Keynote Speaker

Dr. Liz Hale

While Dr. Liz always thought she’d grow up to be a nurse following in her mother’s footsteps, her mother unknowingly directed her towards the field of psychology by having her follow her to hear motivational speakers like Zig Ziglar as early as the 6th grade. It turns out that learning early about the magnificence of the power of the mind is the basis for Liz eventually pursuing a doctorate in Clinical Psychology. For the past 28-years Dr. Liz has been passionate about her professional training and emphasis in marriage and family therapy, primarily working with couples and families within her private practices both in Seattle and downtown Salt Lake City. As a Certified Gottman Therapist she thrives on helping clients learn new, effective ways of being in their relationships. According to Dr. Liz, communication is never the problem; misperceptions are. There is nothing more rewarding than when a client turns to her and says, “I’ve never seen it/him/her that way before.” She is often seen on TV as KSL’s Studio 5 Marriage & Family Coordinator. She is passionate about helping relationships survive and thrive! She works hard on keeping her own relationships healthy and strong. But don’t stand in her way of a daily, sanity-maintaining brisk walk (just ask her husband, Ben!)

Presenter Biographies (alphabetical by last name)

Nate Bagley

Nate Bagley is a marriage researcher and educator. He's spoken from the TEDx stage, he hosts 2 marriage-themed podcasts, he's a member of the Utah Marriage Commission, and his life's mission is to rid the world of mediocre love. If you want to learn more about Nate and his work, go to http://growthmarriage.com/gift

Karen Coulam, MSW, LCSW

Karen Coulam, Licensed Certified Social Worker (LCSW), specializes in working with individuals who struggle with pornography and other sexual addictions and their loved ones who suffer from betrayal trauma. She provides therapy for grief, loss of self-esteem, and trust, self-care, communication and boundary issues and is experienced in marriage therapy including infidelity, intimacy and relationships. Karen is passionate about assisting individuals to accept themselves, flaws and all, and to quiet the voice of perfectionism through self-compassion. Learn how to use your inner voice as a supportive friend rather than a critic. Karen is married and the mother of two children and works at Feller Behavioral Health doing individual, couple, and family therapy.
Cynthia Honomichl
Cynthia Honomichl is passionate about strengthening couple relationships. She obtained a Master's in Family and Human Development from Utah State University to learn methods for empowering families and individuals. Financial Services is her vehicle for strengthening couples relationships. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, gardening and DIY projects.

Emma Parkhurst, MS, CHES
Emma is a Health & Wellness Assistant Professor for Utah State University Extension in Davis County, and is a certified health education specialist. She is passionate about helping others improve the quality of their lives using a holistic approach to health and wellness. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Kinesiology: Fitness & Health Promotion from Colorado Mesa University, and her master’s degree in Health Promotion and Education from the University of Utah. Emma enjoys finding new restaurants with her husband, getting lost in a good book, and taking her dogs on long walks.

Brandon and Danielle Porter
Brandon and Danielle have been married for 15 years. They both earned bachelor’s degrees from BYU, and Brandon obtained a master’s degree in family and human development and a PhD in education, both from USU. Danielle is a project manager for Learn Do Become, and Brandon is a religious educator, having taught family courses at the BYU Salt Lake Center, LDS Business College, and the LDS Institute at the University of Utah. They’re having a good time finding ways to stay connected in the busyness of life with their 6 kids. They wrote Continuing Courtship: A Date Activity Resource for Couples to support other couples in their efforts to keep date night alive and thriving.

“Dr. Dave” Schramm
Known as “Dr. Dave” on campus and across the country, Dave Schramm is a professor and family life extension specialist at Utah State University in the department of Human Development and Family Studies. After graduating with his Ph.D. from Auburn University, he worked as a professor at the University of Missouri for nine years. Since arriving at USU in 2016, he has been appointed by Governor Herbert to serve on Utah’s Commission on Marriage, he appears on television monthly on Fox 13’s “The Place” and he shares tips and videos on social media to help individuals, parents, and couples thrive in their life journeys. From British Columbia to Beijing, China, and from St. Louis to San Diego, Dr. Dave has given over 500 presentations, classes, and workshops to a variety of audiences, including the United Nations and a TEDx talk. He married his high school sweetheart Jamie, they have four children, he loves peanut M&Ms, and the Schramm fam lives in North Logan, Utah.
Jonathan Swinton
Dr. Swinton is a relationship expert and engaging presenter. He is an Extension Assistant Professor with Utah State University, a licensed marriage and family therapist, and a certified medical family therapist. Prior to his appointment with Utah State University, Dr. Swinton founded and owned a network of counseling clinics which provided expert relationship counseling services to couples and families. He has been widely published and has been featured on television and radio stations.

Melissa Sunday
Melissa Sunday loves helping others celebrate life through holidays, family traditions, parties, and family trips. She created SoFestive.com in honor of her festive mom who passed away when she was 15. She believes celebrations don't need to be overly expensive or complicated to be meaningful. Her simple, inexpensive, and festive ideas inspire families all around the world and locally. She's been featured on Studio 5, Country Living, and has worked with other national companies. Her favorite thing is celebrating life with her 4 adorable little children and indulging in gelato with her husband.

Mike Whitesides
Mike Whitesides is a husband, father, manager, realtor, and travel expert. He’s the director of marketing for Utah State University Extension and the College of Agriculture where he leads an award-winning marketing team. He received his bachelors and masters degrees from USU in just four years total! He is a Franklin Covey facilitator at USU and has presented to groups locally and nationally. He likes learning about leadership and human behavior and enjoys traveling, skiing, running and spending time with his wife and four boys. If you get a chance ask Mike about his Lego collection and his cheap travel tips!