



Connecting
Couples

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Thought of the Month News and Notes

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Dear Friends,

What a marvelous month February is! It is still winter, blustery, snowy and cold in many parts of the country and balmy, sunny and sandal weather on the West Coast. Oh, and did you notice that THIS year, February has 33 days? It can't get any better than that if you still have snow to shovel by the end of the month or projects to accomplish or those letters to write. Okay, I admit to fudging a bit and stretching this marvelous (!!??) winter out a little longer. I hope you will forgive me.

Some of us really get cabin fever in the winter and tend to be a little, or a lot, more aware of those troublesome personality traits of our partners, our children, our neighbors and pretty much anyone we deal with on a day-to-day basis. Just when you thought my message would be cerebral, I decided to go to one of my inspirations, Bob Newhart! What a comic genius and though not a real therapist or relationship coach, he simply got it right! Take a break, grab a snack and check Bob out! The reference is in the Thought below:)

As always, if you need us, just call.

Donna and David

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FEBRUARY 33, 2014: "Stop It!"

After all my training and experience, I think I finally have stumbled upon the perfect therapeutic tool for dealing with at least one major problem in relationships. And....it costs nothing to learn this tool!

Quit reading now! Google the You Tube clip entitled, "Bob Newhart - Stop It!" Watch it now! (It is only 6 minutes and it can change your experience of your Partner!) After you have finished laughing, just hear how I think this tool can be effectively applied.

It is useful when a couple is complaining...criticizing...calling names... cursing...competing...or acting in any negative manner! Yes, I know your Partner failed to listen...again! I know your Partner made a decision and did not ask your opinion. I know your Partner shared their diagnosis of you for the thousandth time. I know your Partner did a stupid job of parenting the other day. I know your Partner treats the dog ten times better than she treats you. I know your Partner won't tell you what he is thinking! And, trust me, I understand your instinctive response to all these hurts is to feel, say, or do something negative so your Partner knows how hurt you are....right? AND, you make perfect sense but you must STOP IT! That's right....STOP IT!

It is a BAD idea! It is a BAD strategy! It will NOT heal anything! Negativity will never get you what you really want. It will prolong and, even intensify the conflict and pain. More and more I think that being successful in relationship is an Art. It is a finely honed, carefully developed skill. It requires maturity, intentionality, consciousness (i.e. overriding the Lizard), positive language, appreciations, abundance, generosity, grace, and a commitment to remove negativity from your relationship (regardless of your Partner's "behavior.")

Now, I can hear many of you thinking..."But,

I don't feel positive or appreciative or generous." I know you don't. (FYI: Neither do I when Donna is being so "helpful" and telling me how I should have done something differently.) If you don't "feel" it, then do nothing...say nothing. Back away until you can get your lizard calmed and are able to genuinely offer a conscious positive comment or behavior. You will be surprised how your Relationship will shift.

One more thing...you may be saying, "I don't mean it as a criticism. My Partner is just so sensitive." It doesn't count!!! What counts is only whether your Partner feels an "Ouch." Harville and Helen now actually teach their couples to gently say, "Ouch" when something feels negative or critical. Not a bad idea!

Now, watch the clip again and see what brilliance is couched in a hilarious skit!

As always, your comments are much appreciated AND we are always eager to hear from you and share your Journey.

David (and Donna)

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

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

Getting the Love You Want Workshops

April 4-6, 2014 Frederick, MD

Next Step Workshop

April 26-27, 2014 Frederick, Md

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be. Abraham Lincoln

Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions. Dalai Lama

Happiness often sneaks in through a door you didn't know you left open. John Barrymore

Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go. Oscar Wilde

Be happy for this moment. This moment is your life. Omar Khayyam

Don't wait around for other people to be happy for you. Any happiness you get you've got to make yourself. Alice Walker

A table, a chair, a bowl of fruit and a violin; what else does a man need to be happy? Albert Einstein

Everything has its wonders, even darkness and silence, and I learn, whatever state I may be in, therein to be content. Helen Keller

Happiness doesn't depend on any external conditions, it is governed by our mental attitude. Dale Carnegie

The Constitution only gives people the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself. Benjamin Franklin

Love is trembling happiness. Khalil Gibran

There is only one happiness in this life, to love and be loved. George Sand

Money can't buy happiness, but it can make you awfully comfortable while you're being miserable. Clare Boothe Luce

Happiness is like a kiss. You must share it to enjoy it. Bernard Meltzer

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

Sincerely,

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

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