

The Accountability Step



Leader's Note: Before class begins, be sure to make copies of the Participant Handout for the session. Begin by welcoming the ladies and open the class in prayer. Before you watch the video, introduce the topic by spending approximately five minutes going over the definition and Session Opening. After you watch the video, open the floor for discussion and move into your selected group exercise(s).

The group exercises are designed to generate meaningful discussion. Depending on how much time you have, you may not have time to discuss all of the exercises. Before class begins, select the exercise(s) you want to focus your session on. Remember, the goal is not to “get through” all of the exercises, but to create an atmosphere where revelation comes through group dialogue that creates “aha moments”. When women bond through shared experiences and increased knowledge of God’s word, healing comes and creates an opportunity where safe and solid relationships can be built that can last well beyond the group study.

Definition of Accountability



Accountability is the practice of **protecting** our will by surrendering our choices to wise counsel.

Session Opening:



Enticed comes from the Greek word, *exelkō*, which means to draw out. It is used as a metaphor to describe how game is lured out of safety by hunters and fishers. Likewise, men and women are lured from the safety of self-restraint by seductive words.

Words are hard to resist, especially in romance. Charm can be deceitful (Proverbs 31:30). We are most vulnerable when we are not surrounded by the safety that a wise counsel of friends provides.

The old saying, “Love is blind,” really means that our discernment can be easily compromised in romantic relationships, but the way Shakespeare puts it makes it sound romantic. Being blindsided in romance is a dangerous place to be. The best way to protect your heart is to be cautious in love and have a strong accountability system.

As a facilitator, share some of your own thoughts and/or experiences with accountability and how it affected your life.



Video & Discussion Time: Watch the video for Session 8. Afterward, discuss the video before you transition into the group exercises. Pitch out a question or two to the group. Here is one to get you started:

? Have you ever had an accountability partner point out one of your blind spots? How did it make you feel? Did you take the advice or ignore it?



Group Exercises

Group Exercise A

Go around the room and have the participants take turns reading the bulleted items from their handout. Encourage group members to share and make comments after each item is read.

When your accountability is compromised you may:

- Have issues you're too ashamed to talk to anyone about.
- Have liberal standards based on culturally accepted norms.
- Rarely admit when you're wrong.
- Frequently tell white lies and don't always tell the whole truth.
- Mostly be a loner.
- Have a hard time asking for forgiveness.
- Don't think the details of your life are anyone else's business.
- Try to figure things out on my own without asking for help.
- Think that most of your problems are someone else's fault.
- Fail to seek advice even when you are an emotional wreck.

Group Exercise B

Go around the room and have the participants take turns reading the scriptures and questions from their handout. Encourage group members to share and each person reads.

Accountability Scriptures

📖 Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands in not quickly broken. Ecclesiastes 4:12 (NIV)

 Where no counsel [is], the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors [there is] safety. (KJV) For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure. Proverbs 11:14 (NIV)

? What blind spots have you noticed in your own romantic relationships?

 Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed. Proverbs 15:22 (NIV)

? What are some of your weaknesses that hinder your judgment of character?

- Rushing into a relationship too soon.
- Being overly trusting.
- Misguided compassion.
- Ignoring the advice of family and friends.
- Haven't quite figured it out yet, but I keep making the same mistakes over and over again.

 Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses. Proverbs 27:6 (NIV)

 Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Psalm 1:1,3 (NIV)

? What are some things you can do to be cautious in friendship and guard your heart?

 The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice. Proverbs 12:15

 As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. Proverbs 27:17 NIV

 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers. Proverbs 19:8 (NIV)

? Which of the Five F's (faith, family, friendships, finances, fitness) is most important to you? Why? Which is the least? Why?

 Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise. Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)

? What do you think about the common expression that love is blind? Do you think you can control who you fall in love with?

- ? It's been said that we will be the same person in five years except for the people we meet and the books we read. If that's true, what people do you want to sprinkle in your life?**

Group Exercise C

The following action points are discussed in Love Junkies beginning on page 225. Read each action point. Participants can either follow along in their books or fill in the blanks on their handouts. After you read each bullet point, encourage group members to comment, giving their own insight or sharing their own experiences.

If you have trouble with the habit of accountability, try these action points:

- ❖ **Pray for a mentor.**
Pray and ask the Lord to direct you to a trustworthy person of the same sex that will challenge you in your walk with the Lord.
- ❖ **Establish Godly friendships.**
A network of firm believers allows you to obtain a multitude of counsel when you need encouragement, advice or prayer. Lonely people are prey for the enemy's schemes. If you want more friends, show yourself friendly and seek to become a friend (Proverbs 18:24).
- ❖ **Nurture established relationships.**
- ❖ **Give permission for others to put you on the SPOT.**
 - Are you serving the Lord?
 - Are you praying daily?
 - Are you obeying the Word?
 - Are you training for the goal?
- ❖ **Have a forewarn system.**
- ❖ **Take inventory.**
Ask your accountability partner if they see areas of weakness in your life, such as blame, bitterness, selfishness, jealousy, idolatry, hatred, gossip, pride, tendency toward addictive behavior, sexual immorality or seductive behavior or dress, strife, anger or rage.

❖ **Pinpoint false beliefs.**

In areas where the word of God is not your standard, in order to get victory in that area, you must find the root of your false belief. Until you find the root, the enemy can hold you captive to sin. Once you identify the false belief, begin to erase the false belief and replace it with the truth.

❖ **Set goals for your future.**



Reading Assignment for Next Week: Yes

Chapters 24-26