



**Connecting
Couples**

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

Thought of the Month News and Notes

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Dear Friends,

I can hear the slam of screen doors across the nation. School is out! No more homework, tests, teacher meetings, oh...and not much structure! I don't know about you but as a parent, shuffling kiddos off to learn brought a bit of peace and quiet to our little castle. Summer brought quite a lot more chaos, noise, mess but oh, such joy! Donna and I miss the sound of laughter, endless questions and mini-crises, though enjoying our adult "children" is our consolation.

I wanted to share some thoughts that have been helpful to parents who have attended our workshops on Conscious and Connected Parenting. Perhaps this may be helpful for you. Let us know if you need us!

As always, if you need us, just call.

Donna and David

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MAY-JUNE 2015: A Magic Parenting Moment

So you are caught up again in that familiar scene with your teenager. They are doing or not doing something that seems so obvious and so reasonable to you.

And you are saying the same things and losing it like you have so many times before:

"Why is it so hard to do an hour of homework and then have free time?"

"Why is it such a struggle to get teeth brushed and ready for school?"

"What's so hard about the one little chore of changing the cat litter after all the things your mother and I provide for you?"

"Is it that hard to pick up a room enough to at least walk around?"

And you've heard enough of "I hate you" or "FINE" or "WHATEVER". You know...that teenage vocabulary designed to make you feel bad and make them feel exonerated and cool. (Stephanie once came home and announced to her mother that she was the worst parent in the world. And she could prove it because she had taken a poll with all her friends and they agreed.)

It is an endless battle. You feel like a victim, trying to parent respectfully and getting abused by this child who has become a "terrorist" in your own home. I know many of you are feeling this way....or at least moments of feeling this way.

I could now explain this experience in various ways:

"Kids are just seeking connection."

"It is their job to make your life miserable so they can differentiate and discover their own boundaries."

"Kids go through stages where they test the boundaries of what is acceptable to learn how to behave."

(At this point I am glad you are reading this and are not close enough to throw sharp objects at me.)

Let me suggest something you may not have thought of. You can create a magic moment with your child by sharing with them a story of when you were in their shoes. Get ready to be a bit vulnerable. Share a time when you didn't want to pick up your room. Or a time when you had chores you hated. Fill the story out with details of how you felt and who said what to whom.

I'll guarantee your kid will be paying rapt attention.

Seth reminds me of a time I shared with him how my father would scowl and grump if he felt I was making too much noise. I mimicked exactly how he would say "BE STILL, BE STILL." And I told him how it left me feeling shamed and diminished. Seth says it helped him understand me, especially in times where I could be impatient or short and grumpy with him.

You be the judge, of course, regarding how much information you want to reveal. What makes this become a magic moment of connection and understanding is as follows:

- 1. Believe it or not your child is very interested in your life and in what made you the human that you are.**
- 2. It breaks the conflict cycle when you invite your kid across the bridge to your world.**
- 3. It reduces the power hierarchy that the child (especially teenagers) experience and feel they have to fight against.**
- 4. It shows respect for your child by sharing something that is deeply held by you.**

One caution: You cannot use this to "teach a lesson". It is better as a tool for connecting and being human and vulnerable. It helps to validate your child's experience. Funny how you being human and vulnerable will allow your kid to calm down and become human also.

As always, I love your feedback.

(FYI: Donna and I have shelved the "Conscious and Connected Parenting" workshop due to apparent lack of interest. If you register popular demand for this through email responses we could reinstate it. We love sharing it and it is always powerful.)

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

July 24-26, 2015, Frederick, MD

August 28-30, 2015, Frederick, MD

October 2-4, 2015, Frederick, MD

Next Step Workshop

September 19-20 Frederick, MD

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"The best words of wisdom that a parent can say to their child is "I Am proud of you"." Unarine Ramaru

"You raise them half-decent, and they grow up and leave. They move to Miami or California-- someplace with gourmet groceries and nude beaches because you've reared them to cook good and be liberal minded. It's just the opposite with your failures-- them kids stick to your tail like a cocklebur. You'd think it would be the other way around, but it's not. No matter how old I get, this will always amaze me." Michael Lee West, American Pie

"The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice." Peggy O'Mara

"From the time he was young, he dressed the way you told him to dress; he acted the way you told him to act; he said the things you told him to say. He's been listening to somebody else tell him what to do... He hasn't changed. He is still listening to somebody else tell him what to do. The problem is, it isn't you any more; it's his peers." Barbara Coloroso, Kids Are Worth It!: Giving Your Child the Gift of Inner Discipline

"If from infancy you treat children as gods, they are liable in adulthood to act as devils." P.D. James

"A mother is a child's first looking glass into the world." Richelle E. Goodrich, Smile Anyway: Quotes, Verse, & Grumblings for Every Day of the Year

"The greatest mark of a father is how he treats his children when no one is looking." Dan Pearce, Single Dad Laughing

**"You can't make me be nice.
You can't make me be good.
You can't make me believe.
But your example, your kindness, your patience and love will affect me perhaps enough that eventually I may choose to do those things."
Richelle E. Goodrich**

We are on this journey with you. Keep in

touch!

Sincerely,

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

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