

The Gottman Connection

The Ultimate Clinical Assistant

John Gottman & Julie Gottman

Teletherapy can be challenging—and couples teletherapy can be doubly so. You're managing a therapeutic relationship with two clients simultaneously while guiding them to manage their own—all in real time and across a screen. Using clips of actual teletherapy sessions, discover how to take couples teletherapy to the next level with a new scientifically based relationship assessment method and software platform that's accessed by both clinicians and couples, helping clients practice what they learn long after a session is over. With the therapist's guidance, the Relationship Builder helps couples restore and strengthen effective conflict management, emotional connection and friendship, romance and sex life, trust and commitment, physiological calmness and resilience, and shared meaning system. Explore how to:

- Do a thorough teletherapy assessment of a relationship's strengths, challenges, and moment-by-moment dynamics, so therapists can focus on relevant interventions only
- Integrate a set of new online teletherapeutic tools that can be used with couples living together or apart for building essential relationship skills
- Help couples deal with conflicts and difficulties between sessions by using the Relationship Builder to access appropriate tools and exercises

Julie Gottman, PhD, is cofounder and president of The Gottman Institute. The author of five books, she's cocreator of the The Art and Science of Love weekend workshops for couples, and the Gottman international clinical training program. John Gottman, PhD, is cofounder of The Gottman Institute. The author of hundreds of journal articles and 48 books, he's received numerous awards for his marriage and family research.

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Parts 1 & 2
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Learning Objectives:

1. Apply a thorough tele-therapy assessment of a relationship's strengths and challenges in a complete written report and treatment recommendations to improve outcomes.
2. Investigate the actual moment-by-moment dynamics in the complete written report and treatment recommendations to improve outcomes.
3. Employ into your couples therapy a set of new online tele-therapeutic tools called the "Relationship Builder" that can be used with couples living together or apart.
4. Assess how to help couples deal with conflicts and difficulties between sessions by using the "Relationship Builder" to access appropriate tools and exercises.

Outline:

1. Tele-therapy assessment of a relationship's strengths and challenges.
 - Tele-therapy session review and discussion
2. Moment-By-Moment Dynamics
 - Overview and how to understand and explain these dynamics
 - How to describe the couple's interactions during conflict and events discussions
3. Written report and treatment recommendations
 - How to explain them to clients
 - Improve treatment outcomes
4. "Relationship Builder"
 - Overview
 - How these tools can be integrated into your couples therapy
 - How this tool can be used with couples living together or apart.
 - How to help couples deal with conflicts and difficulties between sessions by using the "Relationship Builder" to access appropriate tools and exercises.

Reference List:

Cornish, M. A., Hanks, M. A., & Gubash Black, S. M. (2020). Self-forgiving processes in therapy for romantic relationship infidelity: An evidence-based case study

Gottman, J.M., Gottman, J.S., Cole, C., & Preciado, M. (2019). Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexual Couples About to Begin Couples Therapy: An Online Relationship Assessment of 40,681 Couples. *JOURNAL OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jmft.12395>

1. Shapiro, A. F., Gottman, J. M., & Fink, B. C. (2015). Short-term change in couples' conflict following a transition to parenthood intervention. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice*, 4(4), 239–251. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cfp0000051>
2. Friedlander, M. L., Lee, M., & Escudero, V. (2019). What we do and do not know about the nature and analysis of couple interaction. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice*, 8(1), 24–44. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cfp0000114>

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ABSTRACTS BELOW

Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexual Couples About to Begin Couples Therapy: An Online Relationship Assessment of 40,681 Couples JOURNAL OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY

ABSTRACT. We currently have little idea of precisely who goes for couples therapy. This is a report of the results of a validated online assessment of relationship and individual functioning based on 39,251 heterosexual, 1,022 lesbian, and 438 gay couples about to begin couples therapy. Using validated and reliable questionnaires of relationship and individual functioning, this report presents and compares, for each sexual-orientation, the percentage of couples, pre-therapy, who are coping with a variety of relationship problems. To test for the replicability of results, the sample was divided randomly into two subsamples and statistical tests were performed on each sample. Couples initiating therapy suffer from greater distress and many more co-morbidities than has been presumed in previous literature, and same-sex couples present a particular set of *both* strengths and challenges compared to heterosexual couples. Gay-male and lesbian couples were very different on trust and monogamy, as were heterosexual and lesbian couples. Based on this epidemiologically sized sample, the challenge to our field may be to create interventions with much larger effect sizes than we currently have.

Shapiro, A. F., Gottman, J. M., & Fink, B. C. (2015). Short-term change in couples' conflict following a transition to parenthood intervention. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice*, 4(4), 239–251. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cfp0000051>

Abstract

Conflict among couples was examined following a transition to parenthood intervention to determine both short-term efficacy of the program and elucidate the process of change postintervention. A randomized clinical trial design was used to examine conflict in couples who participated in a transition to parenthood psycho-educational workshop compared with controls. The beginnings of improved communication in conflict were evident at 3 months postbirth through decreased husband contempt and increased husband positive affect during conflict in a sample that demonstrated more substantial improvement at 1 year postintervention. Increases in husband positive affect in the workshop group at 3 months postbirth predicted more positive and less negative wife affect during conflict at 1 year postbirth. Results suggest that some indicators of intervention efficacy were evident, postintervention change can be gradual, husbands may be more receptive to implementing change shortly after birth, and early changes can be associated with later positive outcomes. Findings have implications for preparing couples for the gradual and complex nature of change associated with intervention. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2016 APA, all rights reserved)

Friedlander, M. L., Lee, M., & Escudero, V. (2019). What we do and do not know about the nature and analysis of couple interaction. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice*, 8(1), 24–44. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cfp0000114>

Abstract

This article summarizes the state of the science on couples' observable interactions since Gottman and Notarius's (2000) decade review on the topic. The literature ranges from communication studies during various developmental periods in romantic relationships to the relation of couple interactions to personal health, well-being, and stress, comorbid disorders (depression and alcoholism), parenting, and the psychological functioning of children. After providing an overview of recent research in each topic area covered by Gottman and Notarius, we describe some well-established micro- and macrolevel coding systems and reflect on what is yet to be understood about couple communication, such as the interactional styles of culturally diverse couples, in general and during the process of couple therapy. Finally, we discuss recent technological advances and conclude with recommendations for future research in this area using various statistical analyses that account for systemic dyadic influences. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2019 APA, all rights reserved)