



Welcome back to the Great Date Night!

The next five months are going to be filled with fun dates, and great conversations! We've even included some additional worksheets in case you and your spouse want to keep the discussion going in-between great dates!

As usual, take advantage of our inexpensive childcare if you have small children, you can register and choose your childcare time and location online at www.capechristian.com/greatdates

Please print the discussion guide on the next page and take it with you on your date. You can go out to dinner, find a shady spot at the park, or just stay in for a night of homemade dessert and some alone time. Wherever you go, you can use the following page as your evening's conversational guide.

Oh yeah, and don't forget to post pictures and like/share the church's facebook page at www.facebook.com/capechristian

Have a Great Date!



Our past experiences impact our present reality and, to some extent, where we are going in the future. What many of us don't realize, however, is the direct connection between the attitudes, actions, and lessons from our upbringings and our attitudes, actions, and decisions today. Take some time on your date to answer the following questions with your spouse...

Write some words that describe how you saw your Mom and Dad growing up. There are no right or wrong words, they can be positive, negative, or neutral.

Mom

Dad

What were some unwritten "rules of the house" when you were growing up?

Family

Rules



Thinking back to your childhood, what were the most meaningful experiences you had with your parents / family? Why were they so special to you?

Many of our best memories are from holidays like Thanksgiving or Christmas, we even remember specific gifts we received at Christmas. But those weren't the only "gifts" our parents gave us.

Take a moment to list out some "gifts" i.e. temperament, habits, skills you received from your parents both positive and negative.

Positive Gifts

Negative Gifts

Take a few minutes to discuss how the words you used to describe your Mom and Dad, the unwritten rules of your family, and the "gifts" that you receive from your parents have impacted your marriage. Try to be specific if possible. If you become overly emotional, don't be afraid to come back to the topic later, it's worth the wait!

Follow Up This Discussion in the weeks to come with the "Family History" worksheets on the following pages.



Take Home Couple Worksheets

These work-sheets are designed to give you and your spouse some practical tools to dive deeper into the foundations of a healthy marriage. They are meant to be very practical, so while the worksheets contain good content, their true aim is to equip you to grow deeper in your marriage relationship through practical discussion.

Worksheet One - Uncovering what makes you, “you”

Before we can build a new foundation we must understand the one that is already in place. The following truths must be accepted if we want to move forward into a new marriage with the same spouse...

“A refusal to confront the past is a refusal to face present day reality.”

“The first step to freedom begins with a release from past bondage.”

“When you don’t deal with past pain, two things happen: it grows and you lose sight of it.”

“Spiritual growth coincides with emotional health.”

Understanding how we got to be who we are today begins by understanding the key people who influenced us from the earliest age. Please fill in the following information to describe your parents, or, if raised by someone other than your mother or father, the most significant male and female influences in your childhood.



Mom

What adjectives best describe her?

How did she describe you?

What were her best defining traits?

Where did she face the most struggles?

Did she understand you?

Did she communicate love to you? If so, how?

Did you have to earn her acceptance?

Any painful memories with her?

In what ways are you like her?

Do you have any known unforgiveness toward her?



Dad

What adjectives best describe him?

How did he describe you?

What were his best defining traits?

Where did he face the most struggles?

Did he understand you?

Did he communicate love to you? If so, how?

Did you have to earn his acceptance?

Any painful memories with him?

In what ways are you like him?

Do you have any known unforgiveness toward him?

Beyond who your parents were, there is what they believed. Most of what your parents valued were never communicated to you directly, they were taught to you every day by the things your parents did, what they valued, and what upset them.

With that in mind, try identifying your families “Five Commandments” below.

My Family’s “5 Commandments”

What and how did your family teach you about these areas of life?

1) Money

2) Conflict

3) Success

4) Feelings/Emotions

5) Gender roles

Now that you've identified your families "Five Commandments" discuss the following questions together...

What are some of your family traits that you want to preserve in your life and relationships?

What are some of your family traits that you fear will influence you and your relationships?

On a scale of 1-10 (1-lowest, 10-highest), how well have you made peace with your past? Is there someone you struggle to forgive?

(If your past is a source of pain.)

How can your spouse best help you in dealing with your past?

Sometimes the best way to move forward is by putting the past behind you, and this requires forgiveness. If there are any areas where you need to forgive, please use the following prayer as a guide to help you do so...

A prayer of forgiveness for deep wounding

"I forgive you, _____, for being unable to love me and unwilling to fulfill your God-given role in my life. I face your illness and sin and I name it as the evil that it is rather than the ways I've named it in the past. You have deeply wounded me. I forgive you. I will no longer strive uselessly demanding you change, demanding that you love me, demanding that you finally treat me as God would intend. Because I forgive you, I will no longer give you the power to wound me. In naming your evil for what it is, I trust in Him who is my light and life to transcend your influence in the power of His Spirit. I will now bless you in any way that I can, expecting nothing in return. I turn your accusations and projections back on your head and release you to God's mercy and justice. I do not judge you. I name the evil that has wounded me, but I completely release you to God. And now, heavenly Father, I thank you for hearing this prayer, for enabling me to accept and fully forgive _____, and for enabling me to no longer flail under the evil that has afflicted me, but to rise into the fullness of life and wholeness that You offer that I may even become, as your grace and time allows, a channel of your healing to _____."

In Jesus's name, amen.