

Real Love Teen Journal

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Section 1

What is Real Love?

.....
Love is more than three words mumbled before bedtime. Love is sustained by action, a pattern of devotion in the things we do for each other every day.

- Nicholas Sparks

.....

Name some of the things you love.

So what really is love? Write out a definition.

The dictionary says love is:

- Strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties
- Attraction based on sexual desire
- Affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests
- Warm attachment, enthusiasm, or devotion

Other words for love:

- Agape – Greek. True love.
- Eros – Greek. Intimate or passionate.
- Philia – Greek. Friendship.
- Storge – Greek. Affection or family.
- Xenia – Greek. Hospitality.
- Eshgh – Persian for love. Use Doost Dashtan for liking.
- Ask – Turkish. Used only for “the one.”
- Ai – Chinese. When used as “Wo ai ni” (I love you) it means so much, but it’s rarely used. Instead they’ll say “Wo xihuan ni” (I like you) or say “I love you” in another language.
- Amor – Spanish. To love, to love romantically.
- Amistad – Spanish. Friendship.
- Aficion – Spanish. Enthusiasm.
- Encantar – Spanish. Strong like.
- Amour – French. Love.

So what does God say about real love? Write out a definition based on scripture.

What’s a Girl To Do?



What’s your biggest takeaway from this first session?

What will you do differently after this?

Section 2

Looking for Real Love

.....
A woman's heart should be so hidden in God that a man has to seek Him just to find her.

— Max Lucado
.....

**Guys and girls think about love differently.
Girls want love. Guys want respect.**

Two out of three guys surveyed by Shaunti Feldhahn in *For Young Women Only* said they would rather be “alone and unloved” than “inadequate and disrespected.”

For guys, it's more important to be respected, than it is to be loved. And you might be surprised at what causes them to feel disrespected.

The do's and don'ts of respect:

- Don't tease, criticize, or put down a guy—even jokingly
- Do sincerely compliment him
- Do encourage him
- Don't tell him how to do things or question why he's doing it the way he's doing it
- Do affirm him
- Don't be ungrateful
- Thank him for the things he does

Guys put a lot of stock into what we say. We may be joking, and

they can know we're joking, but the words can still hurt them and cause them to feel disrespected. Our words deeply impact a guy's ego—for better or worse. So be careful of what you say. Some girls tease a guy she likes because she doesn't really know how to talk to him, not realizing that her teasing is causing him to not really like her or to feel like she doesn't really like him. It's a matter of respect. That's what he's looking for.

What's a date?

The dictionary defines a date as "a pre-arranged social engagement" or "an appointment to meet socially." Write your own definition of a date.

List some reasons we date.

My Dream Guy (make a list of what you'd like in a guy if you could have everything you wanted)

I Must Have in a Guy (make a list of what you must have in a guy—including characteristics and values)

I Will Not Tolerate in a Guy (make a list of what you won't tolerate in a guy—including characteristics and values)

A Few Characteristics and Values to Begin Thinking About

- Godly man with a real relationship with God
- Sense of humor
- Loyal
- Hardworking
- Dependable
- Good money sense
- Thrifty
- Enjoys people
- Values family
- Wants children
- Enjoys living in the country
- Likes dogs (or cats or horses or animals)
- Doesn't want pets
- Wants to make a difference in the world
- Polite
- Compassionate
- Kind
- Opinionated
- Patient
- Expressive
- Honest
- Jealous
- Quiet
- Creative
- Upbeat/positive
- Practical
- Spontaneous
- Outgoing
- Playful
- Grouchy
- Controlling
- Smokes
- Does drugs
- Drinks alcohol
- Engages in porn
- Cheats
- Spends money easily
- Loner
- Complains a lot
- Enjoys living in the city
- Talkative
- Serious
- Impatient
- Confident
- Critical
- Enjoys music
- Ambitious
- Energetic
- Conservative
- Open-minded
- Idealistic
- Imaginative
- Organized
- Goal-oriented
- Intelligent
- Athletic
- Outdoorsy
- Enjoys art

Add more:

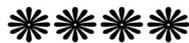
Before getting serious

- Ask yourself, "Is this someone I would marry?"
- Consider his family—would you want to be married to someone like his dad? Can you see yourself enjoying family gatherings?
- Does he share your values and beliefs?
- Does he share your life goals?
- What do your parents think about him?
- Make it a matter of prayer. Trust God. He wants what's best for you!

A few words about breaking up...

- Avoid becoming involved in a relationship you don't want to continue
- When you know it needs to end, end it—don't procrastinate and hold off
- Break up face-to-face
- Be nice
- Be honest
- Afterwards, don't gossip, justify, blame, etc.
- Don't avoid him
- Don't jump into a new relationship right away

What's a Girl To Do?



So what's your biggest takeaway from this session?

Section 3

Getting Real About Boys, Sex, and Love

The bait you use determines the type of fish you catch.

Boys, Sex, and Love Quiz

1. Most guys don't find it hard to stop once they start moving down the road to sexual activity with a girl. True or false?
2. For most guys, if they want to have sex with a girl, it doesn't mean that they're ready to make a commitment to her. True or false?
3. When most guys are moving toward having sex with a girl, they're thinking about how much they love her. True or false?
4. For most guys, if a girl agrees to have sex with them, they trust her more. True or false?
5. Most guys don't like it if the girl they want to marry has a sexual past. True or false?

-From Shaunti Feldhahn, www.foryoungwomenonly.com

Among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity,...because these are improper for God's holy people.

- Ephesians 5:3

What does the world say about sex? Write down some of the messages that society, the media, etc. tell us about sex.

What do boys think about sex?

- Two-thirds say it's about feeling good and not about her
- Two-thirds do not believe sex means a significant commitment
- 82% of guys say they have serious difficulty stopping once they get started
- Most guys believe it's the girl's responsibility to set the limits
- 69% want to marry a virgin—and not just physically, but with a pure heart
- Guys are visual and “read” the message that you are portraying through your clothes, attitude, and behavior
- Because guys are visual, what you wear can get their imaginations going—they will “see” more than you show and what you show will get them thinking...
- When you dress in a way that turns them on physically, that's all they can see—they will not see you or your personality

If he loves you...

- He won't ask you to lie
- He won't ask you to sneak around
- He won't ask you to go against your parents
- He won't ask you to go against God
- He won't ask you to do something that makes you uncomfortable
- He won't force himself on you
- He won't say, “If you love...”

If you love him, you'll wait—you'll keep him from sinning and you'll later (if he's the one) be able to offer him something beautiful and special that's just his.

What does sexual integrity and purity look like for a married woman?

What does God say about sex? Write down some things from your discussion.

Why does God care?

Why wait? List some reasons you would wait until marriage to have sex.

We have an enemy.

Our enemy wants to destroy us. He doesn't want us to experience sex the way God intended because he knows how good it will be. He'll tempt us to think that sex before marriage is no big deal. Or it's not a big deal to have oral sex. Or to let your boyfriend touch you. Everyone else is doing it, right? Your boyfriend won't like you if you don't. Or he'll think you don't like him. You may think it's not a big deal to text him a photo of you naked or partially naked if he asks you for one. But remember that anything you text, email, or post can go viral and be shared with people you don't want to see it.

Some girls have had someone touch them and have sex with them even though they didn't want them to. One in four girls have been sexually abused. Often by someone they trusted. The enemy will cause those experiences to make a girl feel shame and like she's not worth anything. But it's a lie. It's not your fault. You didn't cause it. You couldn't stop it. But you can find healing from it. If you've been sexually abused, tell a trusted adult. Your mom. Your youth leader who brought you here. And even though someone else has hurt you and taken away your virginity, you can still live a pure life by the choices you make. You don't have to have sex with guys just because you're no longer a virgin.

Or maybe you have already had sex with a guy because you wanted to or wanted him to like you. You can still choose to begin today living a sexually pure life. The enemy may tell you it's too late, but he's lying. Every day we choose to either live the life God wants us to or not. Some days we mess up, but the Bible says that God's mercies are new every morning. So we can try again the next day. Asking God for help.

But God is bigger.

God knows we're curious. God knows sex is good. And He knows guys are most likely going to try to push us farther than we may want to go—or should go. He can help us. He can give us courage to say no even if it means a guy won't like us or people think we're old-fashioned. He can help us set boundaries and live by them.

Setting boundaries.

- It's important to decide what you'll do, how far you'll go, and how you'll handle situations before they happen
- Choosing what you will and won't do—setting boundaries—is what really gives you power
- What will you do and won't you do physically?
- Where will you go or won't you go?
- Remember that it's not about how far can you go and still be "okay"—it's about living as godly as you can

What are some boundaries that you want to set?

Who can you call if you need a way out of a date?

Above all else, guard your heart.

Proverbs tell us to “above all else, guard your heart.” Our hearts are important. It’s who we are. Having sex before marriage impacts our hearts. It’s important for us to live sexually pure lives and guard our hearts from shame, guilt, and the hurt that comes from giving yourself physically to someone who then walks away and finds someone else.

What’s a Girl To Do?



So what’s your biggest takeaway from this session?

Section 4

The One Really True Love

.....
*I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore
with loving kindness I have drawn you.*

-God
.....

God, you, and real love.

Okay, so we've talked about love. We've talked about boys, dating, and sex. What about God? Where does He fit into the picture? He created love. He created sex. He created us.

We were created with a need to be loved, valued, and accepted.

God created us to be loved, valued, and accepted. That's how He feels about us. He loves us. He wants us to find our value and acceptance in Him. He longs for us to believe His love for us and live there. He knows it will change how we live. But often, we don't turn to Him to fill our need for love.

How do we try to meet that need? List a few ways.

We have an enemy.

He will constantly attempt to get us to look to people and things for our feelings of love, our sense of value and acceptance. Anything to keep us from truly believing, understanding, and living in God's love, value, and acceptance, because he knows what will happen if we did.

His solutions are only temporary.

- Cute clothes will make us feel good for a moment, but the feeling doesn't last long before we need more cute clothes.
- It feels good when a guy shows interest, but how do we keep him interested?
- When we do things that get attention or applause, it feels good, but the applause dies and we have to do more to get more attention.
- Chocolate (or whatever) tastes good, but for how long? And then, too often, it adds to the battle with our weight and makes us feel worse.

Only God can completely fill our need.

We were created with a God-sized hole and nothing else will fill it no matter how hard we try.

How does God love us? List some ways.

Two main obstacles:

- We don't like ourselves
- We don't really know or trust God

Let's face it, most of us struggle with how we see ourselves. We think our friends are great, but when we look in the mirror, we don't think we're great. We're too fat, too skinny, too tall, too short. We talk too much, we don't talk enough. We can't sing, don't do well in sports, are awkward, or just don't fit in. We can quickly make a list of the things we don't like about ourselves. But we have a harder time making a list of what we do like about ourselves.

And when it comes to God, well we say we know He loves us and wants the best for us, but if we were really honest, we're not really sure. We pray and nothing happens. Bad things do happen to us. Things don't work out the way we want them to. We sometimes believe that God doesn't want us to have fun and only wants us to do hard things that we really don't want to do.

So how do we get past these obstacles? How do we learn to like ourselves? List some ways.

Gotta love ourselves before we can really love anyone else.

- Recognize the enemy's voice and don't agree with him
- Identify the lies
- Take the lies and the things you don't like about yourself to God and ask Him to tell you the truth and show you the you He sees
- You are fearfully and wonderfully made
- Keep talking to God about it

We can't really learn to love anyone else, even a cute guy, until we learn to love ourselves. And we can't really believe anyone else truly loves us until we believe we're lovable. The enemy will do everything he can to keep us from feeling loved or believing we are lovable. He will lie to us about who we are or what we need to look like or be like or do. He will make us feel shame and guilt over silly mistakes. He doesn't actually talk out loud to us, but can "talk" to us through other people, our own thoughts, and messages we get from commercials and ads and other media.

So we need to "listen" to the messages we're hearing and ask ourselves, "Is this really true? What does God say?"

Gotta believe God's love and learn to live it.

- His heart is good
- His Word talks about it
- He will speak love to you every day—look for it: ask Him to help you see it
- Pray and ask Him
- Can only trust Someone you know—get to know Him in a way that works for you
- Keep reminding yourself
- Surround yourself with godly friends who will help you remember

Sometimes the lies will feel like the truth because we've believed them for so long, but they're still lies. We need to compare what we hear in our heads to what the Bible says and what God thinks about us. Would God say that is true about us or not? We need to pray and ask God to help us know what is lies and what is truth, read His Word to learn what He does say about us, and start telling ourselves the truth about who we are in God.

What's a Girl To Do?



What's your biggest takeaway from this session?