



Thought of the Month News and Notes

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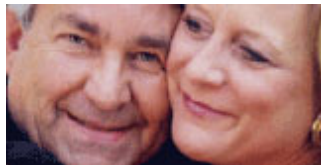
**Issue: #30
JUNE 2011**

Dear Friends,

Thank you for this opportunity to share our Thought of the Month with you!

We are so grateful that you have made us part of your journey and hope that the warmth of the summer months is replicated in the warmth of the love in your relationships.

JUNE: The "Work" of Relationship



"It takes work to have a good relationship!" I hear that expression over and over again. And it always makes me hesitate. Is work the right word? I have used it myself to describe what it will take to improve a relationship. But the word doesn't taste quite right. Let's look at this.

The word "work" sounds like something hard, something negative, something distasteful, something we have to do but don't really want to do. It sounds like having a root canal at the dentist or cleaning the toilet.

But "work" was the last word we would have used back in the romantic phase of the relationship. So what's up with this?

Time for some Imago theory....which says that the "spell" of romantic love is to get us together and committed to each other. Then the real "adventure" (notice I didn't say work)

of the relationship emerges. Our mutual frustrations surface in order to give each other the true blueprint for growth and wholeness. And when our Partner moves toward their own growth potential, we feel happy and healed.

It's in this state of power struggle that a man will say, "I love her, but I just can't stand to be around her." Or a woman might say, "He's a good man but I hate the things he does that hurt me."

Does it take "work" to pull out of this power struggle? I guess if "work" means becoming conscious of what is going on. The same "work" it takes to lose weight or learn to ski. Maybe it's all in how you look at it. Some of the things around which Donna has been frustrated have felt like "work" in the beginning. Becoming more organized with dates and times and such was not what I wanted to do. It was not me. It threatened my carefree approach to life. It would take....."work." But it's been good for me, for her, and for our relationship.

Same for her...learning to play, kick back, get physically active was not her first inclination. It takes conscious effort. And, she reports that it has been good for her. And it has certainly been good for me!

So the real adventure (or "work") of the relationship is born out of the power struggle. And every conflict we have, even daily fusses, are really opportunities for new growth and healing to happen if we are willing to "work" to become conscious. (And who doesn't feel better when they lose that weight or learn that new skill?)

It is in this adventure of struggle, conflict, and behavior change that the real "therapy" occurs and couples feel happier with each other and with themselves.

Enjoy your summer together!

David (& Donna)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES COMING UP!

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

**Next Step: Overcoming Reactivity
November 5-6, Rehoboth Beach, DE**

**Parenting Workshop
November 12-13, Frederick, MD**

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

If you light a lamp for somebody, it will also brighten your path. Buddhist saying

It is not so much our friends' help that helps us, as the confidence of their help. Epicurus

Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity. Kahlil Gibran

Just because nobody complains doesn't mean all parachutes are perfect. Benny Hill

A single rose can be my garden... a single friend, my world. Leo Buscaglia

Silences make the real conversations between friends. Not the saying but the never needing to say is what counts. Margaret Lee Runbeck

An archaeologist is the best husband a woman can have. The older she gets the more interested he is in her. Agatha Christie

Last night I lay in bed looking up at the stars in the sky and I thought to myself, where the heck is the ceiling.

You grow up the day you have your first real laugh -- at yourself. Ethel Barrymore

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

Sincerely,

**David and Donna Bowman
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