

## Love Is . . .

By Susan Vogt

Although this activity can be done at any time of year, it is particularly suited for married couples around Valentine's Day (or perhaps your anniversary). Few couples fully realize what they're getting into on their wedding day. Now that you have experience, revisit your wedding and go deeper.



### For

Adult, Couple

### Season

Winter

### Needed

A good memory, two pieces of paper for each spouse and a pencil/pen. Optional: readings from your wedding, wedding photo album, candles, background music wouldn't hurt (You might choose something from your wedding, a romantic or nostalgic song, "your" song.)

### Prepare in Advance

Agree with your spouse to do this together. Pick a time when you might have about a half hour of uninterrupted time.

### Activity Plan

The most commonly used scripture at weddings is 1 Corinthians 13:1-8, 13. It's so endearing and inspiring. Teary eyed couples listen to these words with hope and commitment, BUT then real life returns.

1. Begin by taking turns slowly reciting 1 Corinthians 13:1-8, 13 to each other:

Husband: If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. *(pause)*

Wife: And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. *(pause)*

Husband: If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. *(pause)*

Wife: Love is patient; *(pause)*

Husband: Love is kind; *(pause)*

Wife: Love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. *(pause)*

Husband: It does not insist on its own way; *(pause)*

Wife: It is not irritable or resentful; *(pause)*

Husband: It does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. *(pause)*

Wife: It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. *(pause)*

Husband: Love never ends... *(pause)*

Together: Faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. *(pause)*

2. On your paper each spouse writes one negative trait that he or she knows they have brought into the marriage. For example: I am (or was) envious, boastful, arrogant, rude, insisted on having my own way, irritable, resentful, rejoiced in wrong doing, or other. Perhaps you've already conquered this negative trait. (Check with your beloved to confirm this.) If not, consider one specific step that you can take to move in a more loving direction. Write it down.
3. On the other piece of paper, each spouse writes at least five virtues that your spouse has. Try to add a specific time when your beloved exhibited this virtue. For example: patience – you wait without complaining when I take a long time to get ready. Kindness – you let me sleep in and took the kids out for breakfast last Saturday. Consider also the virtues of truth telling, bearing wrongs willingly, believing in me, optimism, hopefulness, endures hardships, loves me unconditionally, or others.
4. Each spouse share what you've written. Keep the paper with your commitment to change the negative habit you've claimed. Give the virtue paper to your spouse to keep as a love reminder.
5. Seal it with a kiss, or whatever.

