



Connecting Couples

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Thought of the Month News & Notes

In This Issue

[Thought of the Month](#)

[News & Notes](#)

Quick Links.

[Register for our 2011
Workshops](#)

[Register for our Next
Step Workshops](#)

[Register for our
Parenting Workshops](#)

[Thought of the Month
Archive](#)

-

Join Our List

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Quotes of the Month

**Good friends,
good books, and
a sleepy
conscience: this
is the ideal life.
Mark Twain**

**It is not easy to
find happiness in
ourselves, and it
is not possible to
find it elsewhere.
Agnes Repplier**

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Dear Friends,

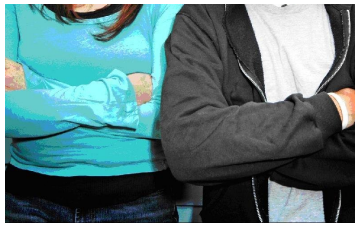
Our wish for you is that you enjoyed a festive or restive holiday season and had the love of family and friends to restore you. We have had more festive than restive as we traveled to reunions and celebrations and included a trip to Hawaii to spend time with family and hold our first ever workshop in the Islands!

Have you taken time for yourself and your partner during the season of too much? Well, often I think of it as "too much" as there are too many opportunities for excess: food, drink, parties, shopping, spending and obligations. There are probably many things you could add to this list. I like to step out on the porch, take a breath of cold air and just be in the moment. Try this yourself when you get overwhelmed with issues and need a break! Having a loving partner and sharing both the joy and the burdens can go a long way to making you feel restored and less stressed.

We are energized to begin this new decade and we especially are happy you will share it with us. Remember to keep in touch! Share your problems and ideas for other Thought topics. We are here for you.



"I think of myself as an intelligent, sensitive human being with the soul of a clown which always forces me to blow it at the most important moments." Jim Morrison



MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES...PLEASE JOIN US:

February 12 - 13, 2011: "The Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity."

What a great gift for your Valentine! Come learn how to:

- understand more deeply the differences you have;
- actually use the Dialogue at home (i.e. the Start Up for those difficult experiences);
- share and attend to your Highest Dream;
- experience deeper and deeper connection with each other.

Here are some of the comments from previous workshop participants:

"...a real breakthrough - to build on what we had learned before and get past what had been sticking point in our practice of Imago. Lots of 'aha' moments." LM

"Transforming experience, pulled all previous workshops together, integrated and brought us to a new level. Exceeded expectations." RK

"...helped to solidify the Imago concepts and...help me practice it in real life." SR

"We just added another rung on our ladder to reaching vintage love." EJ

"If you 'show up' you will learn." JO

"The first workshop saved my marriage and the second workshop reenergized our renewed commitment." PB

The most I can do for my friend is simply be his friend. Henry David Thoreau

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. Helen Keller

Happiness makes up in height what it lacks in length. Robert Frost

When the character of a man is not clear to you, look at his friends. Japanese Proverb

Cherish all your happy moments: they make a fine cushion for old age. Christopher Morley

"I'd much rather be a woman than a man. Women can cry, they can wear cute clothes, and they are the first to be rescued off of sinking ships." Gilda Radner

It is not so much



our friends' help
that helps us, as
the confidence of
their help.
Epicurus

Those who bring
sunshine to the
lives of others
cannot keep it
from themselves.
J.M. Barrie

Even if happiness
forgets you a little
bit, never
completely forget
about it. Jacques
Prevert

The foolish man
seeks happiness
in the distance,
the wise grows it
under his feet.
James
Oppenheim

Happiness is not
in the mere
possession of
money; it lies in
the joy of
achievement, in
the thrill of
creative effort.
Franklin D.
Roosevelt

Knowing others
is wisdom;
knowing yourself
is enlightenment.
Lao Tzu

Anything that is
of value in life
only multiplies
when it is given.
Deepak Chopra

Be faithful in
small things
because it is in



Thought of the Month

January:
Getting Off the Boat

We are honored to have a guest contributor this month. Periodically we will share other's thoughts as we all have a part in understanding our Relationship Journey. Thank you, Mary Lynn.



The "Victim Ship" is a way of life for some of us. It is characterized by a fundamental but often unconscious belief that "I am a victim"...even if it's not true. It actually takes a lot of work to keep the Victim Ship afloat. We have to continually generate situations in our lives that lead to the appearance that we are victims, or we have to continually interpret events in our lives as though they prove to us we are somehow a victim.

Here's an example: one Wednesday, husband asks wife, "Okay if I play tennis Saturday morning with my friend?" Wife answers, "Sure."

Saturday comes, husband goes to tennis. Wife stays home and thinks, "I can't believe he went! When do I ever get to do anything I enjoy? He is so selfish. All I ever do is work, work, work and never get a minute to myself!"

Oh, and for the rest of Saturday, she is withdrawn...or irritable...or has a stomach ache and has to stay in bed. He can't figure out why, but as time goes on, he starts to match her irritability and snaps out at her.

Round two of Victim Ship: she thinks, "I can't believe he treats me like this, that no good &#&#&^\$&#^! HE goes and plays tennis and leaves me here to take care of everything and now he's irritable?!?! I can't believe my life!"

I think, for me, I started to feel kind of lonely on my ship and not just a little bit seasick. Time to get off the ship...but easier said than done. First off, just recognizing that I was on it was difficult, "Me responsible for any of this? No way!"

them that your strength lies.
Mother Teresa

If you have much,
give of your wealth;
if you have little, give of your heart.
Arabian proverb

You can give without loving,
but you can never love without giving.
Anonymous

We cannot hold a torch to light another's path without brightening our own. Ben Sweetland

Ordinary riches can be stolen: real riches cannot. In your soul are infinitely precious things that cannot be taken from you. Oscar Wilde

Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Ralph Waldo Emerson

Eliminate physical clutter. More importantly, eliminate spiritual clutter. D.H. Mondfleur

There are no miracles for those that have no faith in them. French

Then...truly being willing to give it up. Wow, tough one. See, the thing about being a victim is that one can get a lot out of it. True victims receive and deserve, attention, support, sympathy, a break, love, admiration....all those things I was craving and didn't know how to get in any healthy way. People really listen to a real victim. Real victims feel justified in their feelings and are (hopefully) validated by those around them. That's what I wanted in my life, but I didn't realize it, so I built a Victim Ship.

I think the the desire to be seen as a victim has many possible causes/sources. For some of us, growing up and not feeling seen or heard can be the cause. Or, maybe we had someone as our primary caregiver who thought they were a victim. Maybe we learned not to express our true wants, needs, selves in life and had to find an indirect way to be "taken care of" or get what we wanted or needed. Maybe we were criticized or ignored when we spoke up for ourselves or addressed problems directly. Or maybe at some point we really were a victim and "liked" the way we were treated. Maybe we were never taught a healthy way to give and receive love, attention, caring, and validation. Whatever the cause, it's much better to live off the ship.

Getting off the ship means doing things in a new way...sometimes difficult, "stretchy" things. Like asking ourselves what we really want, or feel or hope for, or what we do that's unfair, or interpret incorrectly.

For example: Husband asks the same question about tennis with a friend and wife answers (even though she feels deeply afraid he may criticize her thinking or may reject her), "I really feel like I haven't had much time with you, lately. Can we set up a time for the two of us to do something together?"

"Sure, honey, I didn't realize you were feeling like that. I guess you're right now that I think about it. Let's go out Friday night."

"Sounds nice. By the way, who will you be playing tennis with?"

The thing is, Saturday goes so much more nicely for everyone. Sure, the ship is losing its structure, a plank at a time, but who needs it anyway? It's not always straight-forward.

Sometimes, even though I am trying hard to be conscious about this, it takes me days to even realize I was generating a Victim Ship situation. I still struggle with believing it's something I am doing. I do know

proverb

Each day comes bearing its own gifts. Untie the ribbons. Ruth Ann Schabacker

Only passions, great passions, can elevate the soul to great things. Anonymous

Anything that has real and lasting value is always a gift from within. Franz Kafka

The manner of giving is worth more than the gift. Pierre Corneille

that I am sure that I want to stop. I want a connected, peaceful, secure life for my husband, children, those I care about and me. David told me someone said she was going from a Victim Ship to a Victory Ship. I say, "Switch boats and Sail on!!!"

Respectfully submitted, Mary Lynn Price

February 12 - 13, 2011: "The Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity."



Imago Relationships International (IRI):

IRI continues to work to spread the word about the powerful relational transformation possible through Imago. It also works to find new ways to support couples on their Journey.

Below are two links you might find interesting:

LaSplash is an online magazine with lots of in-depth articles and information.

[LaSplash online magazine](#)

There is now a blog for couples on the IRI website. New articles are posted frequently and regularly

[IRI Couples Blog](#)

The Imago Process

Relationships become relaxed and joyful as day to day connection is experienced even amidst the stresses of life. The powerful bond between the couple creates a sacred space for healing and transformative growth. The trained IMAGO coach gently holds the couple as they find their way back to the marvelous impulses of the romantic days and helps them solidify their vision for the future.

Please stay in touch and let us know how to support you.

**With Love and Abundant Blessings,
David and (Donna)**



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