

DECISION TO LOVE

GOAL: To show that there is a cycle of stages of love that constantly reoccur, and that love is not dependent on feeling, but that **to love is a decision.** The decision to love involves being life-giving to each other.

INTRODUCTION:

The title of this podcast is “Decision to Love.” In this episode, we turn our thoughts toward us as a couple. As you have grown up, how many times have stories ended with “and they lived happily ever after?” But in real life it does not always happen that way. There are stages of love in any relationship. To get through the tough times it takes a strong commitment to your relationship and a decision to love your spouse.

1. STAGES OF RELATIONSHIP
2. ROMANCE
3. DISILLUSIONMENT
4. TO LOVE IS A DECISION
 - a. Openness in all aspects of our lives — I am aware of my partner.
 - b. When I am sensitive — I can be responsible to her/him.
 - c. When I am tender — there is a closeness in our relationship.
 - d. Patience with self and spouse.
 - e. Willingness to work together.
5. KEEPING ROMANCE ALIVE
6. LIFE-GIVING DECISIONS IN MARRIAGE
7. LIFE-GIVING DECISIONS IN RELATIONSHIP TO EACH OTHER
8. OBSTACLES TO BEING LIFE-GIVING

MAKE THIS A SPECIAL TIME IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP

1. Choose the most appropriate/difficult question below to begin writing. (Select just one question.)
2. Write for the full suggested time of 15 minutes.
3. Discuss for the full suggested time of 15 minutes.

QUESTION OPTIONS:

- 1) When have I experienced:
 - Romance in our relationship?
 - Disillusionment in our relationship?
- 2) What specific changes would I like to see you make after we are married? Can I accept you without these changes?
- 3) In what areas of our life do I find that loving you takes a decision?
- 4) Am I willing to compromise when we cannot reach a mutual decision? How do I react to compromising?
- 5) In what areas am I competitive with you or jealous of you, and how must I change to show daily your specialness to you?
- 6) How close do I think we are in agreeing on having a child? Have we really made a mutual decision about this?
- 7) Why is it important for me to know your feelings before making a major decision?
- 8) What decisions about each of our careers do we have to make as a result of our marriage?

Alternate question if you were previously married: If you have been married before, you may find this question helpful. Choose whichever question you find to be most relevant to your situation.

- 9) Do I believe I have “recovered” from my former marriage? How do I feel about that?

