



Thought of the Month News & Notes

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Quotes of the Month

"To love abundantly is to live abundantly, and to love forever is to live forever."

Henry Drummond

"To love deeply in one direction makes us more loving in all others."

Anne-Sophie Swetchine

**Issue: #26.
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Dear Friends,

The new year and new decade is moving us quickly along. We hope you enjoyed Valentine's Day and the many, many faces of Love it embodies. Taking a few minutes out of the busy lives we lead to share a little love with those we live with, work with and encounter on our journey through life is a precious gift. We are not big on lavish displays and gifts but treasure the touch, the sweet word, the caring gesture and sometimes, just a smile. We love sharing these gifts with those we meet in our neighborhood such as the mailman, the checker at the grocery or the coffee barista...what a joy to share! We invite you to share your love, too!

This month always seems too short---well, it is, isn't it? However, knowing this helps us to better organize our work, our workshops and our together time. Don't forget that walking the dog, watching a sporting event, doing errands or working out at the gym can be together time if your schedules allow. If you are trading childcare duties or work in vastly different neighborhoods, try scheduling one thing you and your partner can do together each day. It doesn't have to be monumental, maybe just 10 minutes but you won't be sorry. You might even find that you will have more than 10 minutes as the gift of this time together becomes more and more meaningful.

We are looking forward to a lot of time together as we end winter soon and see Spring in the near future. We are so

"Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay for a while, leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never, ever the same."
Flavia Weedn

"In the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, for in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed."
Kahlil Gibran

"Have a heart that never hardens, a temper that never tires, a touch that never hurts."
Charles Dickens

There is no remedy for love, but to love more.
Henry David Thoreau

A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person.
Mignon Mclaughlin

There is no more lovely, friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage.
Martin Luther

He is husband, she is wife. She fears not him,

happy you will share time with us. Remember to keep in touch! Share your problems and ideas for other Thought topics. We are here for you.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE:

March 18-20, Frederick, MD

**April 8-10 (Same Sex Couples)
Rehoboth Beach, DE**

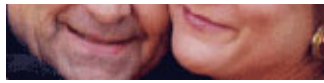


Thought of the Month

February: Starting a Dialogue



they fear not life.
Robert Frost



When you realize
you want to
spend the rest of
your life with
somebody, you
want the rest of
your life to start
as soon as
possible. Billy
Crystal as Harry
in *When Harry
Met Sally*

When you give
each other
everything, it
becomes an even
trade. Each wins
all. Lois
McMaster Bujold,
A Civil Campaign

One word frees
us of all the
weight and pain
of life: That word
is love.
Sophocles

"A light heart
lives long." -
William
Shakespeare

"Never go to bed
mad -- stay up
and fight."
Phyllis Diller

"To be in love is
merely to be in a
state of
perceptual
anesthesia." H.L.
Mencken

"A kiss can be a
comma, a
question mark, or

At our second level workshop this past weekend, our participants reminded us of the need for practice in how to begin a safe dialogue with each other. It seems that the consciousness of how to begin a safe conversation with our Partner is not easily available even if the heart is willing. John Gottman has found in his couples' research that a steady diet of harsh "start-ups" in conversation is a primary factor in relationship break ups.

Let's see if we can help:

First, picture yourself preparing to say something to your boss or a close friend that may not go down well. You are going to prepare by carefully considering your timing, reviewing your words, remaining positive, checking your posture and tone along with any other clues that could influence the experience either positively or negatively.

Now, transfer that conscious preparation to your "set-up" with your Partner. (I'm using "set-up" as a constructive thing...not a con job.) There are three essential elements to increasing your chances of a good outcome:

1. You will invite your Partner to the conversation, allowing them the option of,

"Not now."

"Would this be an okay time to discuss...?"

"I would love for us to find a time..."

"Are you available to hear something that's important to me?"

This avoids being "jumped in the dark." Nobody likes to be jumped.

2. You will make it clear that nothing is required except a visit into your world.

"I know this is mostly about me and my world."

"I just would like to have you see my world more clearly."

"What I'm dealing with is more about me than about you."

3. You will use abundant language.

"I would feel safer if we drove a little slower."

"I need your help to get over this thing that nags at me."

"Could I share another way we might deal with the children?"

"I would feel so great if we could talk about purchases together before buying something."

Abundant language is hard for all of us because the reptilian brain only reacts and has no conscious thought. So when we are threatened or deprived, even in the smallest way, we are likely to react by striking out. Shame and blame are our weapons.

an exclamation point. That's basic spelling that every woman ought to know."
Mistinguett

"At last you kissed me, I could die in waves again, and one good lick of quicksand took...." Heather McHugh

"There is a time for work. And a time for love. That leaves no other time." Coco Chanel

"Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, While loving someone deeply gives you courage." Lao Tzu

"The best and most beautiful things in this world cannot be seen or even heard, but must be felt with the heart." Helen Keller

"But you won't need no harem, honey
When I'm by your side
And you won't need no camel, no no
When I take you

Maybe you think this article sounds contrived and unrealistic. The new language may feel contrived only because it is new. Go back to the conversation with the boss or the close friend. Was that contrived or just strategically (and relationally) thoughtful? What makes us think polite, respectful and careful consideration of our Partner must sound contrived?

Please offer feedback on this and any other topic. Hope you are enjoying this warm sunshine while it lasts!
Promises of spring!

David (& Donna)



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 imago of the

for a ride" lyrics
to "Midnight at
the Oasis" by
David Nichtern

"Anything worth
doing is worth
doing slowly."
Mae West

"Marriage is one
of the few
institutions that
allow a man to do
as his wife
pleases." Milton
Berle

"There will be sex
after death, we
just won't be able
to feel it." Lily
Tomlin

"Love is the
irresistible desire
to be irresistibly
desired." Mark
Twain

"Sexiness wears
thin after a while
and beauty fades,
but to be married
to a man who
makes you laugh
every day, ah,
now that's a real
treat." Joanne
Woodward

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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