

Couples Therapy with Lisa Harris Counselling

Overview of the Gottman Method of Couples Therapy

The Gottman Method of Couples Therapy is based on Dr. John Gottman's research that began in the 1970's and continues to this day. The research has focused on what makes relationships succeed or fail. From this research, Drs. John and Julie Gottman have created a method of therapy that emphasises 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. You will be given methods to help you productively manage conflict, including managing "resolvable problems" and a way to create dialogue around "gridlocked" perpetual issues. We will also work together to help you appreciate your relationship's strengths and to gently navigate through its vulnerabilities.

The Therapy Process

Therapy will generally consist of five parts:

1. Assessment
2. Treatment
3. "Phasing out" of Therapy
4. Termination
5. Outcome Evaluation

1. Assessment^

Assessment consists of joint and individual sessions, along with a relationship check-up questionnaire and a feedback session. The normal flow is listed below:

- a. Questionnaire sent to each of you and completed at least 3 days prior to your initial session
- b. ASSESSMENT SESSIONS - done in one day
 - i. Session 1 – Joint session, 90 minutes
 - ii. Session 2 & 3 – Individual sessions, 60-90 minutes
- c. Session 4 done one week later – Feedback session, 90 minutes

I will first meet with you both as a couple. Then I meet with each of you individually to learn more about your personal history, as well your thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. We will then come back together to discuss my recommendations for treatment and work together to define mutually agreed upon goals for your therapy.

2. Treatment

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

The length of therapy will be determined by your specific needs and goals. Over the course of therapy, we will establish points at which to evaluate your satisfaction and progress. Also, I encourage you to raise any questions or concerns that you have about therapy at any time. For couples who are at a "decision point", we can organise the treatment to enable multiple points at which to check commitment to therapy and the continuation of your relationship.

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3. Phasing Out of Therapy

In the later stage 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.

4. Termination

Although you may terminate therapy whenever you wish, it is helpful to have at least one final session together to summarise progress, define the work that remains (including follow-up sessions if needed), and say good-bye.

5. Outcome/Evaluation Phase

In the outcome-evaluation phase, as per the Gottman Method, a minimum of four follow-up sessions should be 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 will be to find-tune any of your relationship skills if needed, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the therapy received.

**Note that not all couples will require follow up sessions, and some couples will want additional follow up.

Fees

Assessment^	\$900 all inclusive Payment plans available – (Min. \$300 deposit required prior to Questionnaire being issued) Full Payment required prior to initial sessions unless a payment plan is agreed in writing	Relationship Check-up Questionnaire 1 x 90 min Joint Session 2 x 90 min Individual Sessions 1 x 90 min Feedback Session Therapist analysis and therapy plan
Treatment & Follow Up Sessions	\$120 x 60-minute	\$170 x 90-minutes