



Connecting  
Couples

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## Thought of the Month News and Notes

In This Issue

[Thought of the Month](#)  
[Upcoming Workshops](#)

Quick Links

[Register for  
Workshops](#)

[Next Step Workshops](#)

[IRI Couples Blog](#)

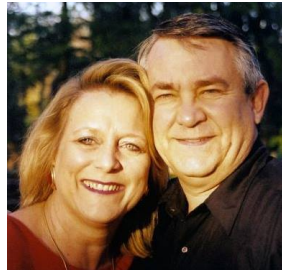
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Dear Friends,

Summer is here and we are so ready! We look forward to lazy days and catching up with each other. That's right! Sometimes we are so busy with teaching, workshops and life, we miss out on the joys of sitting on the swing and just talking to each other. This Thought broaches that very subject and how we get things messed up so easily. Read, enjoy and maybe reach out to us if you need us!

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Keep in touch!

David (and Donna)

### **JUNE: Winning or Connecting**

Are you in your Relationship to win or to connect? No, I'm serious. There is a difference. Many of the couples that I see are in a dance of seeking to win. I call them competitive couples. "I have it worse than you." "You never help around the house." "You don't take responsibility." "Why don't

**you like my family? I try to like yours."  
"You're playing poker tonight? When do I  
get a night out?" "You bought what?" "I'm  
trying to work things out, but you never  
want to deal with anything."**

**In one way or another the interactions for  
many couples seem to revolve around the  
idea that "I'm a better Partner in this  
relationship than you." This is not  
connecting! This is seeking to win. This is  
NOT the path to Intimacy...that we all long  
for. It can start out rather harmlessly.  
Bantering and mild sarcasm can seem fun at  
first. Competing around small things can be  
fun to an extent.**

**As the romantic drugs wear off, the  
competitive dance can take on more serious  
forms. We can then be in a power struggle  
that Hedy Schleifer calls the Survival Knot.  
"As long as you are acting this way then I  
need to act this way to defend myself and to  
survive." And vice versa. We don't say this  
out loud, but it is exactly the belief we build  
our defenses around. If things progress to  
an even deeper level we start seeking not  
just to win but to get even. You'd be  
surprised at how many couples move from  
"connecting" to "getting even" EVEN as they  
are going through "therapy."**

**Some people have such painful histories that  
"getting even" or "winning" is very  
understandable. (BECAUSE, as we  
know....everyone makes sense if you have  
enough information and it is not personal.)  
Even so, it is just not productive and it is a  
terrible strategy.**

**The goal, of course is connecting on a  
joyfully alive level. The path to this goal is to  
use 100% of your effort toward building a  
safe space between the two of you no  
matter what your partner is doing at any  
particular time. There is no score keeping or  
outcome expectations. (And, yes...it would  
be a very lousy ball game. But it's NOT a**

**game.) It is a living relationship with generosity of spirit and a withholding of blame and shame even if it might not be "deserved" in that moment. It is a spiritual journey of the deepest kind**

**Have a great connection!**

**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 21-23, Frederick, MD**

**August 25-27, Frederick, MD**

**October 13-15, Frederick, MD**

### **Next Step Workshop**

**September 9-10, Frederick, MD**

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**Silence is one of the great arts of conversation. Marcus Tullius Cicero**

**A happy marriage is a long conversation which always seems too short. Andre Maurois**

**Summer is the annual permission slip to be lazy. To do nothing and have it count for something. To lie in the grass and count the stars. To sit on a branch and study the clouds. Regina Brett**

**A conversation is a dialogue, not a monologue. That's why there are so few good conversations: due to scarcity, two intelligent talkers seldom meet. Truman Capote**

**A lot of parents pack up their troubles and send them off to summer camp. Raymond**

**Duncan**

**Life always offers you a second chance. It's called tomorrow. Anonymous**

**For the best seat in the house, you'll have to move the dog. Anonymous**

**Silence is golden, unless you have kids, then silence is just plain suspicious. Anonymous**

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

**Sincerely,**

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

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