

Couples Therapy Overview

The Gottman Method Couples Therapy is based upon John Gottman's research that began in the 1970's and continues to this day. The research has focused on what makes marriages succeed or fail. From this research, Drs. John and Julie Gottman have created a method of therapy that emphasizes a nuts-and-bolts approach to improving couple's relationships.

Gottman Method Couples Therapy consists of five parts:

- Assessment
- Treatment
- Out of Therapy
- Termination
- Outcome Evaluation

Early in the Assessment phase, you will be given some written materials to complete that will help us better understand your relationship. In the first sessions, we will talk about the history of your relationship, areas of concern, and goals for treatment.

In the next session, I will meet with each of you individually to learn your personal histories and to give each of you an opportunity to share thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. In the final session of assessment, I will share with you my recommendations for treatment and work to define mutually agreed upon goals for your therapy.

The length of therapy will be determined by your specific needs and goals. In the course of therapy, we will establish points at which to evaluate your satisfaction and progress. Also, I will encourage you to raise any questions or concerns that you have about therapy at any time.

In the later stages of therapy, we will phase out or meet less frequently in order for you to test out new relationship skills and to prepare for termination of therapy. Although you may terminate therapy whenever you wish, it is most helpful to have at least one session together to summarize progress, define the work that remains, and say goodbye.

In the outcome-evaluation phase, as per the Gottman method, four follow-up sessions are planned, one after six months, one after 12 months, one after 18 months, and one after two years. These sessions have been shown through research to significantly decrease the chances of relapse into previous, unhelpful patterns. In addition, commitment to providing the best therapy possible requires ongoing evaluation of methods used and client progress. The purpose of these follow-up sessions then will be to fine tune any of your relationship skills if needed and to evaluate the effectiveness of the therapy received.

Assessment and Fees:

The hourly rate for Gottman Method Couples Therapy is \$130 per hour, unless adjusted by your therapist. Research supports that best outcomes occur when sessions last 1.5 hours. However, your therapist may adjust your fee or your time based on your needs. Fees for the assessment part of your therapy are based on the number of hours needed to complete the three-step process.

Generally, the assessment requires about 4 to 4 and ½ hours in three or four in office sessions. It also requires 1 to 2 hours of paperwork.

The components of the assessment are as follows:

- Session #1: Intake interviews 80-90 minutes
- Session #2: Individual interviews 45 min each (90 total)
- Session #3: Treatment planning 80-90 minutes

Permission for Digitally Recording and Videotaping Therapy Sessions:

As a primary tool in Gottman Method Couples Therapy, and in order to augment your therapy work, I use videotape feedback as a part of therapy sessions. This means that I may ask to videotape you during specific dialogues or exercises or during entire sessions. We will play back these tapes in sessions to help you see patterns of behavior between the two of you and to help you process conflicts. Viewing the videotapes in sessions allows us to “stop action” and process how you might approach a conflict in a more productive way. It also allows you to witness your progress as your relationship becomes more satisfying to you both.

In addition to in-session use, I may wish to use the videotapes to receive consultation from Drs. John or Julie Gottman or a Gottman Institute Senior Clinician. This may occur during the time of treatment or thereafter for the purposes of peer review, education, and quality assurance. During this process, your name will be kept confidential. In addition, all matters discussed in consultations will remain completely confidential within the Gottman Institute staff. The videotapes will be used for no other purpose without your written permission and they will be erased when they are no longer needed for these purposes.

These tapes are my property and will remain solely in my possession during the course of your therapy. Copies may be sent to the Gottman Institute for the purposes noted above. Should you wish to review these tapes for any reason, we will arrange a session to do so. These materials will remain in locked facilities at all times.

Client’s Agreement:

I have read and understand the goals, format and structure of Gottman Method Couples Therapy. I understand and accept the conditions of this statement and give my permission to have my therapy sessions videotaped. I understand that I may revoke this permission in writing at any time, but until I do so, it shall remain in full force and effect.

Client _____ Date _____

Client _____ Date _____

Therapist _____ Date _____