

Encourage Healthy Relationships With These Common Spirit-Filled Attributes

I remember back in 2012, I was asked to speak at a large church conference. The speaking schedule was very intense. I was scheduled to speak for 8 hours each day: 3 hours in the morning, 3 hours in the evening and then 2 hours more at night. Knowing how rigorous my schedule was, the church offered to have different couples take me to very nice restaurants for lunch and dinner so that I would be able to relax and enjoy some good food between sessions. What they didn't tell me was that each of the couples hosting me were on the priority list for emergency marriage counseling. The atmosphere at each of these meals was awkward, tense and even hostile.

One evening at dinner, after listening to yet another round of negative and shaming comments, I finally said, "Stop it!"

I turned to the man and said, "What if your wife spoke to you with the fruits of the Spirit: with peace, gentleness and patience?"

He said, "I would love that."

I asked the same thing of his wife. Her answer was the same. Over the rest of the meal, they came to understand how the negativity in their relationship had created an unhealthy atmosphere that not only affected each other but also the people around them.

You see, relationships are the key to creating atmospheres. The way we treat people directly impacts the environment

around us because it usually is reciprocated back to us. The famous Scripture, “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you” (Luke 6:31), is a wise and powerful command.

Our relationship with God is the best example for learning how to love others. We should look to our relationship with Him as our first source for learning how to love other people.

How would you feel if someone you were in relationship with treated you with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control? That is the way that we are treated everyday in our relationship with God, and this should be our model for every relationship in our lives, whether it be with a spouse, friend, child, sibling, parent or work colleague.

We have the power to create healthy atmospheres by choosing to intentionally exercise the fruit of the Spirit in the way we treat the people around us.

For more on how you can use your words to encourage Spirit-filled relationships, listen to *Transform Your Life* on the Charisma Podcast Network. {eoa}

Steve Chua works globally as a pastor, counselor and executive life and leadership coach. His message helps people discover their God-given design and employ strategies to reject false mindsets so that they can live with the success, joy and fulfillment for which they were created. Steve resides in Claremont, California, and has been married to his beautiful wife, Barbara, for over 29 years. Together they have five incredible kids.