

## Getting it together

# Successful intimacy means melting defenses

At various times in my life I would have called myself a romantic, believing that love was a mysterious gift of the gods, beyond our ability to comprehend or control.

At other times I was a hard-core cynic. I coldly looked at love as a complicated expression of our basic neurotic nature. It is therefore, seemed beyond the grasp of rational, practical attempts to influence it.

Both of these extremes share the same basic error: the conviction that love is irrational and uncontrollable. But the truth is that love, especially that facet which involves closeness and intimate relating, can be understood and successfully produced by virtually anybody.

What's more, intimate loving is of extreme practical value in marriages, families, and almost all human relationships. When used effectively, it makes it possible to resolve difficult conflicts, to revitalize dull love relationships, and to develop a well-tuned team that can withstand the most difficult challenges.

**INDIVIDUALS AND** couples who know how to foster this kind of intimate relating are rarely panicked or overwhelmed by conflicts or other departures from harmony. They know they can call on the powerful communicative resources that are made available when defenses are dropped and creative alliances are formed. Nowhere is this usefulness more

constantly proved than in professional counseling. A counselor's success depends on how well he can get clients to face and cope with difficult, touchy issues in a non-defensive manner. The counselor, along with social psychologists and industrial psychologists, relies on tested technology to produce the open, minimally defensive, trusting intimacy that makes it possible for individuals to confront and share their deepest sensitivities.

**NOT SURPRISINGLY**, the principles applied by the effective counselor and by successful, intimate couples are virtually the same.

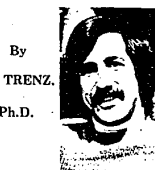
Both recognize, for example, that directly attacking defenses usually makes them all the more resistant. Our defenses are the body guards of our most tender inner-selves. They protect us from painful shocks to our self-images. They hold our personality together in spite of the flood of conflicting demands we must meet every day.

Unfortunately, they are a little blind in their protection. Even important information can be shut out by our defenses if we feel that information threatens our self-image.

For example, when we use an accusatory, degrading approach when trying to become intimate with another person, we will be resisted by their defenses.

Successful intimacy means alleviating the need for defenses. And that means communicating in non-threatening, nonaccusatory ways. A tone of disapproval or a judgemental approach are bitter enemies of intimacy.

**TO THE CONTRARY**, intimates need to cultivate an attitude of mutual respect and basic approval. When warmth and supportiveness are established, defensive obstacles melt away. Under these circumstances, our soft inner self feels a safety and confidence that is epitomized by the infant in its mother's loving arms.



By  
**BOB TRANZ.**

Ph.D.

In adult relationships, this basic acceptance is characterized by each person looking for, and expecting to find the best in his partner.

That doesn't mean overlooking apparent flaws and misbehavior. But it means stretching your perspective so that you can see how a basically good, loving human being might just be doing the best he can under the circumstances as he sees them.

Again, you shouldn't confuse this with blind permissiveness. In fact, a

person who causes harm wants to know about it, and he will feel remorse and want to do better. But the emphasis here is on believing that person has a point of view worth understanding, rather than responding with rejection or judgment.

All of which is really easy to do once you get in touch with the well-intentioned, essentially respectable, basically decent human being who lives behind the facades and defenses of your partner's outer personality. Successful non-defensive communication is self-perpetuating. If you can once establish that intimate connection it will enable you to see more quickly past the defensive obstacles the next time.

Next week's column will discuss more ways to promote intimate relationships.

Bob Tranz is a psychologist and marriage counselor. Questions for Dr. Tranz may be sent to P.O. Box 64, Rochester 48063.

## DAR plans state meet in Southfield

The national president general of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Mrs. George U. Baylies, native of Massachusetts, will be a guest at the 78th state conference scheduled for Sept. 25-28 at the Michigan Inn, Southfield.

Mrs. Eldon A. Behr of Okemos, state regent, will preside at the opening session, Wednesday morning. Reports of chapter regents and state chairwomen will be given describing the work accomplished at local level to support DAR schools, veteran patients, Indians and other objectives of the society.

Mrs. Baylies will speak for the banquet on Sept. 27, on the topic *Our Values Endure*. She heads a membership of more than 200,000 in 3,083 chapters in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, England, France and Mexico. Chapters are in the process of being organized in Iran and Venezuela.

The national defense luncheon will take place Sept. 28 with a program on the Relative Defense Posture of the U.S. and U.S.S.R.

Other invited guests are Mrs. J. Kennedy Kincaid Jr., vice-president general, from Illinois; Mrs. Gabriel Saavedra, state regent of Mexico; Mrs. Monroe T. Thigpen, state regent,

Mississippi, and Mrs. Henry Jamison who will be the DAR Schools Luncheon speaker.

Hostess chapters are General Richardson, of Portage; General Joshua Hammar of Grosse Pointe Park; John Sackett of Redford and Col. Joshua Howard of Dearborn.

John Sackett delegates include Louise Siegmund of Livonia, regent; Margaret Steward of Bloomfield Hills, first vice-regent; Martina Fyfe of West Bloomfield, schools chairwoman and Virginia Beam of Detroit, director.

Alternate delegates are Elizabeth Dettler and Mary Helen Fasing of Livonia and Lorelei Vedeon of Detroit and Hazel Mude of Dearborn.

Mrs. Steward is coordinating the responsibilities of three John Sackett chapter committees taking care of information, exhibits and hostesses.

The information chairwoman is Mrs. Mude, and her committee includes Sue Cooper of Novi, Freddie Cole of Livonia, Bessie Nacker of Farmington and Mrs. Siegmund and Mrs. Dettler.

Mrs. Fasing is working on exhibits with the assistance of Mrs. Mude, Tressa Publ of Brighton, Gladys Sullivan of Plymouth, Mrs. Fyfe and Mrs. Beam.

### Wife abuse to be explored

"Wife Abuse: What Can Be Done About It?" will be the focus of the fall meeting Wednesday, Sept. 27 of the Michigan Inter-Professional Association on Marriage, Divorce and the Family, 237 N. Woodward, Birmingham.

Participating will be Shirley Burgoyne, Ann Arbor attorney, who will talk on what the law can do; Detroit executive deputy police chief James Bannon, whose topic is what the police can do; and Detroit psychiatrist Emanuel Tanay on what the psycho-therapist can do.

Also speaking will be Myra Kruger, director of the Woman's Survival Center in Portage and Gertrude Zemon-Gass, Birmingham psychologist. The event will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Ramada Inn, 20225 Telegraph at Northwestern Highway, Southfield. Donation is \$4 for non-members, \$3 for members and \$1 for students.

### Clock class to teach repair

The cleaning, assembly and disassembly of clocks will be part of a non-credit workshop in basic clock repair to be offered by Henry Ford Community College beginning Tuesday, Oct. 3.

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