



Connecting
Couples

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

Thought of the Month News and Notes

In This Issue

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

Quick Links

[Register for
Workshops](#)

[Next Step Workshops](#)

[IRI Couples Blog](#)

[LaSplash online
magazine](#)

[Be Sure to "Like" Us
on Facebook!](#)

Join Our List

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Issue: #88
August 2016

Dear Friends,

As summer draws to a close and we anticipate cooler temperatures and a "hot" election cycle, we either are eager or wishing it was all over so we can move on!

I encourage you to sit on the porch or a bench in the park, absorb the feeling of the changing season and breathe! My next request is that you read this Thought, which I believe is a bit challenging, and is likely even hard work. I know you are up to the challenge! It will really make you stop and think about whether or not you truly "get" your partner and what "getting" really means. I look forward to hearing what you think.

Questions? Just call me!

Donna and David

[Be Sure to "Like" Us on Facebook!](#)

AUGUST: "Validation: The Power Tool of Intimacy"

Most of you have heard Donna and me say that Intimacy is "Into me see." What this means is...the willingness for another to truly see me...to know me...to be allowed into my vulnerable places...and the willingness to go there for the Other also. This is intimacy. It is more than sex (although the Hebrew concept for having sex is translated as "knowing.")

Take a moment now and asses your own sense of intimacy with your Partner. Are you willing to be seen deeply and fully? And to see deeply and fully?

My thought this month is that you have the power to increase the intimacy level of your relationship. Yes, you can do this on your own. The key is in growing your capacity to validate. Big word-"validate." I think it means to truly "get" another person. Bruce Willis's character in "The Story of Us" says "In the beginning it felt like Katie really "got" me. And believe me, there's no better feeling than being gotten."

Of the various counselors I have had through the years, the one or two who really were helpful and empowered transformation were the ones who "got" me. Being "gotten" is not hearing advice. It's not being yelled at. It's not having to deal with another's interpretation. It is being unconditionally and generously understood from another whose total agenda is about what is going on with me.

Let me quickly say that I fail miserably at this many times. The other day Donna was reporting about her day and I thought I was listening. But she pointed out that I made a few understanding comments and then began talking about the election. Trust me: we are often not as good at communication as we would like to think we are.

The world we live in does not support the concept of validation. The world we live in increasingly looks for one who is wrong and one who is right. The football player sits for the National Anthem and everyone weighs in with their own opinion and with what they would do. Indeed, it is hard....no, actually, it is an art to fully enter the world of the other in a way that conveys "you make sense" or "I get you."

Even when our intentions are noble we have a hard time fully validating someone with a different experience. A woman reveals that she had a miscarriage and you'll hear well-meaning people say "It's probably for the best" or "Be thankful you can always have another child" or "God needed your baby more than you did." I have heard these very statements and worse.

When someone is saying, doing, or feeling things that don't make sense to us and that we cannot validate, we simply need more information. As Donna says so often, "With enough information, everyone makes sense."

Often people are concerned about validating something that is not acceptable or something that isn't the truth. Validation is NOT acceptance or agreement as to the truth of something. (That is what courtrooms are for.) Validation is about connection and understanding. Out of connection and understanding comes safety. And out of safety comes transformation.

So when our Partner does or says something really jerky or something that really hurts us, it is very difficult to even think of validation...much less offer it. It is especially challenging for those people who were severely deprived of being "gotten" when they were growing up.

Like our friend, Yumi Schleifer taught us, validation is like a stool with three legs.

The first leg is to validate the actual situation being described. "Donna, it makes sense that you said the cabinets are a mess because some items are indeed out of place."

The second leg is for me to take some ownership. "I see how I contributed because I put some of the things in the wrong place."

The third leg is to move into compassion for the linkage to the childhood story. "Donna, I can see how this may trigger some feelings because as a child you had to be the one to straighten out messes in your home while others seemed oblivious."

So, for practice, take a happening from somewhere in your life that you are not happy with. Now do some inner work on how you might go about validating the person involved. I do believe as you increase your capacity to really "get your partner" (without blame and shame) you will be rewarded over time with a kinder and more connected relationship.

Let me know how it goes!

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 7-9, 2016, Frederick, MD

November 18-20, 2016, Frederick. MD

Next Step Workshops

September 24-25, 2016

Parenting Workshop

December 3-4, 2016, Frederick, MD

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"Just like children, emotions heal when they are heard and validated." Jill Bolte Taylor

**By all these lovely tokens September days are here,
With summer's best of weather And autumn's best of cheer.
Helen Hunt Jackson**

**The spring, summer, is quite a hectic time for people in their lives,
but then it comes to autumn, and to winter, and you can't but help think back to the year that was,
and then hopefully looking forward to the year that is approaching.
Enya**

**"A lion of truth never assumes anything without validity.
Assumptions are quick exits for lazy minds that like to graze out in the fields without bother."
Suzy Kassem**

**"Fall is my favorite season in Los Angeles, watching the birds change color and fall from the trees."
David Letterman**

**There is a time in the last few days of summer when the ripeness of autumn fills the air.
Rudolfo Anaya**

**"The one person you'll be spending the rest of your life with is you.
Treat yourself with love and respect."
Elle Sommer**

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

Sincerely,

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

Bowman & Associates, PA, 7823 Chestnut Grove Road, Frederick, MD 21701

[SafeUnsubscribe™ {recipient's email}](#)

[Forward email](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by info@connectingcouples.net in collaboration with

Constant Contact 

Try it free today

