

Overview of Gottman Method Couples Therapy

The Gottman Method Couples Therapy is based on Dr. John Gottman's research that began in the 1970s 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 clients' relationships.

This method is designed to help teach specific tools to deepen friendship and intimacy in your relationship. To help you productively manage conflicts, you will be given methods to manage resolvable problems and dialogue about gridlocked (or perpetual) issues. We will also work together to help you appreciate your relationship's strengths and to gently navigate through its vulnerabilities.

Gottman Method Couples Therapy consists of three phases:

- Evaluation, Assessment, and Treatment Planning (4 sessions)
- Treatment
- "Phasing Out" of Therapy and Termination (including 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 2nd session we will talk about the history of your relationship, areas of concern, and goals for treatment.

In the 3rd 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 4th session of assessment, I will share with you my recommendations for treatment and work to define mutually agreed-upon goals for your therapy.

Most of the work will involve sessions in which you will be seen together as a couple. However, there may be times when individual sessions are recommended. I also will give you exercises and tools to practice between sessions.

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 3rd phase 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 the 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 good-bye.

In the outcome evaluation phase, as per the Gottman Method, four follow-up sessions are planned: one after six months, one after twelve months, one after eighteen 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.

Assessments and Fees

Fees for the assessment of your therapy are based on the number of hours needed to complete the three-phase process. Generally, the assessment phase requires 8 hours in four in-office sessions. It also requires assessments that you complete at home and 8 to 10 hours of assessment evaluation that is completed by me outside of our sessions. My charge for the 8 to 10 hours on my own time is equal to the current fee for one double session.

The components of the assessment are as follows:

- Session #1: Intake Interviews, etc. 120 minutes
- Session #2: Oral History Interview, etc. 120 minutes
- Session #3: Individual Interviews 120 minutes
- ***Out-of-session Evaluation*** 480 to 600 minutes
- Session #4: Summary, Treatment Planning, etc. 120 minutes