

New Trends in Hope Focused Couple Counseling

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Hope, Forgiveness, and Positive Psychology in Couple Therapy

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ROUTLEDGE

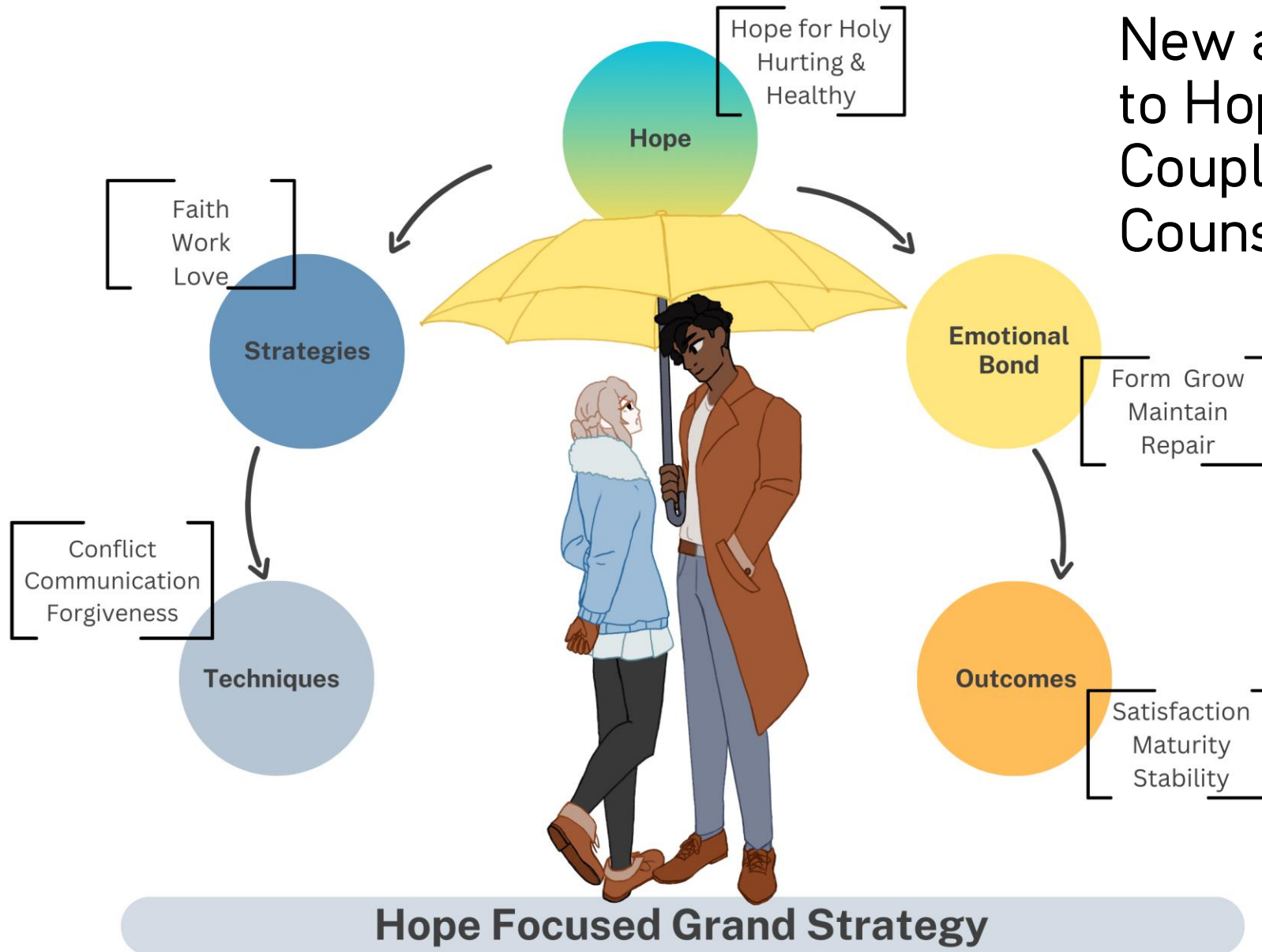


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Credit: DMP



What is the most difficult thing about Couple
Counseling?

New approach to Hope Focused Couple Counseling





The 10 questions that capture relationships

1. What's going on? “..what you see as the major problems in your relationship. We'll expand on these as time goes on, but for now, let's just get a lay of the land.” Try to limit how much description you want without making partners feel like you are in a hurry or are cutting them off.
2. Scaling Question: 0= no connection or fully negative connection and 10- ideal match to hopes & dreams.
3. Relationship History: How met, attraction grew, life together progressed to where it's now struggling?
4. Specific areas now: Record discussion for 7 minutes of what specific areas need work now. Don't leave alone.
5. Communication: Was your communication in those 7 minutes typical for at-home communication?



The 10 questions that capture relationships

6. How is your intimacy or bond as a couple? Emotionally? sexually?
7. Unforgiven hurts. Note any pain you notice and ask if it is something they would like to be able to forgive? Decisional & emotional hurts
8. Best dreams & hopes: We've looked at the problems, now let's talk about what your best dreams and hopes are for this relationship? Don't rush this.
9. Miracle question: If tomorrow your best dreams and hopes had been realized, what would look different?
10. Earlier I asked your scaling, and you said ____ & _____. Can you think of one thing to do to move the needle up half a point this week?

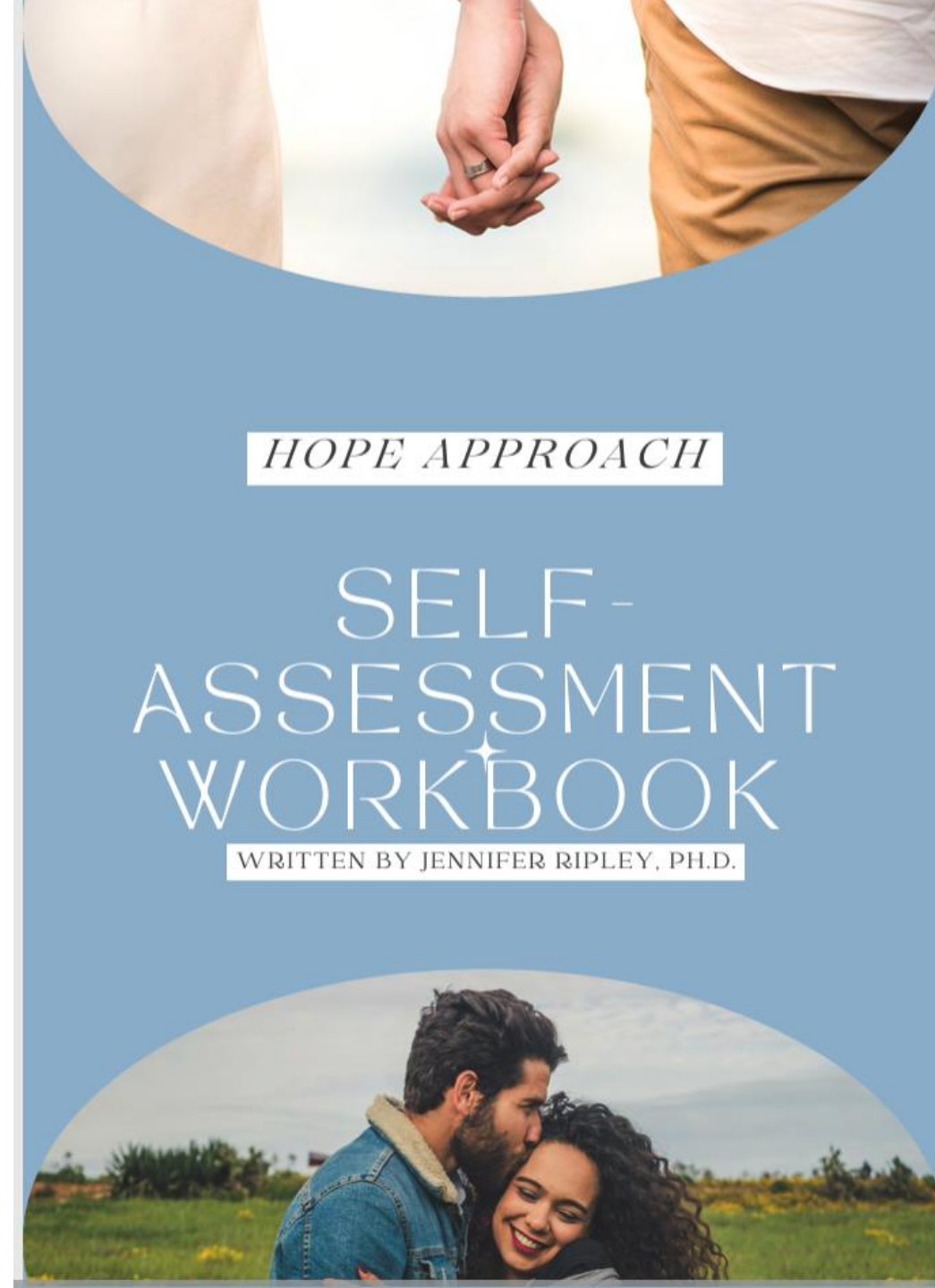


Diversity

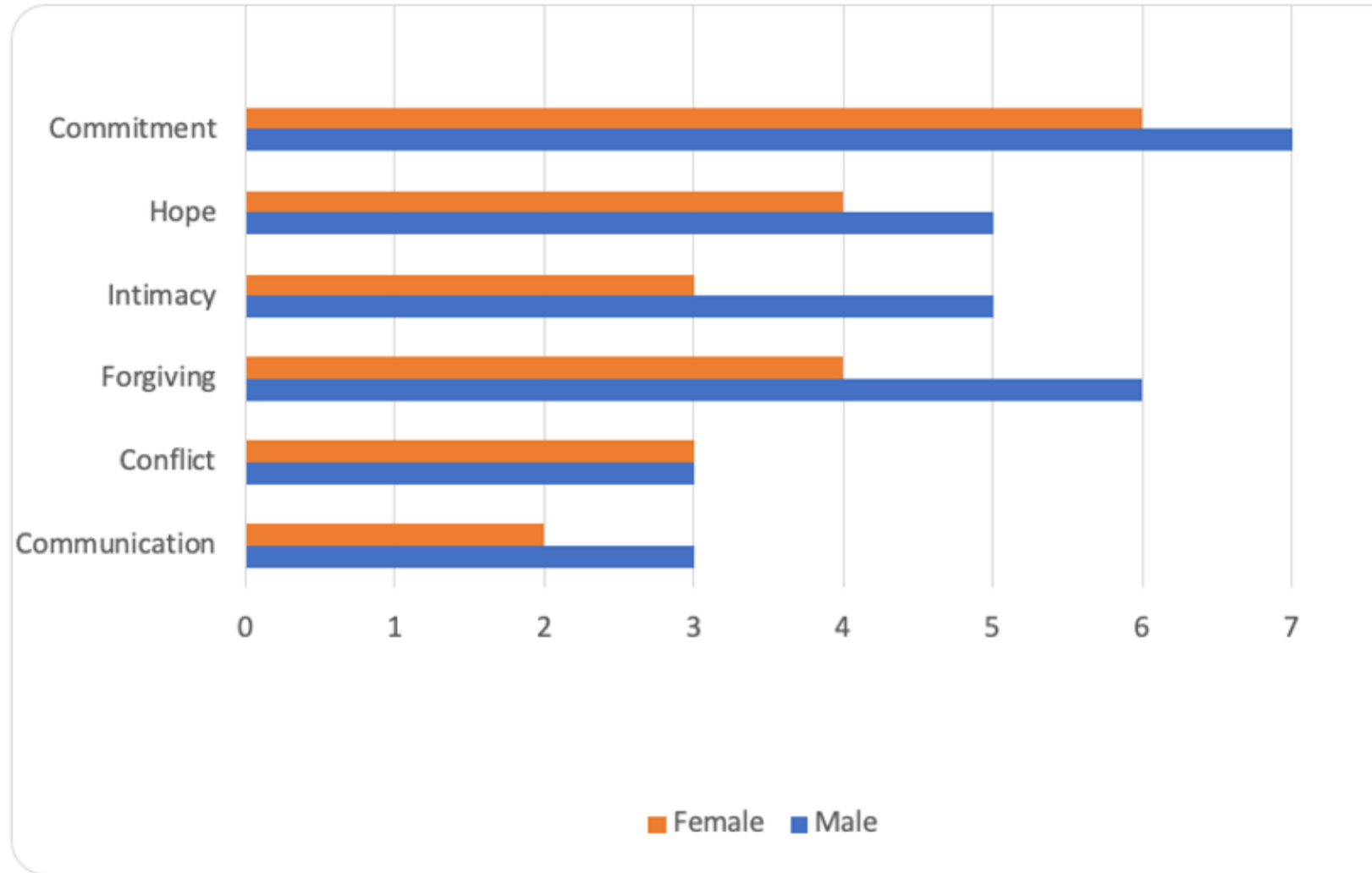
- Christian integration- ask miracle question with God involved in answering prayers
- Is there anything about _____ that we should make part of our work?
- I noticed in surveys you... can you tell me more (red flags often addressed individually and early)

Written questions

- <https://www.hopecouples.com/assessments-for-couples>
- Self-assessment workbook for couples to complete before or after intake



The Care measure 7 questions



Confidential Hope Project Couples Report

Couple: **Male** and **Female**

Assessment by: **Therapist 1 & Therapist 2**

Date: **Month, Day, Year**

Personal History

Male and Female are a (**married, cohabiting, dating, engaged**), (**racial identity, or other important identity**) couple in their (**age range**), who have been together for **##** years. They sought **counseling or relationship check up** to improve their relationship....

Relationship History

Male and Female met when... Female was attracted to ... (**qualities about Male**). Male appreciated... about Female. Male and Female have **##** children... (**family data if applicable**).

Primary Relationship Concerns

Male and Female desire to... (**more effectively communicate, manage personal reactions, and resolve differences...fill in couple's goals**). Female hopes ... (**can use miracle question to fill in here**). Male also hopes for.... Specifically, Male and Female are seeking to navigate... (**situational or season-of-life stressors if applicable**).

Your Relationship Assessment

One measure of how you are doing overall in your

Couple Satisfaction Index:

Male: **A Little Unhappy**

Female: **Fairly Unhappy**

The Report

- <https://www.hopecouples.com/couple-feedback-report-templates>
- Use the 10 questions
- And your measures

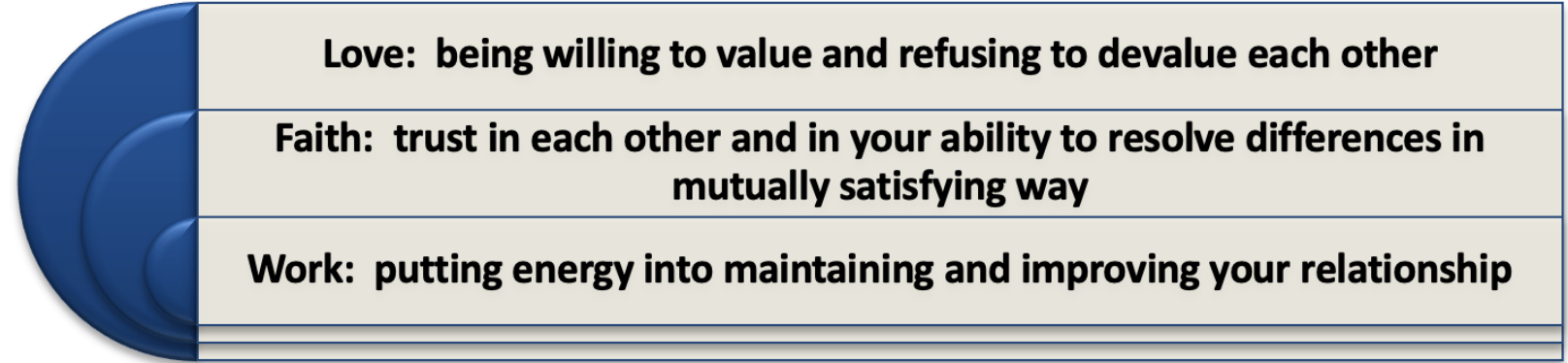


Assessment Report

- Personal & Relationship history (I was listening)
- Primary concerns
- Assessment (global & Care graphic)
- You are like other couples who seek couple therapy
- Communication pattern (distancer-pursuer....)
- Relationship Strengths

Pathways to Change: Faith, Work and Love

The good news is that your relationship can always change. There are 3 pathways to change your relationship that we will work on through various exercises and skills.



Relationships strengthen by “faith working through love” (Galatians 5:6, NKJV).

(Communication, conflict resolution, and intimacy—**fill in couple’s main concerns/goals**) issues can improve with new experiences, skills, and insights. These things can be learned and used in your relationship when difficult situations arise.

The Work: Male and Female, we ask that you focus *one work week* (**about 40 hours**) of effort on your relationship while participating in this program in the next ?? weeks. That will be about ?? hours of counseling (60 or 90-minute sessions) and another 25 hours of spending positive “homework” time together working to improve your relationship.

Your Goals: You identified goals for (improved communication, conflict resolution, and patience with one another.) All of the experiences can strengthen your relationship. You also desire God to be a key player in your treatment and would like prayer and Scriptural encouragement to be incorporated into sessions (**adjust to couple if spirituality and desire for integration are applicable**).

Pathways to change Work Goals

Close with a hopeful summary

WEEK OF :

PLAN FROM THERAPY

MUST DO

1

2

3

SCHEDULING PLAN

REFLECTION/ PRAYER

BIG/ 5- MINUTE DATES

INDIVIDUAL CARE

I'M GRATEFUL FOR

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME
& INSPIRATION

- Clear definition of homework
- Plan for implementation
- Obstacles to overcome
- Connection time
- Individual Care
- Gratitude/ Prayer

Routine Outcome Monitoring

HOPE ROUTINE OUTCOME MONITORING

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

COMPLETING THIS ☐ Before session ☐ After session

INSTRUCTIONS:

Answer each question about how you feel about your relationship THIS WEEK

QUESTIONS:

RATING SCALE:

Emotional Engagement: Do you feel you are emotionally connected, (trusting, open, safe) with your partner this week?

Never
1

Rarely
2

Sometimes
3

Often
4

Always
5

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Understand: Do you feel you understand and are in tune with each other?

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Alliance. Do you feel like you and your partner are working well together toward relationship goals?

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Work. Are you putting time and effort into improving your relationship (doing positive/ healthy things for your relationship)?

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Therapist alliance. How much is your therapist working with you to accomplish your goals?

Never
1

Rarely
3

Sometimes
5

Often
8

Always
10

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Would you say Couple Counseling is working? We are working on the things I want to work on in couple counseling.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Overall, what is your level of well-being (how you are doing)?

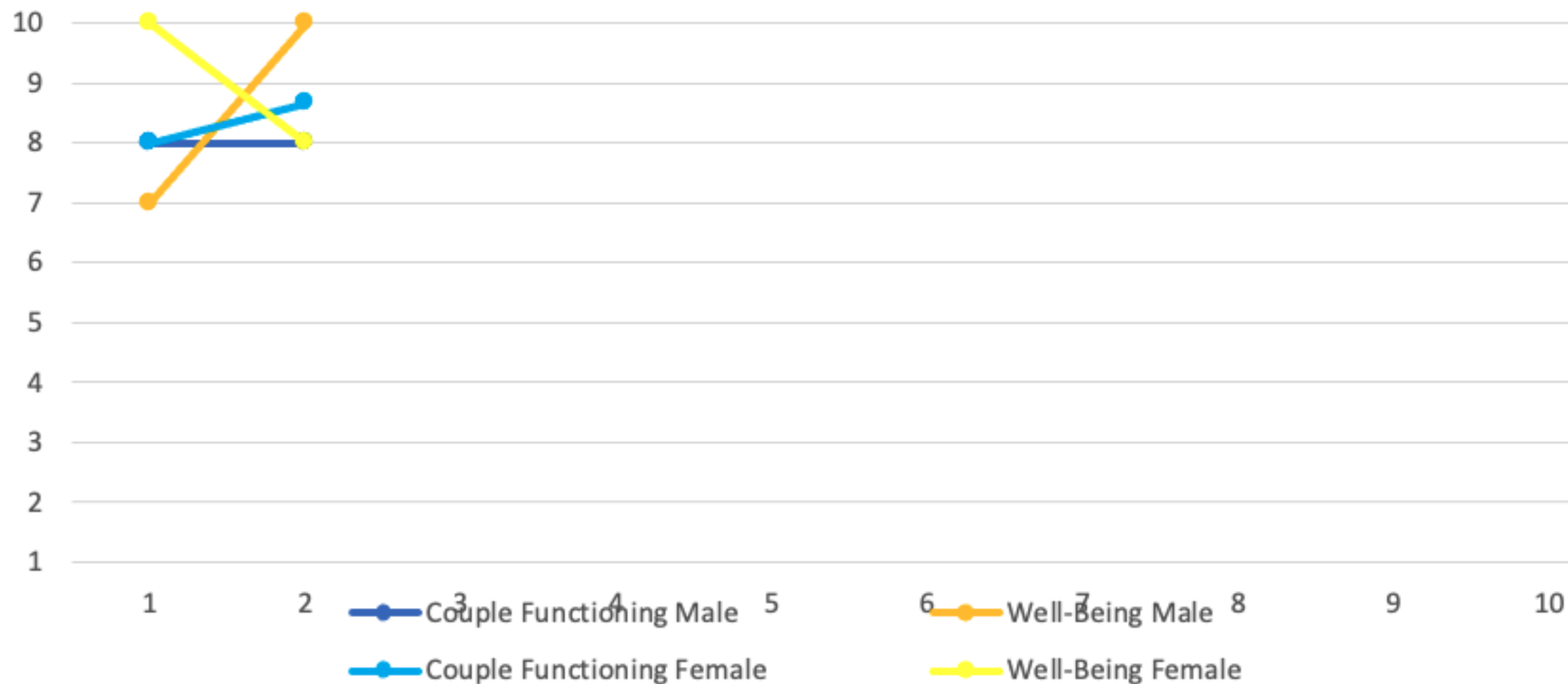
Couldn't
be worse
1

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Couldn't
be better
20

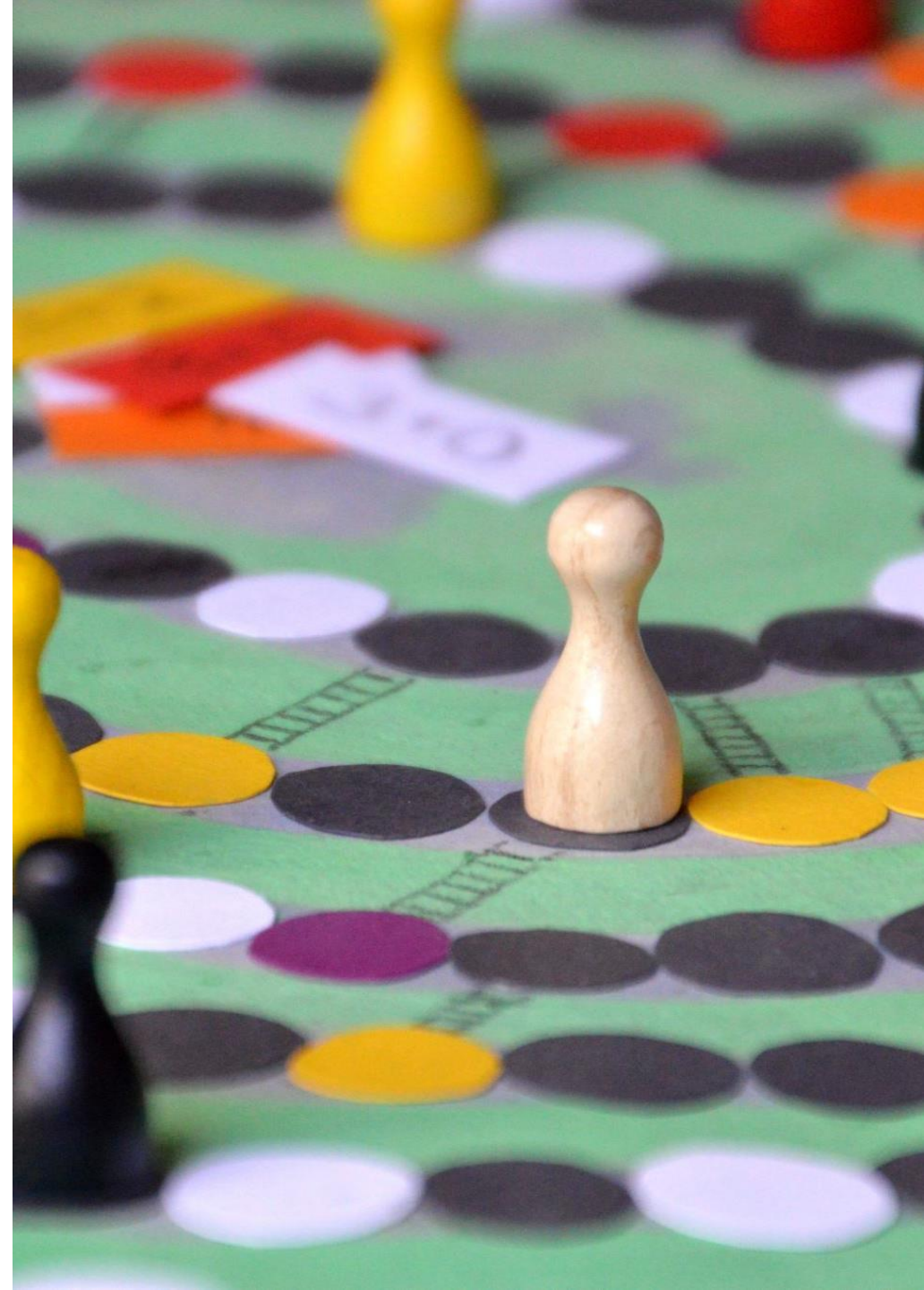
Did you use any exercises, resources or recommendations from couple therapy this week? If so, how did it go?

Outcome Monitoring



Routine Outcome Monitoring Principles

- Use a curious engaging point of view "Hmm.. Let's see what we've got so far. Does this seem to reflect how you have felt?"
- Prioritize the clients' voices
- Make changes visible
- Discuss stuck-points and lack-of-progress as a shared obstacle
- Address blame-game as a negative relationship pattern if it pops up here
- Increase motivation to do homework



THE 3 PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

Hope Focused Couples

LOVE



Being willing to
value and
refusing to
devalue each
other

FAITH



Trusting in each
other and in
your ability to
resolve
differences in a
mutually
satisfying way

WORK



Putting energy
into repairing
and maintaining
your
relationship

Couple Workbook. [Hopecouples.com/workbook](https://hopecouples.com/workbook)

- Blogs, worksheets & materials to walk a couple through their couple therapy
- Orientation and Self-assessment
- Cooling Down & Confidence
- Understanding Needs & Patterns
- Communication & Conflict
- Bond & Intimacy
- Repair & Forgive
- Finish Well

Classic Treatment Plan

In session

1. Intake
2. Feedback, Self-regulation
3. Negative reciprocity, Video
4. Genogram
5. Sensible scaling/sculpting w/ needs*
6. TANGO* or TANGO-E
7. Mid-counseling review
 - Soft Start Up

At home

Date Night & TCCP;
Self-assessment

Ditto; Alligator read

Ditto; Make good video
Prep for Genogram

Ditto; how genogram
affects your goals

Ditto

Ditto; read starting up

Ditto; read intimacy

Classic Treatment Plan

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 8. Intimacy thermometer/ CLEAVE | Ditto; read apology |
| 9. Repair- forgiveness & other way | Ditto; read forgiveness |
| 10. REACH forgiveness* | Start forgiveness wkbk |
| 11. Process REACH forgiveness | Complete forgive wkbk |
| 12. Review gains, how well new habits | Read Joshua memorial |
| 13. Finish well / Joshua Memorial | Discuss what you will continue doing |



RECIPE

CLEAVE TO BUILDING INTIMACY

1 Change actions to positive– increase interactions that are valuing and encouraging

2 Loving romance– What can you do to be romantic this week?

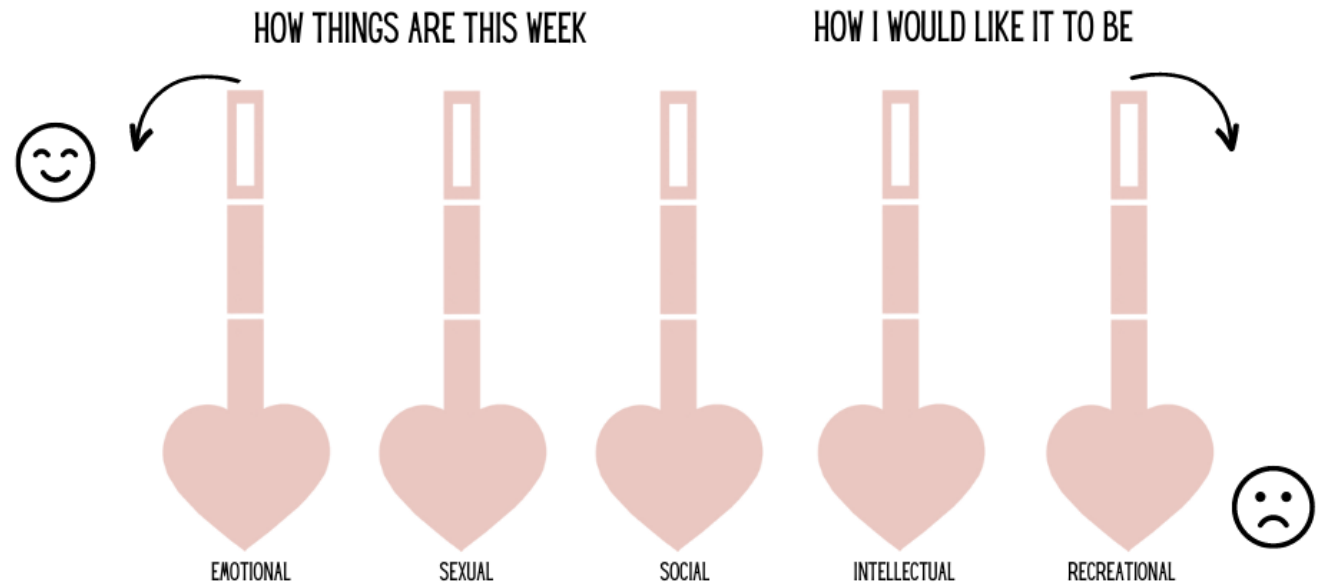
3 Employ a calendar– plan specific times to spent time together

4 Adjust intimacy elsewhere– de-emphasize or end intimacy that detracts from couple intimacy.

5 Value your partner– What do you love about your partner? tell them.

6 Enjoy yourself sexually– develop your sexual bond.

Intimacy thermometer & CLEAVE interventions



INTIMACY THERMOMETERS

ON THE LEFT SIDE MARK HOW THINGS ARE
ON THE RIGHT MARK HOW YOU WOULD LIKE IT TO BE

Interventions

- Forgiveness
 - Prepare them for repair as normative (Research)



Prepare for FREE

Couple Reconciliation

EMPATHY

01

Throughout therapy focus on empathy as a path to growth

02

SOFTEN EMOTIONS

Share vulnerable, soft emotions around relationship hurts.

03

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Assess and intervene for under and overexpressed emotions. Teach grounding techniques, breathing exercises, visualization, recognizing emotional cues, and increase emotional vocabulary.

04

RESISTANCES, FUZZY DEFINITIONS & FEARS

Define what forgiveness and reconciliation are, and are not

05

APOLOGIES

Sincere letters of apology for past hurts will soften partners to help with FREE

06

HOLD ONTO GAINS

Stress will cause setbacks. Prepare ways to get back on track



Forgiveness Workbook Intervention

- Ewworthington-forgiveness.com or
- <https://www.discoverforgiveness.org/tools/the-reach-forgiveness-workbook>. DIY workbooks
- Two versions: two-hour and six-hour
- Self-forgiveness workbook if applicable



Prayer for Couples

- Petitionary Prayer for Partner has research support (Fincham)
- Lectio Divina for Couples. Hopecouples.com Blog
- Prayer of Examen for Couples

Joshua Memorial

- Looking back: The Desert Times
- Looking ahead: The Promised Land (includes difficult days)
- Stop and Remember



What is one thing you want to do in response to this presentation?

1

Get a resource

2

Apply a principles
to your couple
therapy cases

3

Train supervisees