

Your next date may be your first or your 500th,
but you can make it the best date possible.

B4UD8 shows you how.

**Whether you're
dating or waiting,
there are seven things
you need to know.**

ADULT LEADER'S GUIDE

Wouldn't it be nice if every teenager postponed dating until college? Just think: No more messy-breakups creating awkward tension at youth group. No more drama from the girl who's always trying to capture some guy's attention. No more lame excuses from the guy who skips church so he can "hang out" with his girlfriend. Sounds nice, doesn't it?

Of course, unless you're prepared to lock students up in convents and monasteries for the next few years, chances are that some of them will start to date. So why not equip them with some godly advice? Hayley and Michael DiMarco provide just what you need in **B4UD8**, a handy little guide to teen dating. Joining common sense and biblical wisdom, they present seven principles to help teens survive the dating world.

So if your youth group has started to rival TV's soap opera romances, it's a good time to start a **B4UD8** study group. We know that today's dating scene can leave you scratching your head in confusion, but with this downloadable study guide at your fingertips, you'll be ready to serve as the Dating Guru in no time. What are you waiting for? Press "Print," grab your copy of the book, and get ready to teach your crew what they need to know **B4UD8**!



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A QUICK LOOK

The *B4UD8* retreat has been designed as a weekend event that begins early Friday

Session One – Getting Started (Aka—The Intro)

Session Two – Date With a Purpose (Chapter 1)

Session Three – Take Care of the Temple (Chapter 2)

Session Four – Dating is Not Marriage (Chapter 3)

Session Five – Have a Life (Chapter 4)

Session Six – Red Flags Are Red for a Reason (Chapter 5)

Session Seven – Embrace Rejection (Chapter 6)

Session Eight – Don't Date Your Idol (Chapter 7)

THE PLAN OF ATTACK

First things first: Order a book for each student in your group and pass them out one week before your study starts. That way, your students will have just enough time to read the first week's material, but not so much time that the book ends up in the Bermuda Triangle under their bed.

We've divided this discussion guide into eight sessions. Each one starts with an activity idea designed to get your crew talking about the week's topic in a fun and interactive way. Following the activity, you'll see a list of questions you can use to generate more in-depth discussion. And we suggest wrapping things up with a simple prayer.

Each session should take about 45-60 minutes. But feel free to change the pace: For a less talkative group, you might want to spend extra time getting them warmed up with the opening activity. For the serious thinkers out there, you can skip the activities and just dive into the discussion. You know your students the best, so use what works for you, and throw out the rest. (Really, we won't be offended.)

Now we know that some students consider reading a book an ancient torture ritual. And unless the text fits on their cell phone screen or shows up online, they aren't going to read it ahead of time. If this sounds like your crew, try a storytime approach: Just pull out your book at the beginning of the meeting and read it aloud, pausing for questions as you go. (You may want to try some comfy sofas instead of those ugly carpet squares on the floor, though.) Factor in an extra 15 minutes for each session if you plan to use this strategy.

GO FOR IT

Okay, the veteran youth leaders out there probably have no fear when it comes to leading a small group of teens. If that's you: Get out of here. You're ready to roll! But for those of you who are experiencing excess perspiration at the very thought of leading teens, here are a few pointers to help you get started:

- **Prep.** Make sure you've read through the book chapter and the discussion guide for each session. As you prepare for the sessions, consider one or two personal anecdotes you may be able to share during the group's discussion.
- **Be yourself.** Thank students for sharing their thoughts and opinions, but don't feel that you need to agree with every one. Be honest about the lessons you've learned in your own experiences—even if they may not be what your students want to hear!
- **Dig deeper.** Don't settle for simple responses: Ask students follow-up questions such as "Why do you feel that way?" "What do you mean when you say _____?"
- **Silence never killed anybody.** Count to 10 before you say anything further: Someone else may just decide to break the awkward silence before you do!
- **Help the shy ones.** Invite quiet students to talk by saying something like "Lisa, I'm curious what you think about this too" or "Sara, I'd love to hear what you have to say about that."
- **Listen.** Listen. Listen. Try asking "mirror" questions that challenge students to clarify what you've heard. For example, say "What I hear you saying is this. Is that what you mean?"
- **Don't force your opinion.** Encourage students to think through their own perspectives, even if they differ from yours. It's best to share your thoughts briefly and just give them time to think on it.
- **Get God on the team.** Pray for the students before and after each session. And be open to the Spirit's leading: God may take you in an unexpected direction, so don't get too hung up on "the plan."

HELP IS ON THE WAY!

From meals and sleeping arrangements to the question of how you're going to fit 14 kids into a 12-passenger van, we know there are dozens of details that go into retreat planning. So don't be afraid to recruit help. Don't have time to buy groceries for the weekend? There's probably a mom who'd be willing to help. Not sure where to get drivers for your group? I'll bet you know a couple of retired guys who'd love an excuse to hit the road for a weekend! When you let people know about your needs, you might be surprised at how many people are willing to lend a hand.

If you'd like a little help with dating resources or you're just looking for some encouragement and support, check out these great online resources:

- **Ifuse.com** – Connect with other adults who are leading a teen retreat to share questions and encouragement. Encourage your students to join too, and you can keep your dating discussions rolling online!
- **B4UD8.com** – Here's where you can go for all the dating insights we couldn't squeeze into the book. Or pick up a hilarious story from our online dating confessional to share with your crew! It's also a great spot to refer your students if they have more questions than you feel equipped to handle.



Session One

—Getting Started

Opening Activity: *Worst Date Ever*

Supplies Needed: *paper, pens*

Divide students into same-gender pairs. Ask the girl groups to write a guidebook for “How To Lose a Guy in 10 Days” and the guy groups to write “How to Lose a Girl in 10 Days.” Encourage them to list a day by day game-plan that would guarantee a breakup by day 10. Then give your groups about 5 minutes to work.

Now ask each pair to share their guidebook with the large group and take a vote on whether each plan would really lose a guy/girl in 10 days. As groups share their scenarios, mix in a few of these questions:

- What are some of the most common reasons that teen dating relationships break up?
- What traits would make someone a really lousy girlfriend/boyfriend?
- What traits would make someone a really great girlfriend/boyfriend?
- What would be the worst date ever?
- How would you describe your perfect date?

Discussion Questions for Session One:

1. “This book isn’t so much about who you date as much as it is about you” (p. 5). Why might it be a good idea to evaluate your life *B4UD8*?
 - *What might happen if you start dating without really understanding your purpose for dating?*
2. What do you think is the best part about dating? The worst?
3. Do your parents have any rules about dating? What are they?
 - *Do you agree with their rules? Why or why not?*
4. The authors suggest that “most people date by accident” (p. 9). Do you agree with them? Why or why not?
 - *What can go wrong when you jump into a relationship without a game plan?*
 - *What kind of game plan should you have so that you won’t be dating “by accident”?*
5. Discuss this quote: “Dating can be like a drug” (p. 9).
 - *Why do you think dating is such an addictive topic for many teens?*
 - *In what ways are dating breakups similar to drug withdrawals?*
6. Check out the description of life before “dating” on p. 9-10: What do you think it felt like to marry someone that your parents picked out for you? To marry someone you weren’t in love with?
 - *What would be the biggest drawbacks of marrying someone without dating them?*
 - *Do you think there would be any advantages to a system that wasn’t based on dating?*
7. Do you agree with the authors that in modern dating “happiness became the number one motivator for marriage instead of survival and multiplication”? Why or why not?
 - *Do you think the shift to dating for “love” or “romance” has made it easier or harder to find a spouse?*
 - *Has dating for “love” made marriages better or worse? Why?*
8. Look over the list of dating styles from p. 12-19. What are the most common dating styles you see in people your age?
 - *Are there any dating styles you would add to this list?*
 - *Do you think God would recommend or forbid any of these dating styles? Why?*
9. Do you think there’s just one “right” way for everyone to date? Why or why not?
 - *Which dating styles might lead to the most confusion, mistakes, or heartache?*
 - *Which dating styles might make it easiest for you to stay focused on God through the process?*
10. At this point, what dating style do you think would make the most sense for you? Why?

Session Two

—Date With a Purpose

Opening Activity: *The Perfect Match*

Supplies Needed: *paper, pens, copy of this activity page*

Before this session, make a copy of this page and cut out the four profiles listed below:

Profile A: Miss Marriage-Minded

She's already got the dream wedding planned. She just needs to find the groom. So she's in it for real: Every date is a potential mate. And she craves commitment.

Profile B: Mr. Player

He really wants to date that special girl... until he moves on to the next special girl...and the next... you get the idea. This guy sees dating as a game and he wants to win every time.

Profile C: Buffet Princess

She's flirty and pretty. And she likes guys, a lot. So really, why should she have to settle for just one at a time? She likes to try a little of this and a little of that when it comes to dating. She has no problem going out with more than one guy at a time.

Profile D: Good Time Guy

He's dating for fun. Sure, he wants to get married someday. But he's not ready for anything serious yet. For now, he just likes getting to know different girls and finding out what works in a relationship.

Split your students into four groups, giving each some paper, a pen, and one of the profiles. Ask them to read their profiles and then write a description of the “perfect match” from the perspective of their person. They may want to include details such as: ideal date activities, characteristics they look for in a boyfriend/girlfriend, length of relationship, and commitment level.

When they finish, have the group take turns reading their profile and the descriptions they wrote. Ask the following questions as you go:

- Do you think most teens fall into just one of these profiles? Or are they spread across the board?
- Do you think any of your profiles would be a good match for each other? Why or why not?
- What profile combination would make for the worst relationship? Why?
- What happens when people who have different dating goals end up dating each other? Does it turn out well? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions for Session Two:

1. Discuss this quote: "An informed person making choices for themselves is much more likely to follow through on those choices than a person who is being told what to do" (p. 23). How does this apply to dating?
 - *Do you feel like you've had any dating views forced on you by parents, religious leaders, or other adults? If so, what are those views?*
 - *Do you think teens ever have dating views forced on them by other teens? Why or why not?*
2. What are some of the benefits and drawbacks of dating for fun?
 - *What is the "fun" part of a dating relationship?*
 - *The authors say this about dating for fun: "The more you date, the more you break up. And the more you break up, the better you get at leaving someone. In other words, it's kinda like practicing divorce." Do you agree? Why or why not?*
3. In what ways are dating to be popular and dating to conquer both self-centered dating methods?
 - *Do you agree that it's impossible to follow Christ while dating these ways? Why or why not?*
4. Do you think it's a good idea for teens to date with the purpose of finding someone to marry? Why or why not?
 - *Discuss this quote: "The trouble comes in when you aren't old enough to be married or to even think about being married. . . .OK, you can be thinking about it, but you shouldn't be on the dating market if this is your purpose and you aren't ready to get married."*
 - *At what point do you think someone is old enough to start dating with the purpose of finding a husband/wife?*
5. If you decide to give up dating until you're ready to marry, what should you do if you meet someone you think could be the one for you?
 - *Is it possible to have a healthy, "non-dating" relationship with someone who's mutually attracted to you? If so, what does that look like?*
6. Do you think there's a good purpose for dating at your age? Why or why not?
 - *Aside from dating, how would you describe your overall purpose in life?*
 - *How can you make sure your dating style fits in with your overall purpose in life?*
7. How does dating affect people's hearts?
 - *Which dating styles show the most respect for the other person's heart?*
8. Why is it so important to understand your purpose for dating?
 - *How does dating with a purpose protect your heart?*
 - *Should you date someone if they don't agree with you on the purpose of dating? Why or why not?*
9. Why might it be a good idea to ask a parent or other adult mentor for advice on your dating purposes?

Session Three

—Take Care of the Temple

Opening Activity: *Date at First Sight*

Supplies Needed: *various magazines, glue sticks, scissors, paper*

Give each student a magazine and a sheet of paper. Ask students to label one side of their sheet “Yes” and the other side “No” Place the glue sticks and scissors on a table where they can be easily shared.

Now ask students to page through the magazines and cut out pictures of the opposite sex. Tell them to glue each picture to the appropriate side of their paper based on their answer to this question: Based solely on the way this person looks, would you want to go on a date with them? Encourage them to find at least 3-4 pictures for each side of their paper.

When they’re finished, give them a few minutes to compare their sheets with each other. Then lead a short discussion with these follow-up questions.

Follow-up Questions:

- What kind of characteristics attracted you to the people you would want to date?
- What kind of characteristics turned you off to the people you wouldn’t want to date?
- Do you think it’s fair to judge someone based on their outer appearance? Why or why not?
- Do you think you can tell anything about a person’s inner character and personality based on their outer appearance? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions for Session Three:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17. (It's on p. 37 in the book, if you don't have a Bible handy.)
 - *Why do you think God would want to make you his temple?*
 - *How does this verse affect your body image? Your sense of self-worth?*
2. On p. 40, the authors say "People are attracted to other people who seem to give a rip. The good news is that doesn't mean you have to be naturally beautiful to get attention and attract the opposite sex, it just means you have to take care of the temple." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
 - *What do you think makes someone attractive?*
 - *Can you be attractive, even if you are not "beautiful" by the world's standards? If so, how?*
3. Discuss this quote: "Your choice of how you clothe yourself impacts how people treat you and think of you."
 - *What do clothes say about you?*
 - *Do you think your clothing choices reflect who you really are? Why or why not?*
 - *How can you tell the difference between a healthy effort to dress nice and becoming obsessed with clothes?*
4. Do you think God cares about outer appearances? Why or why not?
 - *What would be some wrong motives for trying to look good?*
 - *What are the right motives for trying to look good?*
5. Do you think most teens spend more time caring for their outside or their inside? Why?
 - *What's more important: Someone's inner character or their outward appearance? Or are they equally important? Why?*
 - *What do you tend to struggle with more, caring for your exterior or caring for your interior?*
6. Proverbs 4:23 says "Guard your heart more than anything else, because the source of your life flows from it." What do you think this verse means?
 - *What are some dangerous ideas that teens may let into their hearts?*
 - *How will keeping your heart focused on pleasing God help you when it comes to dating?*
7. Why is it important to control your thoughts?
 - *Why do you think the Bible says that just thinking about doing something bad is as bad as actually doing it?*
 - *Do you agree that "you are what you think" (p.52). Why or why not?*
 - *Is it healthy to think about someone all the time? Why or why not?*
8. When it comes to dating relationships, Hayley and Michael say "if you're not sure if God wants you to do something you are thinking of doing, then err on the side of safety and don't do it" (p. 52). Why is it a good idea to err on the side of caution?
 - *What are some moral "gray" areas that you aren't sure about when it comes to dating?*
 - *What would be some good "escape plans" to use if you start getting caught up in the heat of the moment?*
9. How do you take care of your spirit?
 - *What things or people compete with God for control of your life?*
 - *Do you have to feel close to God in order to actually be close to God? Why or why not?*
10. List all the reasons that taking care of the temple is a great thing to do **B4UD8**.

Session Four

—Dating is Not Marriage

Opening Activity: *Dating or Mating?*

Supplies Needed: *sheets of white paper (one per group member), pens/markers*

Give each student a sheet of paper. Ask them to label one side “Dating” and the other side “Mating.” Read through the following list and ask students to vote on whether they think the activity sounds like a healthy, “dating” couple, or like a couple who’s acting as if they’re already married (“mating”). Have students reveal their votes at the same time by holding up the appropriate side of their paper. If there’s disagreement among the votes, ask a student from each side to explain why they voted as they did.

- Jess calls Jake on Thursday night. She asks if he’s okay with her going out with her girlfriends on Friday night instead of coming to his basketball game like she usually does.
- Kylie and Nick buy a goldfish together: They name him Pete.
- Taylor and his girlfriend attend a Bible study together at his church.
- Jade calls her boyfriend’s mom to find out his favorite cake flavor. She wants to surprise him with a homemade birthday cake tomorrow.
- Mitch asks his girlfriend to be in one of his senior picture poses.
- Liz’s dad is an alcoholic, but it’s a family secret she’s not supposed to talk about. The only person she talks to about her family problems is her boyfriend, Sam.
- Mike buys a dozen red roses for Lisa on Valentine’s Day.
- Kate lost her job a few weeks ago, so her boyfriend has been giving her money to keep her car filled with gas.
- Sometimes Dan goes along with his girlfriend when she visits her grandma at the nursing home.
- Noel and her boyfriend volunteer together at an after-school program tutoring little kids.
- Nate asks his girlfriend not to try out for her school play because the final performance is scheduled for the same night as his school’s winter formal.

After you finish voting on the list, discuss these follow-up questions:

- What are some things teen couples do that qualify as “acting married”?
- List some special things dating couples can do together without acting like a married couple.
- How do you feel when you’re around people who act like an old married couple?
- Should an ideal dating relationship look the same as an ideal marriage? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions for Session Four:

1. What would you say are the key differences between dating and marriage?
 - *Why do you think some couples confuse dating and marriage?*
 - *What are some perks that should be saved only for marriage? (Try to come up with something more than “sex”!)*
2. What are the pitfalls of treating your dating relationship like a marriage?
 - *How does “playing house” make a breakup more painful?*
3. Discuss this quote: “When a couple plays house they risk more than sexual junk, they risk getting really good at divorce” (p. 69).
 - *What are some similarities between a dating breakup and divorce?*
 - *Do you agree that having repeated serious relationships leads you to “practice divorce”? Why or why not?*
4. What are the dangers of getting your boyfriend/girlfriend overly involved with your family?
 - *What are some healthy ways to handle each other’s families?*
 - *What are some unhealthy ways that couples get involved with each other’s families?*
5. What is “emotional virginity”? (Check out p. 71 if you need some help with this.)
 - *“Emotional oneness is meant for marriage” (p. 71). Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?*
 - *Why do you think people feel compelled to share their deepest secrets with each other while they’re dating?*
6. Do you think some people use their boyfriend/girlfriend as a substitute for God in their life? If so, what does that look like?
7. Why are Bible study and prayer risky activities for a dating couple to do alone?
 - *How can you figure out your boyfriend/girlfriend’s spiritual maturity if you don’t study the Bible or pray together?*
 - *At what point in a relationship do you think it’s okay to start praying together?*
8. Why is it a bad idea to start asking permission from each other while you’re dating?
 - *Do you agree that asking permission “gives the impression that you are owned by the other person, or managed by them” (p.75)? Why or why not?*
 - *What’s the difference between being considerate of your boyfriend/girlfriend’s feelings versus asking their permission to do things?*
9. How do the “rules” change when a dating couple becomes engaged?
 - *Are there any activities you wouldn’t do while dating, but that you would do while you’re engaged?*
 - *What activities would you still consider off-limits to engaged couples? What should be saved only for marriage?*
10. What should you do if you’ve already gotten too serious with someone you’re dating, either physically, spiritually, or emotionally?
 - *Do you think it ever works to “backtrack” in the areas where you’ve gotten too close to your boyfriend/girlfriend? Why or why not?*
 - *Would it ever be necessary to break up with someone because you’ve gotten too close? Why or why not?*



Session Five

—Have a Life

Opening Activity: *Guess Who?*

Supplies Needed: *Index cards, safety pins, pens/pencils.*

Give each student three index cards. On each card, they should write something fun or interesting that they'd like to do someday (a career they're interested in, a place they want to visit, a hobby they'd like to try, etc.). Tell them not to let anyone see what they write on their cards. When students are finished, collect all their index cards and shuffle them.

Place the cards in a pile and have students take turns drawing a card. Each time they draw, they should read the card aloud and then try to guess which student wrote that card. After you're finished, you can have a brief discussion with these follow-up questions:

- What was the most interesting activity that was written on one of these cards?
- Did any of you share some common interests? If so, what were they?
- How often do you think about your dreams/plans for the future? Are they a big part of your life, or do they tend to get pushed aside by everyday concerns?
- Do you know anybody who's pushed off their dreams or goals for the sake of a dating relationship? What do you think of that?

Discussion Questions for Session Five:

1. Agree or disagree: "There is no way that another person can be or should be your everything" (p. 83).
 - *Do you think this quote falls in line with our culture's ideas about love? Why or why not?*
 - *What happens when you try to make a guy or girl your "everything"?*
2. Why do you think it's so hard for teens to avoid putting all their time and attention into their dating relationship?
 - *What are the underlying fears that cause boyfriends/girlfriends to spend so much time together?*
 - *Do you think spending all their time together actually addresses those fears?*
3. What are some sexually tempting situations that dating couples find themselves in?
 - *What are some practical steps you could take to avoid being in tempting places?*
 - *How can friends and family be a help when it comes to avoiding sexual temptation?*
4. Why is spiritual accountability important in a teenager's life?
 - *What are some areas where the average teen could use a little accountability to keep them on track?*
 - *What kind of people make good accountability partners?*
5. Why is it important to keep your friends, even when you're dating?
 - *What message do you send to your friends and family when you spend all your time with your boyfriend/girlfriend?*
 - *Why do you think friends and family members sometimes see relationship problems more clearly than the person who's dating?*
6. How could spending too much time together suffocate a relationship?
 - *What do you think Hayley and Michael are talking about when they say "let them miss you" (p. 89)? How do you do that?*
7. How do you "have a life" while you're dating?
 - *What are some practical ways to keep your own life while you are dating someone else?*
8. How does having a life of your own actually make you more desirable to your boyfriend/girlfriend?
 - *Do you think it's a bad sign if your boyfriend/girlfriend doesn't want you to have a life of your own? Why or why not?*
9. What are some signs that you've become too obsessed with your boyfriend or girlfriend?

Session Six

—Red Flags Are Red for a Reason

Opening Activity: *Online Dating Profiles*

Supplies Needed: *paper, pens, markers*

Divide students into pairs for this activity, and hand them some paper, a pen, and a few markers. Tell them to create an online dating profile for a fictitious person who is using UnHarmony.com to look for a boyfriend/girlfriend. Their profiles should include:

- picture and/or physical description
- general information (age, job, hometown, etc.)
- hobbies/interests
- what they're looking for in a relationship
- any other information they want to include.

Here's the hitch: Tell them to fill their profile with as many "red flags" as possible. When they're finished, this person's profile should make readers want to run in the opposite direction! Give the students about 5-10 minutes to create their profiles before regrouping and sharing them with each other. Mix in these follow-up questions as students present their dating profiles to each other:

- What are some behaviors or personality traits that you absolutely would not tolerate in a dating relationship?
- Do you think red flags are always obvious in dating relationships? Why or why not?
- Do you think it's easier to spot red flags before you're in a relationship or while you're in a relationship? Why?
- Why do you think some people are attracted to "the bad boy" or the "bad girl"? What's the appeal there?

Discussion Questions for Session Six:

1. Do you agree with all the items that are listed as red flags in this chapter?
 - *Would you add anything to the list of red flags?*
 - *What red flags have you seen most often in teen dating relationships?*
2. Why do you think some people choose to ignore red flags?
 - *Is being in love with someone a good enough reason to stay together despite red flags? Why or why not?*
3. What should you do if you spot a red flag in your relationship?
 - *How can you make sure that it's really a red flag, and not just your boyfriend/girlfriend having a bad day?*
 - *Do you think it's possible to change someone's red flags while you're dating them? Why or why not?*
4. What role can your friends and family play when it comes to spotting flags in a relationship?
 - *Do you usually ask for your friends' and family's opinion on the people you date? Why or why not?*
 - *Why is it so important to have an outside opinion on your dating relationship?*
5. What should you do when you are the friend who sees a red flag in your buddy's relationship?
 - *In your experience, do friends tend to be honest with each other when they notice warning signs in each other's relationships? Why or why not?*
 - *What would be some good ways to point out a dating red flag to a friend?*
6. Is it okay to date a non-believer if you're just dating for fun and don't plan to get serious? Why or why not?
7. Do you agree with the list of yellow flags listed on p. 110-114?
 - *Would you add any yellow flags to this list?*
 - *What yellow flags seem to show up the most often in teen dating relationships?*
8. When it comes to yellow flags, the DiMarcos say "Don't be a dork and ruin your chance for happiness by ignoring yellow flags just because they don't seem too bad . . . Check them out and at least slow things down. It won't ruin the relationship if it's a good relationship" (p. 114).
 - *Do you think yellow flags can be more dangerous than red flags? Why?*
 - *How will analyzing yellow flags make a good relationship stronger?*
9. Are feelings a good indicator of whether you should continue dating someone or not? Why or why not?
10. List the top five "flags" you would never tolerate in a dating relationship.

Session Seven

—Embrace Rejection

Opening Activity:

Supplies Needed: *Index cards (one per student), pens*

Before students arrive, label the corner of each index card with a small “T” or an “F” in the upper right corner. (Do an equal number of each.) Hand out the cards to students and ask them to write a bad breakup story on their index card. If they have a “T” on their card, they should write about a true break-up story they’ve heard about from friends, family, or the media. If they have an “F” on their card, they should make up a fictional story describing a bad breakup.

Give everyone a few minutes to write their story. Then take turns having students share their stories. For each story, ask the rest of the group to vote on whether they think the story is “True” or “False” before the storyteller reveals which one it was. After all the stories are read, ask these follow-up questions:

- What stories do you think were worse—the true ones or the made up ones?
- For those who wrote “True” stories, did you find it easy or difficult to think of a bad breakup story? Why?
- Have any of you experienced a bad breakup that you’d be willing to share about with the rest of the group?
- What kinds of actions or words create a bad breakup situation?

Discussion Questions for Session Seven:

1. What are some reasons why a breakup could be better than staying together?
 - *Do you agree that rejection is inevitable if you’re going to be on the dating scene? Why or why not?*
 - *Would you ever want to be with someone who doesn’t want to be with you?*
 - *How many times would you be willing to suffer rejection to get to the one for you?*
2. How does the fear of rejection sometimes lead people to do stupid things?
 - *Could the fear of rejection ruin a good relationship? If so, how?*
 - *How could the fear of rejection become a self-fulfilling prophecy?*
3. Discuss this quote: “Most girls don’t judge you when you ask and strike out. They don’t dislike you any more after you ask than before. But they can get hurt and confused when you are too afraid to ask them at all” (p. 125).
 - *Girls: Do you agree with that statement?*
 - *Guys: What makes it hard for a guy to ask a girl out?*

4. Agree or Disagree: Guys should be the ones to ask girls out on a date.
 - *Do you think relationships work better when the guy asks the girl out or when the girl asks the guy out? Why?*
 - *Girls: In your ideal relationship, are you the one who pursues the guy, or do you want the guy to pursue you?*
 - *Guys: In your ideal relationship, are you the one who pursues the girl, or does the girl pursue you?*

5. What can a girl do to show a guy that she's interested in him?
 - *What kinds of things are "overkill" when it comes to showing interest in someone?*
 - *Is it okay to flirt with people you only like as a friend? Why or why not?*
 - *If someone is flirty with all their opposite-sex friends, how might that be confusing to someone who's interested in dating him or her?*

6. What causes some people to become obsessed with a certain guy or girl?
 - *What do people act like when they're obsessed?*
 - *How is obsession dangerous for someone's soul?*

7. What should you do if you sense that one of your friends is interested in you but you don't return the feelings?
 - *Can guys and girls be "just friends"? Why or why not?*
 - *Is it fair to keep a friendship with someone going when you know they want something more? Why or why not?*
 - *How can you be friends with someone who likes you, without giving them false hope that it will turn into more?*

8. What are some good ways to break up with someone?
 - *What are some things you should not do when breaking up with someone?*
 - *When it comes to breaking up with someone, the authors say "Get to the point and always make it about you" (p. 139). How does focusing on your own feelings make the breakup better for both of you?*

9. What should you do when someone breaks up with you? How do you handle that situation in a healthy way?
 - *What are some things you should not do if someone breaks up with you?*
 - *If you really trust that God can work all things for good, how will this affect your perspective on being rejected by someone you like?*

Session Eight

—Don't Date Your Idol

Opening Activity: *Idol Ads*

Supplies Needed: posterboard, markers

Divide students into groups of 2 or 3 for this activity and give each group a piece of posterboard and some markers. Tell them to imagine they are Roman citizens who have time-traveled from ancient Rome to present-day America. Ask each group to choose one of the Roman gods from the list below (each group should select a different god):

Venus – Goddess of Beauty

Bacchus – God of the Vine, Wine, Merriment

Aesculapias – God of Health

Voluptas – Goddess of Pleasure

Mercury – God of Trade, Commerce and Market

Minerva – Goddess of Learning, the Arts, Sciences

Vesta – Goddess of Home and Hearth

Cupid – God of Love

Now ask your “Roman citizens” to create a magazine advertisement for their god. They should include slogans and pictures that explain how modern-day Americans can worship their god and what benefits they’ll receive. Give groups 5-10 minutes to create their ads. Then let each group take a turn presenting their ad to the large group, asking these questions of each advertisement:

- Was it easy or difficult to come up with modern-day parallels for this god?
- Do you think anybody still worships this god today? If so, what are those people like?
- Do you think this god could truly satisfy its worshippers? Why or why not?

After the final group presents their ad, you may want to discuss these questions if time allows:

- Were there any gods from the list that none of your groups chose to make an ad about? If so, how do you think those particular gods would be worshiped in modern-day America?
- Which of these Roman gods would have the most appeal to teenagers today?

Discussion Questions for Session Eight:

1. Do you think idolatry is a problem today? Why or why not?
 - *How would you define an “idol”?*
 - *The authors say that “an idol is anything that is a rival to God” (p. 151). What needs/jobs/desires should only God fill in your life?*
2. What are some common idols for teenagers today?
 - *The authors say that “an excessive devotion to anything other than God is idolatry” (p. 149). What are some things that teenagers can become excessively devoted to?*
3. Is it fair to expect another person to fulfill you? Why or why not?
 - *Do you think a human relationship—even the most romantic one—can be as fulfilling as your relationship with God? Why or why not?*
4. What happens when you make an idol out of the person you date?
 - *How can idolatry mess up your dating relationship?*
 - *How can idolatry mess up your relationship with God?*
5. How can you tell if the person you’re dating—or crushing on—has become your idol?
 - *What are some practical steps you can take to prevent your date from turning into your idol?*
 - *How will the seven principles of B4UD8 prevent you from turning dating into an idol?*
6. Do you think love can become an idol? If so, how?
 - *Why do you think people have so many obsessions when it comes to love?*
7. What do you think are some of the purposes God may have for your life?
 - *Do you think dating is a good idea for someone who’s still trying to sort out God’s purpose for their life? Why or why not?*
 - *Do you think dating makes it easier or harder to focus on God’s plan for your life? Why?*
8. How could dating become a distraction from God’s purposes?
 - *Do you think dating itself could be a purpose for your life? Why or why not?*
 - *Should dating ever be your only purpose in life? Why or why not?*
9. Being in love is a wonderful thing: Would you still want it if you knew it was going to distract you from God’s purpose for your life?
 - *Do you think you’d be willing to sacrifice a dating relationship for God if you had to? Why or why not?*
10. Discuss this quote: “You have to keep yourself occupied with God, your first love, and then every other love will fall into line” (p. 160).
 - *How do you “keep yourself occupied with God”?*
 - *How will focusing on God be helpful to those on the dating scene?*
 - *How will focusing on God help those who are single?*
11. Of the 7 principles you read about in **B4UD8**, which one do you think you needed to hear the most? What are you going to do about it?