

RADICAL ROMANCE

START WITH YOU

LIFE GROUP NOTES

CONNECT and REFLECT

(15-20min) Since you may have new people visiting your group, spend some extended time getting to know each other and getting the conversation started.

Play a game:

Hand out blank paper and pens (or ask people to have this ready if you are meeting online). Ask people to draw their ideal romantic partner. Encourage those who complain about having no artistic abilities - this is meant to be fun and funny!

Ask some ice-breaker questions:

- If you had to date a fictional character who would you choose and why?
- What is one word to describe how you feel when I say the word 'romance'?
- Have you ever changed something about yourself because of a romantic relationship? What happened?
- What is something you believed about romantic relationships that proved to be untrue?

Ask a reflection question:

- What are some of your ideals or non-negotiables when looking for a romantic partner? Why are these things important to you?
 - Do you currently measure up to your own ideals and standard?
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READ

(5 min)

Read this extract from Wolfi Eckleben's book 'Date Talk':

"When it comes to preparing for relationships, it is first about you. It starts with you. Andy Stanley once asked this powerful question to not-yet-marrieds: "Are you the one that the one you are looking for is looking for?" Did you get that? Perhaps you need to read that question again. Maybe you do feel ready for a relationship, and I in no way want to tell you that you are not ready. What I do want to do in this chapter is to help you think more clearly about "you", and I want to show you that the very best preparation you can make for a future fulfilled relationship is a commitment to keep developing your personal wholeness.

Just as much as you are looking for someone, I want to remind you that the someone you are looking for, is also looking for someone. When they do bump into you, what will they find? Will you be the one that the one you are looking for is looking for? Are you becoming that one? So we start with you because right now the only one you can do anything about is you. You have no control over anyone else. In fact, once you are married, you will still be the only one you can do something about as you continue to commit to being the spouse your marriage needs in order to flourish, rather than trying to get your spouse to change. That, by the way, is a very bad idea - as many a spouse has found out!

Don't ever believe that marriage will complete you. At its best, it will only compliment you.

EXAMINE

(15-20min) What does it mean?

- Do you agree with the statement that 'the very best preparation you can make for a future fulfilled relationship is a commitment to keep developing your personal wholeness'? Why or why not?
 - What do you think personal wholeness looks like?
 - Can you relate to the desire to change or control your partner? Why do you think this is a bad idea?
 - Why will marriage or a romantic relationship never complete you?
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APPLY

(10-15min) What will we do?

- Are you the one that the one you are looking for (or dating or married to) is looking for? What areas of your life need improvement or growth so that you can be the best romantic partner you can be?
 - How can your faith help you to develop personal wholeness?
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PRAY

(5-10min)

If you find you have any non-Christians visiting your group who may not feel comfortable with prayer, take this opportunity to pray a brief prayer asking God to help you based on what you have shared.

If your group is more comfortable with prayer, spend some time praying for one another based on what you have shared.

HOME

(5 min) Take the opportunity to connect people to the wider church family and what might be next for them:

- **Group Life:** Is there anything happening outside of the group meeting to draw people into?
- **Church Life:** What's happening next service, are there any key opportunities to highlight, are group members taking their place as contributing church members?
- **Discipleship Step:** Is there a next step that members need to take on the discipleship growth path?