

Marital Foxes

When a couple comes to my office with a specific problem I often ask, "How long have you been aware of this difficulty?" It is not unusual for people to say, "Ten or twenty years."

"Why did it take you so long to seek help?"

"We just thought it would go away."

Problems don't just go away, they tend to get worse. They might start as a little seed, but given time they grow and grow and grow. Yet if we confront the problem early, there is hope.

Cindy was tired of Scott's late nights. She knew he had trouble with alcohol and that most of the nights he was at the local bar. When he stumbled in at 3:00 AM, he apologized and promised he would never do it again. Cindy finally had enough of his empty promises. She confronted him with two choices: either he go into a month-long alcohol rehabilitation program or she was leaving.

"Do you really mean it?"

"Absolutely!"

"Okay, where do you want me to go?"

"St. Vincent's drug and alcohol unit has a bed waiting for you. I arranged it this morning."

"Let's go. If I'm going to do it I might as well get it over with."

Two years later, Scott is still sober with no relapse. Cindy says he is a new man and the marriage is better than ever. She has even learned to trust him again. With trust re-established, there can be a sincere commitment.

from Dr. Steve Stephens' book
Marriage: Experience the Best

"Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom."

Song of Solomon 2:15

Request the daily "Moments With You" couple's e-mail devotion at www.oneplace.com/newsletters



RESOURCES FOR COUPLES

Marriage is one life's most rewarding relationships.

It is a challenge to build a strong, God-honoring relationship. Whether you are 18 or 80, dating, engaged, or married, there is a class or seminar for the two of you.

IS YOUR MARRIAGE TEARING YOU APART?

Retrouvaille (pronounced ret.ro.vi) has helped many; perhaps it is now there for you. A Catholic ministry, it welcomes couples of all faiths. Jan 25-27 at Mt Angel, OR (contact Michael and Lora Rollins (360) 546-5033) also Feb 1-3 in Seattle, WA (contact Bill and Gail Dewey (206) 706-2608). Info and other dates/locations at <http://retrouvaille.com>.

MARRIAGE COACHING WORKSHOP will give couples a good understanding of how marriage coaching works. Couples also get to practice the skills gained with another couple. It doesn't replace the full Marriage Coach Training, but it is an excellent orientation so people can see how it works and decide if they want to do the full training. Fri, Feb 1, 8:30am to 4:30pm at Northwest Family Services, Milwaukie. **Full Marriage Coach Training** starting Mar 2 (24 hrs) in Vancouver. www.marriageteam.org or (360) 450-6042

WEEKEND TO REMEMBER GET-AWAY Did work or hunting keep you from attending the Portland WTR? There are a number of Get-Aways nearby for you and your spouse this Spring. The speakers will show you how to pursue a marriage that really works through stories of their own breakthroughs, blunders, tears and laughter. The weekend provides encouragement, hope, and practical tools to build and grow your relationship.

February 22-24 at Riverside Hotel, Boise, ID
March 8-10 at Sunriver Resort, Bend, OR
April 11-14 at Hyatt Regency Bellevue, WA
April 19-21 at Red Lion Hotel Pasco, WA

Save 30% on registration fees when joining a group sponsored by your church, by starting your own group or by joining group "MarriagePDX". Details at www.weekendtoremember.com.

Tom and Liz Dressel's favorite WTR location is the Empress Hotel in Victoria, BC, Canada. This year the dates are Feb 22-24; for info go to www.familylifecananda.com.

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Every Marriage Matters

Advocates for Healthy Marriage

Check out additional resources at www.EveryMarriageMatters.org