

Couples Therapy Model *Training* *Comparison*

A complete overview of 7 different Couples Therapy Models

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Relational Life Therapy (RLT)

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Internal Family Systems (IFS)

All information sourced from respective model websites.

Relational Life Therapy



Founder:

Terry Real

Website:

<https://www.terryreal.com/>

Time to get certified:

About 2 years. Around 100 hours of training including supervision.

Cost:

\$3500-\$4000

Training Overview:

- Attend the Relational Life Boot Camp/Essential Skills Workshop
Price: \$595 (Includes 12 CEUs)
*NOTE: IF BOOTCAMP IS NOT OFFERED IN YOUR AREA; YOU MAY ATTEND A 3RD COUPLES EXPERIENTIAL AS AN ALTERNATIVE
- Complete the Relational Life LEVEL 1 Training (online option) Price: \$550 (2 days, 12 CEUs)
- Complete the Relational Life LEVEL 2 Training Price: \$550 (2 days, 12 CEUs)
- Complete the Relational Life LEVEL 3 Training Price: \$550 (2 days, 12 CEUs)
- Observe Terry's Couples Experiential Workshop 2 times Price: \$300 each (2 days, 12 CEUs) = \$600
- Participating in a Professional Teleclass with Terry Real (4-6 one hour sessions) Price: \$225 (CEUs not available)
- Coaching/Supervision Requirements (choose one)
-Case Seminar work with Terry Real and a large group OR
-22 hours of small group coaching from a Master Certified RLI coach
Price: around \$50/session

About the model

Traditional psychodynamic therapy focuses primarily on shame to help people come up from feeling "one down" or inferior; RLT is concerned with both shame and grandiosity, helping people come down from feeling "one up." For that reason RLT therapists are very directive and take sides, especially if there is a power imbalance.

RLT focuses on creating swift and permanent change. This is accomplished by doing deep character and trauma work in the presence of the other partner. In most cases, people can go deeper in the presence of the partner.

The RLT therapist is a fellow traveler, neither an expert nor a follower. The therapist makes use of self-disclosure, talking about how they use these skills in their own relationships. RLT believes that nurturing and empathy are necessary but not sufficient. The therapist also coaches, confronts and teaches how to live relationally.

Emotionally Focused Therapy



Founder:

Sue Johnson

Website:

<http://iceeft.com/>

Time to get certified:

1.5-2 years. Around 84 hours of training including supervision.

Cost:

\$3700-\$4900

Training Overview:

- Attend an ICEEFT endorsed EFT Externship led by a Certified EFT Trainer Price: \$700-1100 (4 days, 28 CEUs available)
- Attend the Core Skills Training led by a Certified EFT Trainer which is 48 hours over four 2-day workshops (a 5th is also available) Price: \$450 each (2 days, 12 CEUs) = \$1800
- Coaching/Supervision Requirements
Individual supervision by a Certified EFT Supervisor, Trainer or approved Supervisor Candidate, 8 hours (4 of these 8 hours may be in group supervision) Price: around \$50-\$200/session
- Application procedure involves submitting a cover letter, summary of previous clinical training, a current C.V., 3 letters of reference, letter of reference from EFT Supervisor, copies of relevant documents, evidence of completion of requirements, and a case review. Price: \$600 to submit

About the model

EFT is a structured approach to couples therapy and has developed alongside the science on adult attachment and bonding to expand our understanding of what is happening in couples relationships and to guide therapists. It has been validated by over 20 years of empirical research and claims that 70-75% of couples move from distress to recovery.

EFT is collaborative and respectful of clients, combining experiential Rogerian techniques with structural systemic interventions. Key moves & moments in the change process have been mapped into nine steps and three change events.

EFT has been applied to many different kinds of problems and populations. The goal is to expand and reorganize key emotional responses. The EFT therapist also creates a shift in partners' interactional positions and initiate new cycles of interaction. The goal is to foster the creation of a secure bond between partners.

Developmental Model of Couples Therapy

DMCT

Founders:

Dr. Ellyn Bader and Dr. Peter Pearson

Website:

<https://www.couplesinstitute.com/developmentalmodel/>

Time to get certified:

1 year

Cost:

\$1369-\$1524

Training Overview:

- The financial investment and path to complete course is quite straightforward. Just sign up for \$1369 or \$127/month for a year and you get the following training:
- 12 live training sessions with Dr. Ellyn Bader
- 8 live bonus training calls with guest experts
- 7 videos of real client sessions by Dr. Ellyn Bader and Dr. Pete Pearson
- 90 archived training calls with Dr. Ellyn Bader
- 55 archived bonus calls with guest experts
- There is also written lessons, client handouts, and ongoing community discussion
- This takes place over the course of a year and is 36 CEUs
- Also an advanced training and master mentoring available as well.

About the model

Once you learn the Developmental Model of Couples Therapy you will have a core foundation in diagnosing, intervening, and significantly changing troubled relationships. The model integrates couples' development with the following three scientific areas of study as well as practical techniques you can start using right away: attachment theory, differentiation theory, and neuroscience.

There are 24 lessons that are strategically sequenced so you keep building your skills and interventions. This includes a wide range of topics such as goal-setting for a powerful start, assessment from an attachment theory perspective, assessment tools to diagnose the couples developmental stage, understanding differentiation, accessing the emotional brain for rapid change and trauma healing, recognizing the 3 types of motivation, developing empathy in self-absorbed or narcissistic partners, resolving intra-psychoic impasses, and navigating clashing goals and values collisions.

This program has a practical road map to crafting lasting interventions with: the hostile-angry couple, the conflict avoidant couple, the passive aggressive partner, the narcissistic partner, the self-absorbed partner, the silently disengaged partner, the addicted partner, and lies, betrayal, affairs, and infidelity.

IMAGO Relationship Therapy

IRT

Founders:

Dr. Harville Hendrix and Dr. Helen LaKelly Hunt

Website:

<http://imagorelationships.org/>

Time to get certified:

1-2 years

Cost:

\$3795

Training Overview:

- Complete the IMAGO training program which is 12 days and 96 CEUs. The workshops are usually scheduled in 3 sessions that are each 4 days long over the course of 6 months. Price: \$3000
- This is followed by monthly supervision for 6 months.
Coaching/Supervision Requirements
One time per month (6 months minimum) Price: \$100/session x 6 = \$600
- Application procedure involves submitting 3 and 6 month reports to your clinical instructor, a video of your work for evaluation, and a completed and signed copy of the certification agreement Price: \$195

About the model

IMAGO talks about how at some point in most all relationships, couples find themselves struggling with anger, shock, despair, and sadness. This stress does not arise out of lack of love for our partner, but rather from misunderstanding what our love relationships are about. The conflict could be the very fuel for the fulfillment couples seek.

There is emphasis on the complex process of human growth and development and the recognition that we all have unmet needs as children that cause fear and pain. We often end up feeling like we lose that sense of joyful aliveness until we fall in love and believe that we have found it again. This lasts for a short time until our disillusionment turns to anger and that we can't survive because our partner won't give us what we need. The power struggle has begun.

In IMAGO, the process entails letting couples know that their feelings are perfectly normal and to accept that conflict is supposed to happen. They have created the Imago Dialogue which is the core skill of Imago Practice. Through this dialogue couples can bridge each other's worlds. Change is the catalyst for healing.

Psychobiological Approach to Couple Therapy



Founder:

Dr. Stan Tatkin

Website:

<https://thepactinstitute.com/>

Time to complete levels 1 and 2:

1-2 years

Cost:

\$4395 for levels 1 and 2

Training Overview:

- Complete PACT LEVEL 1 Training Price \$2300 (three 3 day modules for a total of 9 days, 54 CEUs)
- Complete PACT LEVEL 2 Training Price: \$2095 (two 3 day modules for a total of 6 days, 36 CEUs)
- A LEVEL 3 PACT Training is currently in development
- Coaching/Supervision Requirements: None
- There isn't a certification option at this time. Once completing Level 1 therapists become part of the PACT therapist directory.

About the model

PACT is a fusion of attachment theory, developmental neuroscience, and arousal regulation. PACT has a reputation for effectively treating the most challenging couples.

A PACT session may differ from what you would experience in other forms of couple therapy. Key features of this model include the following. The therapist will focus on moment-to-moment shifts in your face, body, and voice, and ask clients to pay close attention to these as a couple. They therapist will create experiences similar to those troubling the relationship and help clients work through them in real time during the session.

PACT tends to require fewer sessions than other forms of therapy. PACT sessions often exceed the 50-min hour and may last as long as 3-6 hours. Longer times allow for the in-depth work of PACT. The therapist may video record sessions to provide immediate feedback to clients.

Gottman Method Couples Therapy



Founder:

Dr. John Gottman and Dr. Julie Gottman

Website:

<https://www.gottman.com/>

Time to get certified:

1.5-2 years

Cost:

\$3200-\$3800

Training Overview:

- Complete Gottman LEVEL 1 Training (online option) Price \$249 (2 days, 11 CEUs)
- Complete Gottman LEVEL 2 Training Price: \$375 (3 days, 19 CEUs)
- Complete Gottman LEVEL 3 Training Price: \$1250 (3 days, 20 CEUs)
- Coaching/Supervision Requirements (choose one)
 - 8 hours individual consultation by a Gottman Consultant OR
 - 12 sessions of group consultation by a Gottman Consultant Price: Around \$50-\$200/session
- Application procedure involves submitting 4 video segments you have made of your work along with some forms. There is a fee required when entering the Certification Track Price: \$675

About the model

The Gottman Method is an approach to couples therapy that includes a thorough assessment of the couple relationship and integrates research-based interventions based on the Sound Relationship House Theory. Interventions are designed to help couples strengthen their relationships in three primary areas: friendship, conflict management, and creation of shared meaning.

The goals of Gottman Method Couples Therapy are to disarm conflicting verbal communication, increase intimacy, respect, and affection, remove barriers that create a feeling of stagnancy in conflicting situations, and create a heightened sense of empathy and understanding within the context of the relationship.

The Gottmans developed 9 components of healthy relationships known as the sound relationship house. They are: build love maps, share fondness and admiration, turn towards instead of away, the positive perspective, manage conflict, make life dreams come true, create shared meaning, trust, and commitment.

Internal Family Systems



Founder:

Dr. Richard Schwartz

Website:

<https://selfleadership.org/>

Time to get certified:

2-3 years

Cost:

\$7000 at least from what I can tell

Training Overview:

- Complete IFS LEVEL 1 Training Price: \$3650 (18 days, 108 CEUs spanning about a year)
- Complete IFS LEVEL 2 Training Price: \$1900 (5 days, 32 CEUs)
- Complete IFS LEVEL 3 Training Price: \$2100 (5 days, 20 CEUs)
- *It may not be necessary to complete Levels 2 and 3 in order to get certified (please ask IFS people to be sure), but it is necessary to get 20 hours of IFS Continuing Education: this might include level 2 and 3 trainings.
- Coaching/Supervision Requirements (choose one)
20 hours of IFS clinical consultation (up to 10 hours may be group)
Price: Around \$50-\$200/session
- Application procedure involves one session review either live or by video as well as other required paperwork and evaluation Price: \$350

About the model

Although IFS is used mostly for individual therapy, it is also often used by couples therapists to promote harmony in relationships and support intimate partners in developing Self-leadership. IFS Senior Trainer, Toni Herbine-Blank is the originator of Intimacy from the Inside Out, an 80-hour intensive training on the application of IFS to couples therapy. Article on Couples and Marriage Counseling with IFS here: <https://selfleadership.org/couples-marriage-counseling.html>

The IFS Model views a person as containing an ecology of relatively discrete minds, each of which has valuable qualities and each of which is designed to – and wants to – play a valuable role within. They parts are forced out of their valuable roles by life experiences and can reorganize the system in unhealthy ways.

It is often trauma as well as a person's family of origin values and interaction patterns that create internal polarizations which escalate over time and are played out in other relationships. IFS attempts to understand all levels of human organization – intrapsychic, family, and culture.

Summary

At a Glance

MODEL	FOUNDER	DURATION	COST
Relational Life Therapy (RLT)	Terry Real	~2 years / ~100 hrs	\$3,500–\$4,000
Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT)	Sue Johnson	1.5–2 years / ~84 hrs	\$3,700–\$4,900
Developmental Model of Couples Therapy	Bader & Pearson	1 year / 36 CEUs	\$1,369–\$1,524
IMAGO Relationship Therapy (IRT)	Hendrix & Hunt	1–2 years / 96 CEUs	\$3,795
Psychobiological Approach (PACT)	Dr. Stan Tatkin	1–2 years / 90 CEUs	\$4,395
Gottman Method Couples Therapy	John & Julie Gottman	1.5–2 years / 50 CEUs	\$3,200–\$3,800
Internal Family Systems (IFS)	Dr. Richard Schwartz	2–3 years / 160+ CEUs	\$7,000+

All of the information on this report was gathered from the respective websites of each of these models. If there are any errors or changes, please let Shane Birkel know at shane@couplestherapistcouch.com

Thank you!