



Connecting
Couples

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Thought of the Month News and Notes



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Quotes of the Month

"Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom." Marcel Proust

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial

Dear Friends,

We were thinking back to this week last year when everything was so different! All the plans for shopping for the big Thanksgiving Dinner, counting chairs and making room for the joy of family and friends. For some of us, there will be loved ones missing this year, losses that have come over the years but somehow, seem so difficult this year. Not being able to safely gather in a warm cozy room with those we haven't seen for a while, not being able to play with a child, hold a new baby, Many of us who are a bit older have weathered more storms, had more loss, more challenges and sadness. But, we have also experienced more joy, had more successes and we know that things change and do get better.

We wish you all the love of a partner, a friend, a loved one. The joy of life and the happiness that comes from the little things. We are grateful for you and wish you a Happy Thanksgiving ♥♥

Keep in touch!

David (and Donna)

November: The Joy of Being Silent

Mark Twain once said, "Better to keep your mouth shut and appear stupid, than to open it and remove all doubt." I truly believe that much of the conflict in an intimate relationship could be eliminated by practicing the art of keeping one's mouth shut. Or more accurately, learning when to talk and how to say things. Harville Hendrix has said that talking is the most dangerous thing a person can do.

into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend." Melody Beattie

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." John F. Kennedy

"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

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

"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

I am grateful for what I am and have. My thanksgiving is perpetual. Henry David Thoreau

Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings. William

Here's how it works to detriment. Something happens (or somebody says something) that threatens us....threatens our self-image...our sense of worth....our sense of well-being. Our lower brain, both the reptilian part which serves our survival and the mammalian part which reacts to feeling hurt, kicks into action.

The general message is "Do something, dummy!" The message travels up to the neo-cortex which translates a primitive message of "Defend yourself; kill the son of a...." to "Say something in retaliation; get them back." After all, the neo-cortex is just smart enough to know that killing someone lands you in prison, while words are protected under "free speech."

Unfortunately, the most wonderful part of our brain, the frontal lobe, does not get utilized because by now we are mired down in defending ourselves and planning our next assault in the proliferation of the conflict. (Disclaimer: I'm not sure I have all the brain stuff exactly right, but I am pretty sure I have the basic progression right.)

Think back. How many of your conflicts could have been lessened or avoided altogether by someone just keeping their mouth shut? Or to put it another way, how many of your conflicts are resolved or diminished by using a lot of words?

Words are way overrated in relationships. A hug or a tender touch says thousands of words. An act of service tops all the words that make up a promise. A smile speaks volumes to the recipient. I am most successful with couples when they are practicing a stewardship of words. Abundant words, carefully chosen, and spoken only in the structure of dialogue. All else is neutral at best and destructive at worst. Silent connecting is a pure thing of joy. Try it!

Sadly, the world advises us to "speak up and defend ourselves" but to what end? No wonder we are feeling disappointed and sort of empty. Where are the real leaders of human relations when we need them? We can name the Prophets of nonviolence in word and deed...Jesus, Mohammed, Gandhi and Martin Luther King. (I just had a weird thought. What if, in the next debate, the candidates are instructed to hug each other and use the first 4 minutes each appreciating things about the other. Can you imagine the resulting commentary? It could be transforming.)

Okay, I have not lost my mind, but you could try this with your partner for real. At the very least, try practicing the art of keeping your mouth shut and see how much positive energy you produce in

Arthur Ward

yourself and in those around you.

As always, your comments are welcome.

David



Be sure to watch this space or check our web site for future opportunities.

To be determined at a later date:

MORE Zoom sessions and workshops

