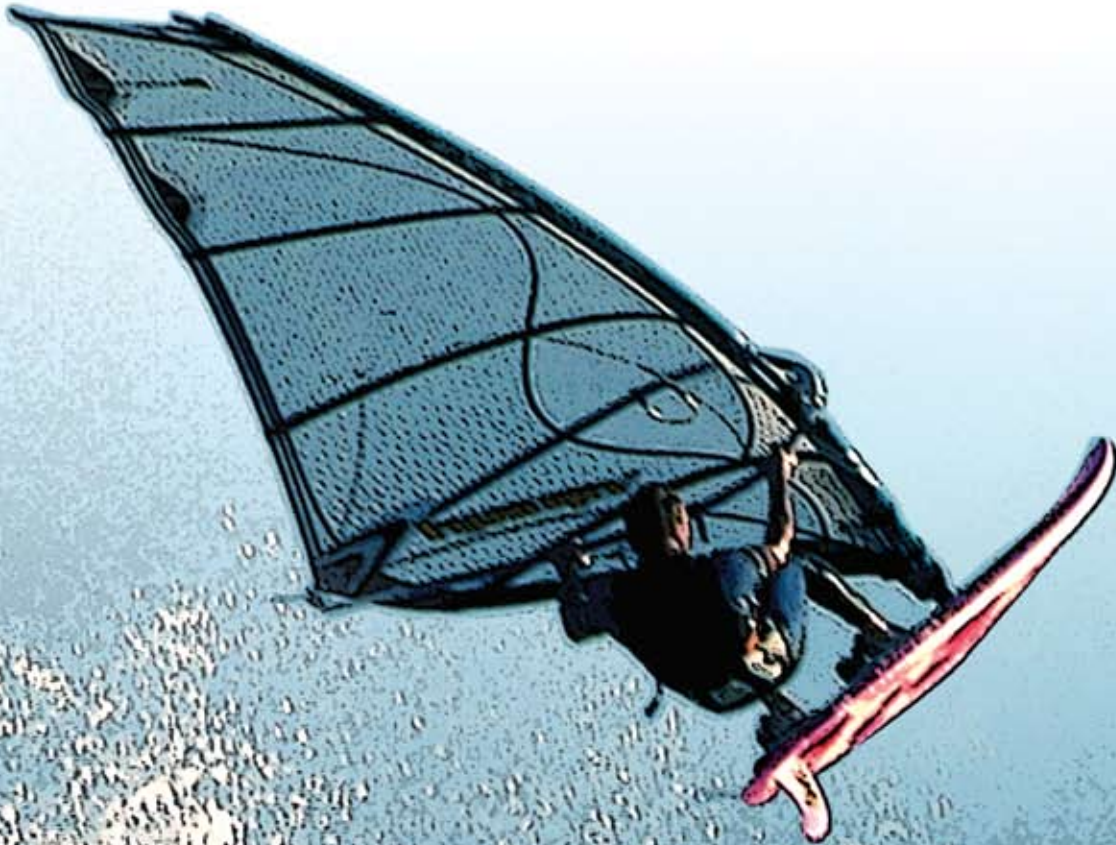
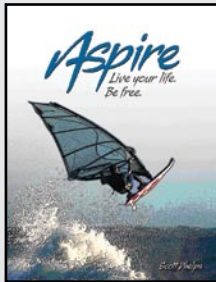


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Aspire is designed to help you think through some of the most important decisions in your life. Specifically, it is designed to help you resist the many pressures pushing you toward sexual activity by making wise choices and decisions today. *Aspire* is about learning to resist the power of the present, and choosing instead to pursue your future freedom. If this is your desire, *Aspire* can help to strengthen your resolve to set your course. If you're not sure what you should do, *Aspire* can help you in considering this very important decision.

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To schedule any of these speakers for your school or event please e-mail info@ampartnership.org, or contact the speakers directly at their websites listed below.

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Our Commitment to Excellence

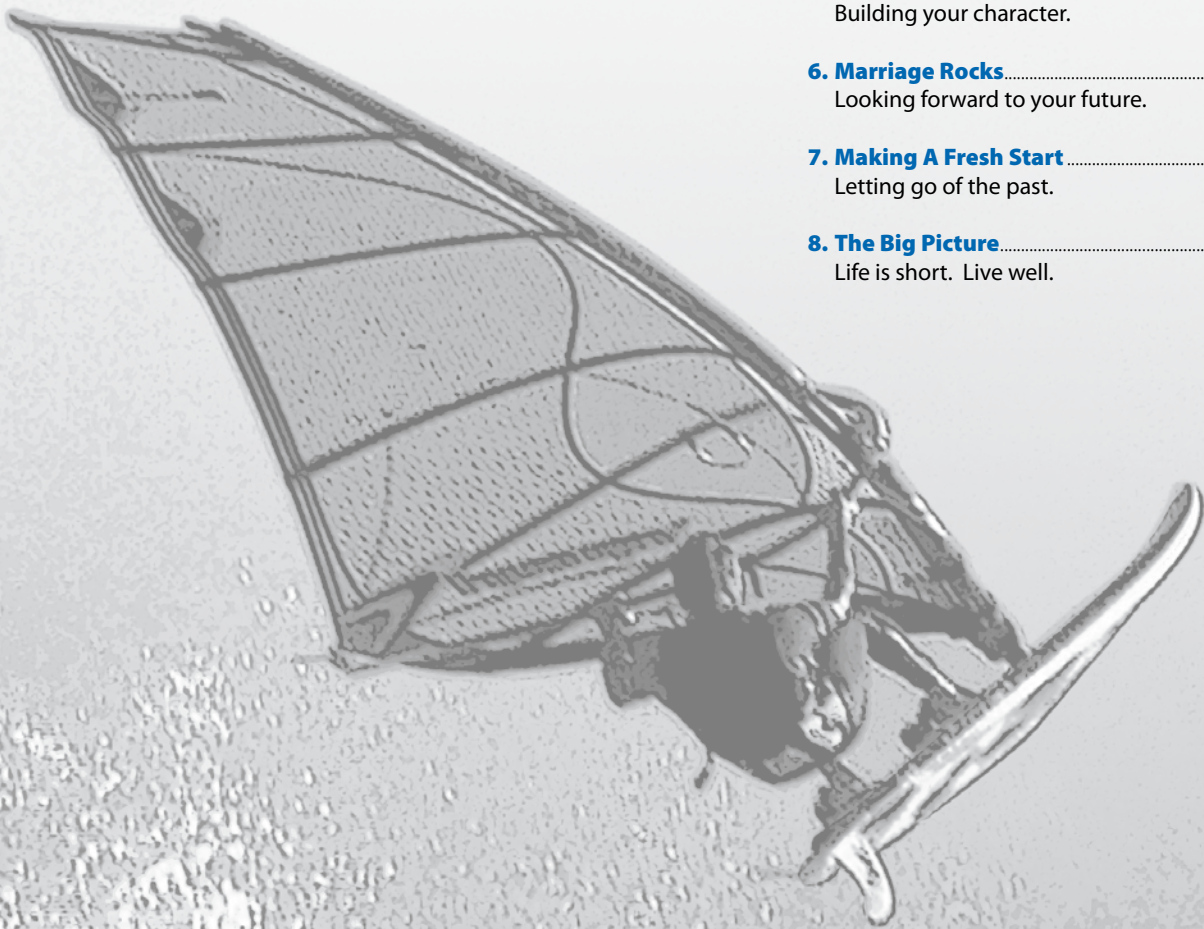
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Be free.*

To aspire is to dream. It is to believe that tomorrow can be better than today. It is to pursue great goals for your future and to make the wise choices that are necessary to get you there. *Aspire. Live your life. Be free.*

1. Living Life On Purpose	5
Considering your future.	
2. Standing Strong	15
Resisting pressures.	
3. Thinking Ahead	25
Choosing to be free.	
4. Protecting Your Mind	35
Taking control of the media.	
5. The Power of Self-Control	45
Building your character.	
6. Marriage Rocks	55
Looking forward to your future.	
7. Making A Fresh Start	65
Letting go of the past.	
8. The Big Picture	75
Life is short. Live well.	





Chapter 1

Living Life on Purpose

Considering Your Future

Discovering Your Purpose

Planning for the future is one of the best things that you can do to accomplish your future goals and dreams.

Everyone has a different purpose in life, although there are over six billion people in the world at this moment. No two people are exactly alike. Everyone is different. People have different skills, talents, and abilities. People have different interests, personalities, and temperaments. Every person is unique and every person has a different purpose in life.

What about you? What's your purpose? What are your dreams? Your purpose and plan won't be written in the sky. It will come about as the result of making a plan for your life and then staying committed to it. It has been said that "People don't plan to fail – they fail to plan."

1. How much thought have you given to planning your future? Have you ever thought about making a plan for your life? Yes No If some one were to ask you what you wanted your life to be about, what would you say?

2. Now is the time to think about what you would like to do with your life. If you could do anything in the world, what would you do?

Without a plan for the future, people often press ahead in life without really knowing where they're going. Years later they are discontent, discouraged, and unsure of what their life is all about. It is especially important to begin thinking through your plan for the future now, during the teen years, before launching out into adulthood.



Looking Forward

1. Your life is like a blank piece of paper. Now is your chance to write your dream. How do you picture your future? How would you like it to be? In the spaces below write some one-word descriptions of what you would like to see in your future. List your greatest hopes, goals and dreams.



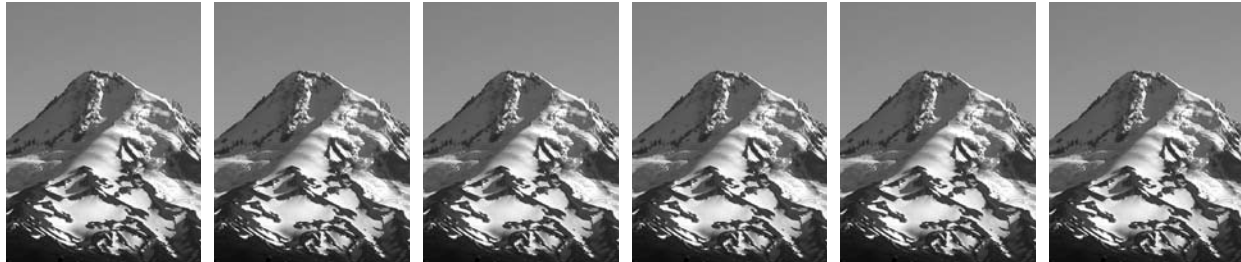
2. Will it be easy for you to accomplish your future goals and dreams? If you are serious about having a meaningful and fulfilling life, what are some things you will have to do to make it happen?

3. Are you planning to go to college? Yes No If yes, do you know which one? If no, what are your plans?

4. If you are hoping to get married and have a family someday, do you have an idea of what you would like your family to be like? Describe:

Life Hike

1. Think of your life as a hiking trip through the Rocky Mountains. You've got a number of peaks to climb as you go through life, and each one represents opportunities and accomplishments. On the series of mountains below, put a mark on the spot where you are now. How much of your life is behind you, and how much is ahead?



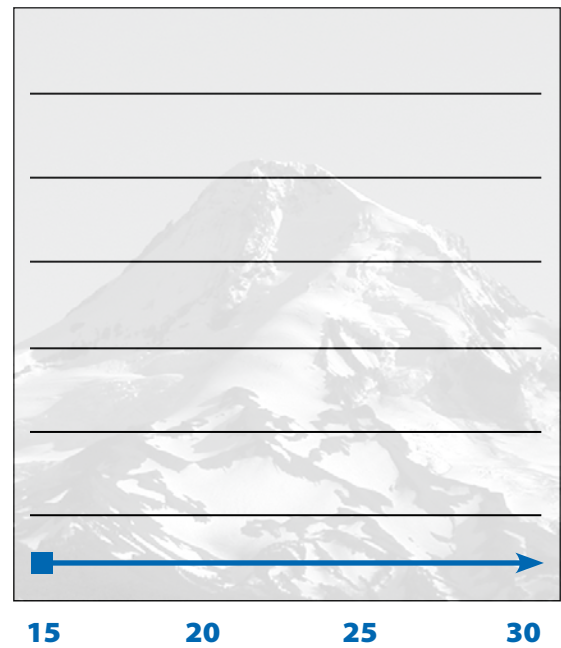
2. Consider your present location. What is the significance of where you are right now?

How far along this hike will your life take you? Will everyone make it to that last mountain or beyond? Will you make it to the end? Life is short. It is important to choose wisely what you will do with your life, and how you will spend your days.

3. Look over the six time periods represented by the mountains above and think about the major life decisions that will take place during each of them. Which mountain would you say represents the most important period of time for you to be thinking about now, and why?

The Critical Moment

1. As you stand at the base of the second mountain or time period, consider the significance of the decisions that you will make between the ages of 15 and 30. Make a list of the major decisions and events that will take place during this period and write them on the mountain at right.
2. As you stand at the base of this second mountain, consider that by the end of this time period, you will probably have made many or all of the most important decisions in your life. In light of this, how important are the decisions you will make now and over the next few years?
 - My choices now will have *no* effect on my future.
 - My choices now will have *some* effect on my future.
 - My choices now will have a *significant* effect on my future.



3. Ages 15 to 20 represent the “critical moment” of your life. What specifically is the relationship between decisions made between ages 15 and 20 and the opportunities you will have between ages 20 and 30?

4. Looking at the mountains in the diagram on the preceding page, what would you say is the most significant difference between the first and second time periods in your life? Why is this important to consider?

The valley between the first and second mountain is steep and the river running through it is difficult to cross. Some get caught in the current. Others slip on the rocks. Successfully crossing the valley of these transition years is critical in protecting your future. Where are you in this transition? Have you felt the current of the river? Stepped on the sharp rocks? Are you making it across? Do you have a plan to make it across the river? If so what is it? If not, what should it be?

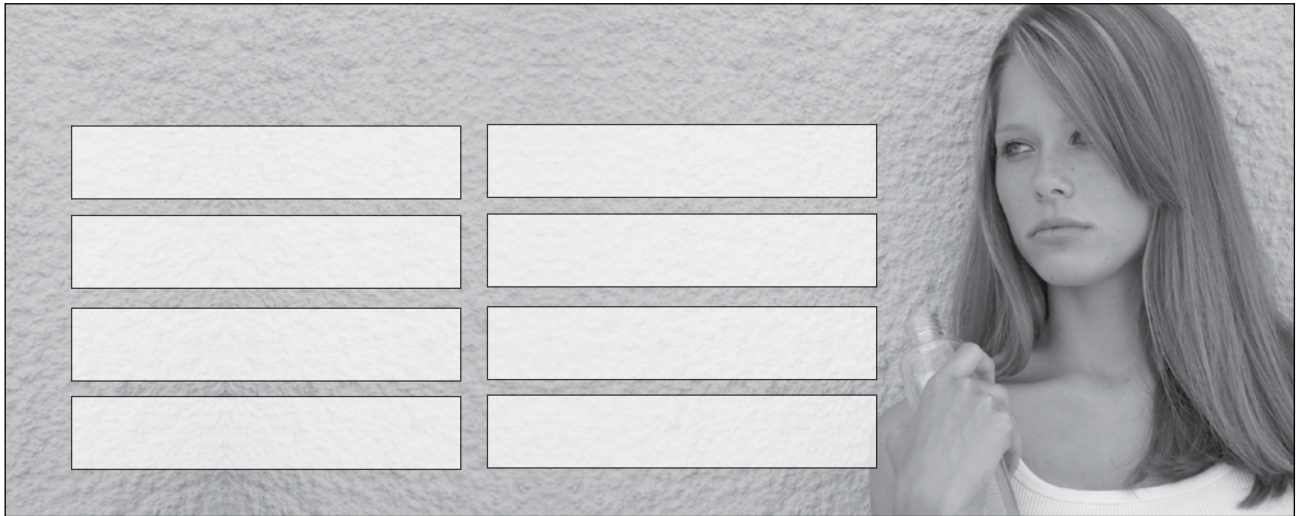


The Future is Now!

This is the best possible time in your life to consider some of the most important decisions you will ever make. Everyone has times when critical choices and decisions must be made. That time is now. It's not enough to just think about your future. Now is the time to do something about it – to prepare for your future, no matter what others might think or say. Now is the time to resist the pressures to look only at today, and to look instead at your future and where you're going with your life.

Pressed on Every Side

1. Although the importance of making good choices and decisions for the future may be clear, there is constant pressure from every side to compromise and make poor choices. Using one-word descriptions, identify some of the negative pressures teens face that could significantly compromise their future.



2. Which of these negative pressures do you think have the greatest potential to keep a person from accomplishing his or her plan for the future?

One of the pressure spots that causes many people to miss out on their plan for the future is the pressure to be sexually active before marriage. Fortunately, increasing numbers of teens are realizing that choosing to resist this pressure provides significant benefits and greatly increases their chances of achieving their future goals and dreams. Even those who have been sexually active in the past are realizing that it's never too late to start over again, and are now choosing abstinence for their future. ¹

3. What is abstinence? If someone at your school were to ask you what abstinence means, how would you explain it?

Considering the Benefits of Abstinence

In reference to sexual activity:

Abstinence is choosing to save all sexual activity for marriage.

“Sexual activity” includes any type of genital contact or sexual stimulation. Abstinence is the only sure way to protect your body, mind, and heart from the various consequences of premarital sexual activity. Abstinence is the safest, healthiest, lifestyle and one of the best ways to prepare for a healthy future marriage.

1. Why is it important to have a clear understanding of what “abstinence” means?

2. Consider the *three key components* of the abstinence definition above:

• **Choosing:** Abstinence is described as a choice. Whose choice is it, and why is this an important part of the definition?

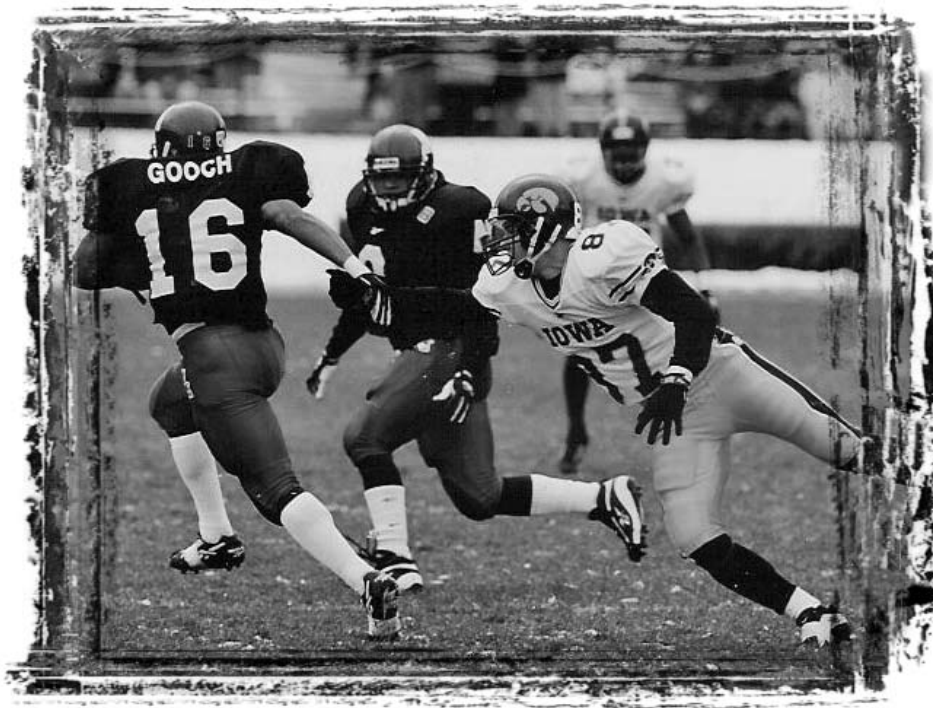
• **Sexual Activity:** Why does abstinence refer to “all sexual activity?”

• **Marriage:** Why is abstinence defined as until “marriage?”

3. Do you believe it is possible for someone who has already been sexually active to still choose abstinence? Yes No Not sure

Abstinence is an option for everyone whether or not you have been sexually active in the past. If you’ve already chosen abstinence for yourself, *Aspire* will encourage you to remain committed to that decision by giving you practical and helpful guidance in this area. It can also help you be an encouragement to others who might be wondering what they should do.

This is the “critical moment.” The decisions you make now will likely shape your life for years to come. The high school years are a time when the pressure is the greatest, and sexual activity has the potential to take your life in a very different direction than you ever imagined. Resisting pressures toward sexual activity is one of the best things you can do to keep your life on track and to accomplish your future goals and dreams.



Worth the Wait TY GOOCH

I grew up in an affluent suburban culture. I was high school homecoming king, a star football player, basketball player, and track athlete. After reviewing a number of college scholarships, I attended Northwestern University where I played on the football team. My first year on the team, we were undefeated in the conference and went to the Rose Bowl against USC. College life was much of what I dreamed it would be, and yet I also had to make some of the toughest decisions of my life.

I was in newspapers and magazines. I was on the front cover of a newspaper co-headlining with Michael Jordan, and our team was on the *Wheaties*® box. The pressure all around me got pretty crazy. Girls would tell my friends that they wanted to be with me. If I would go out with a girl, the guys I knew would encourage me to do as much as she would let me if I got the chance – and the chance was almost always there. Women were even daring each other to go out with me and women would tell me over and over again “no commitment has to be involved, we can just have a little fun”.

At times I thought I was making a mistake by not giving in. What was I missing out on, I wondered. But something inside of me just kept saying hold on, it will be worth it, stand strong. I kept thinking that women aren't just “something” to have fun with but that every woman I went out with was someone's daughter, or sister, and would one day be someone's mom and someone's wife. I would think about the fact that one day I would have daughters and how guys would treat them or try to take advantage of them. I wanted to be able to tell my daughters or sons, if I had them, that I was the kind of guy who respected women and saved myself for their mother. I would think about how some other guy was treating my future wife and sometimes get upset to think he could be treating her poorly. One of the only things I could do to make a difference was to treat women the way they deserved to be treated by helping them meet their husbands in the same manner that I wanted to meet my wife! So I did.

To be clear, I was fully attracted to women and I went on plenty of dates with some wonderful women. Through it all, it was my commitment to my future wife who I hadn't even met yet that helped me to make the only choice I knew I should make. I didn't know the statistics about STDs or pregnancy – and I didn't care. I wasn't planning on putting myself in a situation where I would be at risk for any of that. And even though some of the guys loved to make fun of me when I didn't take advantage of the girls, I reminded myself that these were the guys who already had children and weren't even taking care of them. They left the women to go it alone. To them, there wasn't anything special about marriage – it was never part of the picture. I wanted something different – something greater for myself.

Fortunately, I made it through that “critical moment” of my life. I was able to resist the pressures – and to save myself for my future wife. Although the pressure was steady, I found that the more I used self-control and resisted the pressure, the stronger my ability became to resist that pressure.

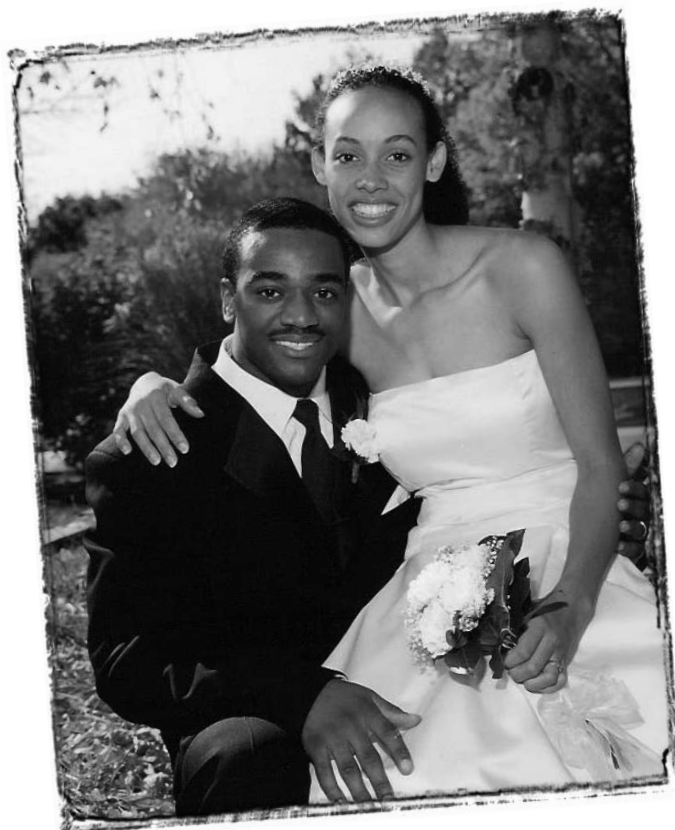
When I finally met Renee, the woman who would become my wife, I was able to tell her I had saved myself for her. She knew she could trust me because I had waited my whole life just for her. Now that we have been married for a number of years and have belonged only to each other, we have a relationship more special and intimate than any other relationship we have ever had. We have two beautiful little girls and we are so thankful that we were able to make it through those challenging years. We have had the joy of starting a family together and we wouldn't wish for anything else.

If Renee and I made it, I know you can make it too. Choose for yourself friends who support you, and exercise self-control. By building your character and exercising self-control, you will build a solid foundation for your future.



• What are some of the reasons Ty gives for choosing abstinence?

• Ty said he was fortunate to make it through the “critical moment.” What did he mean by that? How could that “moment” have changed his life?



• What do you think of Ty's decision?

• Do you think that Renee was glad that he turned down the pressures from other women? Yes No

• Do you think that she respects him more or less because of his decision and why?

Affirmation #1:
I will live my life with a sense of purpose..

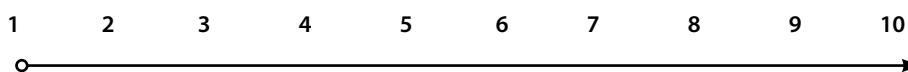
Talking It Over

*This section is designed for parents to review and discuss the chapter with their student.
Parents may want to answer these questions on a separate sheet and compare answers with the student.*

1. Consider your goals for the future. How would you summarize in a sentence or two your hopes for your future?

2. On a scale of 1-10, how much do you think decisions made in the teen years affect a person's future?

(1 = None 10 = A lot)



3. Of all the events that will take place in your life between ages 15 and 30, which do you think are most important (page 9)?

4. Why are ages 15 to 20 considered the "critical moment" of your life (p. 9), and what are some of the important decisions you will have to make during this time?

5. What is the relationship between choosing abstinence and protecting your future?

6. Why do you think that increasing numbers of teens are choosing abstinence?¹





Chapter 2

Standing Strong

Resisting Pressures