



Couples Communication Webinar: Intimacy in Lasting Relationships

Southern California

Welcome to the Couples Communication Webinar

This webinar is intended as an educational tool. It is not a substitute for medical advice about yourself or someone else; if you need medical advice, ask your clinical team. If you have an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest hospital.

Housekeeping



Make sure you have a strong internet connection; cannot participate by phone.



Close all other apps and programs.



Turn your volume up.



If you're using a smart device, do not leave the app once you've joined the session. The chat is reviewed at the end for questions.



By default, you've been placed on mute and cameras have been disabled.

Housekeeping

Privacy

- Please do not share any personal information that you would not want others to know.
- Use your initials only when joining the meeting to protect your privacy.
- Do not share any personal information through the chat function as it will be read by others.
- Please submit your questions via the chat function at the end of the presentation.
- We will do our best to answer as many questions from the chat as possible in the allotted time.

Survey

- At the end of the webinar, we will provide you with a link in the chat for a brief survey. We appreciate your feedback on this class!

Navigating Intimacy in Relationships

- ✓ Learn a better understanding of intimacy
- ✓ Learn how to make love last over time

What is Intimacy?

What is your definition of intimacy?

Sexuality versus Intimacy

- **Sex:** physical connection
- **Intimacy:** emotional connection
- **Pat Love:** “ability to share your thoughts and feelings with your partner”
 - Communicating on a personal level

(Love, Robinson, 1994)



What is intimacy?

Intimacy: is a closeness between people in a personal relationship. It is what builds over time as you connect with someone grow to care about and feel more and more comfortable during your time together. It can include physical or emotional closeness or a mix of the two.

(Love, Robinson, 1994)



3 Stages of Love: Phase 1: Physical Attraction - Initial

- Hormones

(Fisher, 2005)



3 Stages of Love Phase 2: Attraction

- Adrenaline
- Dopamine
- Serotonin

(Fisher, 2005)



3 Stages of Love Phase 3: Attachment

- Oxitocyn and Vassopressin



Pat Love Differentiates Between Romantic Love and Romance

Romantic Love: 3 to 6 months

- Phenylethylamine (PEA)
- Causes a state of ecstasy
- Lowers defenses
- Denies all negative
- Energized
- Work harder
- PEA causes increased libido
- Dopamine = Euphoria



Pat Love Differentiates Between Romantic Love and Romance

Romance

- Requires commitment and conscious effort
- Think
- Plan
- Compromise
- Mature
- Takes daily effort
- Self-disclosure
- Eye gazing
- Knowing that the other person loves you
- Seeing the world through your partner's eyes
- Excitement restores the love drug, PEA

Pat Love Differentiates Between Romantic Love and Romance

- Successful couples progress to feelings of security; to the endorphin response to sex that makes the partners feel calm, safe, confident and comfortable
- Sharing creates intimacy, which creates passion
- If the couples engage in connecting behaviors (touch, hold, gaze, listening, responsiveness, validating, comforting, supporting, etc.) they feel the love, the passion they felt during the infatuation stage

Hot Monogamy

2SI = Two sexual people joined by intimacy = passion

Intimacy brings on the passion in a lasting relationship.

Intimacy born of good communication.

Benefits of monogamy:

- With regular sex, there is higher levels of estrogen = prevents heart disease
- Increase of testosterone = increase of sexual activity
- Emotional – love and trust = support system
- Shared history/steadfast commitment = peace and contentment
- Vintage sex = potent, intimate sexuality fueled by love and emotional maturity, not by youth, newness or physical newness

(Love, Robinson, 1994)



Hot Monogamy

How frequent do you think about sex and want to have sex?

Related largely to testosterone levels (biology)

Studies on the effects on T:

1. Gave 1/3 of women 50 years old estrogen
 - 1/3 estrogen and testosterone
 - 1/3 placebo
2. Women divided into hi T and low T

Hi T = more frequently aroused

- Arousal lasted longer
- More aggressive/assertive
- Powerful jobs
- Poor relationships

Pat Love – Hot Monogamy author, has low desire levels and took testosterone. Sex on her mind all the time, she experienced physical discomfort when she did not have sex.

(Love, Robinson, 1994)

Hot Monogamy

Task: Balance the hi T male with the low T female

Low T:

- Be aware of preconditions for sex! i.e., need down time when you get home, sit and talk for awhile
- You need to make time for your sex life
- Wanting for spontaneity = it won't happen
- Know what turns you on. Take responsibility for your needs!

High T:

- Be aware your partner is not the same
- Distinguish between lust and love
- Know what turns your partner on

(Love, Robinson, 1994)

Hot Monogamy

Variety:

- Quickie
- Married sex (20 to 30 minutes)
- Romance (40 to 50 minutes)
- Adventuresome
- New position, new places, camping, skinny dipping
- “It’s not frequency, it’s how the adventure looks to you!”

(Love, Robinson, 1994)

Hot Monogamy

Four ground rules:

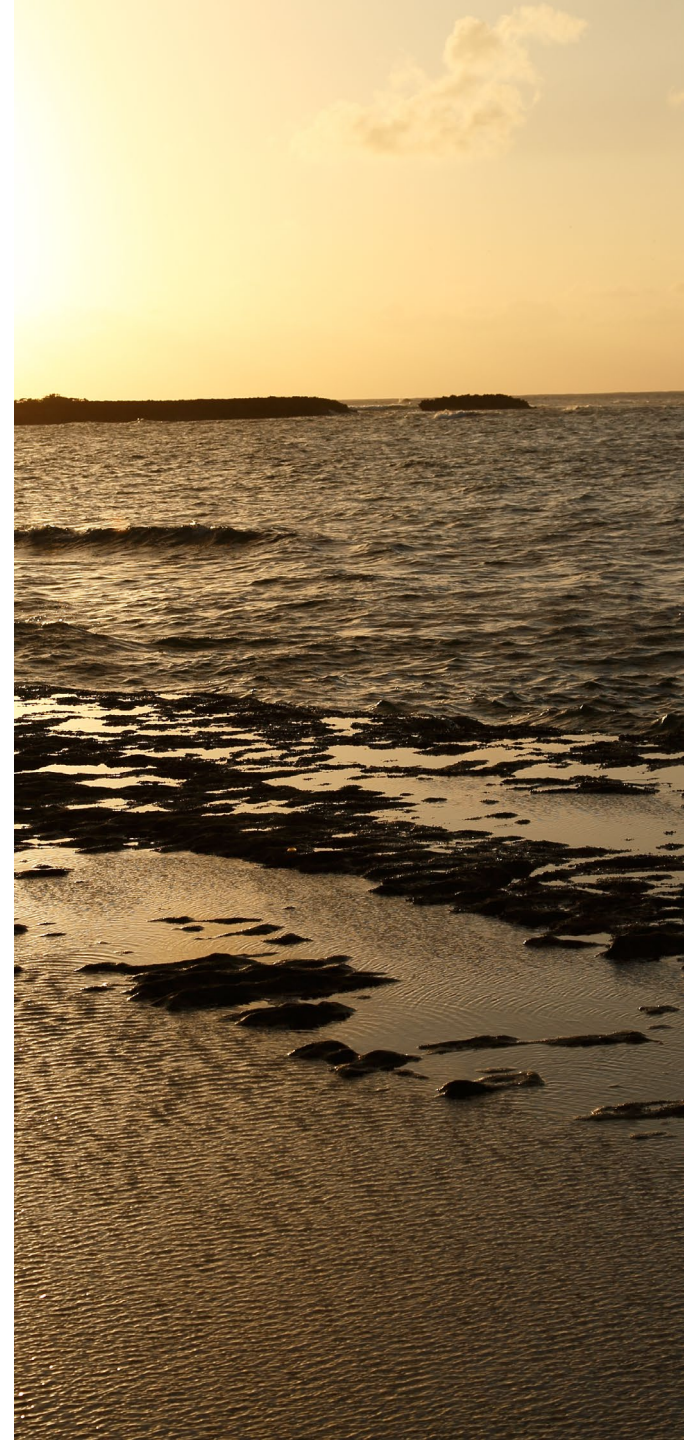
1. **Safety and trust:** No blaming or shaming (e.g., “You’ve felt like this all the time and never said a word?”). Know self/partner then communicate it and increase intimacy.
2. **Consensus:** What connecting means to you. Hot monogamy is not about how many orgasms you have. It is about connection. Some people don’t need sex and some just need seasonal sex.
3. **Dual Responsibility:** “I must let you know what I want.” Do not make assumptions. Check-in with your partner. Do not expect mind reading.
4. **Peace:** You need a way to make peace after sex.

(Love, Robinson, 1994)

Gottman's Concepts on How to Navigate Intimacy Over Time

- Enhance your love maps
- Increasing admiration and fondness
- Turning towards each other versus turning away
“bids for support”
- Add to the emotional bank account
- Let your partner influence you, you become more powerful
- **Intention:** Enrich your love life by responding to partner's likes and preferences

(Love, Robinson, 1994)



Love Maps

- Emotionally intelligent couples are “intimately familiar with each other’s world”
- They remember major events in each other’s history, and they keep updating their information as facts and feelings as their spouse's world changes (goals, worries, likes, dislikes)
- Without this you can’t know them
- If you don’t know them, how can you truly love them.
- In knowledge there is strength
- Couples can cope better with stressful events and conflict better
- Making each other their priority
- A lifelong process – ongoing!
- “Building block to enhancing understanding, fondness and admiration (2ND principle)
- Communication about sex

(Love, Robinson, 1994)



Barriers to Intimacy (In General)

- Early childhood conflict
- Trauma (past or present)
- Lack of trust
- Substance abuse or alcohol abuse
- Past or current Infidelity (or fear of/anxiety)

(Love, Robinson, 1994)



Attachment Styles

1. Avoider Style:

- Wants and needs a lot of time alone
- Is often more quiet than the partner
- Is sensitive to any form of control
- Is often quite self sufficient
- Gives little information
- Withdraws when upset
- Has difficulty expressing feelings
- Often very involved in work

(Love, Robinson, 1994)

Attachment Styles

2. Pursuer Style:

- Expects a great deal of contact and closeness
- Usually wants more time and attention than the partner
- Is very sensitive to any form of rejection
- Gets anxious when separated from the partner
- Tends to want more information than the partner gives
- Focuses more on what they don't have than what they have
- Often seen as needy
- Is better at giving love than receiving
- Gets upset easily
- Holds a grudge, remembers past failings
- Can be hypervigilant to the partner's behaviors

(Love, Robinson, 1994)

Attachment Styles

3. Secure Style:

- Can freely show love and receive love
- Is sensual, sexual and has high self esteem
- Can ask for help when needed and offer help to others
- Gets upset at times but gets over it
- Does not hold a grudge
- Forgives
- Is comfortable with closeness as well as distance
- Enjoys time alone and with others.

(Love, Robinson, 1994)

Thank you for your time and attention today!

I will now open the Chat and review a few questions.

Please join us next Monday at 5:30 p.m. for the next Couples Communication webinar – **The Art of Active Listening**

At the end of the webinar a link will be posted in the chat for a brief Survey – We appreciate your feedback!

Couple's Counseling: Annotated Bibliography

Blank, Emelie A. (2020). *Easy Marriage Counseling.*

Exercises for couples who want to strengthen their relationships.

Chapman, Gary (2010). *The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love That Lasts.*

Chapman, Gary (2018). *Loving Your Spouse When You Feel Like Walking Away.* For a person who feels as if they are doing all the work in a relationship.

Cook, Emily (2018). *The Marriage Counseling Workbook.*

Looks at common issues and provides steps and exercises to improve problem solving.

de Marneffe, Daphne (2018). *The Rough Patch.*

For couples who are struggling in the middle of a long-term relationship.

Fisher, Helen (2005). *Why We Love, the Nature and Chemistry of Romantic Love.*

Gottman, John and Nan Silver (r.2020). *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work.*

Gottman, John and Julie Schwartz, et al. (2019). *Eight Dates.*

Presents the eight most important conversations that a couple can have.

Couple's Counseling: Annotated Bibliography

Guerin, PJ Jr.; Fay, Leo; Burden, Susan and Kautto, Judith Gilbert (1987). *The Evaluation and Treatment of Marital Conflict*

Hendrix, Harville, and Hunt, Helen LaKelly(2008). *Getting the Love You Want*.

Herman, Judy K. (2019). *Beyond Messy Relationships*.
Describes her own journey from divorce to a second marriage and her own confrontation with her relationship with relationships.

Johnson, Sue(2008). *Hold Me Tight*.
Provides ways for couples to create stronger attachments by entering vulnerable conversations about how they feel.

Jung, Marshall (1993). *Constructual Marital Therapy: Theory and Practice*.

Linehan, Marsha M (2015). *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets*.

Love, Patricia, and Jo Robinson (1994). *Hot Monogamy, Essential Steps for More Passionate, Intimate Lovemaking*.

Munoz, Alicia(2018). *No More Fighting*. Acknowledges that conflict is necessary to address in a long-term relationship. Provides discussions to strengthen the ability to work through conflict.

Couple's Counseling: Annotated Bibliography

- **Novak, Ester**(2020). *Marriage Counseling and Anxiety in Relationships*. For the person struggling with a perfectionistic view of how marriage should work.
- **Richo, David**(2002). *How to Be an Adult in Relationships: The Five Keys to Mindful Loving*. Provides a five-step method of mindfulness toward becoming a more aware and loving person.
- **Snyder, Stephen**(2018). *Love Worth Making*. A sex therapist presents strategies for prioritizing and rekindling sex in long-term relationships.
- **Schnarch, David** (2009). *Passionate Marriage*.
- **Wagner, Talia**(2019). *Married Roommates*. Sharpens communications skills to create better relational habits.
- **Walser, Robyn D., and Westrup, Darrah**(2009). *The Mindful Couple*. Encourages mindfulness to realign reactive behavior with the values of respect, kindness, and love.
- **Weiner-Davis, Michele**(2017). *Healing From Infidelity*. Why cheating occurs and strategies to repair a relationship when it occurs.