

REDUCING NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

Scripture supports the importance of our thoughts and thinking positively. Proverbs 23:7 As a man thinks within himself, so is he. Philippians 4:8 Whatsoever is true and positive, think about these.

Many partners find it easy to see the negative in their partner. They may always assume the worst instead of the best! This homework assignment is to help you overcome some of that negativity. Complete this homework at least three days this week. Remember: The best ways to change thinking are (1) thinking about the positive instead of negative, (2) thinking about how to solve the problem instead of elaborating the problem, and (3) noticing the ways your partner values you.

Event: What Happened

Negative Thoughts about Partners

Outcomes: Behavioral and Emotional Consequences

Actions: Your Response, different than thoughts

Results: What happens after your change in thinking

Common Faulty Relationship Assumptions

Taken from: Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling: A Guide to Brief Therapy. Downers Grove, Ill. InterVarsity Press, 1999.

1. To demonstrate love, my mate must tell me he or she loves me several times daily.
2. If I don't feel romantic with my partner, it means we aren't in love any longer
3. My partner should meet all my needs, especially all my needs for intimacy
4. My partner should support all my ideas.
5. When I've had a bad day, my mate should be able to sense it and should do something to cheer me up without my having to tell him or her.
6. My spouse should not expect me to be courteous and polite. That's what marriage is all about: being yourself and not having to put on some show.
7. My partner should know how to stimulate me when we're making love. I shouldn't have to tell him or her what to do and when to do it.
8. My mate and I should do almost everything as a couple if we are to maintain a happy marriage.
9. I should be able to keep my partner from ever getting unhappy.
10. My partner and I should never disagree if our marriage is good.