



Connecting
Couples

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Thought of the Month News and Notes

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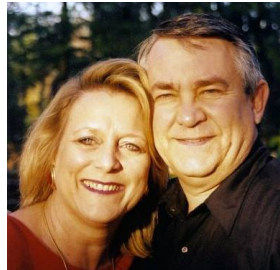
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Dear Friends,

Have you ever felt frustrated with your Partner's response to something you said? Or even angry? Sure, we all have! Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had a little "therapist" on our shoulder who would whisper some words of advice at this time? Words that would nip the problem in the bud and open up an opportunity for clarity or understanding or at least words that might resolve an issue?

This Thought is an idea that might just work like a little therapist on your shoulder. Read on and try it! Let me know how it goes.

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Keep in touch!

David (and Donna)

FEBRUARY: "Ouch" and "Oops"

Therapy

Maybe it's time to try something different. I'm calling it "Ouch" and "Oops" therapy. You can do this at home. First the background:

I believe all couples want to connect with each other in the most joyful and fully alive way possible. Just like when they first met: So respectful, so attentive, so fresh, so energetic, so forgiving. It's Nature's trick, complete with phenethylamine and all the other drugs that accompany romance. After a while, we find that the drugs have worn off and we begin to trigger each other in ways that make us think, "What happened here?"

It is not the triggering issue, but rather the reactive response that gets us into trouble and can, if we are not conscious, lead us down a path of disconnection. My most common situation with couples is they are both wonderful people, who are committed to each other, and who have the abiding impulse to love each other and to make each other happy. They almost have it all. But, alas...they trigger each other constantly in their day to day interactions and, because they have not mastered the skills of dealing with those triggers, have now formed a narrative of each other as hateful, unloving, and perhaps even, mentally unhinged Partners.

Furthermore, since one of them is a turtle (avoider) and one is a hailstorm (volatile pursuer), they have lost touch with what each other is needing or even saying. All of it is misunderstood as coming from an evil or malevolent place.

Here is where "ouch" and "oops" can be helpful. It's really very simple. When your

Partner does or says something offensive or hurtful, you simply say "ouch". Then the Partner knows it is automatically time to say "oops"

Now for the beauty of this therapy:

- 1. The words "ouch" and "oops" carry no blame or shame. They simply represent ownership in the current situation.**
- 2. They immediately convey the feelings in the situation with no argument over the behaviors.**
- 3. They represent a stopper in the escalation and give the couple time to let the newer brain get involved.**
- 4. These words can move us to understanding and compassion without more words. (Always a good idea)**
- 5. It offers the real chance to move from conflict to conversation.**
- 6. It avoids the deadly path of silent resentment from one and confusion from the other.**
- 7. It may be that no more needs to be said. How efficient is that!**

Give this simple "therapy" a try sometime soon and report back to me.

Oh, and don't miss the opportunity for our second level workshop, "The Next Step...Overcoming Reactivity." It's April 21-22. Call at 301-404-7711 or register here: [Next Step Overcoming Reactivity](#)

See you in April!

David

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

March 16-18, 2018, Frederick, MD

May 4-5, 2018, Frederick, MD

Next Step Workshop

April 21-22, 2018, Frederick, MD

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

Wise men speak because they have something to say; Fools because they have to say something. Plato

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

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

Half the world is composed of people who have something to say and can't, and the other half who have nothing to say and keep on saying it. Robert Frost World, Othe

Good words are worth much, and cost little. George Herbert

Falling in love is a chemical reaction. But it wears off in a year. That's why you need a strong line of communication... which includes laughter. Yakov Smirnoff

Everything becomes a little different as soon as it is spoken out loud. Hermann Hesse

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

Sincerely,

**David and Donna Bowman
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