

Think (and Act) Positively

Stress is a major factor that can steal your ability to be positive. Of all the people who show up at my office, about 80 percent struggle with some sort of stress reaction. Their stress might come from work, finances, family, friends, or even their love life. But whatever its source, stress has a way of making life miserable. Among other symptoms of stress, three of the most common are: impatience, irritability, and intolerance of things you would normally ignore.

If you find some productive ways to manage your stress, you'll probably begin to see a decrease in your negativity. When you start to feel overwhelmed, try a few of the following ideas: Take a break, Go for a walk, Call a friend, Read a book or magazine, Write in a journal, Relax in a bathtub, Exercise, Count your blessings. ...

Focus on the best qualities of life. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul writes that he has learned how to be content regardless of the circumstances (Phil. 4:11). The key is focus. He says to fix your thoughts on whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy (Phil 4:8). In any marriage there are going to be disappointments, hurts, and frustrations. If you focus on these, I guarantee you will become more negative. But there are also a lot of good things to focus on – things like the eight qualities that Paul mentions. If you focus on these, you can't help but be more positive. ...

As the brilliant Sunday comic philosopher Ziggy once said, "You can either complain that rose bushes have thorns – or rejoice that thorn bushes have roses."

– Dr. Steve Stephens, from his book *20 Surprisingly Simple Rules and Tools for a Great Marriage*

Do you know a couple who needs encouragement?
Gift them with a copy of Dr. Steve's *20 Rules and Tools* book



RESOURCES FOR COUPLES

Your marriage can be one of your life's most rewarding relationships!

It's a challenge to build a strong, God-honoring relationship. But so worthwhile! Whatever your age, whether dating, engaged, or married, there's a class or seminar for you.

Retrouvaille helps couples through difficult times. Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Renew your marriage for the New Year. For info about the weekend at Mt. Angel on Jan. 22-24, 2016, visit www.HelpOurMarriage.org.

Porn Again??? – Born Again!!! is a workshop for men who want help from the prison of pornography and sexual sin. Thousands have found freedom over the past two decades. Jan 29&30 at Dayspring, Tigard. Details at www.DayspringRecoveryCommunity.com

We Go Together ... Marriage Conference Do you remember all the reasons why "you go together" with your spouse? This seminar will lead you on a journey with your spouse to: Deepen your friendship; Resolve your conflicts more effectively; Plan for a great future together; and Fall more deeply in love. Feb 5&6 at Rolling Hills Community Church, details at <http://tinyurl.com/jy6gram>

The Weekend to Remember is a great way to renew your love and commitment to one another, to reminisce all the reasons why you married, to restore a little romance in your relationship. Mar 4-6 at Sunriver Resort. Save \$100 when you register using the group "MarriagePDX." Or, from Jan 4 to 25 BOGO (Buy One, Get One Free). Details WeekendToRemember.com.

Reminder: Have fun! Date often, even weekly!

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Every Marriage Matters
Advocates for Healthy Marriage
Check out additional resources at www.EveryMarriageMatters.org