



## Discussion Guide

For Adults Working with Teens

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### Lesson: My Journey from Innocence

#### Learning Objectives

Participants will discuss the factors that can influence the outcome of a sexual experience.

#### Materials

- Pens or pencils
- Copies of the story My Journey from Innocence

#### Procedure

1. Introduce the story My Journey from Innocence, by Loryn Cozzi and read ONLY THE FIRST FOUR PARAGRAPHS aloud to your students. Stop reading after the line, "It wasn't until my friend left that things got interesting." Have participants get into groups of 2-3 and instruct them to write a realistic ending to this story. Have them incorporate what they know about the characters and situations so far and create a realistic outcome. Give them five minutes to complete. Invite groups to report back what their endings were and jot down a master list of all the possible endings to this story. Ask, "How many endings that you created were positive? How many were negative? Why do you think that is?"

2. Distribute copies of My Journey from Innocence on page 1 to group participants and have participants read the rest of the story. Ask, "How does this ending compare to the endings our groups created?" (Most likely many of the endings that your groups created will be negative and this story presents a contrast of a positive ending.) Ask group members why a negative attitude about teen sexual activity pervades our society. Instruct individuals to underline everything in the story that Loryn and/or Dylan did to help insure their situation had a positive outcome. Review those specific actions as a whole group. Ask, "Was there anything else they could have done to make this a positive experience? Do you agree with their choice? Why or why not?"

3. Discuss any of the following that seem relevant to your group:



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- A. What does it mean to be too emotionally immature to deal with a sexual relationship?
- B. How do you know if you're in love? How can you tell if you're simply "in lust"?
- C. How powerful is physical attraction?
- D. How can people deal with those feelings?
- E. Is sex the ultimate way for two people to express their feelings for each other?
- F. Could two people choose not to have sex with each other as the ultimate way to express their feelings for each other?
- G. Even though she has had sexual intercourse, what factors might make Loryn NOT ready for another sexual relationship?
- H. Do you think most people assume she would automatically have sex again in her next relationship?

Editor's Note: Other *SEX, ETC.* stories that can be used with this activity are: Second Chances: A Bad Decision Doesn't Have To Last a Lifetime; Skipping Sex: Are You Missing Out?; Are You Ready For Sex? Important Questions To Consider; Are You Too Young For Sex? and Feel Like You're The Last American Virgin? (You're Not). All articles are available for printing on our Web site [www.sexetc.org](http://www.sexetc.org).

*This Discussion Guide was created by Nora Gelperin, M.Ed., and Ann Schurmann, M.P.H. For additional lessons, go to [http://answer.rutgers.edu/page/lesson\\_plans](http://answer.rutgers.edu/page/lesson_plans).*

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