



Connecting
Couples

Donna Reeves Bowman, LCSW-C & David L. Bowman, MDiv

Thought of the Month News and Notes

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to summer! What a great time to think about childhood summers with no school, no homework and lots and lots of daylight to enjoy. Friends, fun and lazy days are part of our childhood memories. I hope you can drift a bit on a warm day and go back to a great childhood memory of summer. It isn't always easy when we are faced with the realities of our grown-up lives but we promise, if you can catch a little dream of the past, you will enjoy the present.

This Thought is Part I about communication--that bugaboo that gets us all once in awhile. I hope it resonates with you. We'd love to hear what you think about this important topic.

Enjoy your June!

Donna and David

JUNE: The Big Mistakes: Part 1



The way I see it, there are two major mistakes men and women (yes, I think it applies to same sex couples, as well) make in their relationships. Okay...men first!

The biggest mistake men make is confusing their Partner's upset or complaints with abject criticism. I spent seven years believing that my wife, Donna, was hell-bent on finding fault with me. And she seemed to have a better way than I did to do everything!

"Are you sure you got the car fixed? It still sounds funny?"

"You're not going to wear that shirt to the party, are you?"

"If you would just put the silverware right side up in the

dishwasher, it would get clean!" ETC.....

I heard these as full scale assaults on my character. I could take one or two but a constant barrage of "Wrong way, David!" and I felt defeated, ashamed, and downright angry! What I had to learn was that it was not criticism. It was simply my Partner wanting to have things come out right and trouble-free (her childhood story.) Of course, my childhood story of never getting it right came into play and formed a nasty dance for us.

There's a difference between complaints and criticism. In my experience, very few women set out to criticize or shame their Partners. Very few women are truly disgusted with their Partners...in spite of how "us Partners" want to believe.

Think about it, men. Even in the age of more equality, women are still generally the chief executive of the household along with her career and any other personal activities. It's in her interest to have things run smoothly. She probably already feels overworked. Add to that her vulnerability of feeling disconnected, unloved, and/or uncherished and we, of course have some complaints.

Men, let's stop making the mistake of confusing some negative emotions here and there with outright unhappiness with us. We have to learn to separate what she's feeling from what we experience as an outright critique of our manhood. This is a challenge because most of us men work off of performance, measuring the happiness of our Partner with our success as a husband or....even as a man.

Ironically, our Partners are not so much interested in changing us as they are in being listened to and feeling connected. So...suck it up, men! And just cross the Bridge into her world with all of your Dialogue skills. You can do it! And, you'll be surprised at what you start getting back. After all, it only took me seven years to get this!

Next month, I will talk about the biggest mistake women make in relationships....equally powerful in the disconnection happening in relationships.

Please let me know if this Thought hits the mark for any of you (men or women.) I would love to know. Donna and I

send you warm, relaxed energy for your summer together!

David

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

Be sure to watch this space or check our web

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

Getting the Love You Want Workshops

July 20-22, Rehoboth Beach, DE

August 17-19, Frederick, MD

Next Step Workshop

July 14-15, Frederick, MD

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." George Bernard Shaw

"Speak when you are angry - and you'll make the best speech you'll ever regret." Dr. Lawrence J. Peter

"To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others." Anthony Robbins

"We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak." Epictetus

"Communication works for those who work at it." John Powell

"The way we communicate with others and with ourselves ultimately determines the quality of our lives" Anthony Robbins

"He who knows, does not speak. He who speaks, does not know." Lao Tzu

"Good communication is as stimulating as black coffee, and just as hard to sleep after." Anne Morrow Lindberg

"Deep listening is miraculous for both listener and speaker. When someone receives us with open-hearted, non-judging, intensely interesting listening, our spirits expand." Sue Patton Thoele

"The most important things are the hardest to say, because words diminish them." Stephen King

"If we are strong, our strength will speak for itself. If we are weak, words will be of no help." John Fitzgerald Kennedy

"Men and women belong to different species and communications between them is still in its infancy." Bill Cosby

"Music can name the unnamable and communicate the

"I wish I had more time to communicate the
unknowable." Leonard Bernstein

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

Sincerely,

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

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Bowman & Associates, PA | 7823 Chestnut Grove Road | Frederick | MD | 21701



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