



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](#)

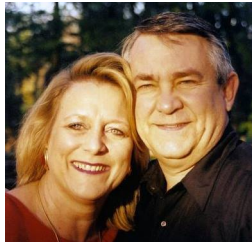
[LaSplash online  
magazine](#)

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

### Join Our List

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

**Issue: #117**  
**January 2019**



**Dear Friends,**

**The New Year, new beginnings and a new start on the same old promises. What? You aren't starting a diet or vowing to exercise more? I don't really look at the new year that way anymore, not that there is anything wrong with this view. I just find I am more forgiving of myself, very familiar with my quirks and habits and well, just easy enough in my skin to roll with whatever seems to work in the here and now. Where I always find room for improvement though, is in communication. A friend told me that if the key to paradise is mastering communication, she was going to be on earth a long, long time!**

**We lost our dear dog, Ben, and I wanted to share an old Thought with you. I always enjoy your comments.**

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

**Keep in touch!**

**David (and Donna)**

## **JANUARY: In Praise of Dogs**

**We are grieving the loss of our famous dog, Ben, who died peacefully on January 5. I say he was famous because he was a mainstay of my men's group, always taking his place under our table. He also brought joy to maybe 1400 of you who did our workshops over the last 8 years. There were about 7 of you who were allergic or afraid or just did not like him. That's OK . Ben was also the Mayor of our community, freely visiting all the homes on his excursions. Some of our neighbors are grieving with us.**

**We miss Ben.**

**Dogs are great.**

**Voltaire said "The best thing about man is the dog"**

**Ben Franklin said "There are three faithful friends- an old wife, an old dog, and ready money."**

**Sir Walter Scott said "Recollect that the Almighty, who gave the dog to be a companion of our pleasures and our toils, hath invested him with a nature noble and incapable of deceit."**

**Perhaps it's time for a repeat of my 2013 thought:**

**"Why can't my wife be more like my dog?" In the great musical classic, "My Fair Lady," Pickering (played in full sexist fashion by Rex Harrison) ponders lyrically: "Why can't a woman be more like a man."**

**I have been spending a lot of time with our dog, Ben, and it has caused me to ponder: "Why can't my wife be more like my dog?" Think about it! Our big black lab/great dane hybrid is always pleasant. He doesn't expect much. Actually he doesn't expect anything. He loves it when I pet him. He likes me to get close and play with him, but he never complains when I forget to show him affection. He likes it when I feed him and never complains that we don't ever go out to eat.**

**Sometimes we just are in a room together in silence and he never once has insisted that I share my feelings with him. Even when I am in a foul mood he is his steady lovable self.**

No reactivity to my moods. He loves to go anywhere with me in the car and he never complains about my driving or asks if I really know the directions for where I'm going. I got pulled over for speeding once and he just sat quietly without shaming or blaming. He just looked at me with his adoring brown eyes as if to say, "I'm sorry." Sometimes I go somewhere without him and he has not once asked me where I am going or when I will be back.

We can watch a whole Nationals baseball game together and he doesn't seem at all bored. When I come into the house Ben always greets me with a joyous wag of the tail and a lick. When he comes into a room where I am located, he always comes over to check and see if I'm ok. Then he goes and minds his own business.

On a more revealing note, he doesn't mind that I go out to pee in the yard. No embarrassment for him. In fact, he often goes with me. And if I am browsing and happen to linger on a picture of Heidi Klum in a bikini, he doesn't make a big deal of it. I guess he pretends to not even notice. When I get sloppy and leave my clothes on the floor he sees it as a good thing and promptly lays down on them. All kinds of things are broken around the house and Ben never even mentions any of them. He's happy with things just as they are.

So why can't my wife be more like my dog? Of course I know that we need human connection for our completion, for true intimacy. But my memory of Ben reminds me of some of the qualities that I need to integrate in order for the people around me to be safe with me.

Your comments are always welcome. **[See our website](http://connectingcouples.net)** [connectingcouples.net](http://connectingcouples.net) for upcoming workshops or call us at 301-404-7711 to schedule a FaceTime appointment or an in person intensive and check up.

Warmly  
D&D

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

February 8-10, 2019, Frederick, MD

March 8-10, 2019, Frederick, MD

May 3-5, 2019, Frederick, MD

### Next Step Workshop

April 6-7, 2019, Frederick, MD

## QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"The better I get to know men, the more I find myself loving dogs." - Charles de Gaulle

"My little dog - a heartbeat at my feet." - Edith Wharton

"It is amazing how much love and laughter they bring into our lives and even how much closer we become with each other because of them." - John Grogan

"To err is human - to forgive, canine." - Author Unknown

"Happiness is a warm puppy." - Charles Schulz

"You know, a dog can snap you out of any kind of bad mood that you're in faster than you can think of." - Jill Abramson

Before you get a dog, you can't quite imagine what living with one might be like; afterward, you can't imagine living any other way." - Caroline Knapp

"Money can buy you a fine dog, but only love can make him wag his tail." -Kinky Friedman

"My idea of absolute happiness is to be in bed on a rainy day with my blankie, my cat, and my dog." - Anne Lamott

"If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I

**die I want to go where they went." - Will  
Rogers**

---

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

**Sincerely,**

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