Couples Counseling

KTSAP

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Couples Counseling Today

• Couples counseling is “remedial” in nature (Gurman & Fraenkel, 2002, p. 203); it often fails due to “mixed-agendas” in which one partner has no intention of staying in the marriage.

• Couples wait approximately six years after their marital difficulties and problems surface to actually seek couples counseling (Doss, Simpson, & Christensen, 2004; Gottman, 2015).

• One of the top reasons couples seek counseling is to clarify whether the relationship should continue.
“Marriage Enrichment” – Its Roots

• Traced back to Father Gabriel Calva, a Catholic priest in the 1960s (Deacon & Sprenkle, 2001); developed into Marriage Encounter
• Around this time, marriage counselors David and Vera Mace founded the first American-based couples enrichment organization, the Association of Couples for Marriage Enrichment (ACME).
• ME programs have increased in number since the 1960s (Jakubowski, Milne, Brunner, & Miller, 2004); about 50 ME programs identified.
• Common goals of ME programs:
  • Helping couples adjust to external struggles including the impact of industrialization and technological advances (Diskin, 1986)
  • Teaching couples interpersonal skills aimed at improving and enhancing various aspects of their marriage (Morris, Cooper & Gross, 1999)
  • Helping couples maintain healthy relationship skills already in use (Jakubowski et al., 2004, p. 529).
My Approach to Couple Enrichment: Adlerian and Gottman Influences

**Adlerian Influence**

- Individual lifestyles are characterized by a set of beliefs, personal convictions, and subjective perceptions (Duba Sauerheber & Bitter, 2014)
- Individual lifestyles are continuously being impacted by the environment.
- People are resourceful, self-determining and creative.
- Behavior is purposeful and aims itself towards a goal.
- Personality is holistic.

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Gottman’s Sound Relationship House

• Create Shared Meaning
• Make Life Dreams Come True
• Manage Conflict
  • Accept Influence – Dialogue about Problems – Practice Self-Sothing
• The Positive Perspective
• Turn Towards versus Away
• Share Fondness and Admiration
• Build Love Maps
An Adlerian Process

1. Building and Maintaining Rapport
2. Assessment
   a. Assessments: The BASIS-A Inventory, The Brief Sound Relationship House Questionnaires
   b. Interpretive Hypotheses
3. Encouraging Insight
4. Application and Reorientation

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References


