

Six Essentials For Married Life



featuring **Ted & Nancie Lowe**

PART 1: CULTIVATE COMMUNICATION AND CELEBRATE DIFFERENCES

CONNECT

Take a few minutes to discuss this question in your group:

What's one quality about your spouse that first attracted you to them?

LEARN

Before watching the video together and discussing the questions below, we suggest taking a few moments to pray. Here's a simple prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, thank you for every couple in this group. Help us continue to grow in how we understand and listen to one another. Show us how to celebrate the differences our spouses bring to our marriage. Amen.

After praying, watch the video for Part 1.

APPLY

After the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Since you've been married, what's one lesson you've learned about communication that surprised you?
2. Read **James 1:19**.

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

Which part of this verse is most challenging for you? How does making assumptions about your spouse impact listening to your spouse?

3. Ted and Nancie talked about the importance of pausing before reacting. What makes it difficult to pause in the moment? What could pausing look like practically for you?
4. Review the five stages couples often experience with their differences: **Fascination, Irritation, Toleration, Appreciation, and Celebration**.
5. Why do you think some couples get stuck in toleration? What helps us move toward

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appreciation and celebration?

6. Being a student of your spouse means remaining curious rather than assuming you've already figured them out. Why is curiosity so important in a healthy marriage?
7. Ted shared this advice: "Find the best possible explanation for your spouse's behavior, and believe it with all your heart." What benefits does believing the best bring?

MOVING FORWARD

This week...

Act

Look for an opportunity to pause before reacting to your spouse. As you pause, ask God to help you listen first and respond with love.

Ask

Ask each other:

"What's one difference between us that actually helps our marriage?"

PRAY

We suggest ending your group with prayer. Here's a sample prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of marriage. Help us to listen well, speak with grace, and celebrate the unique ways you've wired our spouse. Teach us to assume the best, pursue understanding, and build a marriage that reflects your love. Amen.