



Connecting
Couples

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Thought of the Month News and Notes

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Dear Friends,

We hope you are enjoying the changing seasons and have a sense of fun for what's ahead: new friends, new experiences, familiar holidays and all that they entail. We are enjoying seeing the world from the eyes of a child. If you have a chance to just "be" for a little while in a child's world, I promise you will be entranced. If you don't have a child in your life, borrow one for a short time (maybe a very short time) but long enough to let go of stresses and "be" in the moment.

What about just being in the moment with your partner? I'm amazed at how busy we make our lives and how often we neglect those closest to us. Try being quiet, being still and just in the moment with your partner. Let us know if you made a discovery! We are ready to help you and your partner in this relationship business...we are here to help!

As always, if you need us, just call.

Donna and David

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SEPTEMBER 2015: Trial Separation: Good Idea?

Many of us have been confronted with the possibility of a trial separation; either for ourselves or for friends or family members.

Donna and I have, of course, been asked about the value of this tactic for improving a marriage or for deciding whether to continue a marriage.

There seems to be two prevailing reasons that therapists and divorce consultants and attorneys give for employing a trial separation in a highly conflictual marriage.

1. It takes each person and perhaps the children away from the highly stressful or even violent atmosphere of continual conflict.

2. It gives each party a chance to work on themselves, to make a decision apart from the stress of conflict, and perhaps even to develop a genuine missing or yearning to be back with the partner.

I have heard testimonials and read some sophisticated rationale for the option of a trial separation.

I remain unconvinced.

I imagine there are cases of trial separations which have brought both parties back into bliss with each other. It's also true that once in a while a "terminal" cancer will just spontaneously remit without treatment and leave the patient totally healthy. Unusual examples do not, in my mind, indicate a path to be followed.

I think of a trial separation with an analogy. Suppose my car is giving me trouble day after day until finally it is just too troublesome to even drive. Do I leave it sitting in the parking lot and walk to work for a while in hopes that the situation will clear up?

Donna says energy follows attention. She is right. We need to act in the direction of the change we want to see. Gandhi said "BE the change you want to see."

If my golf game needs improvement it won't help to go play tennis for a while or just to

go to the course to use the sauna.

The reasoning against a trial separation is that it defies several important Imago concepts.

One is that it represents a massive exit on the part of both partners. It is the opposite of Showing Up. It is Peace that is bought cheaply. There is no guarantee of growth from anyone. There is a high risk of an affair if one is not already operative. (I don't think Donna is going to feel a lack of excitement in our relationship and then suggest that I go have a weekend with Michelle Pfeiffer to get my excitement back.)

The other concept that is defied is the truth that our relationships are about growth and healing. I need my partner for that growth and healing, no matter how painful it is or how long it takes. To separate is to deprive each of us of that "opportunity."

While I understand the urge to escape the horrible stress of fighting, there are better and more long lasting ways to end the conflicts. We have devoted our lives to these ways in the form of coaching and workshops.

Several other thoughts of caution before trying a "trial".....

-----It is very confusing for kids. Are they together? Not together? Getting back together? Not getting back together? What's going on, anyway?

-----Also, couples usually are not equally committed to the concept. This brings up even more "stuff" to work through.

-----And, finally, after the trial, if the reconnection does not last it can create even more resentment and rejection and permanent hurt than there was before.

As always, please give your feedback on these 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

October 2-4, 2015, Frederick, MD

November 6-8, 2015, Frederick, MD

December 4-6, 2015, Frederick, MD

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it." William Arthur Ward

"I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought; and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder." G.K. Chesterton

"'Enough' is a feast. Buddhist proverb

"If you count all your assets, you always show a profit." Robert Quillen

"At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." Albert Schweitzer

"The deepest craving of human nature is the need to be appreciated." William James

"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

"Let us rise up and be thankful, for if we didn't learn a lot today, at least we learned a

little, and if we didn't learn a little, at least we didn't get sick, and if we got sick, at least we didn't die; so, let us all be thankful." Buddha

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

Sincerely,

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

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