Couples & Relationship Psychotherapy

A Brief Guide to Couples Therapy

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the therapeutic consultants

Deciding to seek help for your relationship can feel like a significant step. The following information is offered to help you understand how couples therapy works and what you can expect from it. Please do not hesitate to ask if you find anything unclear, or wish to question or confirm any details.

What is Couples Therapy?

Couples psychotherapists work with the relationship between the couple. The exploration of the dynamics that the couple bring is key to their work. Relationships have a tendency to move from initial romantic love into a struggle, where the issues of the individuals in the couple come into conflict.

The therapeutic work is to improve communication and understanding between the couple so that they find a way to negotiate and, ideally, resolve their differences. Couples therapists use their skills, training and experience to build trust and to work with the sensitive and intimate issues that the couple bring to the therapeutic encounter.

How does it work?

Couples usually meet with the therapist at the same time and in the same place each week, for a session of 50 minutes. This regularity helps to build a sense of trust and safety, where the couple know they will have a weekly space to bring things that are difficult.

Couples therapy can be a more directive experience than one-to-one psychotherapy. Sometimes the therapist will set homework or exercises so that the work continues into the couple's daily lives between sessions.

The environment of neutral, confidential safety can transform conflict into closeness, bringing a depth of understanding and intimacy into the relationship.

What brings couples to therapy?

Couples come to therapy for many different reasons. Some of the issues that might bring a couple include:

- Infidelity and rebuilding trust
- Adjusting to new parenthood
- Sexual difficulties
- Conflict and anger
- Fertility issues
- Considering or navigating separation
- Step-parenting and blending families
- Financial difficulties and money worries

> *Whatever brings you, the aim is the same: to understand what is happening between you, and to find new and healthier ways of relating to one another.*

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