



Connecting
Couples

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Thought of the Month News and Notes

In This Issue

[Thought of the Month](#)
[Upcoming Workshops](#)

Quick Links

[Register for 2013
Workshops](#)

[Next Step Workshops](#)

[IRI Couples Blog](#)

[LaSplash online
magazine](#)

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**Issue: #47
January 2013**

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! We wish you the best of happiness and love in this new year, one of new opportunities, beginnings and fresh hope.

January is not fraught with must-do items for us and really not much effort is spent in making resolutions. It feels that in every day of our lives and relationships, we are striving for a closer connection to those we love and those who are part of our lives, like you! The weather encourages us to stay inside, build a fire and build little bridges to love, little pieces of memories and little conversations toward understanding. No big efforts, just little....sometimes "little" is okay!

We are here for you in your big issues and little ones, just remember to keep in communication---we WANT to hear from you!

As always, if you need us, just call.

Donna and David

JANUARY: "Are You Keeping Score?"

We live in a world where keeping score is normative in nearly everything we do! We text our kid at her soccer game and ask, "Are you winning?" The state police keep score of our traffic violations. I think I am down to one or two points....Donna says three is "trouble." Some people keep score with their net worth. It tells them how "well" they are doing. How about our credit score...that crazy number that says people who really need a low interest rate cannot get it while those who do not have money worries can get low or no interest anytime they want? So keeping score is all around us and a part of us. A high score feels good and a low score feels bad.

Now to the point of this Thought...keeping score is deadly in relationships. That's right! Someone once said, "You can be right or you can be in relationship." You can put your energy toward winning or you can put your energy toward being connected. It's that simple! Keeping score is saying to your Partner, "You owe me" rather than "We are in this together and I want to figure it out."

It can start in an innocent way. A young couple with a baby bickers, "But I changed the diaper the last time. It's your turn!" I think we fall naturally into keeping score and we don't realize how destructive it can be. Again, as with competing (and all relational experiences), Imago says that keeping score is connected to our childhood story. Many of us who had siblings became painfully cognizant of how much more our siblings got than us...no matter what the birth order. That experience carries right into our intimate relationship.

Imago also tells us we don't have to live in our childhood or relate to each other as children. We are not compelled to express our hurt and frustration by hounding our Partner with the inequity of their contribution to the relationship compared to ours. This is really bad strategy for improving the relationship.

I have three ideas for those who would like to remove score-keeping from their relationship. They are:

- 1. Reserve score-keeping only for board games and other family games that are meaningless;**
- 2. Flood your Partner or your children with appreciations. It will neutralize any score-keeping they are tempted to do.**
- 3. (Here's the BIG ONE.) Do away with that account you have kept of all the things your Partner had done "wrong" (i.e. all those things that have disappointed you or hurt you.) No matter how much you "deserve" to keep it!**

Now build a bank account of your positive actions toward your Partner and toward the relationship. (Remember....each person is 100% responsible for the relationship 100% of the time!) Build that up and sign that bank account over to...your Partner! It is an unconditional Gift in the interest of your relationship!

I get it....this is a VERY hard thing to do. It is unnatural. It is a spiritual discipline.

As always, I love your feedback.

David

**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

**February, 8-10, 2013, Frederick, MD
April 12-14, 2013, Frederick, MD**

Next Step Workshop

March 16-17, 2013, Frederick, MD

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"Whenever you're in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude." William James

"Find a guy who calls you beautiful instead of hot, who calls you back when you hang up on him, who will lie under the stars and listen to your heartbeat, or will stay awake just to watch you sleep... wait for the boy who kisses your forehead, who wants to show you off to the world when you are in sweats, who holds your hand in front of his friends, who thinks you're just as pretty without makeup on. One who is constantly reminding you of how much he cares and how lucky his is to have you.... The one who turns to his friends and says, 'that's her.'"

"No man is worth your tears, but once you find one that is, he won't make you cry"

"You want me to act like we've never kissed, you want to forget; pretend we've never met, and I've tried and I've tried, but I haven't yet... You walk by, and I fall to pieces." Patsy Cline

"You can't stop loving or wanting to love because when its right, it's the best thing in the world. When you're in a relationship and it's good, even if nothing else in your life is right, you feel like your whole world is complete." Keith Sweat

"There is no feeling more comforting and consoling than

"There is no feeling more comforting and consoling than knowing you are right next to the one you love."

"True love is like a pair of socks: you gotta have two and they've gotta match."

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

"There is no feeling more comforting and consoling than knowing you are right next to the one you love."

"You learn to like someone when you find out what makes them laugh, but you can never truly love someone until you find out what makes them cry."

"Well, it seems to me that the best relationships - the ones that last - are frequently the ones that are rooted in friendship. You know, one day you look at the person and you see something more than you did the night before. Like a switch has been flicked somewhere. And the person who was just a friend is... suddenly the only person you can ever imagine yourself with" Gillian Anderson

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

Sincerely,

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

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