



WORKBOOK



Eight sessions for couples preparing to marry: tools, videos, and honest conversations about money, family, expectations and faith, so the marriage you are about to begin starts on ground you have already walked together.

WRITTEN BY BILL & STEPHANIE LAMMERS

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AUTHORS



Bill & Stephanie Lammers

Bill and Stephanie Lammers have been married for 29 years and are parents to four children. Drawing from decades of experience as founders of Wildfire Leadership and Ignite Academy, and co-founders of Xperience Church, they are dedicated to equipping couples and leaders to live out their God-given purpose. Their passion for strengthening marriages led to the creation of the INVEST Marriage curriculum — a unique program that combines biblical wisdom with practical tools to show couples “how” to experience the fullness of what marriage was designed to be, growing in unity, purpose, and resilience.

Our prayer is for this workbook to help you experience God’s faithfulness in your marriage. We pray that this journey will deepen your relationship with each other and foster unity, trust, and growth. May this intentional investment of your time bring transformation and lasting commitment to your relationship, drawing you closer to one another and to God.

PRACTICAL TOOLS

We're so happy you've chosen to journey through INVEST Marriage. This curriculum provides practical, unique tools to foster a deeper connection and build a resilient, thriving relationship. Throughout the sessions, you will actively engage with these tools and incorporate them into your daily life. These tools show you "how" to create a relationship that thrives on intentional investment and God's grace, giving you the foundation needed for lasting growth and unity.

• KEY TOOLS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP

- **Mission Portrait** — helps identify each future spouse's core values, purpose, and vision, so you understand and appreciate each other's mission and purpose.
- **Proper Portions Tool** — helps you evaluate your current life load to make intentional decisions about when to say "yes" or "no," creating healthy boundaries and prioritizing what truly matters in your relationship.
- **DREAM Map** — a tangible way to outline your shared future goals. By dreaming together and mapping out your vision, you can create a plan that inspires and motivates you both to move forward in unity.
- **Grace Place Tool** — fosters grace-filled conversations so each of you feels heard and valued. This method proactively addresses conflict in a healthy, Christ-centered way, bringing peace and growth to your communication.
- **Stretch Team Tool** — helps you identify a group of trusted individuals who actively support your growth, hold you accountable, and give a perspective that helps protect and encourage your relationship.
- **1-1-1 Rhythm** — a simple, sustaining rhythm of 1 daily deposit, 1 weekly pivot, and 1 monthly check-in, so the habits you build in this study become a way of life long after the last session.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

• START HERE

Eight sessions, two of you, one hour at a time

Each session follows the same shape, so you always know where you are. Read it together, or read it apart and bring your answers — both work.

- 1 **Warm up** — A light question to get you both talking.

- 2 **Watch** — A short video from Bill & Stephanie. Scan the code, or skip it — every session stands on its own.

- 3 **Read & reflect** — The teaching, a story from our relationship, and Scripture.

- 4 **Write** — Space for your own honest answers. Write before you talk.

- 5 **Talk** — Couple Conversation questions. This is where the work actually happens.

- 6 **This week** — One small thing to carry out the door.

• ABOUT THE CODES IN THIS BOOK

Every code in these pages points to our own site, not straight to a video. That means we can improve a tool or move a video without your book going out of date. Scan with your phone camera — no app needed. Prefer to type? The short address is printed under each code.

Doing this in a group? Warm-ups and the big-idea questions are meant to be shared out loud. Couple Conversations, the intimacy reflections, and anything about money stay just between the two of you. Your facilitator will tell you which is which.

• A FEW HONEST SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ Write it out — in the book or on the site, whichever you'll actually do. Slowing down to put words to it is the whole point.
- ✓ Answer for yourself, not for the version of you that you'd like your future spouse to see.

- ✓ Don't rush to fix. Most of these questions want to be heard more than solved.
- ✓ Miss a week? Pick it up where you left off. This is not a streak.
- ✓ A B+ is perfect. Finished beats flawless every single time.

"Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

ECCLESIASTES 4:12



INTRO
SESSION 1

● TO WARM UP

☀ **Light-hearted conversation starter:** Share how you two first met — and why you decided to have a second date.

● OUR STORY, AND WHY INVEST

Welcome to INVEST Marriage

Relationship is one of God’s greatest gifts, and what you build together in the months ahead sets the trajectory for the relationship you’re walking into. Research on couples who prepare intentionally before the wedding is honest, not a promise: it won’t guarantee you never struggle, but it does show real, measurable gains in how well you communicate and how clearly you understand each other, gains that are far easier to build now than after the wedding. This reality highlights the importance of the tools provided in INVEST Engaged, to help you build connection and purpose from the start, discover what genuinely draws you to each other, and step into relationship with open eyes and a shared foundation.

Over the years, we’ve seen countless testimonials from couples who have experienced the blessing of fullness in their relationship through this curriculum. Some were on the verge of quitting, feeling hopeless and disconnected, but found renewed strength and purpose as they journeyed through the principles of INVEST Marriage. And many, even in strong marriages, have discovered how proactively investing in their relationship can lead to incredible growth, joy, and unity.

As you begin, take a moment to reflect on the INVEST Marriage logo. The “I” in INVEST represents a match, symbolizing the spark we believe this curriculum will ignite — or reignite — in your relationship. The “V,” shaped like a check mark, is a visual reminder to **check your heart**, a vital step in preparing for the transformation this journey offers. The purpose of INVEST Marriage is to help couples intentionally build a thriving, God-centered relationship.

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

PSALM 139:23–24 (NIV)

This scripture reveals the **how** — how to check your heart. It begins with humility, confession, and repentance. Pause, reflect, and pray through this verse. Let it set the tone for the journey ahead and open your hearts to the **everlasting** fullness that God desires for your relationship.

Humbly seeking God is the foundation for experiencing transformation, unity, and joy, the promised land of the relationship the two of you are preparing to build. The tools and insights in this curriculum are designed to help you start from that fullness and build a relationship that not only thrives but endures with purpose and passion.

This journey can impact generations to come as you build a relationship that reflects the fullness of what God intended. Through the *Mission Portrait* and the tools provided in INVEST Marriage, you'll proactively build a relationship that brings joy, stability, and life to your family and community.

We pray that this curriculum will ignite a deeper connection and joy as you invest in your relationship.

• OUR STORY • THE HIDEAWAY CABIN

Ten years into our marriage, we found ourselves disconnected, easily irritated, emotionally drained, and crying out in quiet desperation for help. Parenting four young children, with our youngest only six weeks old, had drained us completely. Unknowingly, we had neglected the very foundation of our family — our marriage.

In a desperate attempt to reignite the love we once had, Bill decided to do something bold and book a secluded cabin for a romantic, peaceful, and serene escape for us. While the weekend started out a little shaky, one of the first things we did when we got settled in was humbly confess and repent after a true heart check. This broke open the opportunity for us to communicate honestly and hear what the Lord wanted for our marriage. It became the most transformational experience of our relationship. We spent hours on the back porch, asking each other deep questions about how we could personally grow and improve in our marriage. Through raw discussions, journaling, and prayer, we rediscovered our connection and a vision for the kind of relationship God intended for us.

The INVEST Marriage curriculum emerged from that weekend of intentionally choosing to reignite, rebuild, and proactively invest in our relationship.



The Hideaway Cabin

• WATCH • INTRO TO INVEST



Scan to watch this session's video
invest.wildfireleadership.com/s/1

After reading part of our story, watch the “Intro to INVEST” video to learn how a pivotal moment transformed our relationship and gave birth to INVEST Marriage. This video provides a deeper connection to the heart of the curriculum, setting the tone for the journey ahead. After watching, return to the workbook to explore the scripture that sets the foundation for this session.

• SCRIPTURE TO SET THE TONE

“Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.”

ECCLESIASTES 4:9-10 (NLT)

In what ways do you see that choosing relationship, rather than staying as you are, will make you better off?

• KEY CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

Why INVEST?

This journey is about intentionally exploring the depths of your relationship. Just as we had to pour time, energy, and our hearts into healing and growing our relationship, this curriculum invites you to do the same.

The word INVEST was chosen deliberately, because thriving marriages don't happen by accident. They require care, nurturing, and prioritization. The acronym INVEST stands for:

I Intrigue — Rediscovering the fascination and curiosity that brought you together.

N No — Learning to say “no” to distractions so you can say “yes” to what truly matters.

V Venture Out — Embracing shared adventures to keep your relationship vibrant.

E Examine — Reflecting on and improving communication.

S Safeguard — Establishing healthy boundaries to protect your relationship.

T Teachable Spirit — Committing to continuous growth and learning.

Use this curriculum as a guide to help you rediscover intrigue, set boundaries, embrace adventures, improve communication, safeguard your relationship, and maintain a teachable spirit. Investing in each area will make your relationship more resilient, joyful, and deeply connected.

• REFLECTION TIME

Our Hideaway Cabin story is full of humor and adventure. Laughter can be a powerful connector together.

When was the last time you and your future spouse laughed like that together?

Reflect on how even the unexpected, awkward moments can turn into cherished memories that bring you closer. Think about where your relationship is now. This journey of investing in your relationship is about discovering new ways to bring joy and connection into your relationship.

Are there areas where you need to reignite a spark or make intentional time for one another?

• PRACTICAL STEPS

Rekindle connection through fun. Plan a playful or lighthearted moment this week. Maybe share a joke, try a spontaneous activity, or arrange a small adventure. Remember, the goal isn't perfection but enjoying each other's company.

Discuss INVEST together. Review the INVEST acronym and discuss which part excites or intrigues you the most. Is it the idea of protecting intrigue, or learning to say "no" to distractions? Share your hopes and dreams for how investing in each other now could shape the relationship you're building together.

Make it intentional. Choose one small way to show love this week. It could be a thoughtful gesture, a shared coffee break, or simply asking how your future spouse is doing. Small acts of love build a strong foundation over time.

Build a gratitude habit. Gratitude has the power to shift your focus from what's missing to what's meaningful. By intentionally looking for the good in your future spouse, you nurture love, respect, and connection. Each day, write five things you're grateful for about your future spouse. As you continue week after week, you'll be surprised how you start noticing more, and you develop a deeper level of gratitude.

Write five things now and share them with your future spouse:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

• READINESS CHECK-IN • WHERE WE'RE STARTING

Rate each statement from 1 (rarely true) to 5 (very true), no overthinking, it's just a snapshot. Rate on your own first, then share and compare gently; the goal is understanding, not grading each other. Notice the one or two areas you'd most like to grow, and let those guide what you pay closest attention to through the study. You'll revisit these same five in the final session to see how far you've come.

1. We feel emotionally connected right now.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. We communicate well, even about hard things, like money, in-laws, and how we each practice our faith.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. We've talked concretely about what day-to-day married life will actually look like.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. We are growing spiritually together.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. We've talked honestly about money, family, roles, and how we handle conflict, not just about the wedding.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Rarely true

Very true

• BEFORE THE NEXT SESSION • TAKE YOUR SNAPSHOT

Those five statements are your own read on where you're starting. The **Snapshot** goes underneath them: where your relationship is already strong, how you're each wired, and how each of you most feels loved.

Take it **on your own phone**, separately, before the next session. That matters more than it sounds. Answering side by side turns it into a conversation about what you *should* say, and the whole value is in each of you answering honestly first. You'll each get a link to send the other, and then you can look at both together.

Understand to Serve. That's the point of it: not a label for your future spouse, but a clearer picture of how to love them well.

About six minutes each, on your own phone. You'll get a link to share your results with each other.



Scan to take your Snapshot
invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/snapshot

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. As you think about the story behind the INVEST Marriage curriculum and the Mission Portrait tool, consider how defining your core values can shape your relationship. What would it look like to regularly support your future spouse's mission and purpose?
2. Reflect on the idea that investing in your relationship is an ongoing process. How can embracing this journey open new possibilities for deeper connection and joy?

• OPTIONAL • THE MISSION PORTRAIT OVERVIEW

If you're unfamiliar with the *Mission Portrait*, the optional video linked above gives an overview of the tool couples use worldwide to identify and live out their core values and life mission as a couple. Statistics show that **87% of people don't fully understand their purpose**. Purpose is the anchor for identity and fulfillment — and when a person doesn't know their own, it becomes incredibly challenging to understand their purpose and identity together. Next week, you'll actually create your *Mission Portrait*. Watching this video first will help you start thinking about your personal core values and mission.

• NEXT STEPS

1. Weekly Challenge. Choose one word from the INVEST acronym to focus on. Maybe “Intrigue” inspires you to plan a surprise for your future spouse, or “Safeguard” encourages you to set a healthy boundary. Take a small step this week that moves you closer to your goals for your relationship.

2. Dream Together. Spend time journaling or discussing your hopes for this INVEST Marriage journey. Share your dreams with your future spouse and start envisioning what a flourishing, joy-filled relationship could look like. What are you excited to learn or experience as you invest in your relationship?

3. Legacy Reflection. Often, people talk about the impact a person had on their life after they’re gone. Take time to think about the impact you hope your life will have on your future spouse. If your future spouse spoke at your funeral, what would you hope they’d say about you? Write down a few key phrases that reflect the legacy you hope to leave in their heart — then be intentional about being that person now. Share your thoughts with your future spouse so they can affirm the positive ways you are impacting them now.

• A CLOSING THOUGHT

Remember, every small investment you make now has the potential to yield significant returns in love, trust, and unity for the relationship ahead. Let this journey be one of growth, discovery, and building the bond you’ll carry into it.

CHOOSING

SESSION 2

• TO WARM UP

☀ **To warm up:** Tell each other about a decision you are glad you made slowly.

• CHOOSING

Most people slide. You are about to decide.

Almost every major step a couple takes can happen two ways. You can decide it, out loud, on a date you could name afterwards. Or you can slide into it, one convenience at a time, until one day it is simply true and nobody remembers agreeing to it.

Researchers who study this call it sliding versus deciding, and the finding that matters is not that sliding is sinful. It is that sliding is *sticky*. Every step taken without a decision makes the next one harder to reverse, not because you chose it but because leaving got more expensive. A life can accumulate that way. So can a marriage.

You are in the one season where this is still fully in your hands.

This session is not about what you have already done. It is about doing the next part on purpose.

• THE BIG IDEA

A covenant is made. A contract is negotiated.

A contract says: if you hold up your end, I will hold up mine. It is fair, it is reasonable, and it has an exit written into it, because that is what contracts are for.

A covenant says something different. It is not conditional on performance and it does not have an exit clause, because it was never a trade. It is modeled on the way God commits to people who cannot hold up their end.

You are not being asked to feel differently about that. You are being asked to know which one you are about to make, and to say it out loud to each other before anyone says it in front of a crowd.

“Choose this day whom you will serve... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

JOSHUA 24:15

That verse is a decision, spoken aloud, in public, on a particular day. It is not a mood.

• WHAT YOU HAVE DECIDED, AND WHAT HAS SIMPLY HAPPENED

Be honest here. Nobody is grading this, and almost every couple has some of both.

SOMETHING WE GENUINELY DECIDED,
TOGETHER, OUT LOUD

SOMETHING THAT JUST BECAME TRUE
WITHOUT EITHER OF US CHOOSING IT

Looking at that second one: what made it easier to let it happen than to talk about it?

• THE DECISION IN FRONT OF YOU

In my own words, what I am promising, and what I am promising it regardless of

The day we decided to marry each other

If you cannot name that day, that is not a failure. It is worth deciding tonight, and then you will have one.

• COUPLE CONVERSATION

1. What is one thing we should decide out loud in the next month rather than let happen?
2. What does “no exit clause” actually mean to each of us on an ordinary bad week?

3. Who in our lives made a covenant and kept it? What did it cost them, and what did it give them?
4. Is there anything either of us is assuming has been decided that has never actually been said?

• KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✦ Sliding is not a moral failure. It is sticky, and that is what makes it dangerous.
- ✦ Every step taken without a decision makes the next one harder to reverse.
- ✦ A contract is conditional and has an exit. A covenant is neither.
- ✦ Say it to each other before you say it in front of a crowd.

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. Where in your own family did you watch someone choose, and where did you watch someone drift?
2. What are you most afraid of promising without conditions?
3. What would need to be true for you to be certain you are deciding rather than continuing?

• THIS WEEK

Decide one thing out loud. Something small and real: a rhythm, a boundary, a plan you have both been assuming. Name the day you decided it.

• A PRAYER TO CLOSE

“Lord, keep us from drifting into the life we are meant to choose. Give us the courage to say things out loud, on purpose, to each other and to you. Make our promises the kind that hold when they cost something. Amen.”



MISSION PORTRAIT

SESSION 3

• TO WARM UP

☀ **Light-hearted conversation starter:** What is the funniest habit or quirk your future spouse has that makes you smile every time?

• MISSION PORTRAIT

Create your Mission Portrait

In this session, you will individually create your *Mission Portrait* — a powerful tool that serves as a daily visual reminder of your core values and life mission. This isn't just about personal development; it's about deepening your connection with your future spouse by understanding and appreciating what drives them. The *Mission Portrait* will reveal how your individual purposes beautifully complement each other and bring more meaning and unity into your relationship. This tool will help you uncover your purpose and unleash your full potential in your life and **relationship**.

The Mission Portrait is more than a simple exercise — it's a journey into discovering who you truly are and what you hold most dear. Creating your Mission Portrait is also a chance to reignite that sense of awe and appreciation for each other, revealing how your individual journeys are part of a greater purpose. Imagine the possibilities for your relationship when you both clearly understand each other's dreams and values. Think about how this awareness can transform the way you communicate, support each other, and grow together.

Each of you should complete and submit your *Mission Portrait* **before the next session**, because it will be integral to the upcoming discussions. If you've already completed your Mission Portrait, use your current one or create a new one to reflect your current season of life — and encourage others as they create theirs.

• WATCH · MISSION PORTRAIT



Scan to watch this session's video
invest.wildfireleadership.com/s/2

After playing the video, answer the following question. (If group time is short, skip this video and focus on the Mission Portrait Step-by-Step video below to create your Mission Portrait.)

How could knowing your future spouse's core values and life mission change your interactions and help you build the relationship you're preparing for?

• SCRIPTURE TO SET THE TONE

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

EPHESIANS 2:10 (NIV)

What unique purpose do you believe God designed each of you with? How could knowing each other's purpose bring strength and unity to your relationship?

• KEY CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

Create your individual Mission Portrait

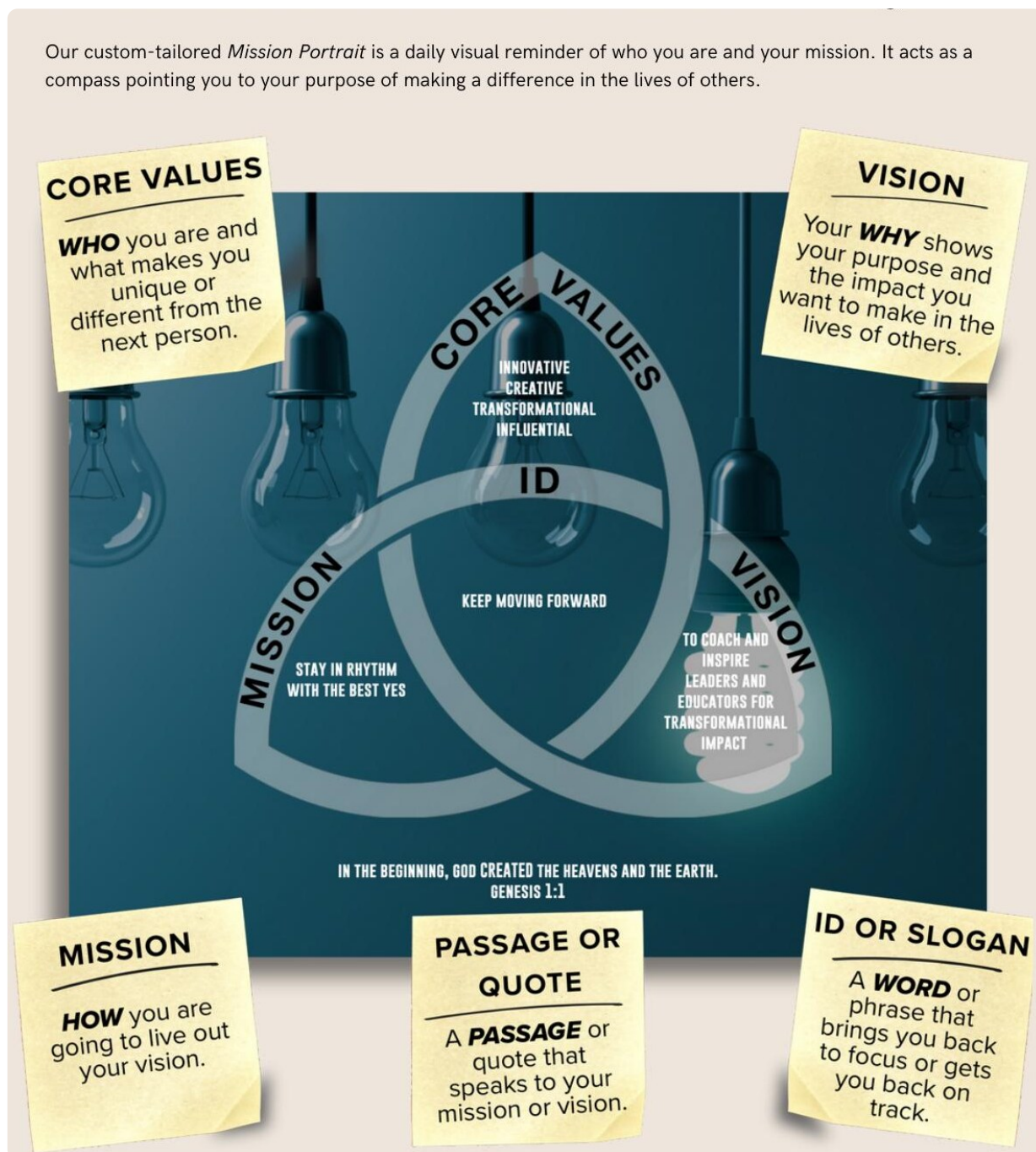
Dedicate some uninterrupted time to thoughtfully complete the following pages to create your *Mission Portrait*. Reflect deeply on your core values, mission, and purpose. Approach this exercise with curiosity and sincerity, viewing it as a window into your heart.

• WATCH • MISSION PORTRAIT STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

This video walks you through the process of creating your *Mission Portrait*, offering clear instructions and examples to help you complete each section thoughtfully and effectively. As you watch, use the built-in timer to keep on track — start or stop the video if you need more time or finish a section early. Use your responses to each section to fill in the Wildfire Whiteboard.

• WHAT IS A WILDFIRE MISSION PORTRAIT?

Our custom-tailored *Mission Portrait* is a daily visual reminder of who you are and your mission. It acts as a compass, pointing you to your purpose of making a difference in the lives of others.



The five pieces of your Mission Portrait: Core Values, Vision, Mission, ID / Slogan, and a Passage or Quote.

SECTION 1 • CORE VALUES

The Core Values section helps you discover and understand the attributes that truly reflect Christ. Self-awareness helps guide an understanding of who you are and what makes you unique or different from others — no one else on Earth will ever have the same DNA as you.

“So God created human beings in His image. In the image of God he created them.”

GENESIS 1:27 (NCV)

If you had to describe yourself to someone who didn't know you, how would you describe yourself? What makes you unique or different from the next person?

Circle the ones that fit — then choose your top 4.

Sensitive	Disciplined	Honest	Faithful	Caring	Compassionate	Respectful	Loyal
Kind	Outgoing	Genuine	Witty	Forgiving	Confident	Brave	Generous
Peaceful	Courageous	Visionary	Understanding	Authentic	Nurturing	Encourager	
Passionate	Dependable	Creative	Strong	Motivated	Leader		

My top 4 core values

1.

2.

3.

4.

SECTION 2 • VISION

The Vision section is vital to carrying out God's will for your life. Where there is no vision, the people perish — but where there is vision, there is **LIFE**.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

PROVERBS 29:18 (KJV)

The vision and plans the Lord has for you are very good, and your vision should be written out in a simple manner, so that you are already ready to run with it.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to give you hope and a future.”

JEREMIAH 29:11 (NIV)

“Write my answer plainly... so that a runner can carry the correct message to others.”

HABAKKUK 2:2 (NLT)

“Find your vision, and let it guide you in all you do. If you lack vision, look inside yourself. Draw on your natural gifts and desires.” — John Maxwell

If you were looking down from a helicopter, what would you love to see yourself doing to positively impact someone else's life?

My gifts and talents

Encourage	Teach	Train	Listen	Host	Serve	Equip	Give	Lead	Develop	Create
Coach	Influence	Network	Support	Build						

The impact I want to make

To Encourage	To Fulfill	To Help	To Focus	To Change	To Overcome	To Facilitate
To Find	To Lead					

My vision — gifts / talents + impact

• SECTION 3 • MISSION

Your mission is the power of your story that shows how you will accomplish your purpose.

Weaknesses are excuses, bad habits, or anything that stops you from achieving your goal. The key is to “flip the script” so you can focus on the strengths that will allow you to live out your vision.

"...The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me..."

ACTS 20:24 (NCV)

Flip each weakness into the strength it can become, then into an action. For example: **Fear** → **Courage** → "Be bold and courageous." **Depression** → **Hope** → "Hope is my anchor."
Controlling → **Surrender** → "Letting go and trusting others."

WEAKNESSES — WHAT STOPS YOU

STRENGTHS — WHAT WILL HELP YOU

STRENGTH IN ACTION = MISSION

My mission

► SECTION 4 • ID / SLOGAN

Your **ID** is an individual declaration — a word or statement you speak over your life daily to activate the destiny of your values, vision, and mission, and keep it in motion.

When you have a day where you feel off track, what do you tell yourself to get motivated and back on track?

► SECTION 5 • PASSAGE OR QUOTE

Choose a passage or quote that speaks to your mission and vision, inspires you, and encourages you. (Try biblegateway.com for passages, or a favorite quote you return to.)

What passage or quote might support or relate to your mission and vision?

• SECTION 6 • PICTURE

Sometimes a picture can bring special memories or positive feelings. You can use your own photo or choose from picture options after you enter your responses in the tool.

What image motivates you to overcome obstacles and fulfill your vision?

• THE WILDFIRE WHITEBOARD

Bring it all together here, then submit it in the tool. Fill in each box from your responses above — Core Values, Vision, Mission, ID / Slogan, Passage or Quote, and your Picture.

 WILDFIRE WHITEBOARD		 SUBMIT YOUR FORM HERE Password: invest	
CORE VALUES <i>Describe yourself in 3-4 words</i>	VISION <i>If you could make the biggest impact, what would you do?</i>	MISSION <i>How are you going to live out your vision?</i>	ID/SLOGAN <i>What is your daily slogan to keep you on track?</i>
PASSAGE/QUOTE <i>Quote that speaks to your vision/mission</i>		PICTURE <i>Keywords:</i>	

The Wildfire Whiteboard — your Mission Portrait on one page.

Password: invest · Enter your responses, choose your picture, and submit before the next session.



Scan to create your Mission Portrait
invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/mission-portrait

• PRACTICAL STEPS

Review and reflect. Once both of you have completed each section of the *Mission Portrait*, share yours with each other. Practice active listening — truly hearing your future spouse without planning your response. Ask questions that help you better understand your future spouse's dreams and values, and express how their mission moves or challenges you. Reflect on how your core values and life mission can bring more depth and joy into your relationship.

Highlight areas of connection. Identify and discuss where your Mission Portraits align or complement each other. Celebrate shared values, discuss how you can support each other in pursuing your individual goals, and look for ways to align your purposes to create a foundation

of unity. This conversation can be a powerful moment of clarity, helping you both see the intentionality of your partnership.

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. How does knowing that God has created each of you with a unique purpose inspire you to support one another?
2. What qualities or values do you see in your future spouse that align with God's purpose for them?
3. How can you encourage each other to live out these unique callings in your daily lives?
4. What is one thing your future spouse wrote or shared in their Mission Portrait that you appreciate most about them? Take a moment to affirm your future spouse — for example, if one of their values is “justice,” say, “Thank you for living a life focused on doing what’s right.”

• NEXT STEPS

1. **Submit your Mission Portrait.** Before the next session, make sure your *Mission Portrait* is fully completed and submitted in the tool above. It's crucial to complete it, because you'll refer to it in the upcoming sessions.
2. **Plan your Marriage Mission Portrait.** The one you just made is yours alone — and that's the point, because you can't share a vision you haven't named. The next step is a **shared** one: a single portrait of the values, purpose, and vision the two of you are building together. You'll create it as the capstone in the final session, so put it on the calendar now. If you have children, you can make a Family Mission Portrait the same way afterward — but start with the two of you.
3. **Daily check-in.** Use your Mission Portrait as a daily reflection tool. Take five minutes each day to focus on one of your values or purposes and think about how it can shape your interactions with your future spouse. Throughout the week, share one insight or act of appreciation — a heartfelt compliment or a small gesture that shows you care.

• A CLOSING THOUGHT

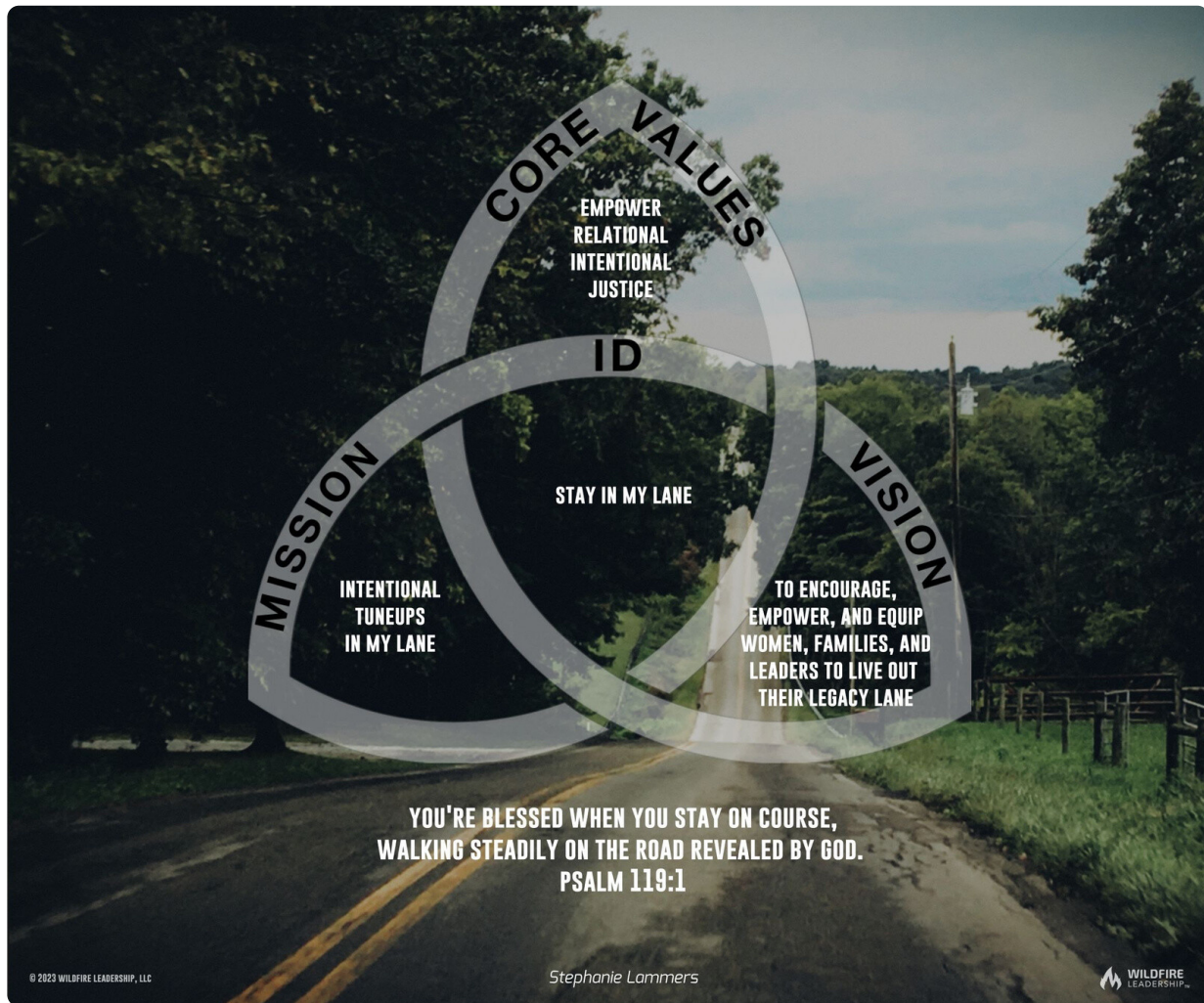
By embracing the Mission Portrait, you're clarifying your own identity and purpose and investing in a relationship centered on God's plan and built to thrive. Your Mission Portraits are a pivotal step forward in your journey toward greater understanding and connection. Let it be a foundation upon which your love and partnership continue to grow.

• EXAMPLE MISSION PORTRAITS

Here are ours, to show you what a finished portrait can look like.



Bill's Mission Portrait



Stephanie's Mission Portrait



INTRIGUE

SESSION 4

• TO WARM UP

☀ **Light-hearted conversation starter:** How did you get engaged — any funny or unexpected moments?

• INTRIGUE

Discovering the fascination that already draws you together

This session will guide you to notice, on purpose, the curiosity and fascination that drew you together in the first place. By reflecting on each other's *Mission Portraits* and values, you will deepen your understanding and appreciation for one another. Relationships often begin with intrigue, that natural curiosity and excitement about what makes your future spouse unique. This session is about protecting that intrigue on purpose, so it keeps drawing you closer long after the wedding is behind you.

• WATCH • INTRIGUE



Scan to watch this session's video
invest.wildfireleadership.com/s/3

In this video, Bill and Stephanie share their stories and insights, discussing the beauty and significance of intrigue together. Watch for examples of how rediscovering fascination with each other can strengthen a couple's connection.

• SCRIPTURE TO SET THE TONE

“And you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first.”

REVELATION 2:3–5 (NASB)

Revelation 2 calls us to guard our first love for God, so it never quietly fades as life gets busier and more complicated. That same watchfulness, staying alert to what pulls you away, protects the relationship you are building, before you ever have a chance to drift.

How does your love for God shape the way you're learning to love your future spouse?
How can humility and grace build the connection you're forming?

“Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.”

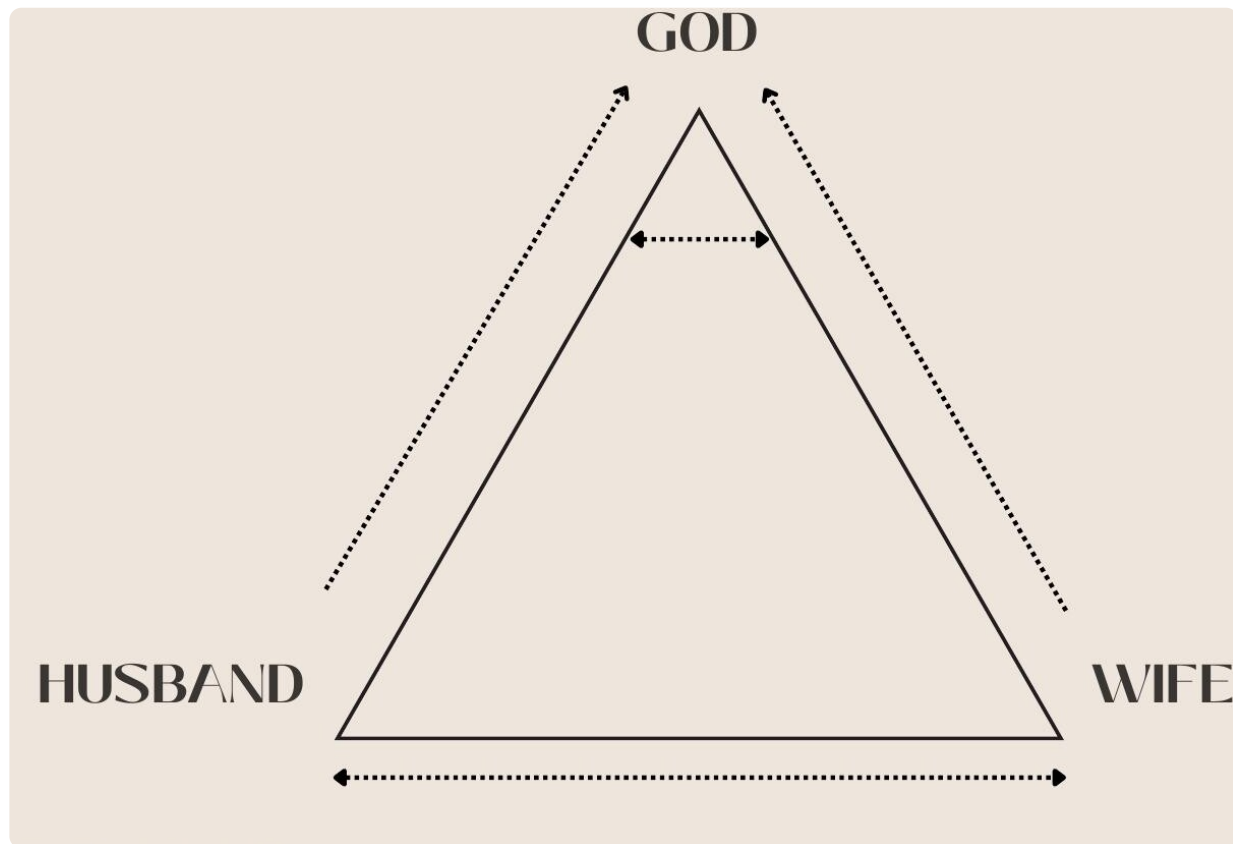
2 CORINTHIANS 13:11–13 (ESV)

What do these verses mean to you, and how do they apply to the relationship you're building together?

• KEY CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

The Relationship Triangle

Something amazing happens when God is at the top of the triangle and each of you is at a bottom corner. As you both pursue God and move closer to Him, you’re being drawn closer to each other, as His qualities are reflected in your relationship.



Pursue God together, and you're drawn toward each other.

• THE THREE STEPS OF DISCOVERY

- ✦ **Discover:** notice, on purpose, what genuinely draws you to each other right now.
- ✦ **Cultivate:** build habits, big and small, that keep that curiosity alive.
- ✦ **Protect:** guard it against the busyness and drift that tend to come later, before they arrive.

• PRACTICAL STEPS

Explore the importance of intrigue. Relationships thrive when we maintain curiosity and appreciation for one another. Share with each other as you think back to the early days of your relationship — what made your future spouse stand out? How did their uniqueness captivate you?

God's desire for first love. Just as God calls us to keep our first love for Him alive, He invites us to nurture that same wonder for your future spouse from the very beginning. As your love for God grows, it naturally deepens your connection with each other, building a healthier, more resilient relationship before it even starts. Apply the Three Steps of Discovery to your relationship with God.

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

• NEXT STEPS

1. Review your future spouse's Mission Portrait. Set aside 5–10 minutes to thoughtfully read your future spouse's *Mission Portrait*, focusing on their dreams, values, and purpose. Share which traits or values you admire in your future spouse and how these have positively impacted your life and relationship.

2. Recreate the early moments. Reflect on something you used to do early in your relationship that brought joy or connection — like long talks, spontaneous adventures, or simple shared moments. What's one specific thing you can recreate this week? (For example: "We used to laugh for hours over ice cream at the park. I'll plan a quick trip there after dinner this week.")

• A CLOSING THOUGHT

Intrigue helps you relive the past, enrich your current connection, and invest in your future. By nurturing your relationship, you'll create a relationship that reflects God's love and continues to grow in intimacy and joy.

WHERE YOU CAME FROM

SESSION 5

• TO WARM UP

☀ **To warm up:** When something went wrong in the house you grew up in, what happened in the first ten minutes?

• WHERE YOU CAME FROM

You learned marriage before you knew you were learning

Nobody sat you down and taught you how two people are supposed to treat each other. You watched. For eighteen years you watched, in the one house you could not leave, and everything you saw got filed as normal.

That filing is quiet and it is durable. Of all the things that can be measured about a couple before the wedding, what each of them absorbed at home is one of the few that still shows up years later, in how they fight. Not whether they fight. How.

You are not doomed by any of it. But you cannot decide about something you have never named.

This session is not about blaming anyone's parents. It is about seeing clearly what you were handed, so you can choose what to keep.

• THE BIG IDEA

Your normal and their normal are both just normal to you

Two people walk into a marriage each certain they know how a disagreement goes, because each has watched hundreds of them. One learned that raised voices mean the room is honest. One learned that raised voices mean someone is about to leave.

Neither is being difficult. Both are running the only program they were given. The trouble starts when each assumes the other is choosing their reaction rather than repeating it.

"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you."

EXODUS 20:12

Honoring is not pretending. You can tell the truth about a home and still honor the people in it. In some ways honoring it well means refusing to pass on the part that hurt.

• THE HOUSE YOU GREW UP IN

Answer these on your own first. Do not soften them for the other person to read.

When my parents disagreed, what I actually saw was...

After a fight, how did the house get back to normal? Who moved first, and what did they do?

How did people in my home show love? What was said, and what was only done?

**SOMETHING FROM THAT HOME I WANT
IN OURS**

**SOMETHING I AM DETERMINED NOT TO
REPEAT**

• WHERE THEY ARE ALREADY SHOWING UP

The point of naming a pattern is catching it in the room you are actually in.

A moment in our relationship when I reacted the way someone in my family would have

Something the other person does that I have never understood

• HOW EACH OF US GOES QUIET OR GOES LOUD

WHEN I AM HURT, MY FIRST INSTINCT IS TO...

Go quiet

In between

Raise my voice

AFTER A DISAGREEMENT, I...

Fix it now

In between

Need time first

If you landed at opposite ends of either scale, you have found something worth an hour of conversation. Opposite instincts are not a mismatch. Unnamed opposite instincts are.

• COUPLE CONVERSATION

1. Read each other's answers about conflict. What surprised you most?
2. Which of our two houses is closer to how we want ours to run, and in what specific way?
3. When one of us goes quiet and the other needs to talk, what will we actually do? Decide it now, not at eleven at night.
4. What is one thing from each of our families that we want our home to be known for?

• KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✦ You learned how people treat each other before you could evaluate it.
- ✦ What you absorbed at home is one of the few things measurable before a wedding that still shows years later, in how you fight.
- ✦ Your normal and their normal both feel like normal. That is the whole problem.
- ✦ Naming a pattern is not blaming anyone. It is what makes choosing possible.

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. Which parent do you resemble more under pressure? How do you feel about that?
2. Was there something in your home that was never talked about? What did its absence teach you?
3. What would the family you grew up in say about the way the two of you handle conflict now?
4. Is there anyone you need to forgive before you carry this into a marriage?

• **THIS WEEK**

Trade your answers about conflict and read them slowly. Then name one pattern each of you brought that you would like the other's help catching. Say what "help" looks like, so it does not become a weapon.

• **A PRAYER TO CLOSE**

"Lord, thank you for the homes that made us, the good in them and the hard. Give us honesty without bitterness, and honor without pretending. Let us keep what was faithful and lay down what was not. Make our home a place someone will one day want to come back to. Amen."



NO

SESSION 6

• TO WARM UP

☀ ☀ **Light-hearted conversation starter:** What's the most memorable trip you've taken together so far, and was there a hilarious moment?

• NO

Saying “no” to distractions, “yes” to each other

This session emphasizes the significance of learning to say “no” to distractions and “yes” to each other. In today's fast-paced world, it's crucial to say “no” to good things so that you can say “yes” to the best things for your relationship.

We often get overwhelmed with commitments and tasks that take away from the quality time and energy our marriages need. The Bible describes these distractions as “little foxes” that can ruin the vineyard of love, highlighting the importance of guarding what matters most. In this session, you'll learn to identify those “foxes” and make space for deeper intimacy and connection. You'll work together to identify the distractions that pull you away from your relationship and use practical tools to realign your priorities.

• WATCH · NO — PRIORITIZING WHAT MATTERS MOST



Scan to watch this session's video
invest.wildfireleadership.com/s/4

This video features Bill and Stephanie sharing stories and insights about how saying “no” to distractions has impacted their relationship — and how you can experience greater joy and unity by doing the same.

• SCRIPTURE TO SET THE TONE

“Catch all the foxes, those little foxes, before they ruin the vineyard of love, for the grapevines are blossoming!”

SONG OF SOLOMON 2:15 (NLT)

What are the distractions, or 'foxes,' that are stealing your time and energy from your relationship?

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life... Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

MATTHEW 11:28–30 (MSG)

What practical ways can you slow down and prioritize your connection to bring rest into your relationship?

• KEY CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

N stands for “No” — and saying your “best yes”

Distractions can take many forms — work, social commitments, and even good things like church activities. They can quietly undermine the quality of your relationship, so it’s essential to identify them and create boundaries to protect what truly matters. The Bible describes these distractions as “little foxes” that ruin the vineyard of love, emphasizing the damage that seemingly small distractions can cause over time. By intentionally setting priorities, you can guard your relationship and experience a more meaningful connection.

• ASSESS YOUR GODLY ORDER OF PRIORITIES

Individually assess how you’re currently prioritizing the areas below. Reflect on the **past three months**. On a scale of 1 to 5, rate how well you’re prioritizing each area — **1 = needs significant improvement, 5 = thriving and balanced**.

1. Personal Growth & Faith — growing spiritually and personally to reflect God’s purpose.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Relationship — intentionally nurturing and protecting your connection with your future spouse.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Family Planning: how clearly you and your future spouse have talked through if, when, and how you'll parent someday.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Health & Well-Being — caring for your physical, mental, and emotional health.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. Purpose & Career — pursuing meaningful work and dreams that align with God's plan.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Financial Stewardship — managing your resources wisely.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7. Impact, Serve, & Community — using your time, talents, and resources to serve others.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

8. Adventure, Fun, & Travel — creating joyful experiences and meaningful memories.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Rarely true

Very true

Reflect on your ratings — are there areas where you feel convicted to grow? Write down one actionable step for each category. These reflections feed directly into the Proper Portions tool below.

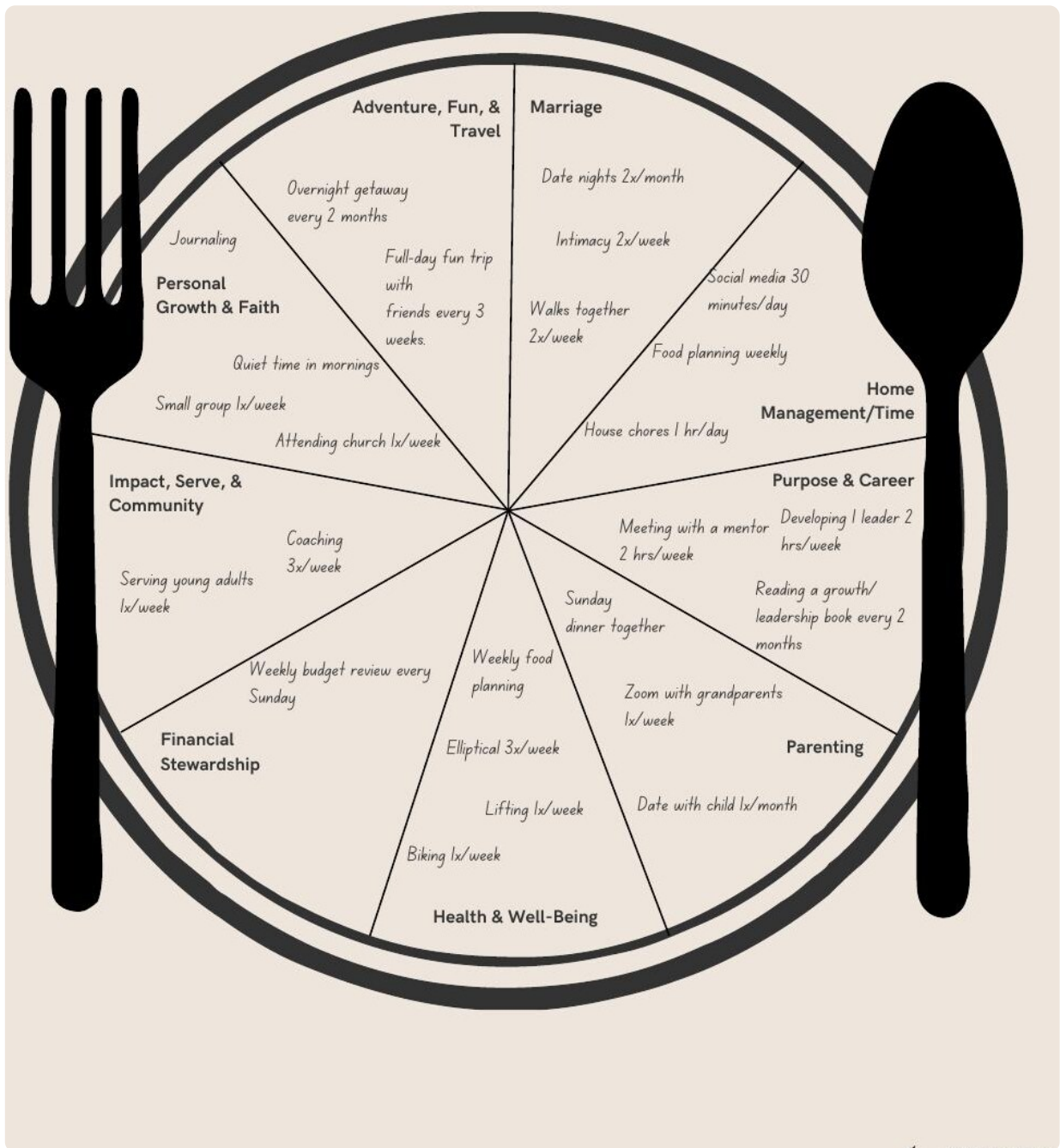
TOOL • PROPER PORTIONS

What's actually on your plate?

The goal of this exercise is to reflect on the current state of your life over the past three months, understand where your time and energy are being spent, and gain self-awareness about your

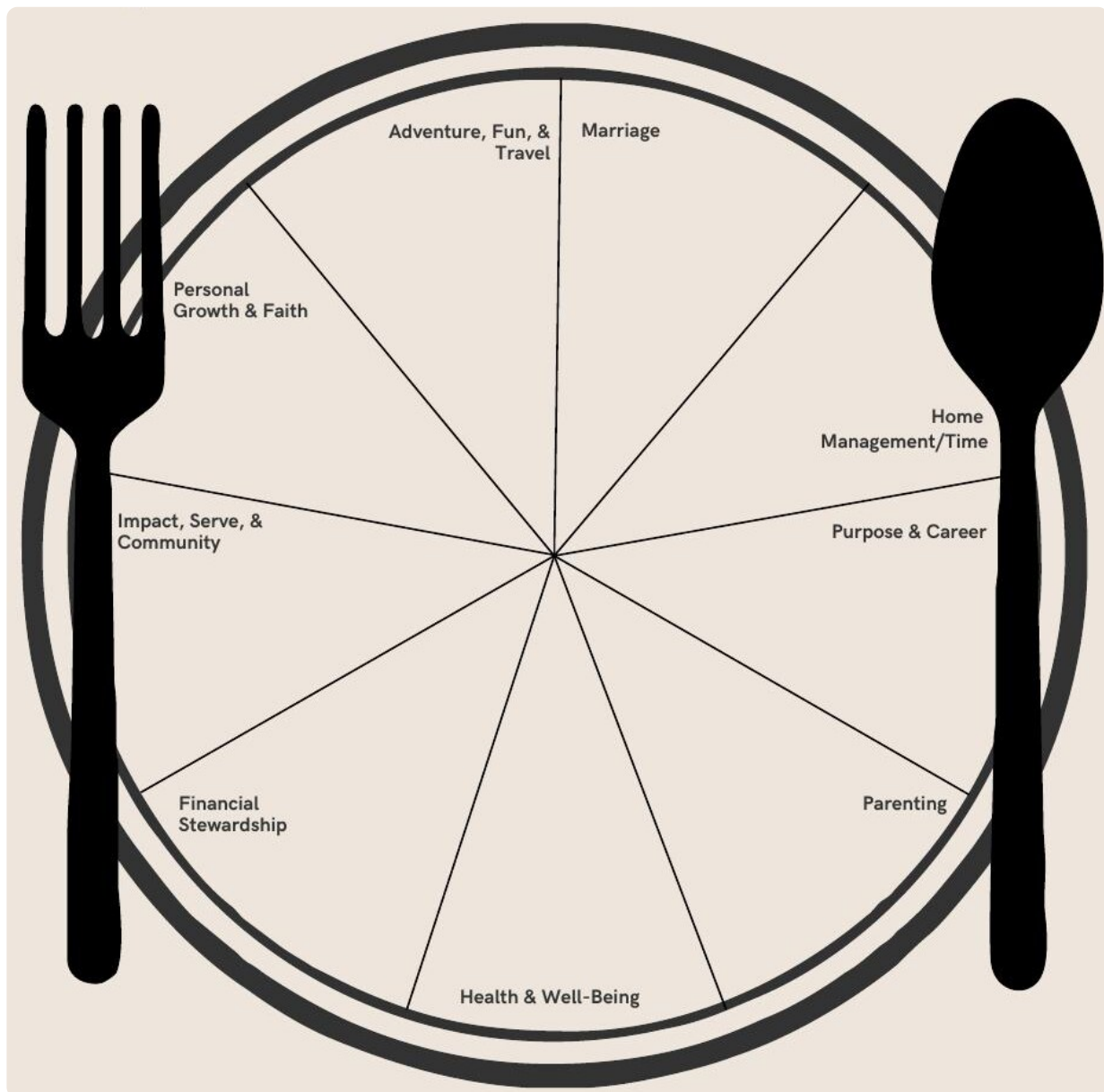
focus and margin. This tool helps you identify your “best yes” and any area that might rob your time.

Step 1 • Review the example. As you review the example plate, reflect: what stands out to you?



Proper Portions — an example plate

Step 2 • Fill out your plate. Reflect on the past three months and write down the activities and commitments currently filling your time in each category. Use the legend to guide you.



Your plate — fill in each category

The legend, category by category:

- **Personal Growth & Faith** — How are you growing spiritually and personally?
- **Relationship** — What activities nurture and protect your connection with your future spouse?
- **Family Planning** — How clearly have you and your future spouse talked through if, when, and how you'll parent someday?
- **Health & Well-Being** — What are you doing to care for your physical, mental, and emotional health?
- **Purpose & Career** — How are you investing in meaningful work or dreams?

- **Financial Stewardship** — How are you managing your resources wisely?
- **Impact, Serve, & Community** — How are you using your time, talents, and resources to serve others?
- **Adventure, Fun, & Travel** — What experiences or activities bring joy and create memories?
- **Home Management / Time** — What routines maintain your own household today, and what activities, like social media or TV, are part of your day?

Step 3 · Analyze your plate. What stands out? Are any categories too large or too small? Which activities align with your “best yes,” and what is taking up time that doesn’t align with your values?

Step 4 · Identify your “best yes” and “no.” Name two things that are not your best yes and consider how to adjust or let go of them. Then choose two next steps to prioritize what brings life to you and your family — and discuss it together.



The Proper Portions tool
invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/proper-portions

• EXERCISE · FILLERS & DRAINERS

One of the best ways to rekindle intrigue is to become a student of each other again — to notice what lights your future spouse up and what wears them down. **Fillers** are the activities, habits, or moments that energize and uplift you. **Drainers** deplete your energy or weigh you down. When you identify what energizes and what depletes both of you, you unlock fresh ways to engage each other with curiosity, empathy, and intention.

For you. List five fillers that leave you energized and five drainers that leave you depleted.

MY FILLERS — WHAT ENERGIZES ME

MY DRAINERS — WHAT DEPLETES ME

For your future spouse. Share your list. Talk about what stood out and why certain things made the list — be open and honest.

Action step. Identify one filler from your future spouse’s list to intentionally support this week. (If your future spouse said “quiet time in the morning” is a filler, create space for that.)

What's one way you can work together to protect each other's fillers and reduce the drainers?



The Fillers & Drainers tool
invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/fillers-drainers

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you’d rather keep things light.

1. When you say “no” to lesser things, you make space for greater blessings. Your Mission Portrait helps you decide what should earn your “yes.” What commitments in your life don’t align with your vision?
2. What “yes” will you make today to honor your relationship and spiritual journey?

• NEXT STEPS

1. Implement a margin exercise. From your Proper Portions plate, choose one area to simplify or reduce. Protect that margin intentionally — cancel a less important commitment, or dedicate uninterrupted time to each other.

2. Celebrate small wins. Acknowledge and celebrate any improvement in prioritizing your relationship. Recognize how saying “no” to distractions has already blessed your relationship.

• A CLOSING THOUGHT

By learning to say “no” to distractions and “yes” to a stronger relationship, you create a life filled with God’s peace, joy, and blessings — living in His unforced rhythms of grace.

BEFORE YOU MERGE

SESSION 7

• TO WARM UP

☀ **To warm up:** Who taught you what money was for? Not what they said about it. What you watched them do.

• BEFORE YOU MERGE

The one you are most likely to skip

Of everything a couple can argue about, money is the one that predicts the most trouble. Not because money matters more than love, but because two people arrive with two entire histories about it and almost never compare them out loud before the accounts join.

Right now you have something you will never have again: two separate financial lives, side by side, still legible. Every number is still attributable. Every habit still belongs to one of you. That makes this the easiest this conversation will ever be, and it is the last week it will be this easy.

This session is not about building a budget. It is about learning what the other person believes, before those beliefs get expensive.

• THE BIG IDEA

You are not merging accounts. You are merging two educations.

One of you grew up in a home where money was discussed openly. One of you grew up in a home where it was a closed door, or a raised voice, or a thing that arrived and vanished. Neither of you chose that education. Both of you are carrying it.

Most money fights are not about the purchase. They are about what the purchase meant, and what it meant was decided years before you met.

“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it?”

LUKE 14:28

• SAY THE NUMBERS OUT LOUD

Not to judge them. To stop them being a surprise later. Each of you fill this in on your own first, then trade pages.

WHAT I EARN, ROUGHLY

WHAT I OWE, ALL OF IT

WHAT I HAVE SAVED

WHAT I SPEND ON WITHOUT THINKING

If one of those numbers was hard to write down, that is worth saying out loud too. The difficulty is the information.

• WHAT YOU EACH BELIEVE

Money in the home I grew up in was...

The thing I am quietly afraid of about money in our marriage

What I want money to be FOR in our life together

• COUPLE CONVERSATION

1. Which of your two educations about money is closer to how you want to live? Neither answer is a loss.

2. What is one purchase the other person would make that you would find hard, and why is it hard?
3. Who will pay the bills? Not who should. Who actually will, in practice, in month one?
4. What is the number above which we talk first? Pick an actual figure tonight.

• KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✦ Money disagreements predict more trouble than almost anything else a couple argues about.
- ✦ You are merging two educations, not two balances.
- ✦ The habit that is hard to name now becomes the fight you cannot name later.
- ✦ One agreed number, above which you talk first, prevents more arguments than a budget does.

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. What did money buy in your family that had nothing to do with money? Safety, status, peace, silence?
2. Is there anything about your finances you have been putting off saying? What makes it hard?
3. If our income dropped by half next year, what would each of us want to protect first?

• THIS WEEK

Trade pages, then pick your number. Sit down with both sets of answers and agree one figure: the amount above which neither of you spends without a conversation. Write it somewhere you will both see it.

• A PRAYER TO CLOSE

“Lord, make us honest with each other about what we have and what we owe. Keep money in its place in our home, useful and small, never the thing that divides us. Teach us to hold it open-handed and to build on ground we have counted. Amen.”



VENTURE OUT

SESSION 8

• TO WARM UP

☀ **Light-hearted conversation starter:** What's the most adventuresome thing you've done as a couple — and would you do it again? Why or why not?

• VENTURE OUT

The importance of shared adventure

This session invites you to step outside your comfort zone and embrace new adventures together as a couple. Shared experiences add excitement to your relationship, helping you grow closer and gain a deeper understanding of each other's values and dreams. The *DREAM Map* is a tool designed to help you map your future goals, aligning them with your core values and vision. As you dream and plan together, you'll find a renewed sense of purpose and motivation to move forward in unity.

Think back to the early days of your relationship, when curiosity and excitement peaked. This session encourages you to rekindle that sense of wonder. The *DREAM Map* will help you explore your shared dreams and set a course for the future — reigniting the spark and finding new adventures.

• WATCH · VENTURE OUT — THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARED ADVENTURE



Scan to watch this session's video
invest.wildfireleadership.com/s/5

This video features Bill and Stephanie sharing how stepping out of their comfort zones has enriched their relationship — and how you can experience greater joy and unity by doing the same.

• SCRIPTURE TO SET THE TONE

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

PROVERBS 29:18 (KJV)

What does this verse mean to you, and how does it apply to your relationship?

• KEY CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

Why venture out?

Adventure is a key component of a thriving relationship. It helps you:

- ✦ **Build connection and shared experiences** — adventures bring you closer and create lasting memories.
- ✦ **Renew excitement** — trying new things together keeps your relationship lively and engaging.
- ✦ **Enhance communication and teamwork** — tackling challenges together fosters collaboration and understanding.
- ✦ **Foster mutual growth** — new experiences help you grow as individuals and as a couple.
- ✦ **Prevent monotony** — adventure keeps your relationship from becoming stagnant and routine.
- ✦ **Rediscover each other** — shared experiences let you see new sides of your future spouse.
- ✦ **Find fulfillment and well-being** — a life filled with adventure adds to your overall happiness and happiness together.

• TOOL • THE DREAM MAP

The *DREAM Map* is your roadmap to a clear, inspiring, and actionable vision for your relationship. Dream boldly, support each other, and align your future with God's design for your life together.

D Define — your dreams.

R Reflect — on your Mission Portrait.

E Envision — your future.

A Act — with intentional steps.

M Map — your path forward.

Use the questions in each area to spark ideas — then map where you see yourselves in **1 year, 3 years, and 10 years**. Don't try to fill every box; start with the **2–3 areas** that resonate most. Let your *Mission Portrait* be your compass.

Personal Growth & Faith — How can you grow closer to God together? What habits will strengthen your relationship? *(1 yr: pray together daily, start a shared devotional. 3 yr: a couples' Bible study or relationship retreat. 10 yr: mentor another couple or lead a relationship ministry.)*

Relationships & Family — What traditions could deepen your connection? How will you build a legacy for your family? *(1 yr: weekly date nights or a shared gratitude journal. 3 yr: create a Family Mission Portrait. 10 yr: a legacy project that connects the generations.)*

Health & Well-Being — How will you support each other's physical and emotional health? *(1 yr: daily walks and better rest. 3 yr: a fitness challenge together. 10 yr: a sustainable routine that brings vitality to your relationship.)*

Purpose & Career — What meaningful work could you pursue to make an impact? How will you support each other's purpose? *(1 yr: encourage each other's goals. 3 yr: a shared business, project, or ministry. 10 yr: write a book or launch a platform that inspires others.)*

Adventure, Fun & Travel — What experiences bring joy and excitement? How will you create lasting memories? *(1 yr: a weekend getaway or new local hobby. 3 yr: cooking classes or an international trip. 10 yr: a milestone anniversary at a dream destination.)*

Financial Stewardship — What financial dreams bring peace and freedom? How will you steward your resources? *(1 yr: a budget and short-term savings. 3 yr: pay off a debt or start investing. 10 yr: long-term security through investing and generosity.)*

Impact & Community — What causes align with your shared values? How will you give back as a couple? *(1 yr: volunteer for a cause you care about. 3 yr: start a community initiative or mentor younger couples. 10 yr: lead a relationship-focused ministry or start a family foundation.)*



A couple's DREAM Map, as an
example

invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/dream-map-example

Now map it out together:

PERSONAL GROWTH & FAITH

1 yr _____

3 yr _____

10 yr _____

RELATIONSHIPS & FAMILY

1 yr _____

3 yr _____

10 yr _____

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

1 yr _____

3 yr _____

10 yr _____

PURPOSE & CAREER

1 yr _____

3 yr _____

10 yr _____

ADVENTURE, FUN & TRAVEL

1 yr _____

3 yr _____

10 yr _____

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

1 yr _____

3 yr _____

10 yr _____

IMPACT & COMMUNITY

1 yr _____

3 yr _____

10 yr _____



Your DREAM Map, online — the
same answers as this page
invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/dream-map

• PRACTICAL STEPS

Using your DREAM Map. Start with the 2–3 areas that resonate most so you’re not overwhelmed — you can always expand later. Set a reminder every few months to revisit it, celebrate wins, and adjust. Use your *Mission Portrait* as a compass so your dreams stay aligned with your values, vision, and mission.

Take some adventures. Make plans to venture into new experiences in three areas: an **emotional adventure** (try a new form of communication, or share a vulnerable part of your past), a **physical adventure** (a weekend trip somewhere new, or an active class together), and a **connection adventure** (grow closer emotionally and spiritually while you honor the boundaries you’ve set for this season, through a long, unhurried conversation about what you’re each most looking forward to together, or praying through a passage of Scripture together). Keep the spark alive through both grand experiences and the small, everyday moments that make this season special.

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. How can your dreams and adventures strengthen your spiritual bond and bring joy to your daily life?
2. How can you use your DREAM Map to inspire more connection and shared excitement in your relationship?
3. How can your individual values or vision from your Mission Portrait inspire an adventure together that reflects who you both are?
4. What part of your future spouse's Mission Portrait would you love to explore with them on your next adventure?
5. If your future spouse spoke at your funeral, what would you hope they'd say about you? Write down a few phrases that reflect the legacy you hope to leave in their heart.

• **NEXT STEPS**

1. **Commit to a new adventure.** Choose one adventure from your map and schedule it in the next month — something as simple as a picnic at a new park or as extravagant as a mini-vacation.
2. **Celebrate your journey.** Afterward, reflect on what the adventure brought to your relationship. Celebrate the new memories and the deeper connection you've built.
3. **Complete your personal DREAM Map.** Make a copy for each of you to complete on your own, then share them with each other. Encourage and pray for each other to fulfill your God-given dreams.

• **A CLOSING THOUGHT**

Dreaming and venturing out together creates a bond that transforms your relationship. It gives you both a sense of purpose and a connection that grows richer over time. Step into new adventures, cherish the moments, and continue building a relationship full of love, excitement, and unity.



EXAMINE SESSION 9

• TO WARM UP

☀ **Light-hearted conversation starter:** What was the most epic “date fail” or funny mishap you had as a couple?

• EXAMINE

Building grace-filled communication

This session focuses on examining and improving communication in your relationship by addressing blind spots with grace and understanding. You and your future spouse will learn how to use the *Grace Place Tool* to create safe, grace-filled spaces for honest conversations. Think of this as inspecting the foundation of your relationship to ensure it’s solid and ready for growth — every healthy relationship needs regular examination, just like maintaining the structural integrity of a house.

We all know how frustrating it is when poor communication and unresolved misunderstandings slip into our relationship. They become unseen barriers that quietly chip away at our trust and closeness. Sometimes these blind spots go unnoticed until they start to take a real toll on how we connect. If we don’t address them, they can slowly weaken the foundation of our relationship. The stories and insights in this session will equip you to identify and use grace to address any areas of your relationship that need attention.

• SCRIPTURE TO SET THE TONE

“But as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you — see that you excel in this act of grace also.”

2 CORINTHIANS 8:7 (ESV)

How can you excel in showing grace to one another?

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

COLOSSIANS 4:6 (NIV)

In what areas could grace transform your conversations and bring about healing?

“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’”

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9 (NIV)

In what area can you allow God's grace to fill your weaknesses?

“But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, ‘God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”

JAMES 4:6 (ESV)

How can humility help you extend more grace to each other?

• WATCH • EXAMINE — BUILDING GRACE-FILLED COMMUNICATION



Scan to watch this session's video
invest.wildfireleadership.com/s/6

This video offers real-life examples and testimonies to illustrate how grace-filled conversations can shift the dynamics in your relationship.

• KEY CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

The importance of examination

To **examine** is to inspect something in detail to determine its nature or condition. Intentional, proactive, regular examination together helps create non-conflict settings for growth. It won't always be perfect, but it's always about growth.

Regularly evaluate your communication. Like inspecting the foundation of a home, taking time to assess your conversations helps you identify and repair any cracks before they spread.

Grace transforms conversations. Approaching each discussion with empathy and understanding can soften hearts and foster genuine connection. The *Grace Place Tool* is a guide for navigating tough topics with grace.

Give grace. One danger is assuming you know what the other person is thinking, or guessing an intent that wasn't stated. Give grace — because you and your future spouse are on the same team.

What areas in your relationship can you examine more intentionally?

● TOOL · GRACE PLACE

The *Grace Place Tool* creates a safe, grace-filled space for honest conversation — one area at a time, one question at a time, so both of you feel heard and valued. Everything you need is on the two pages that follow. Work through them together: one future spouse starts, then you switch.



GRACE PLACE

A Simple Conversation Rhythm for Couples

Recommended rhythm: weekly or every other week

Grace Place is a simple, grace-filled tool that helps couples slow down, listen well, and grow closer. It creates a safe space to start with gratitude, ask thoughtful questions, and better understand each other's needs. The goal is not to win a conversation, but to **better love** the person God has entrusted to you.



THE HEART OF GRACE PLACE



SAFE — We are here to understand, not attack, defend, or prove a point.



SIMPLE — One area at a time. One next step at a time.



SUPPORTIVE — We ask how to better love, serve, and support each other.



GRACE-FILLED — We lead with gratitude, humility, and hope.



THE GRACE PLACE FLOW



APPRECIATE — Start with gratitude.



ASK — Use the word bank and ask: *'Is there an area where I can better support, serve, or love you right now?'*



LISTEN — Ask one question at a time. After each answer, reflect back what you heard.



ACT — Choose one simple way to love them well this week.



Use the word bank on page 2 for ideas.
Italicized areas are the 5 love languages.

“

The goal is not perfection. The goal is progress, connection, and grace.

”



WILDFIRE LEADERSHIP



HOW TO HAVE A GRACE PLACE CONVERSATION

A simple rhythm for connection, understanding, and support.

Recommended rhythm: weekly or every other week



1. SET THE ATMOSPHERE

- ✓ Choose a good time to talk.
- ✓ Use a gentle tone.
- ✓ Assume the best about each other.
- ✓ Remember: the goal is closeness, not winning.

*You can begin by saying:
"I want this conversation to help us
feel closer, not heavier."*



2. START WITH GRATITUDE

*Use the word bank below for ideas if helpful.
*Italicized areas are the 5 love languages.**

Each spouse answers:



One thing I appreciate about you right now is...



One reason that means so much to me is...



3. ASK WHERE SUPPORT IS NEEDED

*"Looking at the word bank below,
is there an area where I could
better support, serve, or love
you right now?"*

This week's area:



4. OPEN THE CONVERSATION

*How to do this step: Ask Question 1 and pause. Your spouse answers.
Reflect back what you heard. Then move to Question 2, and repeat.*

The asking spouse asks one question at a time:

- ① What feels most important to you in this area right now?
- ② What is something I'm already doing that has been helpful?
- ③ What is one simple way I could support you better this week?

After each answer, the listening spouse responds:

- What I hear you saying is...
- Did I get that right?
- Thank you for sharing that with me.

Then switch roles and repeat the same process.

AREAS YOU CAN CHOOSE FROM

Italicized items are the 5 love languages.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Quality Time | Home Responsibilities |
| Acts of Service | Work & Life Rhythm |
| Words of Affirmation | Finances |
| Physical Touch | Health & Wellness |
| Receiving Gifts | Parenting |
| Communication | Intimacy |
| Emotional Support | Phone Use & Presence |
| Spiritual Encouragement | |



5. TAKE ONE SMALL STEP

Spouse 1:

This week, one simple way I will support you is:

Spouse 2:

This week, one simple way I will support you is:

KEYS TO REMEMBER



One area at a time.



Ask one question at a time.



Listen to understand.



Progress over perfection.



Tone carries the message.



Grace is the goal.



WILDFIRE LEADERSHIP



Download or print the Grace Place tool

invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/grace-place

YOUR GRACE PLACE CONVERSATION

Use the space below to actually walk through it together — one future spouse goes first, then switch. Choose your area from the word bank on the tool above (italicised areas are the five ways people most often feel loved).

Start with gratitude.

One thing I appreciate about you right now is...

One reason that means so much to me is...

Choose one area.

This week's area

Open the conversation — ask one question, pause, then reflect back what you heard before moving on.

1. What feels most important to you in this area right now?

2. What am I already doing that has been helpful?

3. What is one simple way I could support you better this week?

Take one small step.

FUTURE SPOUSE 1 — THIS WEEK I WILL
SUPPORT YOU BY:

FUTURE SPOUSE 2 — THIS WEEK I WILL
SUPPORT YOU BY:

• WHEN WE'VE HURT EACH OTHER • A SIMPLE REPAIR

Grace Place keeps most conversations soft — but when we've caused real hurt, repair is its own skill, and apologizing well is one of the most loving things you can do. When you need to make something right, walk these four steps:

1. **I was wrong about...**
2. **I'm sorry for...** — name the impact, not just the action.
3. **Will you forgive me?**
4. **Here's what I'll do differently...**

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. By reflecting on your Mission Portrait, you'll identify areas for growth, individually and as a couple. How can humility help you extend more grace to each other?
2. How has your current communication style helped or hindered your relationship?
3. What are the most significant communication challenges or blind spots you face?

• NEXT STEPS

1. **Improve communication.** Choose one communication area to focus on this week — pausing before responding, or expressing more appreciation for your future spouse.
2. **Develop a habit.** Pray together for grace and wisdom in your conversations. Reflect on your progress during your weekly check-ins, and make Grace Place your **weekly pivot** in the 1-1-1 Rhythm.
3. **Celebrate successes.** Celebrate small victories — even just getting through a difficult conversation with newfound grace. Express gratitude for each step forward and recognize the positive shifts happening in your relationship.

• A CLOSING THOUGHT

By making grace-filled communication a regular practice, you'll fortify your relationship with a foundation built on love, understanding, and respect — transforming your dialogue and reconnecting more profoundly.

WHO DOES WHAT

• TO WARM UP

☀ **To warm up:** Name one chore you genuinely do not mind doing. Then guess the other person's.

• WHO DOES WHAT

Nobody argues about dishes

They argue about what the dishes meant.

Every couple walks in with a set of rules they have never written down and could not recite if you asked. Who cooks. Who apologizes first. Whose job it is to notice the car needs gas. You do not discover these rules by discussing them. You discover them the first time one gets broken, and by then it does not feel like a rule. It feels like a betrayal of something obvious.

The rules are obvious. They are just obvious to only one of you.

Last session you learned how to have a hard conversation. This is the one to practice on, because it is specific, it is fixable, and it is coming either way.

• THE BIG IDEA

Fair is the target. Equal is not.

Most couples aim at fifty-fifty and then keep score, which turns a marriage into an accounting problem neither of you can win.

What the research actually finds is different, and more hopeful. It is not the split that predicts how happy people are. It is whether the split feels **fair**, and whether each person feels the other notices what they carry. Two couples can divide the same work identically and land in completely different places, and the difference is usually gratitude.

That is good news, because it means you are not trying to build a perfectly balanced ledger. You are trying to build an arrangement you both chose and both feel seen inside.

“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

PHILIPPIANS 2:4

• WHAT YOU ARE EACH ASSUMING

Answer these on your own, in writing, **before** you compare. This matters more than it sounds. When couples talk it through first, the more certain voice tends to become the plan, and both of you walk away believing you decided together.

Without asking them: name three things you assume will be your job, and three you assume will be theirs

One unwritten rule from my life that I did not know I had until recently

• THE INVENTORY

Do not settle this from memory. Go through it out loud, item by item, and write the name.

COOKING, GROCERIES, AND THE
WEEKLY PLAN

CLEANING, LAUNDRY, AND THE DEEP
STUFF NOBODY SEES

BILLS, BUDGET, AND NOTICING WHEN
WE ARE LOW

CARS, REPAIRS, AND THE THINGS THAT
BREAK

CALENDAR, BIRTHDAYS, GIFTS, AND
STAYING IN TOUCH WITH BOTH
FAMILIES

CHURCH, PRAYER TOGETHER, AND
KEEPING US IN IT WHEN LIFE GETS
LOUD

Look at that last column of names. If one of you appears in most of them, that is not automatically wrong. It is only wrong if neither of you chose it.

• THE TWO THAT GET DECIDED BY ACCIDENT

Most couples never decide these. They just wake up inside them.

If we each got a good offer in a different city, how would we decide? Say the actual process, not 'we'd talk about it'

If we have children and one is sick on a workday, whose calendar clears first, and why that person?

• WHEN YOU GENUINELY DISAGREE

Here is the part most books either dodge or turn into a fight.

Ephesians 5 is the passage, and it is worth reading together rather than around. Sincere Christians who love the same Bible land in different places on what it requires structurally, and pretending otherwise helps nobody. What almost nobody disagrees about is the shape of it: a husband is told to love his wife the way Christ loved the church, which is to say, by laying himself down. Whatever authority is in that passage exists to serve, not to win.

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

EPHESIANS 5:21

You two need to find out, before the wedding, whether you actually hold the same view. Most couples assume they do because neither has ever said it plainly.

But the question that will shape your daily life is smaller and more practical than the theology:

When we disagree and a decision has to be made this week, what is our actual process?

Think of the last big decision we made. Whose preference actually won, and did it feel mutual to both of us?

That second question is the honest one. Couples who are certain they decide together are often the least likely to notice when they do not.

• COUPLE CONVERSATION

1. Compare your two lists from the start. Where did you assume the same thing? Where were you not even close?
2. What is one job you would gladly take off the other person if you knew it mattered to them?
3. What does it look like, concretely, for each of us to say thank you for the invisible work? Not in general. This week.
4. Is there anything on the inventory neither of us wants? Decide now who owns it, or decide to pay someone.

• KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✦ The rules are obvious. They are just obvious to only one of you.
- ✦ Felt fairness predicts happiness. A fifty-fifty ledger does not.
- ✦ Feeling appreciated does more for fairness than moving the split does.
- ✦ Whose career leads and who flexes for a sick child get decided by accident unless you decide them on purpose.
- ✦ Find out whether you actually agree about Ephesians 5, rather than assuming.

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. Whose voice do you hear when you think about what a husband or a wife is supposed to do?
2. What work did someone in your family do that nobody thanked them for?
3. Where might you be agreeing to something now that you would resent in five years?
4. If your arrangement had to be explained to a friend, would both of you describe it the same way?

• **THIS WEEK**

Trade lists, then take one thing. Each of you pick one job off the other person's column, out loud, and own it for a month. Then say thank you for something the other person does that you have never once mentioned.

• **A PRAYER TO CLOSE**

“Lord, keep us from keeping score. Teach us to serve each other without counting, and to notice what the other one carries. Where we assume, make us ask. Where we disagree, make us kind. Let our home be a place where the work is shared and the thanks are said out loud. Amen.”



SAFEGUARD

SESSION 11

• TO WARM UP

☀ **Light-hearted conversation starter:** Name one boundary you're both glad you have — even a funny one (like “no phones at dinner”).

• SAFEGUARD

A protective fence around what matters

Safeguarding is proactive love. It's building a fence around your relationship — around your intimacy, your boundaries, and your people — so your relationship can grow without outside pressures pulling at it. Our natural inclinations don't always lean toward what protects us, and the culture's “be strong, don't give in” only goes so far. The wiser path is to set safeguards **before** a crisis, not after. This session covers three together — your intimacy, your boundaries, and the trusted people around you — and closes with a fourth to take home: a Money & Relationship “money date” for just the two of you.

• WATCH • SAFEGUARD — PROACTIVELY PROTECTING YOUR RELATIONSHIP



Scan to watch this session's video
invest.wildfireleadership.com/s/7

• PART 1 • INTIMACY — THREE THREADS

True intimacy isn't first physical — it's **wholeness**. God designed relationship to weave three threads together, and when all three are nourished, the bond is unbreakable.

♥ **Emotional** — fully known, fully chosen. Safety, vulnerability, presence.

♦ **Spiritual** — praying and growing in the Lord together. Same direction, same Source.

» **Physical** — God's good design, protected for relationship alone.

“That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.”

GENESIS 2:24

“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure.”

HEBREWS 13:4

Which thread already feels strongest between you, and which one will need the most intentionality as you prepare for relationship?

FOR THE FUTURE HUSBAND — A QUIET REFLECTION

FOR THE FUTURE HUSBAND — A QUIET REFLECTION

FOR THE FUTURE WIFE — A QUIET REFLECTION

Then come back together: share one thing from your reflection, and name one simple way you’ll nurture each thread this month.

• PART 2 • BOUNDARIES

A boundary isn’t a wall against each other — it’s a fence around your relationship. Choose the areas where a clearer boundary would protect you, then name one you’ll set together.

“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

1 PETER 5:8 (NIV)

Finances

Friendships

Social media

Phones / screens

Work hours

Extended family

Opposite-sex relationships

Calendar / margin

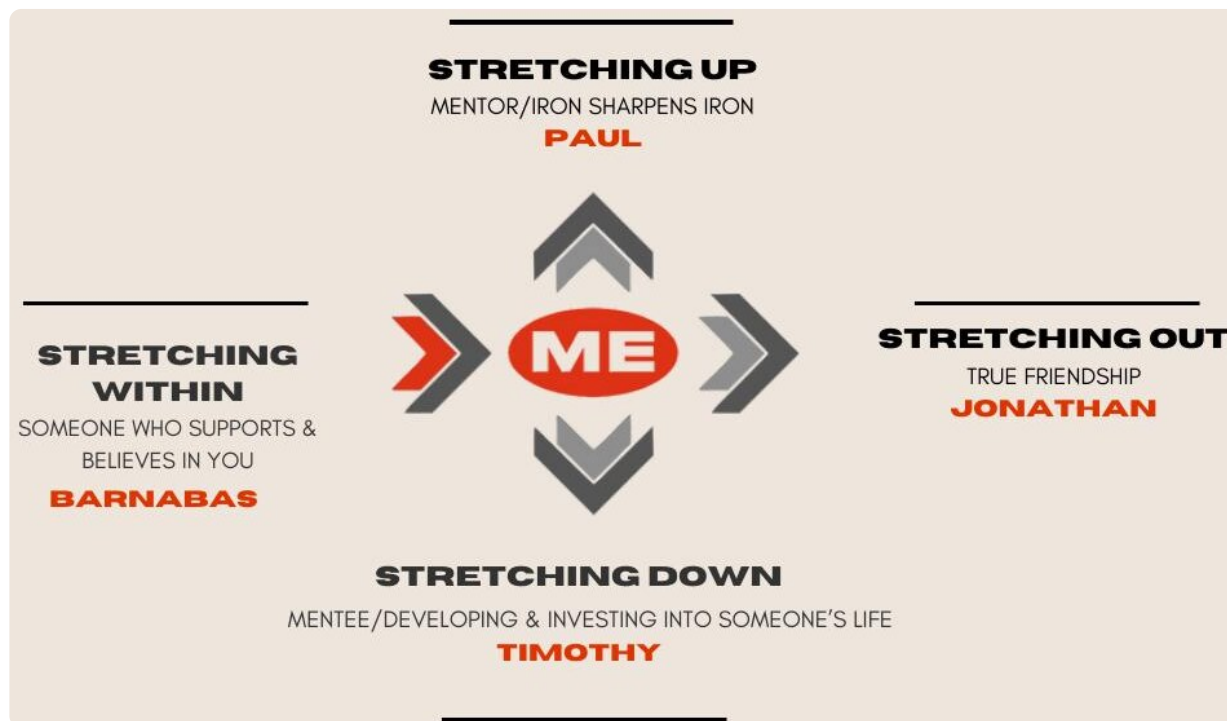
What we watch

Privacy & honesty

One boundary we will set — clearly — this season

• PART 3 • TOOL — YOUR STRETCH TEAM

No relationship thrives in isolation. Your Stretch Team is a small circle of trusted people who support your growth, speak truth, and help protect and encourage your relationship.



Your Stretch Team — the people who help you carry this.

“Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.”

PROVERBS 11:14 (ESV)

Name yours, then complete the tool before the next session:

STRETCHING UP — A MENTOR (LIKE PAUL)

STRETCHING DOWN — SOMEONE WE POUR INTO (LIKE TIMOTHY)

STRETCHING OUT — A PEER / TRUTH-TELLER (LIKE JONATHAN)

STRETCHING WITHIN — AN ENCOURAGER (LIKE BARNABAS)

One person we'll actually reach out to this month



The Stretch Team tool
invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/stretch-team

• COUPLE CONVERSATION

1. Where do we spend energy that really belongs to each other — work, phone, hobbies?
2. What's one boundary that would most protect us right now?
3. Who could we invite to walk more closely with us as a couple?

• KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✦ Intimacy is wholeness — emotional, spiritual, and physical woven together.
- ✦ Boundaries aren't walls against each other; they're a fence around your relationship.
- ✦ Safeguarding is proactive, not reactive — you build the fence before the storm.
- ✦ A relationship grows stronger inside a circle of trusted people.

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. Which of the three threads of intimacy — emotional, spiritual, or physical — do you most want to nurture, and how?
2. Where do you sense your relationship would be strengthened by a clearer boundary?
3. Who could you invite to be a mentor or truth-teller for your relationship this year?

• THIS WEEK

Set the one boundary you named, and reach out to the one Stretch Team person you chose. Then do one small thing to tend the intimacy thread that needs it most — and put your first money date on the calendar.

• BETWEEN SESSIONS • YOUR FIRST MONEY DATE

Money is one of the most common things couples struggle over — but it’s usually less about the math and more about how we talk about it, and the different ways we’re each wired. This one is a take-home: set aside fifteen unhurried minutes this week, just the two of you, and walk through it together with grace.

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

MATTHEW 6:21 (NIV)

First, where do you each land?

FUTURE SPOUSE 1 • SAVER ↔ SPENDER

Saver

Balanced

Spender

FUTURE SPOUSE 2 • SAVER ↔ SPENDER

Saver

Balanced

Spender

What is money mostly *for*, to you?

Security

Freedom

Generosity

Provision

Experiences

Legacy

Peace of mind

Opportunity

Honoring God

A money habit or value each of us wants to bring into our relationship

A money conversation we haven't had yet, and need to before the wedding: debt, spending, or whether to combine accounts

One shared money goal for this year — and our first small step

Make this your monthly **money date** — fifteen unhurried minutes, once a month, to look at money together as teammates, not opponents. It’s a natural fit for the monthly check-in in the 1-1-1 Rhythm.

• A PRAYER TO CLOSE

“Lord, guard our relationship. Make us alert, honest, and unified. Surround us with people who point us to You, and keep our love protected and pure. Amen.”

TALKING ABOUT SEX

SESSION 12

• TO WARM UP

☀ **To warm up:** Where did you learn what you believe about sex? Not what you were told. Where you actually learned it.

• TALKING ABOUT SEX

The skill matters more than the information

There is no shortage of Christian books about sex. There is a real shortage of couples who can talk about it without either of them going quiet.

That is the thing to build now. Not a plan, not a set of rules, and not a rehearsal. A habit. Right now, before anything has gone wrong, is the only season where “can we talk about this” costs nothing. Start the conversation after the first hard month and it lands as a complaint, no matter how gently you say it.

Everything in this session is aimed at one outcome: that the two of you become people who can say true things to each other about this, for the next fifty years.

Nothing here assumes anything about where the two of you are right now. It works either way, and it is not an inspection.

• THE BIG IDEA

Waiting is not a guarantee. It is a start.

Somewhere along the way a promise got attached to this that Scripture never made. Do it God’s way and the wedding night will be effortless, and everything after it will take care of itself.

It usually is not effortless. Bodies are new to each other, nerves are real, the day was long, and two people who have never done this are now doing it in a hotel room after the biggest day of their lives. Couples who were told to expect fireworks often read an ordinary, awkward, tender first night as evidence that something is wrong with them.

Nothing is wrong with them. They are beginners, which is exactly what they were supposed to be.

“Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.”

SONG OF SONGS 2:7

The gift is not a perfect first night. It is a lifetime with one person, learning something together that neither of you has to perform.

Expect a beginning, not a performance. The couples who are gentlest with each other in week one usually have the best year one.

• WHAT YOU WERE EACH HANDED

Most of what a person believes about sex was installed long before they chose it. Naming where it came from does more work than arguing about whether it is right.

Growing up, what I picked up about sex, and where it came from

Was this talked about in my home, or not? What did that teach me?

One belief about sex I suspect I should examine before I carry it into marriage

• EXPECTATIONS, SAID OUT LOUD

Answer on your own first, then trade. Guessing is where couples get into trouble.

HOW OFTEN I PICTURE THIS BEING
PART OF A NORMAL MONTH

WHAT I THINK I WILL FIND HARDEST TO
SAY OUT LOUD

Besides sex, what makes me feel closest to you?

How will we each say yes, and how will we each say no, in a way that does not wound?

If your two answers about frequency are far apart, you have not found a problem. You have found the most common conversation in marriage, ten years early, while it is still easy to have.

• TWO THINGS WORTH SAYING PLAINLY

Nobody owes anybody. Sex in a marriage is something you give, never something one of you is entitled to collect. Any version of this that turns into a duty on a schedule will quietly damage both of you. Mutual is not an upgrade. It is the whole design.

Bodies sometimes need help, and that is ordinary. Pain, difficulty, or a body that will not cooperate is more common than couples realize, and it is usually treatable. It is not a spiritual failure and it is not a verdict on your marriage. If it happens, see a doctor the way you would for anything else, early, without shame.

“And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

GENESIS 2:25

That is the oldest picture of this in Scripture, and notice what it is actually describing. Not technique. Two people fully seen and not hiding. Everything in this session is aimed at that.

• WHAT YOU CARRY IN

Two conversations belong here, and both go better forward than backward.

Your past. You each deserve to walk in without a surprise waiting. That does not mean an itemized account. Numbers, names, and comparisons help nobody and can lodge in the other person permanently. What your future spouse needs is enough to know you honestly, anything

that affects their health, and whether the pattern is behind you. And if you are the one listening: your job is to receive, not to investigate. Do not ask for detail you will not be able to unhear.

Anything ongoing. If either of you is in a live struggle, pornography or otherwise, this is the season to say it, while pausing a wedding is still an ordinary thing to do rather than a catastrophe. Grace is not the same as no criteria. Grace means someone can tell the truth and still be loved. It does not mean the truth changes nothing.

What I want my future spouse to know about me, so that they know me and are not surprised later

If I am carrying something ongoing, what actual support would help? Who else knows?

● THE COMMITMENT

Will we commit, now, to keep talking about this for the whole marriage? Write it in your own words

● COUPLE CONVERSATION

1. What is one thing you would like me to know that you have never quite said?
2. When one of us wants to be close and the other does not, what should that look like so neither of us feels rejected?
3. What would make it easy for you to bring this up in a hard month? Say the specific thing.
4. Who is one older married couple we could actually ask about this?

• KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✦ The skill you are building is talking about it, not knowing about it.
- ✦ Waiting is a good gift. It was never a promise of an effortless start.
- ✦ Expect a beginning, not a performance.
- ✦ Nobody owes anybody. Mutual is the design, not an upgrade.
- ✦ Share your past to be known, not to be audited, and receive it the same way.
- ✦ Say the ongoing thing now, while pausing is still ordinary.

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. What did the silence, or the noise, about sex in your home teach you to expect?
2. Where has shame been doing work in you that grace should be doing instead?
3. What are you most hoping your future spouse will understand without you having to explain it?
4. Is there anything you have been telling yourself you will mention later?

• THIS WEEK

Have the first one. Set aside an hour, somewhere private and unhurried, and trade the pages you wrote alone. No fixing, no defending. Just read and ask questions. The goal is not agreement this week. The goal is that the first conversation is now behind you.

• A PRAYER TO CLOSE

“Lord, thank you for making us bodies as well as souls, and for calling that good. Take our fear and our shame and give us honesty instead. Teach us to give rather than take, and to be patient with each other while we learn. Let what we build be safe, joyful, and ours. Amen.”



TEACHABLE SPIRIT

SESSION 13

• TO WARM UP

☀ **Light-hearted conversation starter:** Share one thing you've learned from your future spouse that has made you better.

• TEACHABLE SPIRIT

The spirit that holds it all together

It's no accident we end here. A teachable spirit — humility, openness, and a willingness to keep learning — is the thread that ties every INVEST principle together. It's the posture that says, "I don't have it all figured out, but I'm willing to grow alongside you." Being open to learning and correction isn't just an act of humility; it's an act of strength that builds a strong, enduring foundation for your relationship.

• WATCH · TEACHABLE SPIRIT — CULTIVATING OPENNESS TOGETHER



Scan to watch this session's video
invest.wildfireleadership.com/s/8

• SCRIPTURE TO SET THE TONE

"Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."

PROVERBS 3:7-8 (ESV)

"By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures."

PROVERBS 24:3-4 (NIV)

What do these verses mean to you, and how do they emphasize the importance of a teachable spirit together?

• KEY CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

Teachability is the foundation for wisdom

Being teachable means a willingness to learn, receive instruction, and continuously seek growth. A relationship built on teachability is like a house on a firm foundation. It fosters unity, humility, and a teamwork mindset — pride, on the other hand, leads to division.

• FOUR DISTINCTIONS OF TEACHABLE PEOPLE

- ✦ **Humility and brokenness** — they live with a humble heart, acknowledging their need for growth.
- ✦ **Seeking wisdom actively** — they pursue wisdom and instruction, understanding it's essential for life.
- ✦ **Learning from the right teachers** — they surround themselves with wise mentors and counselors.
- ✦ **Receiving correction well** — they see correction as an opportunity to grow.

“The ear that listens to life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise.”

PROVERBS 15:31 (ESV)

The danger of condemnation. One of the biggest barriers to growth is condemnation — it shuts down communication and hinders teachability. Instead, we're called to speak words of life.

How can you use your words to nurture a teachable spirit in your relationship?

• PRACTICAL STEPS • TWO GAME-CHANGING TRUTHS

In light of eternity, what really matters? Fixing our eyes on eternity gives perspective — the daily frustrations are temporary and small next to the purpose God has for our relationship. And **meekness** is a deeper humility that goes beyond dying to self; it calls us to yield our personal rights and put our future spouse first. It's not about losing — it's about gaining a stronger bond.

“I keep all things in light of eternity, focusing on what truly matters.” · “I live in meekness, dying to my own rights, and putting my future spouse before myself.”

What is one small thing you can let go of today to focus on what truly matters, or to show meekness by putting your future spouse first?

• YOUR SUSTAINING RHYTHM • 1-1-1

A teachable spirit grows through consistent, small practice. That's the **1-1-1 Rhythm** — 1 daily deposit, 1 weekly pivot, 1 monthly check-in. Small deposits, big returns. The two pages that follow show the heart of it and a menu of simple ideas to choose from; make it your ongoing rhythm so this study becomes a way of life, not a season.



THE 1-1-1 RHYTHM

1 daily deposit. 1 weekly pivot. 1 monthly check-in.

Small deposits. Big returns.

The 1-1-1 Rhythm is a simple tool that helps couples be intentional in small, meaningful ways. It can be used by one spouse for the other, or by both spouses together. You do not need to do everything at once. The goal is to make simple deposits that help your spouse feel seen, encouraged, supported, and loved.

THE HEART OF 1-1-1

-  **INTENTIONAL** — Love is shown in small, on-purpose actions.
-  **SIMPLE** — Choose one small step, not everything at once.
-  **REALISTIC** — Pick what fits your season and your spouse.
-  **CONSISTENT** — Small deposits made regularly build trust and connection.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

- 1 Start by choosing one simple idea.
- 2 Use the 1-1-1 rhythm: 1 daily deposit, 1 weekly pivot, 1 monthly check-in.
- 3 Choose what would feel meaningful to your spouse.
- 4 Let your spouse know what you appreciate, notice, or want to do for them.
- 5 Keep it small, specific, and sincere.
- 6 Switch roles or practice it together.

 *Helpful filter: What would help my spouse feel seen, encouraged, supported, or loved right now?*

“ Progress over perfection. Start small and stay consistent. ”

 WILDFIRE LEADERSHIP



HOW TO PRACTICE THE 1-1-1 RHYTHM

Choose one small way to love, serve, and connect.

Use this one spouse at a time or together. You do not need to do everything at once.

Pick one idea that fits this season.

 DAILY DEPOSIT <i>1x per day</i>	 WEEKLY PIVOT <i>1x per week</i>	 MONTHLY CHECK-IN <i>1x per month</i>
Goal: Keep the baseline of your relationship warm.  6-Second Hug — Pause long enough to really connect.  Life-Giving Text — Send a simple encouraging message or word.  High / Low Check-In — Ask: "What was the best and hardest part of your day?"  Gratitude Sighting — Name one specific thing you appreciate.  Small Relief — Do one small thing that lightens their load.	Goal: Step out of roommate mode and back into partner mode.  Tech-Free 20 — Twenty minutes. No phones, just connect.  Side-by-Side Walk — Take a short walk together.  Shared Fun — Play a game, cook together, or enjoy something simple together.  Dream Seed — Ask: "If we had a free Saturday next month, what would we do?"  Meaningful Question — Ask: "What would help you feel most loved this week?"	Goal: Reconnect, align, and look ahead.  Marriage Check-Up — Use "Stop, Start, Continue."  External Date — Leave the house and create a shared memory.  Goal Alignment — Talk about finances, parenting, calendar, or home priorities.  Support Question — Ask: "How can I support you better in this season?" “ Stop — What should we stop doing that creates friction? Start — What should we start doing to feel closer? Continue — What is already working well that we should keep doing?”





MY NEXT SMALL STEP

This week, one way I want to intentionally love my spouse is: _____

The idea I want to try first is: _____

When I will do it: _____

What would feel meaningful to my spouse right now: _____

Ask yourself: Will this help my spouse feel seen, encouraged, supported, or loved?





WILDFIRE LEADERSHIP

Pick one daily deposit, one weekly pivot, and one monthly check-in to start



Download or print the 1-1-1 Rhythm
invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/rhythm-111

• READINESS CHECK-IN • LOOK HOW FAR YOU'VE COME

Rate the same five statements you did in the first session (1 = rarely true, 5 = very true), on your own first. Then set your two snapshots side by side and talk them through together: celebrate every area that moved, thank each other for the growth, and choose one area you still want to keep investing in, that becomes your first focus in the 1-1-1 Rhythm.

1. We feel emotionally connected right now.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. We communicate well, even about hard things, like money, in-laws, and how we each practice our faith.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. We've talked concretely about what day-to-day married life will actually look like.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. We are growing spiritually together.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. We've talked honestly about money, family, roles, and how we handle conflict, not just about the wedding.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Rarely true

Very true

• YOUR COUPLE COVENANT

Close the study by putting words to your commitment — personal, and shared.

FUTURE SPOUSE 1 — MY PERSONAL COMMITMENT	FUTURE SPOUSE 2 — MY PERSONAL COMMITMENT
--	--

Our shared 'we will...' as a couple

One INVEST tool we'll keep using regularly

● A LOVE LETTER

Take time to think about your future spouse and how your love has deepened over these sessions. Write a letter naming specific things you cherish about them, and what you want them to remember about your love. Plan a special date to exchange your letters — and treasure them.

To my future spouse...

[illegible]

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

• OPTIONAL CAPSTONE • YOUR MARRIAGE MISSION PORTRAIT

You each created your individual *Mission Portrait* in the Mission Portrait session. As a capstone, create a **shared** one — a single visual of who you are and what you’re building together. Answer the same sections through the “we / us” lens, then generate it in the tool, frame it, and put it where you’ll both see it.

“Two are better than one... A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

ECCLESIASTES 4:9,12

Our core values as a couple (aim for 4–5), and the shared vision and mission we're building



Create your Marriage Mission
Portrait · password: invest
invest.wildfireleadership.com/et/marriage-portrait

GO DEEPER — OPTIONAL

For couples who want to linger. Skip it if you'd rather keep things light.

1. Where in your relationship do you most need a teachable heart right now?
2. What feedback have you resisted that, in hindsight, could help you grow?
3. Which INVEST tool made the biggest difference for you — and how will you keep using it?

• THIS WEEK

Start your 1-1-1 Rhythm and read your covenant to each other. Then celebrate — you finished. Mark it somehow: a date, a photo, a prayer of thanks.

• A BLESSING TO CLOSE

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.” — Numbers 6:24–26

CONGRATULATIONS

• CONCLUSION

Congratulations on finishing the workbook

Congratulations on successfully completing the eight-session *INVEST Marriage* curriculum! Your dedication to exploring and fortifying the pillars of your relationship is truly admirable. As you reflect on the insights and the transformative journey you've experienced, let this be the starting point for an ongoing commitment to nurturing and enhancing your relationship.

Inspired by the wisdom you've gained, may you continue to foster growth, deepen understanding, and cherish the unique bonds that make your relationship special. Your persistent commitment to intentional investment lays the foundation for a lasting and fulfilling relationship.

May God continue to guide you and give you wisdom and joy as you keep investing in the beautiful tapestry of your relationship.

CONVERSATION SPARKS

• PULL THESE OUT ANYTIME

Conversation Sparks

For meals, walks, the drive home, or a slow afternoon together. You won't get to them all — just pick one and see where it goes.

• JUST FOR FUN • LOOSEN UP & LAUGH

- What's your future spouse's most adorable weird habit?
- If you wrote a book about us, what would the title be?
- What's the silliest argument we've ever had?
- What's your future spouse's go-to karaoke song — real or imagined?
- Which celebrity would you cast to play your future spouse in the movie of our life?

• MEMORY LANE • GO BACK TOGETHER

- What are you most looking forward to about our wedding day?
- What was the moment you knew you wanted to marry me?
- What's one challenge we've faced together so far that you think has prepared us for relationship?
- What's a small thing I did early in our relationship that I should do again?

• GOING DEEPER • IF THE MOMENT IS RIGHT

- When do you feel most “yourself” in our relationship?
- When was the last time you felt most loved by me?
- What's one dream you've never told me?
- What's one prayer for the family we'll build together that you keep praying?
- What do you sense God is teaching you in this season?

YOUR PULL-OUT TOOLKIT

• KEEP THESE CLOSE

Your pull-out toolkit

These are the tools you'll return to long after the last session. Here's what each one is for and where to find it — so you can pull any of them out on their own, anytime.

- **Mission Portrait** — a one-page picture of your core values, vision, and mission. *From Mission Portrait.*
- **Proper Portions** — see what's really on your plate, and choose your “best yes.” *From No.*
- **DREAM Map** — dream and plan your shared future together. *From Venture Out.*
- **Grace Place** — a simple, grace-filled rhythm for honest conversation. *From Examine · printable front & back.*
- **Stretch Team** — the trusted people who help protect and encourage your relationship. *From Safeguard.*
- **1-1-1 Rhythm** — 1 daily deposit, 1 weekly pivot, 1 monthly check-in; how the whole study becomes a way of life. *From Teachable Spirit · printable front & back.*

Every tool has a QR code in its session that opens a printable version. Print the **Grace Place** and **1-1-1 Rhythm** pages especially, and keep them somewhere you'll both see them — the fridge, a nightstand, your planner.

NEXT STEPS & RESOURCES

• NEED MORE INSIGHT & SUPPORT?

Next steps & resources

Discover Wildfire Leadership's coaching services, workshops, and practical tools designed to help you and your future spouse thrive in your relationship, family, leadership, business, and faith journey. Visit wildfireleadership.com.

• BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Wildfire Daily Journal** — a powerful tool to ignite intentional living, gratitude, and purpose every day.
- **Discovering Joy in Your Lane**, by Stephanie Lammers — a guide to finding joy and fulfillment in the path God designed for you.
- **Flip the Script: Set Your Mind Free**, by Bill Lammers — transform lies and negative thoughts into empowering truths, to unlock freedom in every area of your life.

For books and additional resources, visit wildfireleadership.com/resources. The **Flip the Script App** walks you step by step through the process of flipping the script — available at getflipthescript.com.

• ABOUT WILDFIRE LEADERSHIP

Wildfire Leadership comes alongside businesses, schools, churches, families, and individuals to help people uncover their purpose — equipping and advising them with practical, simple tools and proven strategies to unleash their potential.

- **Mission Portrait** — a daily visual reminder of who you are and your mission; a compass pointing you to your purpose of making a difference in the lives of others.
- **7 Igniters** — each stage of your journey ignites something within you that unleashes your potential; the 7 Igniters curriculum brings action to your Mission Portrait.
- **INVEST Marriage** — rediscover intrigue, set boundaries, embrace adventures, improve communication, safeguard your relationship, and maintain a teachable spirit.

• **SCRIPTURE CREDITS**

Scriptures marked **ESV** are from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version®, © 2001 by Crossway. **NIV**: New International Version®, © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. **NLT**: New Living Translation, © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. **NASB**: New American Standard Bible®, © The Lockman Foundation. **KJV**: King James Version, public domain. **MSG**: The Message, © 1993–2002 by NavPress. **NCV**: New Century Version®, © 2005 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission.

INVEST

“Marriage was never meant to run on leftovers. Keep investing — one daily deposit, one weekly pivot, one monthly check-in.”

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