



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](#)

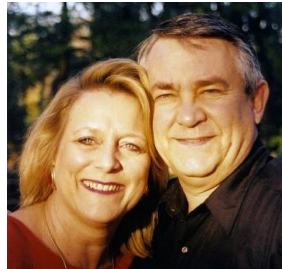
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magazine](#)

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Dear Friends,

We hope you are feeling the stirrings of warmth and spring...we are! When we can stroll down our lane and not wear heavy jackets, boots and hats we are encouraged! Children are thinking about the real possibility of summer and adults are planning that road trip, vacation or weekend get-a-way!

This Thought is meant to challenge you couples and to give you a little assignment. I hope you will try it! And, if you do so and find you need a little support, *please read to the end.* I have a NEW idea that might be just what you need!

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Keep in touch!

David (and Donna)

APRIL: THE INVISIBLE SUNBURN

This month I want to give all you couples a tip for how to manage those places in your relationship where you trigger each other. I believe that for most couples there is 85% or more time where they are loving, caring, peaceful, generous, and harmonious with each other. The remaining 15% or less is where all the trouble happens.

This is where some comment or some behavior triggers the Partner into reflexive defensive behavior where the Lizard brain gets activated. The Lizard response then elicits an equal Lizard response in return and all semblance of peaceful and relaxed connection with each other is lost.

This scene can develop in an instant and is seemingly uncontrollable because, of course, it stems from unconscious childhood adaptations that were so very important in helping us stay alive. No wonder we fall back to our defenses so easily. These adaptations are hard wired into us and become the default response when we feel threatened, no matter how small or unintentional the threat was, and no matter where it is coming from. And the longer this scene is rehearsed, the harder it is to change.

Wouldn't it be great if we had a way to stop this unconscious and escalating Lizard Romper Room? Thinking about our defenses in a new and conscious way is helpful, but not sufficient. We need to act differently in these situation as well.

Perhaps an image can help. Think of yourself as having an emotional Sunburn. It never goes away. It doesn't even hurt all that much anymore unless someone touches it or bumps it. Your Sunburn might be around being abandoned...or dismissed...or criticized...or controlled. There are lots of types of Sunburns.

While you are at it, try and decipher what your Partner's Sunburn is like. In a quiet, safe moment, invite your Partner to talk about your Sunburns together. You know...HONESTLY. "I've discovered I almost always get reactive when...." And, "Tell me what I do or say that activates your Sunburn." No blame. No judgment. Just a little different way of examining and taking ownership for the 100 % contribution each of us makes to our difficult moments.

Be Care-full. Be sure you open your heart to knowing how your Partner's Sunburn got there (i.e. the childhood story.) If they don't know just use your imagination. Nobody creates a Sunburn for fun. It happened out of neglect or some deprivation for all of us. It's essential information that will make Compassion and Connection more available.

Come to think about it, this image of the Sunburn is sort of a prequel to the article on "Oops and Ouch" which got lots of attention. We obviously need new images and new language sometimes to shake us out of old patterns. Let me know how it goes.

(On another note: I have recently changed my ways in that I am finding success and convenience to work with couples with Face Time sessions. I will only do it if I have met the couple and know them (i.e. workshop, earlier sessions, etc.) If you are wanting more Connection, more understanding of what is happening or just feeling stuck (and you are not working with a coach or therapist), we could give it a try. Call me at 301-404-7711 or email at David@ConnectingCouples.net to talk about possibilities. A session or two could make life a great deal brighter.

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

May 4-5, 2018, Frederick, MD

June 1-3, 2018, Frederick, MD

July 20-22, 2018 Frederick, MD

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

**Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about
creating yourself. George Bernard Shaw.**

**Twenty years from now you will be more
disappointed by the things that you didn't do
than by the ones you did do. So throw off the
bowlines. Catch the trade winds in your sails.
Explore. Dream. Discover - Mark Twain.**

**Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap
but by the seeds you plant. Robert Louis
Stevenson.**

**We don't see things the way they are. We see
them the way WE are. Talmud.**

**I have found that if you love life, life will love
you back. Arthur Rubinstein**

**Clothes make the man. Naked people have
little or no influence in society. Mark Twain**

**If you think you are too small to make a
difference, try sleeping with a mosquito. Dalai
Lama**

**The reason people find it so hard to be happy
is that they always see the past better than it**

was, the present worse than it is, and the future less resolved than it will be. Marcel Pagnol

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

Sincerely,

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

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