



Connecting  
Couples

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

## Thought of the Month News and Notes

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**Issue: #59**  
**January 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**Happy New Year! Our wishes for you are for health, happiness and love! How hard can that be? I know, really, really HARD! We all struggle daily with our bodies and the care or lack-of-care we have inflicted upon them. January always seems to nudge us a bit towards a healthy diet, more exercise, less of the things that hinder our health and more of the things that nurture it. Who hasn't said that it is too cold, windy, snowy (put in your excuse) to exercise and who hasn't thought that a batch of chocolate chip cookies is just the thing for cabin fever? But love, we can all experience more of this---with our partner, our children, our parents and our friends. Everyone wants it...take a moment to share it and then sit back and feel the love!**

**Love and making our way through the challenges, joys and surprises is our specialty. No, we are not experts and we do not always have the answers but we do have the experience of helping thousands of couples work through every kind of issue you can imagine. We hope that we count you among those we've helped and suggest that you may be ready for a "tune up" or may know a couple who is struggling now and would benefit from our workshop - maybe a co-worker who shared a personal difficulty with you and who would find some answers that you are not experienced to give. Share this Thought of the Month or just give them our phone number. We look forward to a year of sharing the love with you and new couples!**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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## **JANUARY: "Creating a New Story"**

**OK! So you got involved with Someone who lit your every candle in the Romantic Stage. But now it seems they have changed! They seem uncooperative...no longer interested in meeting your needs...unhappy with you...even critical or down right hateful! So just to remind you...your Relationship is moving along just as it should...according to Imago theory!**

**You chose Someone who really does put you in the same feeling state you had as a child. You feel abandoned...or disrespected...or pushed around...or discounted...or overwhelmed with your Partner's needs. AND you react as you learned to do as a child: pulling away...acting out...becoming sad and depressed...running away...fighting back. It makes so much sense to follow what worked for you as a kid. (It was actually brilliant as a child! You Survived! Congratulations!**

**But, wait! Here's a News Flash! You don't have to be a victim of your childhood Story! The goal is not to keep living our childhood over and over. The goal is to grab your Partner by their Essence and to create a new Story together for the both of you!**

**Here's how it works:**

**Donna meets David and he's so much fun and doesn't worry about how things look or what gets done in any particular time frame. This is startlingly refreshing for Donna. She grew up in an "everything in its place" kind of home and fun happened on a schedule. Donna begins to fall for David. David meets Donna who has an answer for every problem. She knows what should be done as well as when and where and for how long. This is very comforting to a guy who had little guidance in the way of life and had to make it up on his own. (Do you see where this is going?)**

**After a year or so, Donna gets put out with a guy who only wants to have fun and doesn't care about how**

things get done. She feels as burdened as she did as a kid. David gets equally put out with a person who know how everything should be done...not to mention when and where! It feels pretty bossy and controlling to him. "They" are in the power struggle. Donna shuts down her thoughts and needs as she did as a little girl and David either jokes about it or gets angry just as he did as a little boy. BUT NOW they begin creating (or recreating) new childhood stories for each other.

David loves seeing the surprised delight on Donna's face when she says, "You need to take care of that" and he says, "It's already done. I'm way ahead of you!" Donna loves the joy she sees on David's face and the Connection she experiences when she relaxes and surprises David with some fun activity with no time frame or "purpose."

(Note: The last two paragraphs are today's growth report. Last week....not so much!)

Donna and I are in the process of understanding each other's Story and our own Story. (And, let's be very clear...we have been in this process for decades...and our Adventure goes on and on....!) The fascinating punch line to all this is that in growing conscious of helping and healing our Partner's Story, we are changing and growing our own Story at the same time.

P.S. I know some of you are working at just having one day of peaceful communication and experience between you. Let us help you...it's one moment...one day at a time...and then you string more and more of them together...closer and closer. (That's why we have workshops and offer coaching.)

Please respond to this Thought as you wish and submit ideas for future Thoughts.

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 31- February 2, 2014 Frederick, MD**

**February 28-March 2, 2014 Frederick, MD**

**April 4-6, 2014 Frederick, MD**

## **Next Step Workshop**

**April 26-27, 2014 Frederick, Md**

### QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**"Do one thing every day that scares you." Eleanor Roosevelt**

**"We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be." Kurt Vonnegut, Mother Night**

**"When we love, we always strive to become better than we are. When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too." Paulo Coelho, The Alchemist**

**"What's meant to be will always find a way" Trisha Yearwood**

**In the book of life, the answers aren't in the back. Charles M. Schulz**

**"The flower that blooms in adversity is the rarest and most beautiful of all." Walt Disney Company**

**"Sometimes you wake up. Sometimes the fall kills you. And sometimes, when you fall, you fly." Neil Gaiman, The Sandman, Vol. 6: Fables and Reflections**

**What we got here is... a failure to communicate. Cool Hand Luke (1967)**

**"We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty." Maya Angelou**

**"The unexamined life is not worth living." Socrates**

**"It's not the load that breaks you down, it's the way you carry it." Lou Holtz**

**"I was never really insane except upon occasions**

when my heart was touched." Edgar Allan Poe

"Love is the absence of judgment." Dalai Lama XIV

"To give pleasure to a single heart by a single act is better than a thousand heads bowing in prayer."  
Mahatma Gandhi

"I dream my painting and I paint my dream." Vincent van Gogh

Life is uncertain; always eat dessert first. Anonymous

"And still, after all this time, the Sun has never said to the Earth,  
"You owe me."  
Look what happens with love like that.  
It lights up the sky." Hafez

Deal with the faults of others as gently as with your own. Chinese proverb

"It's hard to beat a person who never gives up." Babe Ruth

"Cry. Forgive. Learn. Move on. Let your tears water the seeds of your future happiness." Steve Maraboli

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

Sincerely,

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

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**Issue: #60**  
**February 33, 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**What a marvelous month February is! It is still winter, blustery, snowy and cold in many parts of the country and balmy, sunny and sandal weather on the West Coast. Oh, and did you notice that THIS year, February has 33 days? It can't get any better than that if you still have snow to shovel by the end of the month or projects to accomplish or those letters to write. Okay, I admit to fudging a bit and stretching this marvelous (!!??) winter out a little longer. I hope you will forgive me.**

**Some of us really get cabin fever in the winter and tend to be a little, or a lot, more aware of those troublesome personality traits of our partners, our children, our neighbors and pretty much anyone we deal with on a day-to-day basis. Just when you thought my message would be cerebral, I decided to go to one of my inspirations, Bob Newhart! What a comic genius and though not a real therapist or relationship coach, he simply got it right! Take a break, grab a snack and check Bob out! The reference is in the Thought below:)**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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**FEBRUARY 33, 2014: "Stop It!"**

**After all my training and experience, I think I finally have stumbled upon the perfect therapeutic tool for dealing with at least one major problem in relationships. And....it costs nothing to learn this tool!**

**Quit reading now! Google the You Tube clip entitled, "Bob Newhart - Stop It!" Watch it now! (It is only 6 minutes and it can change your experience of your Partner!) After you have finished laughing, just hear how I think this tool can be effectively applied.**

**It is useful when a couple is complaining...criticizing...calling names... cursing...competing...or acting in any negative manner! Yes, I know your Partner failed to listen...again! I know your Partner made a decision and did not ask your opinion. I know your Partner shared their diagnosis of you for the thousandth time. I know your Partner did a stupid job of parenting the other day. I know your Partner treats the dog ten times better than she treats you. I know your Partner won't tell you what he is thinking! And, trust me, I understand your instinctive response to all these hurts is to feel, say, or do something negative so your Partner knows how hurt you are....right? AND, you make perfect sense but you must STOP IT! That's right....STOP IT!**

**It is a BAD idea! It is a BAD strategy! It will NOT heal anything! Negativity will never get you what you really want. It will prolong and, even intensify the conflict and pain. More and more I think that being successful in relationship is an Art. It is a finely honed, carefully developed skill. It requires maturity, intentionality, consciousness (i.e. overriding the Lizard), positive language, appreciations, abundance, generosity, grace, and a commitment to remove negativity from your relationship (regardless of your Partner's "behavior.")**

**Now, I can hear many of you thinking..."But,**

**I don't feel positive or appreciative or generous." I know you don't. (FYI: Neither do I when Donna is being so "helpful" and telling me how I should have done something differently.) If you don't "feel" it, then do nothing...say nothing. Back away until you can get your lizard calmed and are able to genuinely offer a conscious positive comment or behavior. You will be surprised how your Relationship will shift.**

**One more thing...you may be saying, "I don't mean it as a criticism. My Partner is just so sensitive." It doesn't count!!! What counts is only whether your Partner feels an "Ouch." Harville and Helen now actually teach their couples to gently say, "Ouch" when something feels negative or critical. Not a bad idea!**

**Now, watch the clip again and see what brilliance is couched in a hilarious skit!**

**As always, your comments are much appreciated AND we are always eager to hear from you and share your Journey.**

**David (and Donna)**

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QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be. Abraham Lincoln**

**Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions. Dalai Lama**



**Happiness often sneaks in through a door you didn't know you left open. John Barrymore**

**Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go. Oscar Wilde**

**Be happy for this moment. This moment is your life. Omar Khayyam**

**Don't wait around for other people to be happy for you. Any happiness you get you've got to make yourself. Alice Walker**

**A table, a chair, a bowl of fruit and a violin; what else does a man need to be happy? Albert Einstein**

**Everything has its wonders, even darkness and silence, and I learn, whatever state I may be in, therein to be content. Helen Keller**

**Happiness doesn't depend on any external conditions, it is governed by our mental attitude. Dale Carnegie**

**The Constitution only gives people the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself. Benjamin Franklin**

**Love is trembling happiness. Khalil Gibran**

**There is only one happiness in this life, to love and be loved. George Sand**

**Money can't buy happiness, but it can make you awfully comfortable while you're being miserable. Clare Boothe Luce**

**Happiness is like a kiss. You must share it to enjoy it. Bernard Meltzer**

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

**Sincerely,**

**David and Donna Bowman  
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**Issue: #61**  
**March 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**I hope you don't mind but I am asking you to watch another video! Do you think this is dangerous? I know that the internet holds such interesting, varied delights and creative input that heading down that road can be a huge opportunity for loss of productivity and the dangers of just not getting day-to-day life done!**

**I have a feeling though that this video will be a little different. It is somewhat disturbing, and not your usual internet "cat video" because it is hard not to see the distress of the baby when she fears a loss of connection to her Mother. We all just want to make her a happy, smiling baby once again. I wonder if watching it will awaken a memory or past feeling of a loss in your own life. I am interested in your thoughts.**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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### **MARCH 2014: "Pure Delight"**

**We have a granddaughter named Abby. She lives in Virginia and we see her at least once a month. I cannot tell you how great I feel when she first sees me, throws her arms open (unprompted by anyone), her face lights up all over and she shouts, "Pop Pop!"**

**Let me tell you it is amazing to be delighted in with such pure, unpolluted Connection. At those moments I could happily die and say, "Life has been good." (Lest you worry, I have sometimes felt Donna's delight in me through our 30 year Journey together.) Now, I want you to watch another YouTube video, "Still Face Experiment: Dr. Edward Tronick" Watch it now!!!**

**[Still Face Experiment: Dr. Edward Tronick](#)**

**Have you watched it?**

**Notice how powerfully the child crashed when she was cut off from any response from her Mother. She had been deriving her aliveness and wholeness from experiencing the delight her Mother shared with her just by being with her.**

**When that delight became a neutral experience (not even negative, mind you) the child grew anxious and began de-compensating. When the Mother renewed her delight, her daughter quickly recovered and returned to behavior based on Connection....which, by the way, is our natural state.**

**Let's put it in simple terms. We all want to feel someone's delight in being with us...in the fact they are with us...in the fact that we exist (regardless of our ability to please them!) We wanted it as children and we want it as adults. My heart aches for all the people/children (myself included) who yearned more than anything to be approved of...to be fully seen for their efforts...to be accepted regardless of their shortcomings by their caregivers. My Father always looked grumpy and depressed. That did not feel like delight. It felt like judgment and disappointment. It felt like he may be disgusted with me. My Mother was different. Although she was pretty unconditional with me, she was so unsure and anxious about everything, even her delight in me felt diminished.**

**I want you to know that I understand many of you reading this experienced anything but delight from your caregivers while growing up. You may feel enraged or you may be crying as**

**your read this Thought. I know that and your feelings make perfect sense. Here's the point. Why not resolve to find delight in your Partner? They are yearning for you to be delighted in them but they don't know how to tell you....or even how to receive it! (Expressing that yearning as a child was perhaps met with rejection, judgment, or even shame.) With all this, just know they still need it....and you need it as well!**

**Why would you deprive each other of the very thing you did not get growing up but always, always wanted, needed and deserved?**

**Now, watch the video again and picture your Partner (and yourself) as that child. Then, if you are really serious about transforming your Relationship, create an intention about how you will greet your Partner the next time you see him/her...and if you are really courageous, act on that intention!**

**As always, I welcome your thoughts.**

**David (and Donna)**

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#### **QUOTES OF THE MONTH**

**In nature we never see anything isolated, but everything in connection with something else which is before it, beside it, under it and over it. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**

**Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success. Paul J. Meyer**

I believe in love at first sight. You want that connection, and then you want some problems. Keanu Reeves

It's interesting that I had such a close relationship with my grandfather. Because your parents always judge you: they say, 'You shouldn't do this, you shouldn't do that.' But with your grandparents you have a feeling that you can say anything or you can do anything, and they will support you. That's why you have this kind of connection. Novak Djokovic

Until I realized that rock music was my connection to the rest of the human race, I felt like I was dying, for some reason, and I didn't know why. Bruce Springsteen

I've had moments when I've thought about somebody, picked up the phone to call them and they are on the line already, and I think that maybe there's some vibration, some connection. Clint Eastwood

When someone has a strong intuitive connection, Buddhism suggests that it's because of karma, some past connection. Richard Gere

Everybody laughs the same in every language because laughter is a universal connection. Yakov Smirnoff

You know it's right when you feel this undeniable connection and chemistry. Ali Larter

There's something dangerous about what's funny. Jarring and disconcerting. There is a connection between funny and scary. Christopher Walken

I have never felt any ethnic connection between the Greeks and me other than how hairy I am. George Michael

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

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**Issue: #62**  
**April 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**Happy Spring! Does this time of year make you yearn for renewal? Sometimes I get more introspective and contemplate those discarded resolutions from January and re-visit them. I feel that this spring I will definitely exercise more, eat less, finish that book (am I reading it or writing it?) and spend more time thinking about dialogue with Donna and coaching you in your dialogues with your Partner.**

**Speaking of dialogue and all of the ins and outs of this very simple yet complicated technique, I have been noticing how others communicate in the world: television commentators, journalists, bloggers, Tweeters and social media mavens. So often the dialogue and communication is from a negative point of view rather than from one which is positive. I hope you enjoy this Thought as I took on the most famous communication I could think of and realized how "not" to write it!**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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**APRIL 2014: Ten Commandments of  
Relationship**

**First, I found it interesting that in reviewing the original Ten Commandments, I found that only two of the ten are couched in**



**"abundant" language. The other eight are filled with lots of "nots". So I'm going to practice what we preach and fashion these variations of the original Ten Commandments as they apply to your Relationship in positive language as much as possible.**

**1. Thou shalt make thy Partner first in your life, above any other relationship.**

**2. Thou shalt refrain from fashioning your own desired (graven) image of your Partner, and consciously strive to love them for who they really are.**

**3. Thou shalt speak positively of thy Partner in all things, and refrain from using their name in vain or in any ugly fashion.**

**4. Remember your Sabbath days (your times of rest and renewal with each other), to keep them holy.**

**5. Honor thy father and mother and their influences on your life both positive and negative so that you can understand why you act the way you do. While you're at it, thou shalt honor thy Partner's father and mother and their influences on your Partner as well.**

**6. Thou shalt bring life to your Partner and refrain from killing their spirit in any way.**

**7. Thou shalt be faithful to thy Partner, and refrain from committing adultery. DUH!**

**8. Thou shall uphold thy Partner's essence in all things, and refrain from stealing thy Partner's hopes or dreams or joy.**

**9. Thou shalt tell the truth in love to your Partner, without shame or blame or bearing any false witness.**

**10. Thou shalt be happy for thy Partner's skills and qualities, and refrain from**

**coveting anything that belongs to thy Partner.**

**For those of you who may want to refer to the "original" as a context, here is a link:**

### **The Ten Commandments**

**As always, Donna and I welcome your feedback, questions and suggestions.**

**David (and Donna)**

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**June 6-8, 2014 Frederick, MD**

**July 18-20, 2014, Frederick, MD**

### **Parenting Workshop**

**September 6-7, 2014 Frederick, Md**

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'  
Robin Williams**

**Behold, my friends, the spring is come; the earth has gladly received the embraces of the sun, and we shall soon see the results of their love! Sitting Bull**

**In the Spring, I have counted 136 different kinds of weather inside of 24 hours. Mark Twain**

**The first day of spring is one thing, and the first spring day is another. The difference between them is sometimes as great as a month. Henry Van Dyke**

**People ask me what I do in winter when there's no baseball. I'll tell you what I do. I stare out the window and wait for spring. Rogers Hornsby**

**In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt. Margaret Atwood**

**Don't forget it's daylight savings time. You spring forward, then you fall back. It's like Robert Downey Jr. getting out of bed. David Letterman**

**Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush. Doug Larson**

**The day the Lord created hope was probably the same day he created Spring. Bernard Williams**

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**Issue: #63**  
**June 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**Summer must be just around the corner. I can tell because I sat on a bench at the park when I was supposed to be writing the Thought, and got lost in the reverie of a young boy nearby who was flying a kite. Remember the joy of kites, parks, marbles, swinging? Maybe your childhood was more video games, sports, structured play. It will be a lot different world for our granddaughter with today's restrictions, fears and modern realities. Too bad. I had fun!**

**This Thought is very personal to me. I was working with a couple and they were sort of "stuck" when it came to the everyday courtesies they shared with others and the lack of courtesies they shared with each other. I am sharing a story of my Uncle. I hope it resonates with you. Let us know if this topic is pertinent. If not, what would you like to have us discuss? We are listening, just call or email---we want to hear from you!**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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**JUNE 2014: On Being "Care-Full" with  
Your Family**

**This Thought is prompted by a man who recently confessed to being "sloppy" at times in his communication with his Partner.**

He is a very good man who is dedicated to providing a conscious and safe relationship for his wife and family. Yet he puzzled over the fact that at times he can be more polite and respectful to a total stranger than to the family he lives with.

This reminded me of a thought I have often puzzled over. Why would we ever treat a stranger with vastly more courtesy or respect than we do with our own family? What makes us entitled to shame or criticize someone we are married to when we would never do so with a friend or acquaintance?

Yes, I know we may have had a model of negativity in one or both our parents.  
Yes, I know that our Partner or children trigger us in ways that a stranger does not.  
Yes, I know we may have built up a resentment toward our Partner's actions that make us want to "hurt them back".  
Yes, I know there may be some unresolved problem that happened once or over years that has not been dealt with consciously.

But surely the answer is not to continue being "Care-Less" in the way we treat our loved ones.

I was lucky. My parents, (as many deficits as I thought they had,) were never ugly to each other. They maintained an atmosphere of kindness and courtesy. Donna would say they "tended to their space" even though they would not have had a clue as to what this meant.

I do remember an uncle of mine who was kind and funny and experienced as generous by everyone who knew him. I liked him myself and I always felt energized and attracted to this jolly fellow.

One weekend I stayed in their home and I was horrified at the way this man treated his own family. He criticized his wife (my aunt) mercilessly. He put down his kids (my

cousins) in every move they made. I was utterly confused at the stark discrepancy between how this man behaved with his family and how he behaved "in the world".

We just lost a great human being, Maya Angelou. She wrote and said so many important things that it would take a lifetime to recount them.

But one truth she said is so simple. She said, "All you need to tell who a person is, is to see how they treat others."

I hope this thought will help all of us be more conscious of how Care-Full we are with those whom we most love and who most need to experience us as safe.

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## QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage. Lao Tzu**

**Keep love in your heart. A life without it is like a sunless garden when the flowers are dead. Oscar Wilde**

**All you need is love. But a little chocolate now  
and then doesn't hurt. Charles M. Schulz**

**A flower cannot blossom without sunshine,  
and man cannot live without love. Max Muller**

**Love is an electric blanket with somebody else  
in control of the switch."**

**In all the world, there is not heart for me like  
yours. In all the world, there is no love for  
you like mine. Maya Angelou**

**A new command I give you: Love one another.  
As I have loved you, so you must love one  
another. Jesus Christ**

**I believe people will forget what you said,  
people will forget what you did, but people  
will never forget how you made them feel.  
Maya Angelou**

**You've gotta dance like there's nobody  
watching,  
Love like you'll never be hurt,  
Sing like there's nobody listening,  
And live like it's heaven on earth. William W.  
Purkey**

**Love is that condition in which the happiness  
of another person is essential to your  
own. Robert A. Heinlein**

**We're all a little weird. And life is a little  
weird. And when we find someone whose  
weirdness is compatible with ours, we join up  
with them and fall into mutually satisfying  
weirdness-and call it love-true love. Robert  
Fulghum**

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

**Sincerely,**

**David and Donna Bowman  
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**Issue: #64**  
**July 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**Have you ever stepped back after a conversation with a Partner, child or loved one and just said to yourself "what does he/she want? I thought I was on track but wow, was I off base!" If you have had this experience, you are definitely not alone. We have ALL been there.**

**This Thought explores this idea and maybe will give you a bit more insight. Then again, it may bring up even more questions. When it does, remember, we are here for you. Call, e-mail or let us know how we can help!**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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### **JULY 2014: "What Do Couples Want?"**

**There is no question that we want a lot from our Relationships. I have often thought and said that we expect a lot more from our Relationship than we ever used to. My parents did not expect all that much. My Mother kept the house and my Father worked at a milk plant to provide for the family. I never heard my Mother complain that my Father was emotionally unavailable. And it never crossed my Father's mind that my Mother should have a career and help with providing income for the family. She**

never expected him to do laundry or wash dishes. He never expected her to take the car to the shop (she did not even drive) or to mow the lawn.

It was pretty simple. I guess they understood each other. It worked! Maybe, today, we want too much: two thriving careers, two equally superb, available and involved parents, a very involved and rewarding social life, plenty of passion and intimacy, responsible community involvement, and, of course, free time to experience leisure and personal interests. WOW! Sounds impossible, doesn't it?

NOW, what do we REALLY want from our Partner? I have discovered the answer to this after being with thousands of couples (NOT to mention my 31 years with Donna) and the answer may be surprising. Some may say it is sex. Some may say it is companionship. Many people say they want better communication. But, after all these years, professionally and personally, I believe our deepest need in Relationship is none of these.

I believe our deepest need is: *to be understood*--to be gotten. Bruce Willis says this through his character in "The Story of Us." He says there is "no better feeling than to be gotten."

We feel so, so "gotten" and understood in the Romantic Phase (i.e. drugged and deluded.) We are shocked and hurt when that feeling does not last. (By the way...I think this is what kids also want. More than to get their way or to get by with something, I think kids want most to be understood....to be validated. *Are you going to register for the Conscious and Connected Parenting workshop in September?*)

What do we do when we no longer feel understood by our Partner? How do we get

our Partner to really "get" us? I have discovered two fast tracks to getting back to that feeling of being deeply understood, of being "gotten."

The first is: *seek first to understand*. You have no idea the generosity your Partner holds for you if you are willing to first cross the Bridge with curiosity and compassion and validate their World. When your Partner feels truly "gotten" by you, it is amazing the change that occurs. It opens up the Relationship to that wonderful place of mutual understanding and Connection.

The second track is: especially for men. IF we can just learn to show our Partner our full self, our fears, our fragile places, our weaknesses, then our Partner feels trusted, close, and connected with us. Ironically, it is in being vulnerable that we are seen as wanting to be deeply connected.

It is the opposite of poker (which I have been practicing online with cheap chips...another of my "phases" as Donna identifies.) In poker, we try mightily to hide our weaknesses and portray our strengths...never showing what we really have.

**PLEASE don't do your Relationship like a poker game. Risk sharing your vulnerability with your Partner and they will honor you and thank you for it. Show your hand first!**

**Please let me know what you think! AND, get that registration in for the Conscious and Connected Parenting workshop!**

**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**

**August 15-17, 2014 Frederick, MD**

**September 12-14, 2014 Frederick, MD**

**October 10-12, 2014 Frederick, MD**

## **Parenting Workshop**

**September 6-7, 2014 Frederick, MD**

### **QUOTES OF THE MONTH**

**I doubt whether the world holds for any one a more soul-stirring surprise than the first adventure with ice-cream. Heywood Broun**

**The secret to humor is surprise. Aristotle**

**There is no surprise more magical than the surprise of being loved: It is God's finger on man's shoulder. Charles Morgan**

**Searching is half the fun: life is much more manageable when thought of as a scavenger hunt as opposed to a surprise party. The only thing that should surprise us is that there are still some things that can surprise us. Jimmy Buffet**

**"What is love? Love is when one person knows all of your secrets... your deepest, darkest, most dreadful secrets of which no one else in the world knows... and yet in the end, that one person does not think any less of you; even if the rest of the world does."**

**Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity. George S. Patton**

**It's great to be a blonde. With low expectations it's very easy to surprise people. Pamela Anderson**

**The only thing that should surprise us is that**

**there are still some things that can surprise us. Francois de La Rochefoucauld**

**Sometimes you surprise the goalkeeper and sometimes the goalkeeper surprises you. In my career, I tried to do more of the first than the second. Eric Cantona**

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

**Sincerely,**

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**Issue: #65**  
**August 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**I'm in denial! Yes, me! I keep thinking that life will slow down, that I will make time for the "little" things (Donna's list of these and mine are, well, totally different!) But here it is, the end of another summer and all those little projects are still sneaking up on me and for another summer, they will not get done! The great news is, we have reveled in the joy of longer days, sultry nights, meandering walks, quiet conversations, a few more late breakfasts and a lot more lingering dinners. In addition, we've had more family, friends, babies, neighbors, animals and nature. What a joy life can be...I think those "little" things can just wait!**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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AUGUST 2014: "The Magic of 5"

**In February I was rear-ended on a country road near our home here in Frederick. Our Camry was totaled. "Oh no!" "What a bummer!"**

**As I pondered this event, I began to wonder if I could see it a different way. I came up with 5 really good things connected with this accident:**

- 1. Even though I was in an accident, no one was seriously hurt.**
- 2. It was not my fault. (Lord knows I've done some dumb things while driving.)**
- 3. I have never been in a real car wreck before.**
- 4. Even though it totaled my car, it was just a car and not my wife or my kids or my grand-kids.**
- 5. I am probably a little more careful on the highway since then.**

**I am still not overjoyed at what happened. And my neck still hurts a bit. But I can tell you that bummers that come our way are part of life and the way we react to and perceive any happening, especially bad happenings, is usually more important than the happening itself.**

**Let me issue you readers a challenge. When the next "Oh, no" arrives in your life, take some time to see if you can find 5 positive things around the very same thing. (There is actually a book entitled, When my house burned down I could see the mountains much better.)**

**Now for the real challenge. The next time you have a frustration, resentment, or one of the other negative feelings about your Partner....STOP. Take note of the specific incident and what is bothering you. Then come up with 5 things that are abundant, lovable and positive about your Partner. Next, check to see if this exercise takes some of the sting out of your hurt feelings. It's a variation of the 5-1 Principle. (Put 5 positive things into your relationship for every negative one.)**

**If you really want to take the challenge all the way, just communicate what you are doing with your Partner. Then do something fun together.**

**Note: Some of you are thinking: "He doesn't know my situation;" "It's easy for him to say...he's married to that easy going woman;" or "This sounds too 'new age' for me;" "It's just not realistic;" or "I don't feel like trying to be positive at those times." You are the ones this article is *really* for.**

**We welcome your thoughts.**

**David (and Donna)**

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**September 12-14, 2014 Frederick, MD**

**October 10-12, 2014 Frederick, MD**

**November 7-9, 2014, Frederick, MD**

### **Next Step Workshop**

**November 15-16, Frederick, MD**

#### QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**August brings into sharp focus and a furious boil everything I've been listening to in the late spring and summer. Henry Rollins**

**I want summer to last forever for these reasons: 1. Hair gets lighter. 2. Skin gets darker. 3. Water gets warmer. 4. Drinks get colder. 5. Music gets louder. 6. Nights get longer. 7. Life gets better.**

**Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by**



**no means a waste of time. John Lubbock**

**Beach sand, perfect tans. Day walks, night talks. Sleepless nights, pillow fights. & spending every day with those who matter most.**

**In every girl's life there's a boy she'll never forget and a summer where it all began.**

**Summer is the annual permission slip to be lazy. To do nothing and have it count for something. To lie in the grass and count the stars. To sit on a branch and study the clouds. Regina Brett**

**Nothing is more memorable than a smell. One scent can be unexpected, momentary and fleeting, yet conjure up a childhood summer beside a lake in the mountains. Diane Ackerman**

**Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability. Sam Keen**

**Let a man walk ten miles steadily on a hot summer's day along a dusty English road, and he will soon discover why beer was invented. Gilbert K. Chesterton**

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

**Sincerely,**

**David and Donna Bowman  
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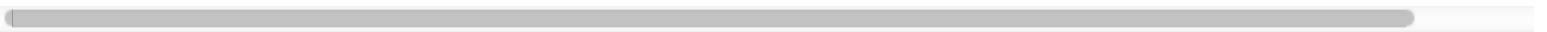
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**Issue: #66**  
**September 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**Ahhh, a chill is in the air and I am enjoying an occasional night by the fire. How about you? What do you enjoy most about the changing seasons? We would like to discuss the possibility of a "meeting" where by you and your partner, your family, your co-workers, your friends, discuss the most positive aspect of the changing season and celebrate! That's right, have a little party, take a walk, have coffee at a new bistro, take the kids to a new park--step outside your routine and celebrate!**

**Now, after the celebration, revel in some new energy or insights and practice some of the tips in the Thought for this month. I promise, things can and will change, for the BETTER, if you do!**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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## **SEPTEMBER 2014: "What's a Guy to do?"**

**This thought is for the men out there who have heard me preach the sermon on "cherishing" your Partner and may have either slept through it or have little idea how go about this. (This is also for all our Friends in same sex relationships whose Partner says things like: "You don't pay attention to me"; "We don't spend enough time together" etc.)**

**How do you cherish someone? What exactly do you do to make your Partner feel special?**

**I am convinced this is the thing women want most from their relationship....to be cherished. As one woman in my office put it, "I want to know that he has me in his mind; that he's thinking of me."**

**I am equally convinced that, in general, we men are pretty poor at understanding this need to be cherished. We don't experience the need for Connection quite the same way women do. (Stay tuned, Ladies, for next month's Thought.) And we are also good at hearing criticism instead of hurt; feeling shame rather than compassion; looking for a way out rather than moving toward the problem.**

**I remember the few times my Mother would express her frustrations, my Dad would just walk out without saying a word. It felt awkward but it worked for him. He was limited in his skills for experiencing intimacy. Come to think of it, so am I. Imagine that!**

**So...here are my five real, do-able actions to help your Partner feel cherished and, as a bonus, I've provided a helpful question to ask in order to find out how you are doing. Take this seriously, guys!**

**1. Spend conscious and intentional time with your Partner. This is not on the phone or in front of a video game or a ball game on TV. This is "Honey, I miss you when we're apart and I feel all is right when we are together." Go ahead...say something like that. Ask: "How could we find a way to have more time together?"**

**2. Listen to her. This is a must. Don't just do something....stand there...refrain from giving advice...just mirror and validate. Ask: "Are there ways I could learn to hear you better?"**

**3. Share compliments and appreciations with her. This should be easy. Name all she does for you...for the household. Name a quality she has and tell her how much you love that part of her. Tell her how attracted you are to her. You are, you know. (Ignore the less attractive parts...you know energy follows attention so focus on the positive.) Ask: "Are there things you would like to be**

appreciated for that I may have missed?"

4. Replace your anger with compassion. I know being criticized or disrespected is infuriating. But anger is a deadly strategy. I have asked many women and I am now certain that male anger or rage is the number one turn off for our Partners. Do something with your anger until you can transform it into compassion for your Partner. And, remember, silence is most likely to be interpreted as anger. Ask: "Are you ever afraid of my anger? What can I do to make you feel safer with me?"

5. Support her. Let her know you have her back...that you will protect her feelings with understanding. Again, it is not advice but it is support. There's a big difference. Even when you disagree with her view of things, she will not relent until she feels supported. Ask: "Are there ways I could better show my support for you?"

I know these are tough questions to ask. Especially when we guys are not feeling vindicated ourselves. But, trust me, any effort to do any of these five behaviors will result in magic.

Let me know how it goes!

David (and Donna)

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QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**Harmony with land is like harmony with a friend; you cannot cherish his right hand and chop off his left.  
Aldo Leopold**

**Friends... they cherish one another's hopes. They are kind to one another's dreams. Henry David Thoreau**

**If you're lucky enough to still have grandparents, visit them, cherish them and celebrate them while you can.  
Regina Brett**

**Cherish all your happy moments; they make a fine cushion for old age. Booth Tarkington**

**"To share is precious, pure and fair. Don't play with something you should cherish for life. Don't you wanna care, ain't it lonely out there?" Marvin Gaye**

**"Let us find someone who will never break our heart, who will always be there for us, who will make us happy all the time, who will respect, love and cherish us in everything, and we can't go far in the search because such personality is within us, not in the world we are living now!" Michael Bassey Johnson**

**Cherish your human connections - your relationships with friends and family. Barbara Bush**

**Cherish your visions and your dreams as they are the children of your soul, the blueprints of your ultimate achievements. Napoleon Hill**

**Cherish forever what makes you unique, 'cuz you're really a yawn if it goes. Bette Midler**

**For in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's futures. And we are all mortal. John F. Kennedy**

**Today a new sun rises for me; everything lives, everything is animated, everything seems to speak to me of my passion, everything invites me to cherish it.  
Ninon de L'Enclos**

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

**Sincerely,**

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Issue: #67  
October 2014

Dear Friends,

**Yes, you are correct, it IS November and the Thought is for October! Did you think we forgot this issue? No, though one team member, an important one...missed the deadline! She (and no, it's not Donna!) apologizes and promises that this "trick" will not be repeated. After all, tricks in October are almost as fun as treats!**

**We were loving a relaxing Sunday by the fire and having a discussion about this Thought. If you recall, last month we explored what makes your partner feel cherished or special. This month we look at things from a guy's point of view. What does he REALLY want? You may be surprised!**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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### **OCTOBER 2014: "How to Respect Your Guy"**

**A thousand men were asked the simple question, "If you had to choose one, would you rather be loved or respected?" Guess what? 90% of the men said they would rather be respected.**

**I felt like I was on solid ground last month in my suggestions for how men could help their partners feel more cherished. (I got**



**some feedback on the word "cherished." Try "loved" or "treasured" if you want.) I am less confident in making suggestions to women this month, somehow. Please see this as an honest effort to capture some things men really, really want and feel but probably will not be able to tell you outright. My thoughts come out of my observations over a bunch of years of sitting with thousands of couples.**

**Just as it is true that women are not likely to say outright how much they wish to be cherished or treasured, men may not say directly that they wish to be respected or seen as a hero. That does not make it any less true!**

**Ready? Some of my readers will be uncomfortable or downright angry upon hearing these suggestions. I know this. It may be because of a painful experience with your husband or a prior relationship or your childhood story. I also know that across the board women are measurably less satisfied with their relationship than men. Women tend to feel "I already work much harder at keeping this relationship going than he does."**

**Nevertheless, allow me to share what I genuinely see as true and helpful to know.**

**1. Most important of all: refrain from any criticism. It may come as a shock but we men are far more vulnerable to feeling criticized than our Partners. Notice that I said "feeling" criticized. Donna can say something as harmless as "I think one of the tires is low" and immediately I can shift into "Oh no. I'm a terrible husband" mode. This phenomenon is widespread with men (I've checked it out.) It stems from a combination of our particular childhood story combined with what Steven Stosny calls our primal urge to "provide" and "protect". Women, understandably, don't easily get this.**

**Just know this...that anytime you are questioning your guy about everyday things there is a distinct possibility that he will feel criticized. Any mention of a deficit can do this. From "It's cold in this house" to "We never take nice vacations."**

**Learn and practice abundant language for everything. "I would love it if you would...." "It makes me happy when you ..." (e.g. come home on time; drive the speed limit, etc.)**

**2. Be patient with his relational style. Men want to be connected just as much as women. It's true. We often do it differently than through intimate conversation or sharing of feelings. Many times we don't know what we feel. Terry Real writes that men, by and large, have lost touch with their feelings as they grow up. We may very well want to connect by doing an activity or by being sexual. Fixing a broken appliance may be a loving and connected act for a man. So, again with abundant language, look for ways to say "I understand that you are wanting to connect with me in your own way."**

**3. Seek to understand his need for peace and routine. I know this can be infuriating but it is true that for men, if things are not too terribly out of whack, they will tend to choose not to stir things up. Most men that I know feel at a disadvantage in "relational" discussions or dust ups. As men, our unspoken desire is for things to be peaceful. That means that we have succeeded in providing a safe and pleasant environment for our Partner and our family.**

**This is very important to most men. Picture a male lion perched on an outpost watching over his mate and cubs. He is happy and relaxed when the family is eating and playing. He is doing his job. If there is any disruption, the male lion must go on high alert and take defensive or aggressive measures. (See Stosny: "Lions Without a Cause"). The next time your man runs away**

or loses his temper, see if it is not related to his frustration over failing to provide a peaceful connection for you and the family.

**4. Try to understand his vulnerability to shame. Please note: your Partner is not going to reveal to you that he feels ashamed. If he is like me, he is too ashamed to reveal that he is ashamed. I will hide or run away or resort to anger first. (Shame is a very instructive but complicated phenomenon. See Love and Stosny: How to Improve Your Marriage Without Talking About It. This book informs my understanding of hetero relationships more than any other since GTLYW.)**

The point is that at a very early age little boys are hypersensitive to too much relational stimulation and are inadvertently given signals that they are not doing it right...the "relational" thing, that is. This starts a lifelong pattern of being vulnerable to shame, especially in intimate relationships. Add to this the many cultural messages that a boy doesn't "do" feelings, certainly not vulnerable or soft ones like sad, afraid, anxious....and a boy certainly doesn't express feelings by crying! So an abundance of compassion is needed to re-frame what you women experience as avoidance, indifference, willfulness or worse.

**5. Trust me on this one....The top priority in his life is for YOU to be happy with him. Trust that. That's what I said. What a man wants most...more than a fortune, or a scratch golf game, or six pack abs or a promotion...is to know that his Partner is pleased with him. Go ahead! Ask him, "As far as you and I are concerned, what do you most want out of life?"**

I have posed this notion to hundreds of men and there has been 100% agreement to date. Usually with an enthusiastic

**"ABSOLUTELY!"**

**Again, to be respected and to feel successful in protecting and providing makes for a very fulfilled man. (Please be clear that providing and protecting are not about material things or wild animals anymore. Women today can survive and stay safe on their own. It's about connection and peace and routine and respect.)**

**I would love to hear your wisdom about, and/or challenges to, any of what I have written.**

**David (and Donna)**

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**January 9-11, 2015 Frederick, MD**

**February 20-22, 2015 Frederick, MD**

## **Next Step Workshop**

**March 7-8, 2015 Frederick, MD**

## **QUOTES OF THE MONTH**

**I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me... All I ask is that you respect me as a human being. Jackie Robinson**

**One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say. Bryant H. McGill**

**There is no respect for others without humility in one's self. Henri Frederic Amiel**

Everyone should be respected as an individual, but no one idolized. Albert Einstein

To be one, to be united is a great thing. But to respect the right to be different is maybe even greater. Bono

And the greatest lesson that mom ever taught me though was this one. She told me there would be times in your life when you have to choose between being loved and being respected. Now she said to always pick being respected.  
Chris Christie

The bond that links your true family is not one of blood, but of respect and joy in each other's life.  
Richard Bach

It is so important to get respect for what you do and at the same time give it. Estelle Parsons

When you practice gratefulness, there is a sense of respect toward others. Dalai Lama

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

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**Issue: #68**  
**November 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**We are nearing the end of another year and it seems so trite to say "where did the time go?" or "can you believe the holidays are almost here?"**

**In spite of the hype that comes with the season, and all of the shopping and stress and the spending (!) we love to savor the little things from 2014: special times with family and friends, the events that caused us to laugh, to cry and that will be etched in our memory forever, the kindness of a partner, the smile from a child, the unconditional acceptance from an unexpected source. But most of all, Thanksgiving reminds us of the gratitude we have that you are in our lives. We appreciate the support and caring, the questions and challenges and the honor you have given us to be part of your lives. We take this honor seriously and with gratitude, wish you a wonderful Thanksgiving season.**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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### **NOVEMBER 2014: "What is Zero Negativity?"**

**Some of you may have heard of the latest concept in Imago known as Zero Negativity. Harville Hendrix and Helen Hunt have been promoting this concept for several years. He**

recently referred to ZN as the "heart of the theory and practice of Imago."

As we often do, our group of certified Imago coaches and therapists has taken our "leader" to task on this concept. "Are you whitewashing any conflict?" "Are you saying there is no place for negative feelings or protest of things that just aren't right?"

I, too, have been critical of a concept that uses a negative word and the number zero to communicate a thought intended to convey the best of human consciousness and relational maturity. However, let me explain what I think he means. And, I will do my best to make this practical and easily understood.

I think Zero Negativity means that when we negate Another, whether it be our Partner, our Kids or anyone else, we not only diminish them and us, but also diminish the positive power of the relationship for our growth and healing. Negation is shaming, blaming, criticizing, or any other method to highlight the adaptations (brilliant as they were as children) and faults of Another. Imago is about seeking, honoring, and celebrating Abundance, Joy and Essence...in our Partner and in Ourselves.

Every major religion in history has discouraged negating, abusing, and terrorizing others. At the same time, every major religion has encouraged the emergence of the Essence of the individual and the relationship with the neighbor. The Master Teacher of my own faith tradition cleverly said "Be not so concerned about the speck in your Partner's eye, when you are sitting there with a log in your own eye." (OK, that was close to what he said!)

This Teacher also said "Be angry, but do not sin." What a curious phrase! It seems to say negative feelings and thoughts are perfectly natural and ok. It's what you might do with

them that causes harm and discord.

(As always, I welcome your responses and challenges to my monthly musings.)

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 5-7, 2014 Frederick, MD

January 9-11, 2015 Frederick, MD

February 20-22, 2015 Frederick, MD

## Next Step Workshop

March 7-8, 2015 Frederick, MD

## QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**Anonymous**

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!

I hate turkeys. If you stand in the meat section at the grocery store long enough, you start to get mad at turkeys. There's turkey ham, turkey bologna, turkey pastrami. Some one needs to tell the turkey, 'man, just be yourself. Mitch Hedberg

Turkey: A large bird whose flesh, when eaten on certain religious anniversaries has the



**peculiar property of attesting piety and gratitude. Ambrose Bierce, The Devil's Dictionary**

**Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough. Oprah Winfrey**

**Vegetables are a must on a diet. I suggest carrot cake, zucchini bread and pumpkin pie. Jim Davis**

**Thanksgiving dinners take eighteen hours to prepare. They are consumed in twelve minutes. Half-times take twelve minutes. This is not coincidence. Erma Bombeck**

**Gratitude is the inward feeling of kindness received. Thankfulness is the natural impulse to express that feeling. Thanksgiving is the following of that impulse. Henry Van Dyke**

**You may have heard of Black Friday and Cyber Monday. There's another day you might want to know about: Giving Tuesday. The idea is pretty straightforward. On the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, shoppers take a break from their gift-buying and donate what they can to charity. Bill Gates**

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

**Sincerely,**

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

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## Thought of the Month News and Notes

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**Issue: #69**  
**December 2014**

**Dear Friends,**

**Peace! Joy! Love! Yes, those words are ringing in our ears, too! Everywhere we look we are reminded that it is a wonderful time of the year. Maybe your family and friends are of the "perfect" variety--you know, they host wonderful, flawless parties, have well-behaved children and the rare perfect relatives that do not argue, love the gifts, don't eat or drink too much and never, ever criticize anyone else in the family. What? Not yours? Well, this is not exactly ours either.**

**Our family and friends are just people on a journey, just as we are and they sometimes stumble a bit, just like us! I guess the holiday season with all of its stresses may be a good time to remember that we are all striving for love and understanding. Cut yourselves a little slack, don't worry and stress too much and let a little light in your heart. I hope this Thought helps!**

**As always, if you need us, just call.**

**Donna and David**

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**DECEMBER 2014: "It's the  
most...wonderf...stressful. . .time of  
the year!"**

**The popular song recorded by Andy Williams**

**in 1963 is delightfully nostalgic.**

**"With the kids jingle belling and everyone telling you 'be of good cheer', it's the most wonderful time of the year. It's the happiest season of all, with those holiday greetings and gay happy meetings, when friends come to call, it's the hap-happiest season of all."**

**Maybe it was easier to experience the happy and wonderful holiday season in 1963. I was only twelve. Many of you reading this were not even born. I remember our family glued to the TV for the whole weekend of the Kennedy assassination. I remember playing cards as a family on many cold holiday nights, with cider and popcorn. Come to think of it we were pretty connected. We were not an emotionally connected family, but there was a sense of togetherness.**

**These days there are so many "exits" through which family energy can escape. This is especially true at the very holiday time which is supposed to connect us.**

**The kids I know are not jingle belling. They are lost in the world of electronics.**

**Instead of people telling me "be of good cheer," what I hear is, "Are you ready for Christmas?" This simply reminds me of all the additional decorating, shopping and arranging that needs to be done.**

**"It's a time when friends come to call," translates to all kinds of stressful feelings when it comes to extended family and in-law harmony. I don't have to elaborate on this, do I?**

**Financial worries can peak at this "...happiest time..." which can drain energy and put stress on our relationships.**

**So how can we restore the holidays to a wonderful time of joyful connection?**

## **Some tips.**

**1. Ask yourselves, "What do we really want to experience together?" This is different than "What must we do for our extended families or others?"**

**2. Develop some family rituals that are free of electronics.**

**3. When you are involved with extended families, create times that you can check on your Space as a couple.**

**4. Strategize together about gifts and spending, remembering that very meaningful and creative gifts often cost no money.**

**5. Men, help her out with stuff, even if you are not that into it. You'll be her hero!**

**Donna and I wish you all joyful, relaxed, blessed, and connected holidays.**

**David (and Donna)**

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**QUOTES OF THE MONTH**

**Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful. Norman Vincent Peale**

**Happy, happy Christmas, that can win us back to the delusions of our childhood days, recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth, and transport the traveler back to his own fireside and quiet home! Charles Dickens**

**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. Dave Barry**

**I don't think Christmas is necessarily about things. It's about being good to one another, it's about the Christian ethic, it's about kindness. Carrie Fisher**

**What I don't like about office Christmas parties is looking for a job the next day. Phyllis Diller**

**My brothers and sisters, may the spirit of love which comes at Christmastime fill our homes and our lives and linger there long after the tree is down and the lights are put away for another year. Thomas S. Monson**

**The main reason Santa is so jolly is because he knows where all the bad girls live. George Carlin**

**Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas. Calvin Coolidge**

**I stopped believing in Santa Claus when I was six. Mother took me to see him in a department store and he asked for my autograph. Shirley Temple**

**The Supreme Court has ruled that they cannot have a nativity scene in Washington, D.C. This wasn't for any religious reasons. They**

**couldn't find three wise men and a virgin. Jay Leno**

**A lovely thing about Christmas is that it's compulsory, like a thunderstorm, and we all go through it together. Garrison Keillor**

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

**Sincerely,**

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

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