



Connecting
Couples

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Thought of the Month News and Notes

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Dear Friends,

Donna and I send our love and best wishes for you and your loved ones this holiday season. Most of all, our wish for us all is for peace--- peace in our hearts, peace in our families, peace in our world.

Wouldn't the world be a lovely place if peace reigned? We all know how difficult this seemingly simple concept is to achieve but as human beings, we never, ever give up hope!

We also never, ever give up hope on our relationships and in the goal to achieve a peaceful partnership full of love and understanding. Our Thought this month is another exercise to help us to fully understand and accept our partner. Our hope is that this will resonate with you and remind you and your partner that this journey we are all on, takes one step, one word, one touch, one moment at a time--and each one is there for us to understand, to cross the bridge and truly see our lives through our partner's eyes. I hope this will be a gift to you!

As always, if you need us, just call.

Donna and David

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DECEMBER: "Crossing the Bridge"

OK! Let's talk "Crossing the Bridge!" NO image has

been more helpful to couples in conflict than the mental idea of crossing the Bridge to understand your Partner.

What do people in committed relationships want? Do they want their Partner to turn themselves inside out and change their very nature? No!

Do they want their Partner to grovel and always accommodate every wish? NO!

Do they want their Partner to supply them with every comfort available to human beings? No, again!

People in committed relationships want MOST to be heard and understood. We want someone to see our life through our eyes...to hear our every word with compassion and understanding! EVEN when they think we are wrong! EVEN when they don't agree! We want a Safe Haven...a place to be Ourselves...weird sometimes...off base sometimes...but always met with validation and free of criticism! It's just what kids want! We are all little kids in our emotional life.

Here's where the Bridge comes in. We give the greatest gift imaginable when we willingly leave our Land and cross over the Bridge to be fully present in our Partner's World. Donna and I have been married 30 years. I have never been more aware that her World is a vastly different place than my Land. Things hurt her and scare her and frustrate her that I just don't get. I used to laugh at her for being so different. That was a mistake! I used to get reactive when she put forth something I disagreed with. No good!

Our wonderful mentor, Hedy Schleifer, says that it's more than a visit. It's an "Encounter." A "visit" can denote something passive....a passing glance. An Encounter is a Journey to a new place in order to take it all in...to digest and let it affect us...to move us...to leave us changed.

Many people visit the Grand Canyon. The average visit is three hours. The lucky ones Encounter the Grand Canyon. They experience the heat...the dryness...the enormity...the power...the mysterious changes of light. They hike, ride mules, float the river, sleep by the rising river, witness the stars at midnight and the sun at dawn.

Our visit to our Partner's world is not a polite, obligatory, self-serving endeavor. It is a genuine desire to learn something we don't yet know. It is a hunger to immerse ourselves into the world of our Partner....to feel their plight...to rejoice in their joy...to know their Story! And it has to be done in safety. "Nothing is learned when people do not feel safe." (A quote from a client.)

Go ahead! Try it! Work at making your visit to your Partner...to your children...to the person at the airline counter...to your colleague...to your employer...to your employee.....with no thought of yourself. Empty yourself for a time and give your full energy to the one who is yearning, praying, crying for your full energy, attention, and your understanding.

Let me know what happens!

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

January 3-5, Frederick, MD

January 31- February 2, 2014 Frederick, MD

February 28-March 2, Frederick, MD

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves. Carl Jung

Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain but it takes character and self control to be understanding and forgiving. Dale Carnegie

Never do today what you can put off till tomorrow. Delay may give clearer light as to what is best to be done. Aaron Burr

All truths are easy to understand once they are

discovered; the point is to discover them. Galileo Galilei

You don't need strength to let go of something. What you really need is understanding. Guy Finley

Everyone hears only what he understands. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

I know that you believe you understand what you think I said, but I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant. Robert McClosky

To understand the heart and mind of a person, look not at what he has already achieved, but at what he aspires to. Kahlil Gibran

Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood. Marie Curie

Don't believe what your eyes are telling you. All they show is limitation. Look with your understanding, find out what you already know, and you'll see the way to fly. Richard Bach

Furious activity is no substitute for understanding. H.H Williams

If we are to live together in peace, we must come to know each other better. Lyndon Johnson

A matter that becomes clear ceases to concern us. Friedrich Nietzsche

The reality of the other person is not in what he reveals to you, but in what he cannot reveal to you. Therefore, if you would understand him, listen not to what he says but rather what he does not say. Kahlil Gibran

I am so clever that sometimes I don't understand a single word of what I am saying. Oscar Wilde

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

Sincerely,

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

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