



Connecting
Couples

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Thought of the Month News and Notes

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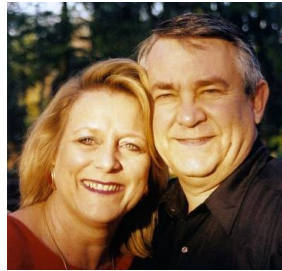
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Dear Friends,

Finally, the long, hot and climate-challenged summer is over! Our thoughts and prayers continue for all of those who have been touched by the hurricanes, floods and disasters. Life is so uncertain...love, love, love one another.

This is our 100th Thought of the Month! WOW! I was once asked if I would have difficulty coming up with a Thought full of fresh ideas each month. I guess the answer is "No!" I have ideas bubbling up in my brain and you, dear friends, my family and those whose lives touch ours continue to inspire me...here's to the next 100!

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Keep in touch!

David (and Donna)

**SEPTEMBER: The Tale of Four
Marriages**

**First, let's consider the marriage of my
parents. Carl and Vera Bowman grew up in a**

rural farming community in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. They attended the same grade school, the same high school, the same church (which was the same church that their parents and grandparents had attended before them.) My father's sister married my mother's brother and one of my father's other sisters married one of my mother's other brothers. These people didn't get out much! Their wedding consisted of them dropping in to the Pastor's home one Sunday afternoon and saying "I do." No license required. (No driver's license was required back then either.)

They were happy I suppose, but as their marriage evolved, happiness was not a prerequisite. Their commitment was a pragmatic alliance from having made the choice of each other; they simply belonged together. My father provided income and my mother provided a home. That's it! No talk of "He's not emotionally available" (Even though he wasn't.) No talk of her needing to help with income. (She never did.) "They didn't need no stinkin' counseling!!" They died in love with each other.

Next, let's consider the typical first marriage that might occur currently. Things have changed. First, the couple is probably much older than my parents were; most likely in their mid to late twenties or even older. They both have had several serious relationships before falling in love with each other. And, clearly, they are deeply in love and deeply committed to each other and to their relationship. They will probably expect the traditional provisions of marriage—security, respect, material success, and children. But they will also probably expect so much more.

She may want him to listen deeply to her feelings and for him to share from the center of his soul. She may expect him to be an equal participant in all things domestic, such as cooking, cleaning, childcare (if children.)

And, of course, to be a tender and sensitive lover. He may expect her to contribute equally to the income, to advance in her career, to be the executive director of the household, to go through pregnancies (if children) and, of course, to be a sexy and available lover.

Who can possibly fulfill all the expectations we have come up with in modern love life? What a contrast from the simplicity of my parents' deal with each other.

Now, the third marriage. I was invited by my son to spend a week with him in Dubai when he had a business trip to this unique place. We were invited to dinner with his Indian colleague and his wife. She cooked some delicious traditional Indian dishes which I'll never forget. Over dinner she finally got around to asking me "What do you do for work?" "I'm a marriage counselor" was my reply. "A what?" "Well, I'm a person who helps people have a better experience in their marriage." Her reply surprised me: "What do they need that for?" This opened up the discussion of their marriage which was arranged (although she did say that she sort of had a right of refusal.) She went on to say "We don't always please each other, but we would never think of not being married or needing a stranger to help us."

Now, the fourth marriage. A good friend of mine recently shared with me her joy of being in a new relationship of several years after an earlier failed marriage of many years. They are making plans for retirement down the road and enjoying life together in a rather exotic location. Dumb me asked her about the M word and she quickly said that neither of them saw any need for that. All righty then! She is voicing the current trend of people young and old away from the institution of marriage and to a covenant, nevertheless, to be partners in life.

I believe we now live in a society where

more people are unmarried than are married. A good 30% of the couples who attend our workshop are not married. Like all things, there are more choices in intimate relationships than ever before. And along with all these choices, the expectations of our intimate relationships, whether married or not, have risen to epic proportions. Maybe it is a good time to practice grace and compassion and some generosity of spirit. And with Imago there is hope for us all.

Your comments on my thoughts are always wonderful to read.

Don't forget the "Overcoming Reactivity" second level workshop on Dec 2-3. We may fill this one and you can register here: [Overcoming Reactivity](#)

Happy Fall!

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

November 10-12, 2017, Frederick, MD

January 5-7, 2018, Frederick, MD

February 9-11, 2018, Frederick, MD

Next Step Workshop

December 2-3, Frederick, MD

Parenting Workshop

February 3-4, 2018, Frederick, MD

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

I now pronounce you man and wife, you may now change your Facebook status.

Anonymous

If you want your wife to listen to you, then talk to another woman; she will be all ears.

Sigmund Freud

The most important four words for a successful marriage: 'I'll do the dishes.'

Anonymous

Marriage is the bond between a person who never remembers anniversaries and another who never forgets them. Ogden Nash

I looked into my wallet and it was empty, I looked through all my pockets and they were all empty. Then I looked into my heart and I found you, and only then I figured out how rich I was. Anonymous

Stop! You're under arrest for being too sexy. Your sentence is an eternity inside my heart.

Anonymous

Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, half shut afterwards. Benjamin Franklin

Our love is like a train with no brakes, unstoppable. Anonymous

Being married means mostly shouting "What?" from other rooms. Anonymous

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

Sincerely,

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

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