



## Speaker tells women to stay positive

*BY JAMIE LAMPROS Standard-Examiner correspondent*

OGDEN — Before he spoke to the audience at Saturday's Northern Utah Women's Conference, Doug Nielsen asked several of the participants how they felt about themselves.

Their answers encompassed feeling misunderstood; not being able to do enough; having no identity and low self-esteem; feeling exhausted, guilty and resentful; having a poor body image; and being taken for granted.

Nielsen said those negative feelings are keeping women from shining and becoming their ultimate best.

"It doesn't take much effort to be negative," Nielsen said. "And it doesn't take much effort for your spirit to die."

Nielsen, a psychotherapist and motivational speaker, was the keynote speaker at the 32nd annual NUWC at the Marriott Hotel in Ogden.

He talked about taking life by the helm and renewing your spirit.

"When you take life by the helm, you unleash your greatness," he said. "This is not a dress rehearsal. This is life and you should be enjoying this incredible journey called life."

Nielsen related several stories to the audience about people who have overcome challenges. One person is the author of the 2006 book "Man's Search for Meaning." The author, Viktor Emil Frankl, is a perfect example of dealing with his challenges in a positive way.

"Viktor's concentration camp number was 119104. He had it tattooed on his arm. He took this number and transformed it into power. His entire family was killed and he decided to let that light inside of his soul continue to shine," Nielsen said.

Nielsen said he came upon another individual at a garage sale. The young man hadn't sung since he was in the eighth grade because the kids made fun of him. He had decided to try out for "American Idol."

"He told me he had to sell everything so he could go and try out for this show," Nielsen said. "He said that he had been sitting in the audience looking on the stage of his life, but he never saw himself on that stage. I was moved by his spirit. He had decided it was time to let go of fear and stop worrying about what people thought of him."

Nielsen said he has also overcome challenges in his life. He said he used to be overly involved in work and was in the middle of building his dream home when his son was diagnosed with a brain tumor.

The experience made him realize what was important in life. It also made him realize that he needed to develop a positive attitude about things he couldn't control.

"Life has a way of slapping you upside the head and reminding you what it's all about," he said. "When we got my son home, I sat there with tears welling up inside of me, thinking that this may be it. I may not get a second chance. Did I care about work and the house at this point? No. It was time to wake up. Luckily, my son survived, and he is alive and well and driving me nuts today."

Nielsen told the audience to find gratitude within their challenges, and to choose to be around positive, happy people and not people who like to "stir the stink."

Be more kind than is necessary and look for opportunities to serve without being resentful, he said.

"Take a risk every day to live a more fulfilling life. It's easy to get complacent," he said.

"Remember that greatness is within you. Everyone has a song to sing, and if you don't sing that song, the world is a little less great because of it."