



Connecting Couples

Donna Reeves Bowman, LCSW-C & David L. Bowman, MDiv

Thought of the Month News & Notes

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Quotes of the Month

**Good friends,
good books, and
a sleepy
conscience: this
is the ideal life.
Mark Twain**

**It is not easy to
find happiness in
ourselves, and it
is not possible to
find it elsewhere.
Agnes Repplier**

**Issue: #25.
January 2011**

Dear Friends,

Our wish for you is that you enjoyed a festive or restive holiday season and had the love of family and friends to restore you. We have had more festive than restive as we traveled to reunions and celebrations and included a trip to Hawaii to spend time with family and hold our first ever workshop in the Islands!

Have you taken time for yourself and your partner during the season of too much? Well, often I think of it as "too much" as there are too many opportunities for excess: food, drink, parties, shopping, spending and obligations. There are probably many things you could add to this list. I like to step out on the porch, take a breath of cold air and just be in the moment. Try this yourself when you get overwhelmed with issues and need a break! Having a loving partner and sharing both the joy and the burdens can go a long way to making you feel restored and less stressed.

We are energized to begin this new decade and we especially are happy you will share it with us. Remember to keep in touch! Share your problems and ideas for other Thought topics. We are here for you.



"I think of myself as an intelligent, sensitive human being with the soul of a clown which always forces me to blow it at the most important moments." Jim Morrison



MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES...PLEASE JOIN US:

February 12 - 13, 2011: "The Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity."

What a great gift for your Valentine! Come learn how to:

- understand more deeply the differences you have;
- actually use the Dialogue at home (i.e. the Start Up for those difficult experiences);
- share and attend to your Highest Dream;
- experience deeper and deeper connection with each other.

Here are some of the comments from previous workshop participants:

"...a real breakthrough - to build on what we had learned before and get past what had been sticking point in our practice of Imago. Lots of 'aha' moments." LM

"Transforming experience, pulled all previous workshops together, integrated and brought us to a new level. Exceeded expectations." RK

"...helped to solidify the Imago concepts and...help me practice it in real life." SR

"We just added another rung on our ladder to reaching vintage love." EJ

"If you 'show up' you will learn." JO

"The first workshop saved my marriage and the second workshop reenergized our renewed commitment." PB

The most I can do for my friend is simply be his friend. Henry David Thoreau

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. Helen Keller

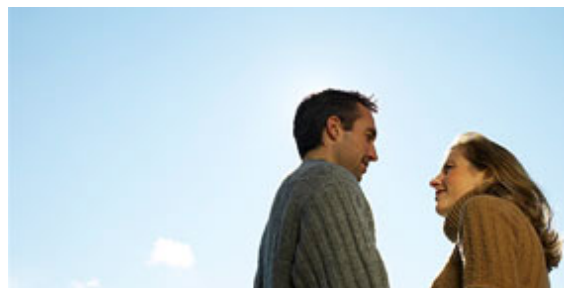
Happiness makes up in height what it lacks in length. Robert Frost

When the character of a man is not clear to you, look at his friends. Japanese Proverb

Cherish all your happy moments: they make a fine cushion for old age. Christopher Morley

"I'd much rather be a woman than a man. Women can cry, they can wear cute clothes, and they are the first to be rescued off of sinking ships." Gilda Radner

It is not so much



our friends' help
that helps us, as
the confidence of
their help.
Epicurus

Those who bring
sunshine to the
lives of others
cannot keep it
from themselves.
J.M. Barrie

Even if happiness
forgets you a little
bit, never
completely forget
about it. Jacques
Prevert

The foolish man
seeks happiness
in the distance,
the wise grows it
under his feet.
James
Oppenheim

Happiness is not
in the mere
possession of
money; it lies in
the joy of
achievement, in
the thrill of
creative effort.
Franklin D.
Roosevelt

Knowing others
is wisdom;
knowing yourself
is enlightenment.
Lao Tzu

Anything that is
of value in life
only multiplies
when it is given.
Deepak Chopra

Be faithful in
small things
because it is in



Thought of the Month

January:
Getting Off the Boat

We are honored to have a guest contributor this month. Periodically we will share other's thoughts as we all have a part in understanding our Relationship Journey. Thank you, Mary Lynn.



The "Victim Ship" is a way of life for some of us. It is characterized by a fundamental but often unconscious belief that "I am a victim"...even if it's not true. It actually takes a lot of work to keep the Victim Ship afloat. We have to continually generate situations in our lives that lead to the appearance that we are victims, or we have to continually interpret events in our lives as though they prove to us we are somehow a victim.

Here's an example: one Wednesday, husband asks wife, "Okay if I play tennis Saturday morning with my friend?" Wife answers, "Sure."

Saturday comes, husband goes to tennis. Wife stays home and thinks, "I can't believe he went! When do I ever get to do anything I enjoy? He is so selfish. All I ever do is work, work, work and never get a minute to myself!"

Oh, and for the rest of Saturday, she is withdrawn...or irritable...or has a stomach ache and has to stay in bed. He can't figure out why, but as time goes on, he starts to match her irritability and snaps out at her.

Round two of Victim Ship: she thinks, "I can't believe he treats me like this, that no good &#&#&^\$&#^! HE goes and plays tennis and leaves me here to take care of everything and now he's irritable?!?! I can't believe my life!"

I think, for me, I started to feel kind of lonely on my ship and not just a little bit seasick. Time to get off the ship...but easier said than done. First off, just recognizing that I was on it was difficult, "Me responsible for any of this? No way!"

them that your strength lies.
Mother Teresa

If you have much,
give of your wealth;
if you have little, give of your heart.
Arabian proverb

You can give without loving,
but you can never love without giving.
Anonymous

We cannot hold a torch to light another's path without brightening our own. Ben Sweetland

Ordinary riches can be stolen: real riches cannot. In your soul are infinitely precious things that cannot be taken from you.
Oscar Wilde

Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Ralph Waldo Emerson

Eliminate physical clutter. More importantly, eliminate spiritual clutter. D.H. Mondfleur

There are no miracles for those that have no faith in them. French

Then...truly being willing to give it up. Wow, tough one. See, the thing about being a victim is that one can get a lot out of it. True victims receive and deserve, attention, support, sympathy, a break, love, admiration....all those things I was craving and didn't know how to get in any healthy way. People really listen to a real victim. Real victims feel justified in their feelings and are (hopefully) validated by those around them. That's what I wanted in my life, but I didn't realize it, so I built a Victim Ship.

I think the the desire to be seen as a victim has many possible causes/sources. For some of us, growing up and not feeling seen or heard can be the cause. Or, maybe we had someone as our primary caregiver who thought they were a victim. Maybe we learned not to express our true wants, needs, selves in life and had to find an indirect way to be "taken care of" or get what we wanted or needed. Maybe we were criticized or ignored when we spoke up for ourselves or addressed problems directly. Or maybe at some point we really were a victim and "liked" the way we were treated. Maybe we were never taught a healthy way to give and receive love, attention, caring, and validation. Whatever the cause, it's much better to live off the ship.

Getting off the ship means doing things in a new way...sometimes difficult, "stretchy" things. Like asking ourselves what we really want, or feel or hope for, or what we do that's unfair, or interpret incorrectly.

For example: Husband asks the same question about tennis with a friend and wife answers (even though she feels deeply afraid he may criticize her thinking or may reject her), "I really feel like I haven't had much time with you, lately. Can we set up a time for the two of us to do something together?"

"Sure, honey, I didn't realize you were feeling like that. I guess you're right now that I think about it. Let's go out Friday night."

"Sounds nice. By the way, who will you be playing tennis with?"

The thing is, Saturday goes so much more nicely for everyone. Sure, the ship is losing its structure, a plank at a time, but who needs it anyway? It's not always straight-forward.

Sometimes, even though I am trying hard to be conscious about this, it takes me days to even realize I was generating a Victim Ship situation. I still struggle with believing it's something I am doing. I do know

proverb

Each day comes
bearing its own
gifts. Untie the
ribbons. Ruth
Ann Schabacker

Only passions,
great passions,
can elevate the
soul to great
things.
Anonymous

Anything that has
real and lasting
value is always a
gift from within.
Franz Kafka

The manner of
giving is worth
more than the
gift. Pierre
Corneille

that I am sure that I want to stop. I want a connected, peaceful, secure life for my husband, children, those I care about and me. David told me someone said she was going from a Victim Ship to a Victory Ship. I say, "Switch boats and Sail on!!!"

Respectfully submitted, Mary Lynn Price

February 12 - 13, 2011: "The Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity."



Imago Relationships International (IRI):

IRI continues to work to spread the word about the powerful relational transformation possible through Imago. It also works to find new ways to support couples on their Journey.

Below are two links you might find interesting:

LaSplash is an online magazine with lots of in-depth articles and information.

[LaSplash online magazine](#)

There is now a blog for couples on the IRI website. New articles are posted frequently and regularly

[IRI Couples Blog](#)

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Relationships become relaxed and joyful as day to day connection is experienced even amidst the stresses of life. The powerful bond between the couple creates a sacred space for healing and transformative growth. The trained IMAGO coach gently holds the couple as they find their way back to the marvelous impulses of the romantic days and helps them solidify their vision for the future.

Please stay in touch and let us know how to support you.

**With Love and Abundant Blessings,
David and (Donna)**



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Quotes of the Month

"To love abundantly is to live abundantly, and to love forever is to live forever."

Henry Drummond

"To love deeply in one direction makes us more loving in all others."

Anne-Sophie Swetchine

**Issue: #26.
February 2011**

Dear Friends,

The new year and new decade is moving us quickly along. We hope you enjoyed Valentine's Day and the many, many faces of Love it embodies. Taking a few minutes out of the busy lives we lead to share a little love with those we live with, work with and encounter on our journey through life is a precious gift. We are not big on lavish displays and gifts but treasure the touch, the sweet word, the caring gesture and sometimes, just a smile. We love sharing these gifts with those we meet in our neighborhood such as the mailman, the checker at the grocery or the coffee barista...what a joy to share! We invite you to share your love, too!

This month always seems too short---well, it is, isn't it? However, knowing this helps us to better organize our work, our workshops and our together time. Don't forget that walking the dog, watching a sporting event, doing errands or working out at the gym can be together time if your schedules allow. If you are trading childcare duties or work in vastly different neighborhoods, try scheduling one thing you and your partner can do together each day. It doesn't have to be monumental, maybe just 10 minutes but you won't be sorry. You might even find that you will have more than 10 minutes as the gift of this time together becomes more and more meaningful.

We are looking forward to a lot of time together as we end winter soon and see Spring in the near future. We are so

"Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay for a while, leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never, ever the same."
Flavia Weedn

"In the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, for in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed."
Kahlil Gibran

"Have a heart that never hardens, a temper that never tires, a touch that never hurts."
Charles Dickens

There is no remedy for love, but to love more.
Henry David Thoreau

A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person.
Mignon Mclaughlin

There is no more lovely, friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage.
Martin Luther

He is husband, she is wife. She fears not him,

happy you will share time with us. Remember to keep in touch! Share your problems and ideas for other Thought topics. We are here for you.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE:

March 18-20, Frederick, MD

**April 8-10 (Same Sex Couples)
Rehoboth Beach, DE**

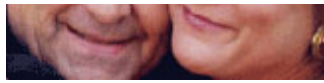


Thought of the Month

February: Starting a Dialogue



they fear not life.
Robert Frost



When you realize
you want to
spend the rest of
your life with
somebody, you
want the rest of
your life to start
as soon as
possible. Billy
Crystal as Harry
in *When Harry
Met Sally*

When you give
each other
everything, it
becomes an even
trade. Each wins
all. Lois
McMaster Bujold,
A Civil Campaign

One word frees
us of all the
weight and pain
of life: That word
is love.
Sophocles

"A light heart
lives long." -
William
Shakespeare

"Never go to bed
mad -- stay up
and fight."
Phyllis Diller

"To be in love is
merely to be in a
state of
perceptual
anesthesia." H.L.
Mencken

"A kiss can be a
comma, a
question mark, or

At our second level workshop this past weekend, our participants reminded us of the need for practice in how to begin a safe dialogue with each other. It seems that the consciousness of how to begin a safe conversation with our Partner is not easily available even if the heart is willing. John Gottman has found in his couples' research that a steady diet of harsh "start-ups" in conversation is a primary factor in relationship break ups.

Let's see if we can help:

First, picture yourself preparing to say something to your boss or a close friend that may not go down well. You are going to prepare by carefully considering your timing, reviewing your words, remaining positive, checking your posture and tone along with any other clues that could influence the experience either positively or negatively.

Now, transfer that conscious preparation to your "set-up" with your Partner. (I'm using "set-up" as a constructive thing...not a con job.) There are three essential elements to increasing your chances of a good outcome:

1. You will invite your Partner to the conversation, allowing them the option of,

"Not now."

"Would this be an okay time to discuss...?"

"I would love for us to find a time..."

"Are you available to hear something that's important to me?"

This avoids being "jumped in the dark." Nobody likes to be jumped.

2. You will make it clear that nothing is required except a visit into your world.

"I know this is mostly about me and my world."

"I just would like to have you see my world more clearly."

"What I'm dealing with is more about me than about you."

3. You will use abundant language.

"I would feel safer if we drove a little slower."

"I need your help to get over this thing that nags at me."

"Could I share another way we might deal with the children?"

"I would feel so great if we could talk about purchases together before buying something."

Abundant language is hard for all of us because the reptilian brain only reacts and has no conscious thought. So when we are threatened or deprived, even in the smallest way, we are likely to react by striking out. Shame and blame are our weapons.

an exclamation point. That's basic spelling that every woman ought to know."
Mistinguett

"At last you kissed me, I could die in waves again, and one good lick of quicksand took...." Heather McHugh

"There is a time for work. And a time for love. That leaves no other time." Coco Chanel

"Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, While loving someone deeply gives you courage." Lao Tzu

"The best and most beautiful things in this world cannot be seen or even heard, but must be felt with the heart." Helen Keller

"But you won't need no harem, honey
When I'm by your side
And you won't need no camel, no no
When I take you

Maybe you think this article sounds contrived and unrealistic. The new language may feel contrived only because it is new. Go back to the conversation with the boss or the close friend. Was that contrived or just strategically (and relationally) thoughtful? What makes us think polite, respectful and careful consideration of our Partner must sound contrived?

Please offer feedback on this and any other topic. Hope you are enjoying this warm sunshine while it lasts!
Promises of spring!

David (& Donna)



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for a ride" lyrics
to "Midnight at
the Oasis" by
David Nichtern

"Anything worth
doing is worth
doing slowly."
Mae West

"Marriage is one
of the few
institutions that
allow a man to do
as his wife
pleases." Milton
Berle

"There will be sex
after death, we
just won't be able
to feel it." Lily
Tomlin

"Love is the
irresistible desire
to be irresistibly
desired." Mark
Twain

"Sexiness wears
thin after a while
and beauty fades,
but to be married
to a man who
makes you laugh
every day, ah,
now that's a real
treat." Joanne
Woodward

couple as they find their way back to the marvelous impulses of the romantic days and helps them solidify their vision for the future.

Please stay in touch and let us know how to support you.

With Love and Abundant Blessings,
David and (Donna)



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Issue: #27
March 2011

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our new format! Let us know what you think, we value your feedback.

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MARCH: The Challenge of Our Time



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We've often wondered who out there reads these "Thoughts" each month. Some really honest friends have said things like, "I read a little of it and then move on to something else." It turns out that even a brilliant Thought for the Month asks more time and attention from us than we are willing to spend. Turns out that the biggest challenge of our time is...well...Time!

Okay, I get. I've already written more words than in an average text message so I guess I've lost most of you already. I get that.

So, everyone...quit reading right, find your phone, contact your Partner and make a date to spend some time together in the next 24 hours. How much time? At least as much as you would have spent reading the rest of this article.....

Happy Spring,
David (& Donna)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES COMING UP!

NEXT STEP: OVERCOMING REACTIVITY
MAY 21-22, 2011, REHOBOTH BEACH, DE

WORKSHOPS:
April 8-10, 2011 (same sex) Rehoboth Beach, DE
April 15-17, 2011 Rehoboth Beach, DE

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"Anyone can hide. Facing up to things, working through them, that's what makes you strong."
Sarah Dessen

"A day without sunshine is like, you know, night."
Steve Martin

We are on this journey with you. Keep in touch!

Sincerely,

David and Donna Bowman
Bowman & Associates, PA

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Issue: #28
APRIL 2011

Dear Friends,

First, thanks to all of you who provided feedback about the length of the Thought and our newsletter. We are attempting to strike a balance. Please share your thoughts and ideas anytime.

Spring is upon us, at least on the calendar. We hope you enjoy the changing season and keep in touch!

APRIL: Does an Affair Mean the Relationship is Over?



Sadly, an affair represents a lot of rupture in a relationship. The affair is often the result of years of unconscious dissatisfaction and disconnection, even though this may not have ever been talked about. And sadly, again, the amount of romantic energy that is re-ignited with someone new often overpowers any attempt or even desire to return to heal the source of the disconnection.

It does not have to be this way. An affair can be the catalyst for two conscious people to create a whole new relationship full of things they enjoy and hold dear. It can provide a chance to walk away from a house full of muck

and clutter into a new home of deep meaning and adventure.

Several things will be required to make this courageous

move:

- 1. Both will have to be clear about their willingness to transform their relationship through ownership, change, forgiveness, generosity, and understanding;**
- 2. The other person (the "exit") will have to be removed from the picture;**
- 3. Both will have to challenge their assumptions about what is possible with their Partner.**
- 4. Both will have to inventory their own notions about love and make thoughtful decisions about the kind of man or woman they want to be, who they really are, and how they want to express love.**

A seasoned and skillful coach can be of tremendous help in this critical chapter of people's lives. The swirl of emotions often swamps any attempts to reason together about what is really the best course to take.

Feedback and/or questions about this are welcomed.

With hope,

David (& Donna)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES COMING UP!

**NEXT STEP: OVERCOMING REACTIVITY
May 21-22, 2011, Rehoboth Beach, DE
July 16-17, 2011, Frederick, MD**

**WORKSHOPS:
June 3-5, Frederick, MD
June 25-26, Parenting Workshop, Frederick**

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

Neither a lofty degree of intelligence nor imagination nor both together go to the making of genius. Love, love, love, that is the soul of genius. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

To keep your marriage brimming, with love in the wedding cup, whenever you're wrong, admit it; whenever you're right, shut up. Ogden Nash

We cannot really love anybody with whom we never laugh. Agnes Repplier

Love is like the measles. The older you get it, the worse the attack. Mary Roberts Rhinehart

I think men who have a pierced ear are better prepared for marriage. They've experienced pain and bought

jewelry. Rita Rudner

Man does not live by words alone, despite the fact that sometimes he has to eat them. Adlai Stevenson

Love doesn't make the world go 'round. Love is what makes the ride worthwhile. Franklin P. Jones

We are on this journey with you. Keep in touch!

Sincerely,

**David and Donna Bowman
Bowman & Associates, PA**

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**Issue: #27
May 2011**

Month/Year

Dear Friends,

**It's May, the lovely month of May! We wish
you the pleasures of this wonderful season.**

May: The Many Faces of Love



**Scott Peck, in *The Road Less Traveled*, says that love is the
willingness to extend yourself for the sake of another. A
famous Jewish rabbi suggested that we love our enemies.**

**Soren Kierkegaard said, "Perfect love means to love the one
through whom one became unhappy." Ghandi instructed
a countryman whose son was killed by a Muslim enemy to
adopt a Muslim boy and love him in order to find peace of
mind.**

**All these brilliant people are telling us love is more of a
decision or action that we take than it is a feeling that comes
over us. Yet I hear so many people express that they have
lost feelings for their Partner. They've "fallen out of love."
They are not getting their needs met. Their Partner is even
responsible for how bad they feel. Their Partner has
changed (or hasn't changed.) They are considering exiting
the relationship in one way or another.**

**Imago training has taught me that we need to look inside
when we are not feeling as loved as we wish. What is this
chapter in life telling me? What am I not giving to my**

**Partner to make it safe for her/him to meet my needs?
Where am I blocked from living in the fullness of loving as
an action or a decision? What will be required of me in
order to "let the love in?"**

**It is sad that so many couples split up. So often they choose
to end the relationship because they have lost the feeling of
being loved rather than choosing to live fully in the truth of
the love they share.**

Please share your responses or thought about this.

**Still with hope,
David (& Donna)**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES
COMING UP!**

**NEXT STEP: OVERCOMING REACTIVITY
July 16-17, Frederick, MD**

**WORKSHOPS:
June 3-5, Frederick, MD
July 8-10, Rehoboth Beach, DE
July 22-24, Frederick, MD**

**PARENTING WORKSHOPS:
June 25-26, Frederick, MD**

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**To love deeply in one direction makes us more
loving in all others. Anne-Sophie Swetchine**

**Love and kindness are never wasted. They
always make a difference. They bless the one
who receives them and they bless you, the
giver. Barbara de Angelis**

**A happy home is one in which each spouse
grants the possibility that the other may be
right though neither believes it. Don Fraser**

**Love is never lost. If not reciprocated, it will
flow back and soften and purify the heart.
Washington Irving**

We are on this journey with you. Keep in touch!

Sincerely,

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**Issue: #30
JUNE 2011**

Dear Friends,

Thank you for this opportunity to share our Thought of the Month with you!

We are so grateful that you have made us part of your journey and hope that the warmth of the summer months is replicated in the warmth of the love in your relationships.

JUNE: The "Work" of Relationship



"It takes work to have a good relationship!" I hear that expression over and over again. And it always makes me hesitate. Is work the right word? I have used it myself to describe what it will take to improve a relationship. But the word doesn't taste quite right. Let's look at this.

The word "work" sounds like something hard, something negative, something distasteful, something we have to do but don't really want to do. It sounds like having a root canal at the dentist or cleaning the toilet.

But "work" was the last word we would have used back in the romantic phase of the relationship. So what's up with this?

Time for some Imago theory....which says that the "spell" of romantic love is to get us together and committed to each other. Then the real "adventure" (notice I didn't say work)

of the relationship emerges. Our mutual frustrations surface in order to give each other the true blueprint for growth and wholeness. And when our Partner moves toward their own growth potential, we feel happy and healed.

It's in this state of power struggle that a man will say, "I love her, but I just can't stand to be around her." Or a woman might say, "He's a good man but I hate the things he does that hurt me."

Does it take "work" to pull out of this power struggle? I guess if "work" means becoming conscious of what is going on. The same "work" it takes to lose weight or learn to ski. Maybe it's all in how you look at it. Some of the things around which Donna has been frustrated have felt like "work" in the beginning. Becoming more organized with dates and times and such was not what I wanted to do. It was not me. It threatened my carefree approach to life. It would take....."work." But it's been good for me, for her, and for our relationship.

Same for her...learning to play, kick back, get physically active was not her first inclination. It takes conscious effort. And, she reports that it has been good for her. And it has certainly been good for me!

So the real adventure (or "work") of the relationship is born out of the power struggle. And every conflict we have, even daily fusses, are really opportunities for new growth and healing to happen if we are willing to "work" to become conscious. (And who doesn't feel better when they lose that weight or learn that new skill?)

It is in this adventure of struggle, conflict, and behavior change that the real "therapy" occurs and couples feel happier with each other and with themselves.

Enjoy your summer together!

David (& Donna)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES COMING UP!

Be sure to watch this space or check our web site for future opportunities.

**Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity
November 5-6, Rehoboth Beach, DE**

**Parenting Workshop
November 12-13, Frederick, MD**

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

If you light a lamp for somebody, it will also brighten your path. Buddhist saying

It is not so much our friends' help that helps us, as the confidence of their help. Epicurus

Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity. Kahlil Gibran

Just because nobody complains doesn't mean all parachutes are perfect. Benny Hill

A single rose can be my garden... a single friend, my world. Leo Buscaglia

Silences make the real conversations between friends. Not the saying but the never needing to say is what counts. Margaret Lee Runbeck

An archaeologist is the best husband a woman can have. The older she gets the more interested he is in her. Agatha Christie

Last night I lay in bed looking up at the stars in the sky and I thought to myself, where the heck is the ceiling.

You grow up the day you have your first real laugh -- at yourself. Ethel Barrymore

We are on this journey with you. Keep in touch!

Sincerely,

**David and Donna Bowman
Bowman & Associates, PA**

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Issue: #31
JULY 2011

Dear Friends,

Are you enjoying your summer? We are happily enjoying a few lazy days and a lot of opportunities to share Imago and new (and refreshed) ideas with you!

Please bask in summer joys and love of partners, family and friends. We are privileged to join you on your journey.

JULY: Imago: Not Just for Couples



Imago: Not Just for Couples

Donna and I have enjoyed wonderful response to our workshops throughout the years, both the Getting the Love You Want workshop and second level workshop we created. On the other hand, we are puzzled that people are not more eager to participate in our Conscious and Connected Parenting workshop.

Here are some of the things we make up as we try to understand it:

- **Maybe people do not see the connection between Imago tools and parenting;**
- **Maybe people are too anxious about their parenting to come to a workshop;**
- **Maybe people are too busy parenting (i.e. running kids around, etc.) on the weekends to come to a workshop on parenting.**

Let me try to whet your appetite for our last parenting workshop of the year (November 12 -13 in Frederick.) Our workshop applies Imago tools to the art of parenting. We also include new original ideas about communication with kids. We describe the path of turning our individual faulty styles of parenting into a powerful, connected, couple style. We help you understand and appreciate the differences you may have about parenting, turning them into a strength as a team.

Okay, let me entice you further with our "Assumptions for Fully Conscious Parenting":

1. You are better parents than you think you are....your kids love you no matter how they act...you need to be strong parents and strong people...your mistakes are miniscule compared to the power of your connection...the Universe has gifted you with a sacred opportunity for connection and growth.
2. Our parenting is heavily influenced by our own childhood story...wherever we were stuck in our own development is where we find ourselves stuck as parents...as we better understand our own story we are empowered to become more conscious parents.
3. We become more effective parents as we reflect on the parts of us that are blocked...our reactivity diminishes as our consciousness increases...reclaiming our lost [parts allows us to share our full aliveness with our children.
4. Children need to be valued and enjoyed rather than managed.
5. The best model for life you can give your children is your own relationship.

Please consider joining us in November. If tough economic times make the cost prohibitive, just let us know. We'll work it out.

If you register before October 1, take \$100 off the cost. What more incentives do you need? Just tell us.

Hope you are having a great summer with your kids and all the special people in your life.

David (& Donna)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES COMING UP!

Be sure to watch this space or check our web site for future opportunities.

[Getting the Love You Want Workshops](#)

August 12-14, Frederick, MD
September 9-11, Frederick, MD
October 14-16, Rehoboth Beach, DE
October 21-23, Same Sex, Rehoboth Beach, DE
November 18-20, Frederick, MD
(don't forget to refer a friend!)

Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity

November 5-6, Rehoboth Beach, DE

Parenting Workshop

November 12-13, Frederick, MD
NOTE: SEE SPECIAL OFFER OF \$100 OFF ABOVE

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"Love has the power of making you believe what you would normally treat with the deepest suspicion." - Mirabeau

"Three things can't be hidden: coughing, poverty, and love." - Yiddish proverb

"The most wasted day is that in which we have not laughed." - Chamfort

"A light heart lives long." - William Shakespeare

"Never go to bed mad -- stay up and fight." - Phyllis Diller

"Love is like quicksilver in the hand. Leave the fingers open and it stays. Clutch it, and it darts away." - Dorothy Parker

"To love is to suffer. To avoid suffering one must not love. But then one suffers from not loving. Therefore to love is to suffer, not to love is to suffer. To suffer is to suffer. To be happy is to love. To be happy then is to suffer. But suffering makes one unhappy. Therefore, to be unhappy one must love, or love to suffer, or suffer from too much happiness. I hope you're getting this down." - Woody Allen, Love and Death

"Do not marry a man to reform him. That is what reform schools are for." - Mae West

"The body, she says, is subject to the forces of gravity. But the soul is ruled by levity, pure." - Saul Bellow

"It does not matter what you do in the bedroom as long as you do not do it in the street and frighten the horses." - Mrs. Patrick Campbell

If love is blind, why is lingerie so popular?" - unknown

We are on this journey with you. Keep in touch!

Sincerely,

**David and Donna Bowman
Bowman & Associates, PA**

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Issue: #32
AUGUST 2011

Dear Friends,

Yes, we know August is about over and this is the August Thought! Life has had a few surprises for us this month and we just are behind.....trust you know what that is like. And, all is well.

We are looking forward to seeing many of you again at our "Next Step..." workshop November 5 - 6 in Rehoboth Beach AND at our "Conscious and Connected Parenting" workshop November 12 - 13 in Frederick. (There is \$100 discount for the parenting workshop if you register before October 1.)

AUGUST: About Forgiveness



My guess is that as we think of the theme of forgiveness, we think of all kinds of situations in life other than our most intimate relationships (i.e. partners, spouses, children.) Maybe it's time to highlight forgiveness as a vital tool for couples to employ. Why do we so seldom use the word with the people who are most important to us?

If we loaned someone our car and they had an accident, then came to us and expressed their sorrow, most of us would likely offer, "That's okay" or "You're forgiven." But if our spouse or family member wrecked our car, I think most of us would say something like, "Well, what happened" or "I knew this was going to happen" or I told

you not to drive so fast." Why is this?

Forgiveness is needed in relationships all the time, in matters both large and small. When our spouse forgets to pick up our prescription at the pharmacy, an attitude of acceptance or forgiveness contributes positive energy to our Space while any form of blame or shame poisons our Space.

But what about much more hurtful things...like our partner having an affair? How do we forgive something like that?

Here are a few thoughts on a big topic:

- Forgiveness is a choice.
- "Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong." (M. Gandhi)
- "To err is human; to forgive divine." (A. Pope)
- Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself.
- Forgiveness is more what you do for yourself, not for someone else.
- Forgiveness builds connection/energy while resentment drains connection/energy.
- Forgiveness is the ultimate act of abundance.
- Withholding forgiveness is like drinking poison and expecting the offending person to die.
- Withholding forgiveness is to choose to remain the victim.
- You may never forget but you can always choose to forgive.

And, finally, a quote from Oscar Wilde: "Always forgive your enemies...nothing annoys them so much."

Hope your fall begins with great joy and connection!

David (& Donna)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES COMING UP!

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site for future opportunities.

Getting the Love You Want Workshops

**October 14-16, Rehoboth Beach, DE
October 21-23, Same Sex, Rehoboth Beach, DE
November 18-20, Frederick, MD
(don't forget to refer a friend!)**

Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity

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Parenting Workshop

**November 12-13, Frederick, MD
NOTE: SEE SPECIAL OFFER OF \$100 OFF ABOVE**

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

True friendship is like sound health, the value of it is seldom known until it be lost. Charles Caleb Colton

There are three faithful friends, an old wife, an old dog, and ready money. Benjamin Franklin

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. Helen Keller

There is no greater loan than a sympathetic ear. Frank Tyger

Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves. J.M. Barrie

Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity. Kahlil Gibran

The antidote for fifty enemies is one friend. Aristotle

A single rose can be my garden... a single friend, my world. Leo Buscaglia

I value the friend who for me finds time on his calendar, but I cherish the friend who for me does not consult his calendar. Robert Brault

A true friend is someone who thinks that you are a good egg even though he knows that you are slightly cracked. Bernard Meltzer

Donna Bowen

We are on this journey with you. Keep in touch!

Sincerely,

**David and Donna Bowman
Bowman & Associates, PA**

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Issue: #33
SEPTEMBER 2011

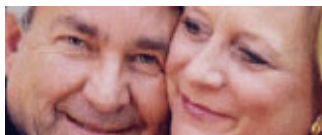
Dear Friends,


It really is beginning to feel like Fall...finally! Although we are not experiencing Fall the way we did as children by getting our school books and pens together and thinking about homework, we ARE planning exciting things for the Fall

We are looking forward to seeing many of you again at our "Next Step..." workshop November 5 - 6 in Rehoboth Beach AND/OR at our "Conscious and Connected Parenting" workshop November 12 - 13 in Frederick. (There is \$100 discount for the parenting workshop if you register before October 1.)

Many of you have asked for an additional workshop and we are SO excited to offer a new opportunity for couples in 2012. It is a one day workshop, "Gender to Gender: What Men and Women Need to Know about Each Other." It will be posted on our website within the next month. Check it out and let us know what questions you have and when you want to register.

SEPTEMBER: Working Things Out





How does a couple go about resolving something when each person's feelings are in direct contrast with the Partner's feeling? One person says, "I want us to spend several days at Thanksgiving with my family." The Partner says, "That's the last thing I want us to do at Thanksgiving. I want to just spend time with you and our kids and have some time to relax." **IMPASSE!**

I have thought of six patterns that couples employ in response to these situations. For simplicity sake, I will name each one.

(Note that these are patterns or dances that couples move into based on childhood adaptations and their brilliant adaptations that allowed them to survive. Each pattern, while seeming dysfunctional and, perhaps, feeling hurtful to the Partner are, nonetheless, ways of staying safe and stabilizing Connection. In other words, couples operate the best they know until one, or both, become strong enough to act out of a new awareness/a new consciousness. Wow! That sounds profound!)

Back to simplicity:

Pattern 1: WIN/LOSE: (YOU WIN): One person dominates most or every decision or situation.

Pattern 2: WIN/LOSE - LOSE/WIN: (IT'S ME OR YOU): The Couple takes turns dominating situations/decisions, each having dominance in their own "domain."

Pattern 3: LOSE/LOSE: (IT'S JUST ME): Both people dig in their heels in most situations and are unlikely to budge from their view. (See the movie, "War of the Roses")

Pattern 4: WIN ½ - LOSE ½: (KEEPING SCORE): This Couple often agrees that, "We'll do it your way this time and my way next time."

Pattern 5: GIVE IN TO WIN: (BARTERING): This couple might bargain, "I will go visit your family if you will let me buy the motorcycle I want."

Pattern 6: WIN - WIN: (YOU AND ME): Obviously, this is the "road less traveled." This requires conscious,

intentional dialogue and a generous spirit. The goal is to optimize the mutual satisfaction of each Partner, understanding and honoring different needs from both worlds.

And now I offer some tips for achieving Pattern 6 (Win-Win):

1. Develop an honest scale. How strongly (on a scale of 1 - 10) do you feel about visiting your family, buying the motorcycle (or whatever the "issue" might be.)
2. Do no harm! If a decision will deeply hurt your Partner, don't make it!
3. Use Dialogue to discuss the childhood wants and desires that lie beneath the current preferences and frustrations. New understandings sometimes change everything.
4. Always be open to a new option. Instead of visiting the family or buying a motorcycle, what about taking a cruise you have been talking about? How great would that be? (Did I just say that...giving up a motorcycle?)
5. Keep in mind that connecting safely with our Partner is far more valuable than any one decision or "win."

So...please join Donna and me as we continue to try to understand and figure out the endless options life offers (as well as each other.) WHAT AN ADVENTURE!

Hope you have a great fall!

David (& Donna)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES COMING UP!

Be sure to watch this space or check our web site for future opportunities.

Getting the Love You Want Workshops

November 18-20, Frederick, MD
(don't forget to refer a friend!)

Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity

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November 12-13, Frederick, MD
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QUOTES OF THE MONTH

Love is a grave mental disease. - Plato

"You don't love someone for their looks, or their clothes, or for their fancy car, but because they sing a song only you can hear."

"If I never met you, I wouldn't like you. If I didn't like you, I wouldn't

love you. If I didn't love you, I wouldn't miss you. But I did, I do, and I will."

"Love me when I least deserve it, because that's when I really need it." Swedish Proverb

"Fear less, hope more; Eat less, chew more; Whine less, breathe more; Talk less, say more; Love more, and all good things will be yours"

"We come to love not by finding a perfect person, but by learning to see an imperfect person perfectly" Sam Keen

"I don't wish to be everything to everyone, but I would like to be something to someone." Javan

Ah me! love can not be cured by herbs. - Ovid

Love is being stupid together. - Paul Valery

We are all a little weird and life's a little weird, and when we find someone whose weirdness is compatible with ours, we join up with them and fall in mutual weirdness and call it love. - Author Unknown

Love is what makes two people sit in the middle of the bench when there is plenty of room at both ends. - Author Unknown

We are on this journey with you. Keep in touch!

Sincerely,

**David and Donna Bowman
Bowman & Associates, PA**

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Issue: #34
OCTOBER 2011

Dear Friends,

There is still room!!! We are looking forward to seeing many of you again at our "Next Step..." workshop November 5 - 6 in Rehoboth Beach AND/OR at our "Conscious and Connected Parenting" workshop November 12 - 13 in Frederick.

Our 2012 workshop schedule will be on our website in the next few weeks, including our new one day workshop, "Gender to Gender: What Men and Women Need to Know about Each Other." Check it out and let us know what questions you have and when you want to register. (Remember, the Getting the Love You Want Workshop is half price the second time around! There's always something that has new meaning for you.)

OCTOBER: The Rug or The Shelf



Many couples use The Rug to keep from feeling the immediate pain of their conflict. It happens all the time. Something gets said or done...there is a reactive response...there is a decision whether to escalate the situation into a full blown and familiar power struggle or to sweep in under The Rug and "move on."

It is more comfortable for many of us to avoid bad feelings and conflict. So The Rug is very useful in the short run. Couples can act and look connected and happy. The problem with The Rug is that it represents hidden information. It's a cover up of negative energy.

This energy doesn't go away. It only goes into hiding. The next time the same type situation occurs, the responses and reactions are even greater because the old brain has stored the bad feelings for future use. The more we sweep things under The Rug, the more negative energy gets attached to the small things.

Now, let me introduce you to the concept of The Shelf. The Shelf is actually a wonderful tool. All couples should have one. The Shelf is where we put our central power struggles and conflicts when we are not directly dealing with them. An example: Some years ago, our son was going to be starring in the high school production of "Barnum." Seems like a good thing, right? But the tension in our relationship grew as the weekend approached. We were having guests visit for the weekend and we went into a familiar pattern of conflict. I grew frustrated as Donna got more and more critical of how little I was "helping out" to get ready. She grew upset at how I seemed to insist that she was worrying too much about everything. (Many of you may know this twisted pattern of male-female conflict.

In the car, on the way to Opening Night, we actually did a smart thing. We crossed the bridge! (It was a quick trip as it is only 3 miles to the high school.) We gained a bit of understanding of each other's worlds....which, of course, helped us feel more connected. Then we agreed to put this saga on The Shelf so we could enjoy our son's experience and our guests. We did so, had a great time with Seth and our friends AND took "it" off The Shelf later when we had more time to attend to it. Now, mind you, we have used The Shelf for this exact same thing many times since and it is so nice to know it's there when we need it.

The point is that this power struggle does not have to overtake our lives and disrupt the many good aspects of our relationship. That's the value of The Shelf. It is a holding place...available through a conscious decision. The decision is to deal with a problem in an intentional way. Perhaps working on it for a time, putting it back on The Shelf (letting it rest as we add positive things to our Space), and then taking it off for more attention.

The Shelf is not The Rug. The Shelf is not a dumpster. It's a Shelf...a storage place for the instructive and valuable grist of opportunity which composes all our central power struggles.

Build a Shelf in your relationship and agree when to use it.

Enjoy your fall!

David (& Donna)

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES
COMING UP!**

***Be sure to watch this space or check our web
site for future opportunities.***

Getting the Love You Want Workshops

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(don't forget to refer a friend!)**

Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity

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Parenting Workshop

**November 12-13, Frederick, MD
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QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**I was nauseous and tingly all over. I was either in love
or I had smallpox. Woody Allen**

**"Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some
stay for a while, leave footprints on our hearts, and we
are never, ever the same." Flavia Weedn**

**"You give but little when you give of your possessions. It
is when you give of yourself that you truly give." Kahlil
Gibran**

**"Have a heart that never hardens, a temper that never
tires, a touch that never hurts." Charles Dickens**

**Gravitation cannot be held responsible for people falling
in love. Albert Einstein**

**You can't put a price tag on love, but you can on all its
accessories. Melanie Clark**

**If it's the Psychic Network why do they need a phone
number? Robin Williams**

**There is a place you can touch a woman that will drive
her crazy. Her heart. Melanie Griffith**

**If you judge people, you have no time to love them.
Mother Teresa**

**Love is composed of a single soul inhabiting two bodies.
Aristotle**

We are on this journey with you. Keep in touch!

Sincerely,

**David and Donna Bowman
Bowman & Associates, PA**

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Issue: #35
NOVEMBER 2011

Dear Friends,

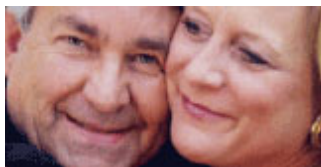
Thanksgiving is such a special time of the year. You really don't have to buy anything special, you don't really even have to cook, but it reminds us how grateful we are to be part of your lives and your journey. Thank you!

Our 2012 workshop schedule is on our website with information posted soon about our new one day workshop, "Gender to Gender: What Men and Women Need to Know about Each Other."

Check it out and let us know what questions you have and when you want to register. (Remember, the Getting the Love You Want Workshop is half price the second time around!

There's always something that has new meaning for you.)

NOVEMBER: "Connecting Rituals"



I've spent my share of time complaining about the new technology life style where "smart" phones are an obsession and skyping, texting, tweeting, facebooking, linkedining, and zipdoodling take up enormous chunks of time. (Worried that you don't know what zipdoodling is? Relax....I made that one up. Hard to keep up, isn't it?)

Okay. Enough criticism! You get the point. So many ways to take us away from face to face body present, human, sensory

connection with each other. (AND, in the interest of full disclosure, I am very grateful for cell phones which allow us to connect with our son, Seth, in Hawaii so easily anytime he or we want or need to be in touch.)

Let's correct this trend in a positive way. Let's talk about important family rituals, especially with the holidays approaching.

We had a "Conscious & Connected Parenting" workshop this past weekend and the part concerning Family Rituals was lively and generated much energy as couples named, shared, and visioned experiences that create connection in their families. One couple borrowed from the Obama family a ritual called, "Roses & Thorns." Each person at dinner (or breakfast or whatever meal the family shares) describes a joyful event from their day (a "Rose") as well as a tough event (a "Thorn".) This couple's children (even the teenager) bought into this ritual with enthusiasm. Another couple had a similar ritual of each family member sharing an appreciation about each individual in the family.

Active rituals are great. We used to have a "Christmas Tree Day" where we traveled to a tree farm with our kids to find the "perfect" tree. Even though the weather would sometimes be nasty and opinions would often loudly vary as to the "perfect" tree, everyone expected and depended on this experience (along with the decorating and sometimes midnight shrimp feast that followed.)

Any activity or behavior can become a meaningful family ritual. Let's look at the marks of a true ritual:

1. Everyone in the family has investment and participation (however reluctant it may be at first.)
2. It has to make sense as a bonding experience.
3. It has to be repeatable.
4. It is simple and involves face to face interaction.
5. It has ceremonial value (i.e. the experience points to higher values or goals for the family.)

Let's look at examples:

Traditional:

- * Religious experiences (e.g. holidays, meals, services, etc.)
- * Extended family events (e.g. Thanksgiving at Grandma's, vacations, etc.)
- * Chores together (e.g. painting a room, raking leaves, etc.)

- * Family experiences (e.g. vacations, restaurants, etc.)

Specific:

- * Bedtime experiences (e.g. stories, songs, check-ins, etc.)
- * Waking experiences (e.g. centering, appreciations, etc.)
- * Mealtime experiences (e.g. any verbal structures, etc.)
- * Special family experiences (e.g. games, puzzles, etc.)

Out of the Box:

- * Service projects (e.g. soup kitchens, food drives, etc.)
- * Gifts (e.g. family babysitting for friends/relatives, making gifts, etc.)
- * Challenges (e.g. hiking, learning to play/appreciate music, etc.)

Have fun creating your own unique rituals. Ask your kids what they would like.

So hope you enjoy the holidays!

David (and Donna)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES COMING UP!

Be sure to watch this space or check our web site for future opportunities.

Getting the Love You Want Workshops

**December 2-4, Rehoboth Beach, DE
(don't forget to refer a friend!)
January 13-15, Rehoboth Beach, DE
February 3-5, Frederick, MD**

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

If a fellow isn't thankful for what he's got, he isn't likely to be thankful for what he's going to get. Frank A. Clark

Thanksgiving is an emotional holiday. People travel thousands of miles to be with people they only see once a year. And then discover once a year is way too often. Johnny Carson

May your stuffing be tasty

May your turkey plump,

May your potatoes and gravy

Have nary a lump.

May your yams be delicious

And your pies take the prize,

And may your Thanksgiving dinner

Stay off your thighs! Anonymous

None is more impoverished than the one who has no gratitude. Gratitude is a currency that we can mint for ourselves, and spend without fear of bankruptcy. Fred De Witt Van Amburgh

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live

the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. John Fitzgerald Kennedy

What we're really talking about is a wonderful day set aside on the fourth Thursday of November when no one diets. I mean, why else would they call it Thanksgiving? Erma Bombeck

Who does not thank for little will not thank for much. Estonian Poverb

God gave us our relatives; thank God we can choose our friends. Ethel Watts Mumford

The Pilgrims made seven times more graves than huts. No Americans have been more impoverished than these who, nevertheless, set aside a day of thanksgiving. H. U. Westermayer

If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, 'thank you,' that would suffice. Meister Eckhart

We are on this journey with you. Keep in touch!

Sincerely,

**David and Donna Bowman
Bowman & Associates, PA**

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Donna Reeves Bowman, LCSW-C & David L. Bowman, MDiv

Thought of the Month News and Notes

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Issue: #36
DECEMBER 2011

Dear Friends,

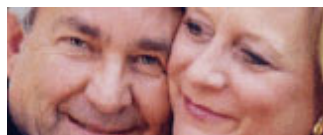
If the weather outside is frightful and your anticipation of the holiday season is less than delightful, we hope you will pause for a minute in your busy lives as we will. Our pause will give us a moment to treasure the love we have in our lives: our friends, family, neighbors, co-workers and all of those who touch our lives each day. Each of you are treasured by us and we are thankful to have you in our lives.


We wish the joy and love of the season to you and yours!

Our 2012 workshop schedule is on our website with information posted (within the next few weeks) about our new one day workshop, "Gender to Gender: What Men and Women Need to Know about Each Other." Check it out or call us (301-404-7711 or 301-898-0527) and let us know what questions you have and when you want to register.

Also, remember, our Getting the Love You Want Workshop is half price the second time around! There's always something that has new meaning for you.

**DECEMBER: "What I Really Wish You
Understood About Me Is..."**





What if we were to find out that the cause of much relationship conflict was not rooted in growing apart, loss of love, lack of satisfaction of needs, or poor communication? What if we discovered that much relationship conflict stems from the different ways males and females experience connection and the misunderstandings that result from the differences?

I am more and more clear that gender differences are a lot of what is behind relational conflict. (PLEASE...bear with me...any of you who are reading this and are a part of a same sex relationship...I want you to help me understand more and more about all this.) To put it simply, women generally desire to feel connected. Anything that happens that disrupts connection is a threat to the relationship (i.e. male anger/rage, obsessive work hours, reluctance to talk about "the relationship".) Men generally desire to be respected. Anything that disrupts respect is a threat to most males (i.e. criticism, sadness/unhappiness, insistence to talk about "the relationship.")

Donna and I got into a fuss right before a workshop last Saturday morning. I was building a fire in the fireplace, thinking that was a contribution to hosting our couples. I wasn't demanding praise and respect for that...just thinking I was doing "my part." Donna didn't see it that way. She felt alone with kitchen preparations for breakfast and thought fire building could be done later as couples arrived. At the bottom of the fuss...you guessed it. Donna felt misunderstood, discounted, and disconnected from me and I felt criticized, misunderstood, and disrespected.

How transforming it would be to get women to respond lovingly to their man's need for respect and to get men to respond lovingly to their woman's need to feel cherished and connected. (I think same sex couples often have the same dynamics...just not gender driven.)

In our new one day workshop, "Gender to Gender: What Men and Women Need to Know", we will tackle this transformation. I will work with the men to help figure out what we really want. Donna will work with the women with the same agenda. Then Donna will work with the men to see what is missing in the translation of the experience as I work with the women. We will then come together to explore new patterns of communication that can result in understanding and satisfaction of needs.

We will explore everything from sex to symphonies, anger to active listening, and physical to emotional. We will invite you to "play" a game that will build on these understandings (remember "The Newlywed Game?")

We hope many of you will join us at our home in Frederick, Saturday, January 21, 12:00 - 7:00 p.m. for an unforgettable day of learning how to understand your Partner better. We promise, as always, that we will provide an experience that will be safe as you let us support you on your amazing relationship Adventure. If this works as we believe it will, couples will feel a "burden" lifted and a more peaceful relationship.

Hope you have joyful and blessed holidays!

David (& Donna)

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QUOTES OF THE MONTH

And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more. ~Dr. Seuss

Wouldn't life be worth the living
Wouldn't dreams be coming true
If we kept the Christmas spirit
All the whole year through?
~Author Unknown

Santa is very jolly because he knows where all the bad girls live. ~Dennis Miller

They celebrated it for eight days with gladness like Sukkot

and recalled how a little while before, during Sukkot, they had been wandering in the mountains and caverns like wild animals. So carrying lulavs ...they offered hymns of praise to God who had brought to pass the purification of His own place. II Maccabees 10. 6-7

Nothing's as mean as giving a little child something useful for Christmas. ~Kin Hubbard

Blessed is the match consumed in kindling flame
Blessed is the flame that burns in the secret fastness of the heart. ~Hannah Senesh

We hear the beating of wings over Bethlehem and a light

We hear the beating of wings over Bethlehem and a light that is not of the sun or of the stars shines in the midnight sky. Let the beauty of the story take away all narrowness, all thought of formal creeds. Let it be remembered as a story that has happened again and again, to men of many different races, that has been expressed through many religions, that has been called by many different names. Time and space and language lay no limitations upon human brotherhood. ~New York Times, 25 December 1937

If "ifs" and "buts" were candy and nuts, wouldn't it be a Merry Christmas? ~Don Meredith

Once again, we come to the Holiday Season, a deeply religious time that each of us observes, in his own way, by going to the mall of his choice. ~Author Unknown

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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