest goals.

The contest goals and prize details will be posted each year on the True Love Thing to Do website. Each year on December 1st, the winners will be announced on the True Love Thing to Do website at <http://worldcommunity.com/tl>.

The contest and the contest prizes are sponsored by the World Community Network, the publisher of the curriculum. Note that contest levels, prizes and the contest itself may change over time. Check the above website for updated information about the contest and prizes or email the publisher at TL@worldcommunity.com.



Session One

Readings:



The True Love Thing to Do



Sexual Activity and the Realm of Heart, Part 1



Round Table Discussions



Round Table Reports

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The True Love Thing to Do

Why should we save ourselves 'til marriage, and why is this “the true love thing to do?” When we fall madly in love with someone, at the ripe old age of fifteen, sixteen, or even younger, we don't want to think about anything except our new found love. Why should we refrain from holding hands, dating, kissing or having sex with our new girlfriend or boyfriend? Why should we *prepare* ourselves for marriage, and how can we do that?

There are thousands of messages blaring at us to convince us that “if it feels good, do it,” or “the animals do it, so why shouldn't we?” Sex is everywhere, and living together without marriage has become more and more popular. There are so many divorces, and so many teenagers who have seen how difficult marriage can be, that the ancient concepts of true love, courtship and faithful marriage are in severe danger of disappearing altogether. Some teenagers may even say, “*We enjoy sex. Why should we stop having sex, and why should we wait until marriage, when we don't even believe in marriage?*”

Hard questions, indeed. Sex does feel good, most especially when love is present. We hope to answer these questions more, in the course of this seminar. Our hope is that by the end of this seminar, (even though we all might not agree with everything,) we can all still say, “*Preparing for marriage is a topic worth talking about.*” Examining life with an active mind, and talking about things that matter, will open up new options for our future. When it comes to sex and love, we all want the brightest future possible.

This seminar doesn't push “old-fashioned traditions”, the “status quo” or the “newest thing.” Human beings owe it to themselves to lead “an examined life.” It doesn't make sense to agree with something just because “everyone's doing it” or because “it's always been that way.” Consider women's rights. For thousands of years, women couldn't vote and had no rights. (This is still the case in some countries today.) Because the repression of women was a “time-honored” tradition, was it right? Of course not.

Quite plainly, teenagers, who are vastly more intelligent than they're sometimes given credit for, need the information that will allow them to make decisions about life based on common sense, logic and *deep reflection about the right questions.*

This seminar pushes the envelope, and breaks with some popular opinion, by taking the approach that we should postpone sexual activity until marriage not just because of “safe sex”, pregnancies or other external factors, but because of love itself. “True” love to be exact. The term “true love” has fallen into disrepute; perhaps because of the gigantic failure rate in relationships, but also certainly because of the cynicism in our culture today. We need to take a moment to look at the term “true love,” and see if we can actually use it and appreciate it as a valid goal to strive for in our lives.

Before we look at the question, “*Why is preparing ourselves for marriage the true love thing to do?*” we need to establish a foundation for our discussion. For example, if we were only machines, without feelings, it wouldn’t make sense to discuss true love. It wouldn’t have any meaning for us. Luckily for us, we’re more than machines. We’re living, breathing people who all share certain common traits that allow us to communicate about mutual ideas, hopes and dreams. The desire for love is a human characteristic that cuts across all boundary lines such as race, language or culture.

Even though various cultures in history have created many different outlooks about love, it should be possible to peel away the layers of tradition and arrive at a philosophical viewpoint about love that makes sense to most of us. To do that, we start this seminar by examining basic concepts about love.

It’s not good enough to be simplistic, or quick, in our definition of true love. It’s important to understand true love with our hearts, not just our minds – and to feel it through our experience. Therefore, let’s explore that vast uncharted area called our hearts, by looking at our own life experience.



If we think back to our earliest memory, what comes to our mind? No matter how old or sophisticated we might have become, for many of us, it’s usually the memory of our father and mother caring for us. Perhaps we remember their kind faces peering down at us as we awoke from a comfortable nap. We may remember them feeding us, or playing with us with our favorite toy.

Our memories of our very early childhood are often precious, because they are frequently memories of being loved unconditionally by one or both of our parents, or perhaps by our grandparents.

As we grew older, our relationships with our parents may have grown more complex – especially when we became teenagers. Life is often confusing, and sometimes we might have lost sight of the fact that our parents have loved us many,

many times in our life. If we feel hurt by our parents, it's still very important to remember the love that they did express.

The love that many of us received and felt as young children, coming from our parents, is called parental love. It was special because it was *unselfish* love. Sometimes we might have taken it for granted, or not really thought about it at all. It isn't easy to empathize with the feelings of our parents until we ourselves become parents. It isn't easy to understand parental love if we don't yet have children, or at least have spent a lot of time with children. Parental love is related very closely with true love, so let's examine parental love a bit more.

Think of a very young child that you know – perhaps a brother or sister, or a cousin or family friend. When you look at a three year old, and see how cute they can be, and see how much they love to smile and play, don't you feel delighted inside? Doesn't that particular little boy or girl make you smile, and make you want to give them a gift, or something especially yummy to eat?

If you smiled just now, or even thought about smiling, it means that you are already experiencing unselfish love! You are on the way to becoming a person of parental love; someone who cares for the happiness of others.

Of course, parental love is more than smiling at a cute little boy or girl. Parental love is deep, and profound and patient. Parental love is willing to endure yucky diapers and temper tantrums and other uncomfortable things. Parental love can even see past awful monstrosities like pimples on the end of one's nose. Didn't your mother comfort you when you were staring in the mirror in agony?

What is the highest form of love? If we use the yardstick of unselfishness, we would have to say that parental love is the most unselfish. One way of describing parental love is to say that a person of parental love will look at another person and say, "I want to bring true happiness to this person. I want to care for this person in such a way that I can influence his happiness for the rest of his life."

A parental person will want to serve the other person, give to the other person and love the other person. A crucial aspect of parental love is that the parental person will think about the other person's happiness in long-range terms. If we love someone unselfishly, we want him to be happy forever, don't we?

At the same time, a parental person will be thoughtful, reflecting deeply about the real way that the other person can find true happiness.

When, as children, we wanted to do something that was not good for us (such as eating ten candy bars in a row) our parents hopefully stopped us – because they knew we would suffer later if we ate them.

We, as short-sighted children, may not have understood our parents – we might have kicked and screamed in rebellion. Our parents, on the other hand, were thinking about our long-term happiness, and were usually motivated by an unselfish desire to care for us.

Once in awhile we might have felt that our parents fell short of the standard of true love. Honest parents will be the first to admit that everyone falls short of the highest standard of parental and unselfish love. Yet, our parents try hard, so the most loving thing for *us* to do, as children, is to support them, love them, and do our best to help them build relationships of harmony and love. (After all, if we're so much better than our parents, then why aren't we loving them more than they're loving us?) Examining ourselves tends to help us become more humble.

When we remember the parental love that we received, it helps us recognize true love; both in ourselves and in others. We need to maintain or fix what I call our "heartistic radar." "Heartistic" is a new term that means "things related to the heart." We all have a special radar system. Our heartistic radar is invisible, and is used to sense and perceive the invisible feelings flowing between our hearts and the hearts of others. We all have this type of heartistic sense. Think of the time that you walked into a room and could feel that the atmosphere between the people in the room was cold and brittle, because of an argument between them.

Unfortunately, our heartistic radar gets rusty because we don't use it enough in our fast-paced culture. Sometimes it gets damaged; sometimes we didn't receive much love ourselves, and aren't able to sense love clearly because we didn't have the opportunity to experience it very much.

Our heartistic radar is important, because our ability to understand the feelings and the concepts of true love, or unselfish and parental love, will directly impact our relationships with the opposite sex. The term "true love", in this context, means unselfish love, which contains within it the heart of parental love toward others, even if the other person is not our child. One can be, and should be, parental toward everyone, even one's husband or wife. Using the term "true love" shouldn't feel shallow or embarrassing. If we think about it in this in-depth way, it becomes a very real, very practical term for the type of relationships of heart that we all want to have.

With this exploration of our hearts as the foundation of our logic (what I like to call "heartistic logic"), we can say that *true love* is more than an incidental part of sexual activity. True love is the core guidepost for sexual activity, and the main reason that we should save ourselves, and prepare ourselves, for marriage.

~ heart-is-tic: *adj.* Things related to the heart ("heartistic" is a new word, i.e. a "neologism".)

Sexual Activity and the Realm of Heart

Part 1 ~ "Apollo Stone"

It is possible for someone to engage in sexual activity with many, many different partners. To a person living his life in this fashion, sexual activity is little more than a search for personal physical pleasure. Some might say that living one's life in this way is not wrong – that it is our right to do as we wish with our physical bodies – and that if we seek sexual pleasure by leading a promiscuous life it is our own affair, since it “doesn't hurt anybody.”

Let's put that idea to the test. Assume for a moment that we get a chance to interview a really selfish guy – a wolf from head to toe. Let's put him under the spotlight and find out what makes him tick. As we arrive at his luxury condo, we hear him singing bits of the old tune, “Fooled Around and Fell in Love”, by Elvin Bishop. His singing is loud and off key.

“I must have been through about a million girls

I'd love 'em then I'd leave 'em alone

I didn't care how much they cried, no sir

Their tears left me cold as a stone”

As we come in, he sees us, and stops singing. He seems annoyed that we interrupted him.

“Excuse me sir... can I ask you some questions? You're the famous babe magnet, Apollo Stone, aren't you? The one with the incredible love life?”

The man smiles broadly, his irritation vanishing. “Yes, indeed.”

“Are you still out there cruising around? Do you still try to meet new women?”

Apollo takes a long drag on his cigarette for a moment, and then grandly flicks the ash on the floor.

“Whenever I can, of course – in between Baywatch reruns.”

We lean forward, preparing to lay our trap. “Oh yeah, you gotta watch your shows. Oh... by the way, did any of those women that you went out with love you?”

Now Stone is beginning to preen. “Love me? They adored me!” He glances at his biceps admiringly, and carefully runs his fingers through his spiky black hair.

“There must have been all types of women, right Apollo? Nice girls, too?”

Apollo glares at us. “Hey! I always go out with the best!”

So then... the question...

“How did those nice, sweet women feel when you dumped them?”

“Huh?” He looks surprised. “Well, they cried a *little* bit - but they all do that - women are kinda loopy, you know. Some were just jerks about it.”

“Did any of them cry a lot?”

Apollo begins to look a little irritated. “Why are you asking me these stupid questions? What does it matter if they cried? That’s the way life is.”

“Well - did any of them cry a lot?”

He flicks his cigarette ash angrily. “Man, you never give up, do you? Oh, what the heck. I do remember one girl - she really threw a fit. She cried for days. But it was her own fault. All she knew how to do was cry and shop. Shop, shop, shop. She cost a bundle.”

Our interview is almost over. We have one more question. “Are you happy that she cried when you left her?”

Stone grinds his cigarette out on the coffee table. “What do you think I am - a nut? Of course I’m not happy about that! But remember, it wasn’t *my* fault. She was crazy. But - it’s true. It was very sad that she was so emotional. I hope that she can get over it. Hey - I felt her pain.”

We are finished. As we thank him and depart, Apollo ignores us, inhaling a new cigarette and gazing fondly at his reflection in the mirror.



Session 1 ~ Round Table Discussion Topics

1. What is true love, and why is it important?
2. Is it possible for everyone to experience true love? What are some of the ways that parents express true love to their children?
3. What are some of the ways that we can express love unselfishly?
4. What is our “heartistic radar?” Why does our radar become “rusty” and insensitive in our relationships to others? How can we keep our radar in good repair, so that we can easily sense and understand the feelings of others?

▣▣▣▣ “Quotes to Live By” from Session One

- ❖ Preparing for marriage is a topic worth talking about.
- ❖ It doesn't make sense to agree with something just because “everyone's doing it” or because “it's always been that way.”
- ❖ Teenagers, who are vastly more intelligent than they're sometimes given credit for, need the information that will allow them to make decisions about life based on common sense, logic and *deep reflection about the right questions*.
- ❖ If we love someone unselfishly, we will want that person to be happy forever.
- ❖ “Heartistic” is a new term that means “things related to the heart.” We all have a special radar system. Our heartistic radar is invisible, and is used to sense and perceive the invisible feelings flowing between our hearts and the hearts of others.
- ❖ One can be, and should be, parental toward everyone, even one's husband or wife.
- ❖ True love is the core guidepost for sexual activity, and the main reason that we should save ourselves, and prepare ourselves, for marriage.

Session Two

Readings:

 Sexual Activity and the Realm of Heart, Part 2

 Sex Should Be Unselfish

 Round Table Discussions

 Round Table Reports

 10 Minute Break

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Sexual Activity and the Realm of Heart

Part 2

Through the exaggerated but simple example of the chain-smoking wolf, Apollo Stone, we've highlighted one of the great dilemmas of life. As individuals, we constantly search for happiness and fulfillment. Yet, often, in our search, we find that we have hurt others, even though we didn't plan to hurt them. When it's pointed out to us that we have hurt someone, we usually feel sorry. Very few people will stand up in the middle of the local shopping mall and yell out that they're really proud of themselves because they hurt a lot of people that day.

When we look at history, we see that tyrants or criminals are reviled because they brought suffering to others. Prisons, in fact, are occupied by people who have hurt others through selfish and unloving actions. Unselfishness is – to some degree or another – the accepted standard or goal in society. How many of us look toward the rest of our life, saying, “I hope that I can hurt hundreds of people before I die!”

We bring others joy or pain through our interaction with them. Whether in conversation or our activities, we are in the position where we inadvertently may hurt someone. As we asked Apollo Stone, we can ask ourselves, “do we feel happy when we hurt someone?” Certainly the answer is “no.” Even though a selfish man might not care about people very much, he would still be reluctant to say that he felt pleasure at the suffering of others, if only to “save face.”

Sometimes for the sake of pride (but more often because we believe it to be so), most of us would agree that the right standard is that we shouldn't cause others pain. Conversely, we feel quite proud of ourselves if someone comes up to us and says, “You know, you *really* make me happy! I really feel joy because of you!”

What is the essence of this nature in people that yearns for joy and happiness? When do we feel the most joy?

Although money, power and knowledge are high on the list of things that people yearn for, isn't it true that unselfish love is the thing that makes us happiest?

When Apollo Stone withdrew his love from the many different women that he knew, they cried. One cried for days. Although our example wasn't real, isn't it true that the removal of love causes people great pain?

But wait, you say... Apollo didn't set out to love all those women. He just wanted to have sexual relations with them. He was seeking his own physical pleasure. He didn't remove his love ... he didn't have any love to begin with.

You are right, of course. His desires were self-centered. He didn't think about the happiness of those women. It wasn't important to him.

Let's think for a moment, though. Unless both partners engaged in sex are one hundred percent cold-hearted and self-centered, one of them is going to get hurt when the relationship of love deteriorates. Since no one is really a machine, we can conclude that everyone gets hurt; even if they don't acknowledge or recognize their own pain.

The very nature of sex tends to include the aspect of love, of romance and of heart. How many people do you know who habitually have sex together with absolutely no regard for each other? Certainly we don't want to be like that ourselves.

It is safe to say, then, that the normal standard of behavior and heart that most of us will agree with is the standard that says, "I don't want to hurt anyone. I don't want to cause anyone any grief. Rather, I hope that I can bring joy to others by caring for them, serving them, and loving them as much as possible."

People, ourselves included, receive joy when they are cared for and loved. No one wants to be cruelly mistreated. For our part, isn't it true that we feel very, very conscience-stricken when we find that we have hurt someone? We are anxious to rectify the wrong that we have done, and restore the person's feelings.

Our basic heart, then, as a person, is that we want to gain joy by giving and receiving love. Unselfishness toward others is the measuring stick of goodness that is common to all of us. We all admire unselfish people.

Is sexual activity any different? Of course not!

Sexual activity, more than any other human activity, is linked to the realm of heart by its very nature. Even those persons who engage in casual sexual activity will admit that they want to be loved by their sexual partner. They certainly don't want to be hated or abused by their partner!



Sex Should Be Unselfish

If our primary ethic in life is to treat others unselfishly, and to serve and give and love parentally, then with what attitude should we approach the activity of sex? If the thought of causing others suffering makes us feel sad, then it stands to reason that we would not want to hurt anyone because of our sexual activity.

Our desire to love others with an unselfish, parental heart becomes the “guidepost” for our sexual activity. As in all other aspects of our life, our desire to make others happy will lead us to act unselfishly in our sexual relationship with our one true love, before and after we’re married.

What does this mean, in concrete terms?

An overly ardent young man might say to a young lady, “If you really loved me, you would have sex with me!” (This, of course, before they were married.)

The young lady might be confused. Having feelings of love for the young man, she might oblige him, thinking that she was being unselfish and giving. This happens all the time, doesn’t it?

The standard of unselfish love should cause the young woman to step back, and say, “Wait ... what is best for our relationship of love from a long-term viewpoint? What will cause our love to flourish and become unselfish and permanent? What will create a relationship of true love?”



An easier way to understand this is to look at it from the young man’s point of view. As you may have heard, young men have a strong and sometimes overwhelming sexual desire.

Young men tend to feel sexual desire toward many different women, often quite indiscriminately. How many times have young men looked at young women and felt sexual desire that had nothing to do with unselfish love?

When a young man feels sexual desire for a young woman, how will he answer if he is asked, “At this moment of sexual desire, are you thinking of the young woman’s lifelong happiness? Are you thinking of bringing her true joy? Are you thinking of

caring for her for many years to come, even when she is old and wrinkled? Or are you just thinking of her physical body, and your own sexual stimulation?”

These are very difficult and uncomfortable questions. They are also the kind of questions that are tremendously illuminating and useful.

It is helpful to remind ourselves, whether we are young men or young women, that we really *do* want to become unselfish and loving people. Don't we?

Because of our own desire to become better, it is liberating (although initially confronting) to ask ourselves these hard questions. When we do, we hopefully will be able to tell ourselves, “Well, even though my sexual attitude toward the other person was selfish, I recognize that now, and I want to change, and treat the other person unselfishly. I really do want to love the other person with *true* love.”

Adopting an attitude of unselfish love toward the other person will enable us to ask ourselves, “What is best for this person? Is it better to have sex now, when our relationship is still immature, and our future together is not guaranteed, or is it better to wait until marriage, when we both have clarified and cemented our mutual commitment of love?”

The crux of the matter is our own spiritual, emotional and “heartistic” status. How mature are our minds and hearts when we look at someone of the opposite sex? Does the struggling sixteen year old boy (or forty-year-old man, for that matter) really love each woman with a pure heart of unselfish love?

To do so requires that a man looks at only one woman as his wife, and all other women as his sisters, cousins, aunts or grandmothers. If his love is pure and mature, then a young married man will look at other beautiful women as his sisters – not as objects to lust after, or drool over.

Yet, how often do both men and women fall short of this pure standard of unselfish love? Even one of our Presidents admitted that he had committed lust in his heart, and was laughed at for his honesty. We won't even include the Presidents who did more than think about other women. We're not, however, throwing stones at other people's weaknesses. The real issue is that each one of us struggles to love members of the opposite sex in a pure and unselfish way. One might think that looking and thinking are far removed from immoral actions – but they're really not. In this context, the verse, “... every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart,” becomes extremely relevant to teenagers.

“Spiritual” or internal, emotional love springing from the heart, is centered on unselfish caring and affection. Spiritual love must lead and dominate physical, sexual attraction – because the nature of true love is that it cares for the other person forever, no matter how beautiful or ugly the person may be.

Having sex before our spiritual love is mature, outside of a committed marriage, impedes the growth of our unselfish hearts of love. This is true because the power and attraction of sexual love is so strong that it can easily dominate and confuse immature spiritual love. It's very damaging to teenagers' hearts to have sex before their love is mature.

It's also true that people get married when they're eighteen or twenty, and at that time their hearts are not yet mature. There's one big difference: since they're married, and (hopefully) committed to each other, their hearts can grow together in love, and they can protect each other. Without that rock solid commitment of marriage, one's heart can become bruised and battered like a wood chip on the ocean.

The proper growth of our unselfish hearts of love may not seem like a very urgent matter to us, especially when we feel like we're "in love", but it directly impacts our ability to give true love to the person we think we love. Being "abstinent because of love" means that we're abstinent for the sake of the other person's heart as well as our own.

We want to protect the other person's feelings, protect their lives from troubles and difficulties, and protect them from damage in any way. Young men of true love will want to help the young lady they admire become a better and more mature person.

Sex is, and should be, the most intimate and holy part of a committed, long-term relationship of love. Knowing that, a young man of true love will say, "let's save that most precious part of our love until we're committed to each other in marriage."

As teenagers approach the realm of love and romance, they need to ask themselves about their long term goals. Do they want to reach the age of eighty, having had multiple marriages and numerous affairs, with emotional wreckage and disillusionment littering the landscape behind them, or do they want to go through life holding hands with their one true love?

Imagine having just one relationship. The young man and woman marry and dedicate their hearts to each other. They determine to love each other "beyond death" – beyond any problems or struggles or distractions. They devote their energies to caring for each other (as well as others), and to communicating their feelings to each other on a daily basis, sharing their innermost hearts and thoughts. As they work hard to care for each other (and it is work, sometimes), their love for each other grows and grows, until their minds and hearts meld into one entity – almost like two halves of a round rubber ball – indistinguishable from each other.

When they have sex together, it is a reflection of their true love for each other, and the love they have for the children that may be born from that union. Sex based on true love becomes a holy and spiritual activity because the motivation for it is "heart" – the unselfish core of each person. Sex based on true love is physically pleasurable –

but the heart of love between the husband and wife creates an experience that is far more than physical.


In direct contrast, teenagers that engage in casual sex damage their own hearts and the hearts of their partners. Their ability to create a relationship of true love becomes damaged, as their heartistic radar becomes rusty and dull. The rich sensitivity of their hearts grows dim, and when they do have sex with a partner, it tends to be extremely non-spiritual and non-heartistic – relegated to the realm of physical, animalistic sensations. True love is often completely absent. Even when the partners feel strong emotion for each other, it simply doesn't compare to the closeness that can be attained when one devotes oneself to loving one person forever.

It's hard to discuss things like “eternal true love” without examining deeper issues about the nature of human beings and the source of unselfish love. The question of whether or not human beings are simply animals randomly evolved from rocks and dust – or something more – directly affects our attitude toward love.

Harvard Ph.D. Patrick Glynn writes in *God: The Evidence* that scientists are now realizing that the universe was designed from the subatomic level to support the lives of human beings. Even the smallest changes in forces such as gravity would have made human life impossible. The concept of “design” leads inevitably to the “God or No God” question. Those in favor of the view that everything in the universe was designed by God point to evidence that is becoming increasingly difficult to dispute.

Is it realistic to think that the Presidents' faces on Mt. Rushmore evolved randomly, without human intervention? Could the rain and wind have reproduced their faces so exactly? In the same way, it's more logical to assume that the powerful yet invisible force called love has its source in a living Creator, rather than “evolving” from clouds of minerals and particles. The entire family system, with fathers and mothers and children, and all the potential for love contained in family relationships, provide clues to the invisible nature of a parental Creator.

One of the most fascinating clues is the human desire for love to last forever. When we feel deep love for someone, we want it to last. This seems to indicate that the Creator of our desire for eternal love also wants our relationships of love to last forever. Although studying these questions in depth is beyond the scope of this seminar, the logical conclusion that there is an “after-life” or “spirit world” where our love for our eternal husband or wife will continue forever, provides immense and even revolutionary meaning to the commitment of marriage.

The view that sex was created by God to be part of a loving marriage adds an infinite and spiritual dimension to the sexual relationship and to the realm of heart created between a husband and wife who are committed to love each other forever. A marriage such as this requires effort and time – but the quality of love developed by the husband and wife is better than the love found in any fairy tale. 

Session 2 ~ Round Table Discussion Topics

1. If we express love or friendship to someone, and then “drop” them, and break the relationship, does the other person often feel emotional pain?
2. What can we, as individuals, do to avoid causing pain to members of the opposite sex?
3. When we do find our “one true love” in the future, how can we build a relationship of true love? What are some steps that we can take to avoid hurting the other person?
4. Should sexual relations always be guided by unselfish love for the other person? Does the other person’s future happiness have any relevance in sexual relationships?

▣▣▣▣ **“Quotes to Live By” from Session Two**

- ❖ “Do we feel happy when we hurt someone?” Certainly the answer is “no.”
- ❖ Unless both partners engaged in sex are one hundred percent cold-hearted and self-centered, one of them is going to get hurt when the relationship of love deteriorates. Since no one is really a machine, we can conclude that everyone gets hurt; even if they don’t acknowledge or recognize their own pain.
- ❖ The normal standard of behavior and heart that most of us will agree with is the standard that says, “I don’t want to hurt anyone. I don’t want to cause anyone any grief. Rather, I hope that I can bring joy to others by caring for them, serving them, and loving them as much as possible.”
- ❖ If the thought of causing others suffering makes us feel sad, then it stands to reason that we would not want to hurt anyone because of our sexual activity. Our desire to love others with an unselfish, parental heart becomes the “guidepost” for our sexual activity.
- ❖ Adopting an attitude of unselfish love toward the other person will enable us to ask ourselves, “What is best for this person? Is it better to have sex now, when our relationship is still immature, and our future together is not guaranteed, or is it better to wait until marriage, when we both have clarified and cemented our mutual commitment of love?”
- ❖ Being “abstinent because of love” means that we’re abstinent for the sake of the other person’s heart as well as our own.
- ❖ Teenagers that engage in casual sex damage their own hearts and the hearts of their partners. Their ability to create a relationship of true love becomes damaged, as their heartistic radar becomes rusty and dull. The rich sensitivity of their hearts grows dim.

Session Three

Readings:



How to Save Ourselves 'til Marriage

- ☺ Round Table Discussions
- ☺ Round Table Reports
- ☺ Optional 10 Minute Break

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How to Save Ourselves 'til Marriage

Even when we feel clear inside ourselves that waiting is better, it's still not easy to deal with the constant pressure from others to have sex right away. The message gets blared at us everywhere; from television, from our friends, from the opposite sex (in some cases) and even sometimes from grownups and so-called experts. We get mixed messages don't we? It's bad enough to get put through the mill of peer pressure. It's even worse when someone in authority tells us that having sex is "natural and inevitable" and thus not worth resisting. Getting handed a condom doesn't really help us to say "no", does it?

To complicate our lives even further, sex has become physically dangerous, with the threat of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. So-called "safe sex" isn't that safe at all, when one considers the failure rate of condoms. And finally, the message about abstinence has sometimes become a tactic used to confuse already over-stressed teenagers (or their parents.) Abstinence has been re-defined by some people to mean any type of sexual activity that does not include sexual intercourse. In other words, you can do just about anything short of "insertion" and supposedly call it "abstinence." That's like saying that you're not really swimming because you didn't get your hair wet.

I think adults should honor and respect teenagers enough to encourage them to meet the highest standards, without muddying the water with psycho-babble. The search for "legal loopholes" (because some people want to have sex and still be able to say that they didn't have sex) has obscured the real issue: how to create marriages and families of true love.

It's time for teenagers to stand up and let people know that they're more than dumb animals run amok. It *is* possible to save our love for our eternal spouse. Isn't it better to have pride in our inherent capability to be morally strong, intellectually clear, and concerned for the feelings of others? Insisting that sex should be saved for the "One" we'll love forever is the *right* thing to do, and the *gutsy* thing to do. Abstinence, *real* abstinence, means not having *any* type of sex. And we're all smart enough, and honest enough, to figure that one out. It isn't, after all, rocket science.

Saving ourselves for marriage and preparing ourselves for marriage are the *true love* things to do. Anyone that tells us otherwise is inferring that we're not much more than mindless animals. That's not very complimentary, is it?

The best defense against pressure from others to have casual and uncommitted sex is to look them in the eye, with a serious look, and say, "You believe in true, eternal love, don't you?"

Who can say no to that? If they do say no, then you know that they're not the right person for you, anyway.

If they say yes, you've got them. With a generous, magnanimous heart, (it's always nice to be magnanimous, isn't it?) firmly remind them that true, eternal love requires, by its definition, a rock solid, real commitment. Sex is the most intimate part of love, and isn't like a cheap handkerchief to blow one's nose into and casually throw in the trash.

Of course all the wolves (and maybe even some wolverettes and sirens) out there will say things like, "Oh but I *do* love you! That's why we should have sex now!" Look them in the eye, and say, "If you really love me *eternally*, then *you* will encourage *me* to save myself until you marry me. If you're not saying that, something's wrong. Period."

Frankly, though, saying no is a really tough thing to do in a society that's pressuring us to have sex now, now, now. On top of that, we ourselves, as humans, and as teenagers, find it difficult to resist the immediate temptation of sex. That's why the very first line of defense is *not* at the front door of his or her apartment, after a romantic evening out on the town. Saying no requires that we're clear headed and strong. Our biggest obstacle is the power of love itself.

Let's be honest. Kissing produces a powerful effect, both for girls and boys. Saying no after a long romantic kiss is like sampling the buffet when you're starving, and then walking out of the restaurant without eating. It just "ain't realistic." So what's the best way to say no, and save our love for marriage? Honestly, the best way is to not date. No, that wasn't a typo. :-)

These days, people start dating, holding hands, and having girl friends and boy friends when they're ten, eleven and twelve years old. (Or younger.) How can we muster up the courage and strength to say no when we're dating all the time?

I know, I know. Now you might be thinking, "Well, how can I meet the person of my dreams, if I don't date?" It's a reasonable question. The answer is really rather simple. We see people all the time – at school, at games and events, and at social

functions. At those public events, we're safe. Safe that is, from pressure to have sex, and safe from the pressure that may be inside us to just throw in the towel and do it.

When we're in a group, we'll still get a chance to meet people. We'll see how people act, and we'll have a chance to become friends with others. What we won't be is caught alone riding down lover's lane, or somewhere else, where it will become very difficult for us to say no.

Determining to not date is all well and good, but what happens when we find ourselves falling into that swirling fog known as "infatuation?" Then, the problem becomes the tugging of our own heartstrings. If we feel that we're embarked on a dangerous course, and can see that down the road we might lose our resolve to not have sex, then the best, most effective method to stop the multiplication of emotional love is to cut our relationship with the other person. It sounds brutal, but it can save us from serious mistakes.

Cutting off from another person sounds cruel. We need to be aware, though, of the incredible power of love – even love that is misdirected. Our hearts usually rule our intellects – so knowing that something is "wrong" just isn't enough if we've already fallen over the precipice of love. In concrete terms, cutting off a relationship with another person may mean saying to that person, "I can't see you any more, because I don't want to engage in pre-marital sex. The only way to protect ourselves is to not see each other." Most of the time, it's better to not say *anything*, and just stop seeing the person, because speaking about it often makes things worse. If the other person isn't attracted to *us*, then of course, we can't say anything at all.

Frankly, if more married men and women were aware of this method, there would be less infidelity in this country. People often don't set out to be unfaithful – they just aren't aware of the way that emotional feelings multiply until they become overwhelming.

Cutting off a relationship is very, very difficult; but it is truly the best (and perhaps the only) way to protect yourself from illicit sexual relationships. It will make it easier to do this if you confide in your parents, and ask them for their help. They can give you moral support as well as external support. For example, if a boy or girl was really chasing you, and the situation became very troublesome, your parents could intervene.

If for some extreme reason you feel that you can't go to your parents, at least go to some responsible *adult* who can help you. The bottom line is, when you're in trouble, don't isolate yourself. Don't act alone. Get help in the beginning of a problem, when it's still small, rather than waiting until the end, when it might be overwhelming.

~ in-fat-u-a-tion: *n.* A foolish, unreasoning, or extravagant passion or attraction.

~ il-lic-it: *adj.* Not sanctioned by custom or law; unlawful.

There are a lot of messages out there that “parents aren’t cool,” but you know what? All of those people in the sixties who said “never trust anyone over thirty” are now *well* past forty! It happens to everyone. Just imagine life without your parents. I mean *really* without your parents. Wouldn’t you be even a tiny bit sad? Our parents usually love us more than anyone else in the whole world. It’s very smart (and the true love thing to do) to treat them like friends and allies. And we need allies, don’t we?

Until we all resolve the conflict between our minds and bodies, it’s safer and more realistic to say that *none of us* can trust our hearts one hundred percent. We can, however, trust our *circumstances*. Here’s a method that is worth repeating the proverbial three times :-). If we forget everything else, at least we should remember this:

- ▣▣▣▣ If we refuse to be alone with the person that we’re attracted to, it is unlikely that we’ll have sex with him or her.
- ▣▣▣▣ If we refuse to be alone with the person that we’re attracted to, it is unlikely that we’ll have sex with him or her.
- ▣▣▣▣ If we refuse to be alone with the person that we’re attracted to, it is unlikely that we’ll have sex with him or her.

If we continually put ourselves in situations in which we’re alone with that person, then our risk becomes much, much greater.

If it all sounds too severe, take heart. True love is the most wonderful thing in the world, and is the ultimate destiny of every person – young and old.

Someone might ask, “*How do we get to know someone deeply if we’re never alone together? How can we carry on deep and personal conversations with other people listening in?*” A simple method to balance the need to be careful with the practical need for privacy, to better get to know someone, is to sit together in a “relatively public setting.” In other words, you don’t have to discuss true love in the middle of the living room, surrounded by curious younger brothers or sisters who are making silly faces at you. Sit in the next room – with the door open – so you can be seen but not heard. Or sit on the swing on the front porch (if you have a swing or a front porch :-). Pick a place that’s public enough for “safety,” but private enough for a heart to heart talk.

So how do we find true love and avoid mistakes? One method is the ancient tradition of “match making.” (Remember the movie “Fiddler on the Roof?”) The essence of this type of match making is that the parents are involved in their children’s choice of spouses. Unfortunately, if the parents and children don’t have a good relationship, match making doesn’t work very well. If the parents and children talk plainly about different prospects of matching, and respect each other’s opinions, it works far better. Both the parents *and* the children should agree about the match.

Ideally, parents should guide their children as match makers, but guide them with so much respect and love for their children, combined with a lifetime of heartistic and

spiritual guidance, that the children gladly cooperate with their parents' recommendations. It's not a bad thing for parents to hope that their children avoid marriages to spouses who end up mistreating them and causing them pain and hardship. Is it? However, the children should never be forced into a match they don't want, for if they are, how will they exercise their responsibility to build a marriage of true love? The love between husband and wife is unlike any other, and cannot be forced. It must be created and maintained in an atmosphere of freedom. This may be obvious in some cultures, but is not necessarily a standard in every culture.

How does "match making", or the old-fashioned, nineteenth century tradition of "courting", relate to the commonly accepted view that "falling in love" is normal and wonderful? Let's be clear. **Nobody** wants to be condemned to a loveless marriage. Everyone wants to love and be loved. Living "happily ever after" is our eternal dream and the subject of countless stories and movies.

It's not really *how* we meet the one we love that's important. A couple could have been "matched" with their parents' help, or could have "courted" under their parents' watchful eyes, or could have bumped into each other in the mall, and "fallen head over heels in love." What's really important is not how they met, but "*what happens next*". It's their mutual commitment to build a happy marriage, combined with their knowledge and wisdom about how to make their marriage work, that will help determine whether their marriage succeeds or fails.

After all, a husband or wife who "fell madly in love" with their honey, and got married, could then fall madly in love with someone else at any time. How many times have we seen that happen in Hollywood? Hormones, chemicals and biological urges often combine with natural compatibility to trick people into thinking that they're "in love" even though they still "love" their current spouse. How can we sort it out?

What will truly make a difference in marriages is when a husband and wife decide to *make* their marriage work by *creating and deepening* their mutual relationship of love. Eternal true love doesn't just "happen." **True love is created and maintained by unselfish and loving service.** The wonderful thing is that the more we give and serve and love, the more we feel joy to do so.

Still, one has to have the chance to meet the love of one's life, whether it's through "*cooperatize parent/ child matchmaking*" (a very good method indeed) or what could be stage two of the matchmaking process - courting. Courting is a safe method to get to know the other person over a period of time - without sex. Courtship is a great way for girls to keep the wolves at bay. The rules of courtship are very simple. The girl

makes sure that she hangs out in groups and in public settings, and when a boy tries to approach her with that clever smile we all know about, the girl ever so sweetly says:

“Haven’t you heard about courting? You have to go see my father or mother, and get permission to approach me, in public places only, with a friend present (to protect me, of course). If my parents say ok, then you can come and visit me. And, if marriage isn’t a possibility, let’s not waste each other’s time.”

I’d like to be fair to boys here, and suggest that the rules of courting be applied to girls as well. If a girl wants to get to know a boy, then the boy should react the same way, and suggest that the girl come over to meet his parents, and then observe the same style of safe, public courtship. There’s no real logical reason that a girl shouldn’t initiate a relationship; it’s just a “tradition.”

Are all traditions good? As we mentioned, it used to be a tradition that women couldn’t vote in this country. We should examine all traditions under the spotlight of true love. Simply speaking, the rules of true love apply to men and women equally. There’s no room for double standards.

Some doltish, insensitive people may laugh at the idea of courtship, but don’t worry. Real, honorable, unselfish men love and *admire* women who are protective of themselves in this way. *Don’t* listen to the mutterings of boys who are – at that moment – only thinking with their sexual organs. Yes, it’s true that teenage boys (and girls) often have to endure a certain amount of agony because of physical desires. The dilemma is that the desires of our bodies should never “rule” our unselfish hearts – but unfortunately our bodies often dominate our minds.

In order to make an enduring and deep relationship of love with our future spouse, it’s far healthier, from a spiritual point of view, to overcome physical sexual desire when it tends to claw at us. How can we do that? One remedy is to be tough on our physical bodies. An effective method to overcome physical desire is to take a cold shower, or to work out. (Remember to check with your parents first!) It’s also very important to walk away from things that have the wrong kind of stimulus, such as movies, television, books or magazines that have sexual content. Other “at risk” behaviors such as smoking, drinking and drug use tend to create an environment that can increase the risk of sexual activity. Therefore, the healthiest way of life is to avoid all of these “at risk” behaviors. Not going to the latest wild party may sound horrendously dull, but in the long term, finding our one true love is *much more exciting!*

The best way to conquer our physical desires is to strengthen our heartistic capacity to give and understand unselfish love. Our bodies will yield to the higher

power of unselfish love, because true love is the strongest power in the universe. Note that we said “true” love – not hormones or chemicals or infatuation. An example of our bodies obeying our unselfish hearts is when we have the opportunity to give some of our lunch to someone who doesn’t have enough. Our bodies will tell us to eat all of our food and not share it – but our true hearts know otherwise. The dilemma is that we lose touch with our “true hearts” quite frequently. We can stay in touch more easily with our true selves through many methods, including daily reflection, prayer, meditation or other types of “soul searching.” The key is to *do something every day* to find “the real me” instead of the fake or confused version that sometimes creeps up on us, grabs us by the nose and leads us down a thorny path.

The age of “teenagerdom” could be described as the period of “rampant desires.” The fact that teenagers dream of true love is normal. Yet, teenagers with rampant desires still have to follow a road map, or they’ll crash, like Mr. Toad in his roadster, in *Wind in the Willows*, and the “brutal minions of the law” (or in this case, “reality”) will fall upon them. The “road map” we need to follow could also be called a “true love map” – a map that brings us back to the question of “dating” or “waiting.”

Why should we hurry to date, anyway? Who wants to get pregnant at sixteen? Isn’t it better to grow a bit and find out how we really feel about life? Waiting until we’re older will give us a much better chance to learn how to love our spouse when we do get married.

At the same time, if two 18-year-olds decide to get married, with honor and respect and commitment, and a clear understanding of the road ahead of them, it’s certainly better than living a promiscuous life. It’s a toss-up between the huge difficulty of remaining abstinent and being mature enough to make our marriages work. In today’s Western society it’s unusual, but it might help newly married, young couples if they either lived near - or with - their parents, so they could ask for guidance about making their marriage a success. (Assuming of course that their parents’ marriage is successful, which unfortunately is sometimes not the case.)

Becoming mature in our ability to love our spouse will also give us the ability to love our children when we have them. If teenagers date and have sex, they have to face the reality that girls do get pregnant – even if they use various precautions. Given that fact, it’s very important to clarify once again that our goal is not just to “reduce teenage pregnancies” or “eliminate sexually transmitted diseases.” If those were our primary goals, then we would be talking about so-called “safe sex” and birth control methods. Many people would also say that the simple solution to unwanted teen pregnancies is abortion. Our discussion here takes the viewpoint that those methods miss the point entirely.

We’re advocating “abstinence *because* of love.” Searching for ways to have safe sex, or contemplating having abortions, ignores the primary issue that the couple should

not have sex until they're *married and committed* to building an eternal relationship of true love. Heartistic love should be the primary ingredient of sex, and the foundation for having children. From this point of view, abortions should never happen. If couples waited to have sex until they were married and committed to each other, unwanted teen pregnancies or sexually transmitted diseases would no longer be an issue.

If teenagers do have sex before they're married, and then are faced with a pregnancy that they didn't plan, they are then in a very difficult position. From the point of view of true love, the only good option is for the couple to get married and raise their child with all the heart and love that they can muster. To not get married, and leave the mother to raise the child alone, or to abort the child because it's inconvenient, is a violation of heart.

It violates heart and true love because either action is essentially selfish. It would be selfish for the father to abandon the mother and the child. The mother will say, "Where is the man who said that he loved me?" The child will say, "Where is my father? Why did he leave my mother and me?"

It would be selfish to abort the child, because the normal, original, and natural consequence of true love is a child; to abort a child because of inconvenience is to deny true love itself - not to mention the beautiful and wonderful life that the child should have. My wife once noted that the famous singers Celine Dion, Iris DeMent and Enya were all the youngest of a large group of children in their respective families. What a loss to the world if their parents had aborted them!

The best solution for teenagers is to say "no" to sex before marriage, for the sake of their own happiness, and for the sake of the children that they might have. If the teenage couple has children unexpectedly, they are obligated to raise them with true love, and provide them with a loving home. If either the teenage father or mother tries to abandon the child, the other partner needs to seek help, from parents or counseling agencies, in order to ensure that the child is raised properly. Adoption is truly the last resort. Children's normal, basic, common sense point of view is that they want to be with their *own* parents - nothing takes the place of our real parents, generally speaking.

Having children as teenagers is a huge task - for that reason, teenagers should wait to have children until their love is mature.



Session 3 ~ Round Table Discussion Topics

1. Do teenagers have the intellectual capacity and the strength of moral will to say “no” to sex? Can an individual reject peer pressure and stand up for what he or she believes in?
2. No matter how much our hormones might be raging, and no matter how much pressure society places on us, isn't it true that deep down in our hearts we believe that living a life of true, unselfish love is the best way to find happiness? Why is that true?
3. What is the best way to avoid pressure to have pre-marital sex?
4. Why is it so “dangerous” to be alone with a member of the opposite sex, over a long period of time? Why do emotional feelings multiply when we have “give and take” with them?

▣▣▣▣ “Quotes to Live By” from Session Three

- ❖ It’s time for teenagers to stand up and let people know that they’re more than dumb animals run amok.
- ❖ It *is* possible to save our love for our eternal spouse. Isn’t it better to have pride in our inherent capability to be morally strong, intellectually clear, and concerned for the feelings of others? Insisting that sex should be saved for the “One” we’ll love forever is the *right* thing to do, and the *gutsy* thing to do.
- ❖ The best defense against pressure from others to have casual and uncommitted sex is to look them in the eye, with a serious look, and say, “You believe in true, eternal love, don’t you?” Who can say no to that? If they do say no, then you know that they’re not the right person for you, anyway.
- ❖ If they say yes, you’ve got them. With a generous, magnanimous heart, (it’s always nice to be magnanimous, isn’t it?) firmly remind them that true, eternal love requires, by its definition, a rock solid, real commitment. Sex is the most intimate part of love, and isn’t like a cheap handkerchief to blow one’s nose into and casually throw in the trash.
- ❖ Cutting off a relationship is very, very difficult; but it is truly the best (and perhaps the only) way to protect yourself from illicit sexual relationships.
- ❖ If we refuse to be alone with the person that we’re attracted to, it is unlikely that we’ll have sex with him or her.
- ❖ What will truly make a difference in marriages is when a husband and wife decide to *make* their marriage work by *creating and deepening* their mutual relationship of love. Eternal true love doesn’t just “happen.” **True love is created and maintained by unselfish and loving service.** The wonderful thing is that the more we give and serve and love, the more we feel joy to do so.

Session Four

Readings:



Preparing to Have Children



Becoming a Person of True Love



Building a Marriage of True Love



Round Table Discussions



Round Table Reports



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Preparing to Have Children


Although children are the result of their parents making love to each other, it is a terribly tragic fact that all too often the parents don't love each other, or their children, enough. After we get married, and have children, how can we ensure that our children will grow up to become men and women of unselfish and parental love? Isn't it true that in order to understand unselfish love to the point of being able to give it to others, a person must receive adequate parental love first? How can someone give to others what they have never experienced?

From this point of view, our responsibility as future parents is serious indeed. When a young man and young woman fall in love, they can't ignore the topic of children. The ultimate, original result of the love of a husband and wife is a child. How then will their love influence the life of the child to be?

Let's assume that the husband and wife have decided to have a child, and the wife is not yet pregnant. What kind of child will be born from the couple? Just as it is obvious that certain trees produce a certain quality of fruit, doesn't it make sense that a child will reflect the heart, love, spirit and character of the father and mother?

It is not only the training of the child during his childhood years that will influence the child, but the very nature or character of the parents at the moment of conception that will be embedded in the core of the child's character. The internal inheritance of character and heart is similar to the external inheritance of certain physical features that the child will bear.

The concept of "education in the womb" illustrates the sensitivity of a child to the atmosphere of harmony and love that is present in the home, and between husband and wife, even before the child is born. In Asia, and more recently in the West, doctors recommend that mothers who are pregnant listen to beautiful music so that the child in their womb can develop in the right way.

It becomes the burden (although it's also a labor of love) of the new couple to make a sincere effort to grow in their ability to love parentally, even before their child is conceived. This is an additional reason that young men and women should wait to have sex until they're married and have matured adequately. If a young, immature girl has a baby, how will she love her child when she is still a child herself? 

Becoming a Person of True Love

Building a marriage of true love with our future spouse, and raising children with parental love requires that we, as future fathers or mothers, prepare ourselves and train ourselves to become men and women of unselfish love. Unfortunately, becoming a person of true love is usually not something that is taught in school. Young people often find themselves married, with a child on the way, before they have had a chance to gain a clear concept of marriage and parenting.

Marriages often fail miserably because the husband and wife don't know how to care for each other and therefore don't take the necessary steps to deepen their relationship of love. After thirty years, they look at each other and realize that they no longer like (or love) each other. The tragedy is that the distance between them was not what they started with, and could have been completely avoided.

After the couple gets married, parenting is far more than learning how to change diapers, feed the baby, and provide a comfortable living environment for the child. A child will grow up, perhaps physically well taken care of, and still wonder, "Do my father and mother love me?"

One of the beautiful aspects of unselfish love is that it cuts across all areas of our lives. Just as unselfish love is so essential to a successful marriage, and a wholesome sexual relationship, unselfish love is the primary qualification to be a parent. It makes life simple, in a way - for we can focus our hearts and minds on a very beautiful, simple, and yet strong credo to love others unselfishly.

Yet, our task is not easy, is it? As teenagers, we may still be struggling to understand ourselves, and life in general, and still be wondering if we'll ever find our own true love. In the midst of all that, without much guidance, we must train ourselves to create beautiful marriages and to become good parents.

One might think that it's all vastly unfair, or entirely too quick for us to grasp everything in time to care for our future spouse and children adequately. In a way, our situation as we grow up throughout our teens is really too difficult. Part of the problem is that human history has been a history of people having children before they were ready and able to love them properly, so that those children couldn't receive adequate love or training. Each generation of children has been caught in the vicious circle of being unready and ill-prepared to have children.

Today's young people are in a special situation. Although the pressures of life might seem greater than ever, with the world becoming smaller every day, and the pace of life getting faster and faster, the opportunities to grow in new ways are unprecedented in human history.

Because the world is within each person's reach, and because cultures and other forms of knowledge are being shared throughout the world, young people have the chance to develop their hearts of compassion and true love in a deeper and more profound way than earlier generations. Young people have a chance today to establish new standards of true love and heart, no matter what field of endeavor, or career, they commit themselves to.

By vigorously striving to become a person of true love, we will be able to care for our future husband or wife and our children, as well as our friends, our families and our associates. It's really important to ask ourselves what kind of person we want to become. Besides deciding on our career goal or external life's ambition, we need to clarify our internal goal as a person. Two people can grow up and become successful, and one will be selfish and corrupt, and the other will be generous, humble, serving and loving toward others. Which do we want to become?

Isn't it an admirable goal to say, "I want to become a person who can give and serve and love, on a daily basis?" Yet, how many of your friends have that goal, think like that, or ever talk about living that way? If we don't lock onto that target, becoming a person of true love will be a long shot at best. It's just too easy to be selfish.

Mother Teresa once said, "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness: kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile."

What a beautiful goal! Becoming such a person of kindness and true love is a gradual process that requires a lot of thought and reflection. It requires digging into ourselves with humility, to find both the good and bad parts of our characters. When we find a bad spot in our hearts or minds, we can act as our own "heartistic" doctor, and cut out the bad spots with the invisible scalpel of true love.

Having a realistic view of ourselves will give us the strength to be humble, and to apologize to others when we hurt them. All too often, saying sorry is an ability that is woefully absent from our lives as we grow up. The courage to repent to others will allow us to look our future spouse in the eye and take responsibility for the quality of our love.

The quality of our love is the central factor in determining the success of our marriages. It's not really our future spouse that will be the problem. Oh, it's true that our spouse will have his or her own responsibility to be a person of true love. *Our* ability to *give* love is what *we* must focus on. Which, as we discussed, is one of the

reasons why preparing ourselves for marriage is the true love thing to do. Saving ourselves until marriage gives us a chance to grow in our quality of love for others, so that when we do get married, we'll be more prepared to give our spouse true love, through thick and thin.

Then, as a future husband or wife, and parent, with a clear vision of the beauty and value of unselfish love, we will continue to develop in a good way. We'll be able to love our children, and teach our children to grow properly and become wonderful children of true love in their own right.

We will have become a "person of true love", with a husband or wife of true love, and children of true love, forming a beautiful family of true love. What could be more inspiring?



Building a Marriage of True Love

The first step in preparing ourselves for marriage is the preservation of the beautiful and unspoiled hearts of love that we have as children. Loving our future husband or wife in a complete and mature way will be difficult if our hearts are tired and bruised from numerous relationships prior to our marriage. Saving ourselves until marriage avoids the baggage and pain that is often created when people engage in pre-marital sex.

Although some people live together before marriage as a way of testing the relationship, the long term negative effects of “living together” are often overlooked. One of the problems of living together without the commitment of marriage is that the relationship between the man and woman often lacks the key ingredient of commitment that helps a marriage endure. With the knowledge that their “experiment” of living together may end at any time, the partners often place divisions between important elements of their lives, such as bank accounts or house ownership.

When difficulties in their relationship arise, it's easy to say, “hit the road, Jack”, or “scram, Mabeline.” Instead of being “good practice” for marriage, living together can develop habits and attitudes that make a committed marriage even harder. “Starter marriages”, which are based on the concept that one needs practice before a final, long term marriage, are as damaging as living together. A couple's long term, mutual commitment to a successful marriage, through all the difficulties of life, is the foundation to build a marriage of true love. Anything less than total commitment makes a marriage a strong candidate for failure.

When the husband and wife share a common set of values or spiritual beliefs, their path is even smoother, for their commitment gains the fuel of a shared motivation of heart. The beliefs and values of husbands and wives are sometimes all over the map, opening up the possibility of disagreements and conflict. In searching for a common ground that cuts across barriers, couples may wish to adopt the “true love thing to do” as a way of life. The essence of the “true love thing to do” way of life is the belief that expressing unselfish love to others is the best way to live.

When “true love is the Boss” for both the husband and wife, it becomes easier to resolve conflicts as they arise. Doesn't it make sense that a husband, however macho he may be, should bow to the beauty of true love? If his wife is more loving than he is,

at any particular moment, shouldn't he humbly listen to her? When both the husband and wife hold true love itself in the highest regard, conflicts will happen less frequently.

When the husband says to himself, "I must love more; I must give more; I must serve more", and then makes effort every day to do so, his path in marriage will become smoother. When the wife feels and acts in the same way, the marriage is well on its way to becoming a happy one.

Love is a creative power that multiplies with every ounce of effort poured into its application. In a way, true love is like exercise – the more weights that we try to lift, the easier it gets. Love given to our spouse, in this way, becomes a wonderful "road" that we want to stay on forever. If we declare to ourselves that we'll "give and love and serve" *infinitely*, going beyond our own concepts or limitations, we'll discover that the power of love can crumble any barrier.

It's important to realize that in marriage there are indeed barriers to true love. Some of them are ancestral or historical – such as the "ancient rage" that many women feel, under the surface, because of the mistreatment of women by men, throughout the ages. Ancient rage may be a new and uncomfortable concept for some men – but it's not too difficult to review the multitude of ways that men have abused women in history. Unfortunately, historical "baggage" often becomes a stumbling block in marriage; and thus needs to be dealt with by both the husband and wife.

Historical pain can also surface when a man and woman from former "enemy countries", or different races or religions, fall in love and marry. Even though the husband and wife may not have participated in those historical conflicts, they may sometimes feel the burden of historical pain or resentment. Of course, their families may also have difficulties digesting their marriage.

Someone might say that it's better to not marry across the boundaries of race, religion or historical enemies. However, marrying and building a marriage of true love across "enemy lines" is perhaps the best way to contribute to a world of true peace. It has been demonstrated in history, over and over again, that love in marriage has the power to resolve the conflicts between opposing sides.

The immigrants in New York City experienced this a hundred years ago. As each new wave of immigrants came to New York, conflicts would arise between the newest group and the ones already in residence. After awhile, they would start marrying each other, and the conflicts would subside – until the next group came ashore.

The children of inter-racial couples have a special power that only "grandchildren" have. Even if the granddaddy is a bigot, there's something devastatingly cute about the little grandchild sitting on his knee. The smile of a child breaks racial barriers down.

If a husband and wife enter into marriage committed to "love one's enemy", beyond their own suffering, sacrifice or death, then the power of their sacrificial love

will create a marriage that has the potential to endure forever. It might seem unnecessary to “commit” oneself in such an extreme way, when couples are usually not “enemies” and in fact are usually “in love” with each other. Will it really be so tough? Does one need to prepare for so much sacrifice and service? Marriage might begin to sound like a very unpleasant option for a young man or woman contemplating a life together. Where’s the joy in marriage? Where’s the true love?

One of the core issues of marriage – or any relationship, for that matter, is what to do when problems arise. How do we conduct ourselves when our husband or wife gets cranky, or irrational, or selfish, or mean, or lazy, or leaves hair in the sink, or spends too much money, or does one of a million other things that tend to create feelings in us that could be summed up as: “I’m not being loved enough.”

The “selfish” behavior of our spouse affects us where it hurts – our hearts. We don’t feel loved when our spouse is inconsiderate or selfish. When we don’t feel loved, a common chain of reactions is to feel hurt, get angry and then get even by being mean right back. Thus, “baggage” is created between the couple. The atmosphere of love, sweet love is blown to bits by the chill winds of anger and resentment and complaint.

Many marriages follow the route of baggage accumulation. The couple falls totally in love. They get married. They have children. They have debts and bills and pressures. Daily life hits them in the face. When they argue, they don’t make up very well. Heartistic baggage starts to collect after years of being “swept under the rug”. After ten, then twenty, then thirty years, they realize that the burning spark of passion and love has been squelched by thousands of little “incidents” of mutual mistreatment. Tired, bitter and angry, the couple that once was “in love” ends their marriage in divorce.

Building a marriage of true love requires thousands of brave smiles. It requires thousands of moments of biting our tongue, gulping a bit, and “giving love” to our spouse – even though – at that moment, our spouse may have hurt us.

By “digesting” the pain caused by our spouse, and then giving anyway, serving anyway, and loving anyway, the pain caused by our spouse doesn’t escalate. Loving endlessly in this fashion requires effort and patience and the long-range vision that someday, if enough effort is made, we will be in complete harmony with our spouse, centered on love. Of course, it may not be our spouse who is causing the pain at any particular moment – we ourselves will almost certainly be to blame many times.

If our spouse is “less mature” or “less loving” than we are, then we, who are “more loving” (at least in our own mind :-)) are placed in the inevitable position of loving our spouse with a parental heart. Otherwise, we wouldn’t be more loving than our spouse, would we? Isn’t logic amazing?

The good news is that giving parental love to one's husband or wife is a joyful process. Giving true love requires humility and the realization that even if one seems "better" or more mature than the other, we're not really that good, compared to the highest possible standard of unselfish love.

Since the purpose of giving love is to make the *other* person happy, which makes *us* happy, then the real secret of giving love appears in front of our nose – we love giving true love to our husband or wife because the *mutual* relationship of love that develops becomes the source of intense and ever-expanding joy. Once we experience the joy that comes from giving true love, we want to give love again and again and again.

The time to multiply and maintain a beautiful atmosphere of heart is when the couple begin their married life, before the living room carpet of their life has mounds of secret pain swept under the rug. The problem with sweeping things under the rug is that the dirt and trash created by quarrels and arguments don't stay hidden. The piles get so big eventually that the husband and wife sometimes trip over them like explosive land mines.

Maintaining an atmosphere of heart is very much like weeding a garden. When an argument springs up, then the couple needs to stop and pull it out of their garden of heart like the weed that it is. Tending their garden of heart is a job that needs daily attention. Weeds and bugs are sneaky, and so are the seeds of conflict. Conflict can start in a moment, over terribly mundane and boring things like laundry and "where's my dinner!?"

Removing the weeds of hurt and misunderstanding when they're still weeds can only happen if the husband and wife communicate constantly. True love and harmony are difficult to maintain if the couple don't understand each other's hearts and minds and thoughts and dreams. If they're strangers to each other in their hearts and minds, then how close will their relationship of true love become?

Yet, how many husbands and wives communicate frequently and effectively? One of the purposes of communication is understanding. With more and more couples coming from diverse backgrounds and cultures, communication is essential to understanding the thoughts and feelings of a spouse who might have been raised with a radically different life experience or world view.

Some cultures consider verbal communication about matters of the heart unnecessary, based on the view that husbands and wives should be able to understand each other's hearts and minds without words. Spiritual and intuitive understanding and communication is natural in those cultures, perhaps because of hundreds of years of shared experience that fosters easy understanding. However, the ability to understand someone without words does not change the fact that understanding itself is the goal – it doesn't really matter *how* we understand each another.

The “bottom line”, so to speak, is rather simple: if a husband and wife don’t understand each other, for whatever reason, communication becomes necessary. If words are required, so be it.

There’s a book called *Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus*. What if men and women really were from Mars and Venus? They would certainly have to make a great deal of effort to understand each other. They couldn’t possibly *demand* that the other party understand them without words. The easiest way to look at the need for communication is very practical: if either the husband or wife feel that they are misunderstood, or don’t understand the other, they should *insist* that they sit down and talk. And talk and talk and talk, for hours and days and weeks and years (not all at one stretch, of course) until they understand each other more.

Sometimes, the husband and/or wife don’t want to talk. It might not be in their nature to express things deeply, or frequently. Men often find it difficult to communicate about mushy things like “love” and heart. It seems too feminine to men, or “sissified”. Because of this, many women feel that men are underdeveloped in their ability to express love or give love to others – and deficient in their ability to talk about true love.

Are women right? It’s up to men, in the 21st century (the century that may become known as the “Age of Illumination”) to prove to their wives that they can give true love to others, and communicate sincerely about true love. And why not? True love; sacrificial love, can be masculine as well as feminine. When a firefighter risks his life to save a child in a burning building, his actions may very well reflect his internal heart of love for others. What’s wrong with talking about it? Absolutely nothing! Hey, guys, are you listening? :-)

When either the husband or wife find it difficult to communicate, then it makes a huge difference in the marriage if the partner who communicates more easily takes the initiative to guide and help (in a sense, to *educate*) the other spouse to communicate about internal things. It might be difficult in the beginning, but the “communicator” shouldn’t give up in his or her efforts to reach into the heart and dreams of their spouse and find the place where the couple can touch each others hearts.

The invisible place where the husband and wife can brush against each other’s hearts is the resting place and center of their home. They can rest there, and their children can rest there as well. Home really is where the heart is.

Eventually, the husband and wife will feel so close that they are happiest when they’re together. Living together in sincerity and trust, they won’t joke about “taking a break from the spouse”. Being together will be as natural as breathing.

No matter how much or how little love a couple feels toward each other at the beginning of their marriage, the critical factor for their success is that they make the

effort to *build* a marriage of true love from the moment that they leave the altar. Even a couple that's madly in love will encounter rough spots that might derail their marriage in the future. Their mutual commitment to creatively multiply and deepen their relationship of love will guide them over the rough spots.

It takes patience and effort, but creating a marriage of true love is not only possible, it's every person's right. Even though many young people are nervous about marriage, and are experimenting with living together first, can't we assume that *everyone* wants to find "their one true love"? Even old, sourpuss hermits living in the mountains must feel lonely if they don't have their soul mate next to them, with beautiful children and grandchildren sharing their holidays. In the ideal sense, families complete us and make our lives whole. That's why grandparents will sometimes refer to their many grandchildren as a "blessing" that they've received.

In the same way, marriage is also a blessing – a blessing that's completed by the couple as they build an eternal relationship of love.

Today's young people have the opportunity to be the pioneers of a new "marriage culture" that lifts up the beauty and value of eternal marriages centered on true love. Marriages of this type will help transform society, especially when the marriages are between different races, cultures, religions and nationalities.

Children raised in families based on marriages of true love will learn from their parents how to give true unselfish love to their brothers and sisters, and thus to other people when they get older. Families like this will become the "school of love" for the children. The world is complicated, but when we boil everything down to the most basic unit of society, we find the individual, the husband and wife and children – the family.

When a husband and wife pledge to each other that they will love each other without limitation, and together love their children, and then with their children strive to love and serve the world, the ripple effect across society and the world will contribute to an atmosphere of peace. Combined with other families who are living in the same way, we can say that marriages and families of true love are the building blocks of a peaceful world.

The 21st century can indeed become the Age of Illumination – but it will depend upon each husband and wife searching for the higher ground of true love that is burning in each person's heart, waiting to expand and multiply into a "culture of heart" and a "world of heart". Building marriages of true love will change the world.



▣▣▣▣ “Quotes to Live By” from Session Four

- ❖ If a young, immature girl has a baby, how will she love her child when she is still a child herself?
- ❖ Human history has been a history of people having children before they were ready and able to love them properly, so that those children couldn't receive adequate love or training. Each generation of children has been caught in the vicious circle of being unready and ill-prepared to have children.
- ❖ Marriages often fail miserably because the husband and wife don't know how to care for each other and therefore don't take the necessary steps to deepen their relationship of love. The tragedy is that the distance between them was not what they started with, and could have been completely avoided.
- ❖ Isn't it an admirable goal to say, "I want to become a person who can give and serve and love, on a daily basis?" Yet, how many of your friends have that goal, think like that, or ever talk about living that way? If we don't lock onto that target, becoming a person of true love will be a long shot at best. It's just too easy to be selfish.
- ❖ Mother Teresa once said, "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness: kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile."
- ❖ The essence of the "true love thing to do" way of life is the belief that expressing unselfish love to others is the best way to live.
- ❖ When "true love is the Boss" for both the husband and wife, it becomes easier to resolve conflicts as they arise.
- ❖ If we declare to ourselves that we'll "give and love and serve" *infinitely*, going beyond our own concepts or limitations, we'll discover that the power of love can crumble any barrier.
- ❖ It takes patience and effort, but creating a marriage of true love is not only possible, it's every person's right.
- ❖ Building marriages of true love will change the world.

Evaluation Form *(fill in, cut out, and mail!)*

*This form is really valuable to us. We want to hear from **you**, about your impressions of the seminar; your thoughts “The True Love Thing to Do” way of life; your comments and questions about specific topics in the seminar, and your suggestions of ways that the seminar or the text can be improved. Please fill this out, and hand it in to your seminar moderator, so the moderator can mail all of the forms to us, or you can mail the form directly to:*

The World Community Network
5581 Sunny Side Road ~ Saint Stephens Church, VA 23148 / USA

Name of Organization that Hosted the Seminar: _____

Seminar City & State: _____ Seminar Date: _____

Your name (optional): _____

Your age: _____ Male / Female (circle one)

The rating numbers below go from 1 = worst to 10 = best (circle one)

Overall rating of the seminar: _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Rating of Sessions:

Session 1 - The True Love Thing to Do
- Sexual Activity and the Realm of Heart (Part 1) _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Session 2 - Sexual Activity and the Realm of Heart (Part 2)
- Sex Should Be Unselfish _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Session 3 - How to Save Ourselves 'til Marriage _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Session 4 - Preparing for Children
- Becoming a Person of True Love
- Building a Marriage of True Love _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments about the seminar:

Note about these two quote sections: (if you want us to use your name, then please ask your parents to sign it also, for approval, if you're under 18. Otherwise, we'll use the quote without your name.)

Quote we can use to promote the seminar:
(for example, “This is the best seminar I’ve ever been to!” :-)

Quote about one of the topics that we might use in the text:
(for example, “Teenagers aren’t robots. We believe in true love, too!”)

The True Love Thing to Do Pledge

Building a marriage of true love and a family of true love is central to a lifetime of happiness.

Because I believe in the value and power of God's true unselfish love . . .

- 1 ~ I will maintain my purity before marriage and will maintain fidelity in marriage.*
- 2 ~ I will educate myself to become a person of true love and will live for the sake of others by expressing unselfish love to all people, throughout my daily life.*
- 3 ~ I will learn how to resolve conflicts and build unselfish relationships of peace through the power of true love and service – and will thus prepare myself to build a marriage of true love in the future.*
- 4 ~ I will encourage others to adopt the true love way of life as a foundation for marriages and families of true love and as the foundation for a peaceful world.*

The True Love Thing to Do Graduation Certificate

Be it hereby known that the bearer of this certificate has completed "The True Love Thing to Do Seminar".

A world of peace begins with individuals who believe in and act according to the precepts of true love. Marriages flourish when husbands and wives adhere to the tradition of giving unselfish love to each other, their children and to those around them.

For the sake of a world of heart built upon sacrificial love, we are happy to honor and recognize the following individual as a "True Love Thing to Do Graduate".

Graduate Name

Seminar Date



Peter Falkenberg Brown & Kim Korman Brown

Founders and Publishers
The World Community Network

