

Relationships – Introduction

Relationship work is more like Habit than mood work. The tools in each of the TEAM categories are a bit different as is the flow of the session outline.

Testing – Relationship Satisfaction Survey and BMS. We still do testing before and after every session. You can use just the relationship satisfaction or the entire BMS. Or perhaps a survey from another modality.

Empathy – same as any work we do with clients if you are working with an individual, but you may find some nuances here when working with couples. For example, it's hard to do Disarming if one partner says, "He's being a jerk." In fact, you may find yourself using a lot of empathy in the individual intake sessions (depending on how you set up your couples work) and less so in the group sessions. The empathy section on the ETS may reflect this but you'll have to make a judgement call as it can be less about getting 20/20 and more about the two people learning to give each other A+ empathy.

Assessment – Resistance is the strongest in relationship work. Usually even stronger than Habits! We will need to check in often if the client is still willing to do the work.

Methods – Like any work in TEAM we have so many tools to choose from. We can use David's or branch out with other modalities like EFT / EFCT or Gottman, or faith tools.

Outline for using TEAM-CBT in relationship work

This outline will vary slightly trainer to trainer.

- Testing - Relationship Satisfaction Scale (or other) alone or with BMS / ETS
- Empathy
 - Psychoeducation (may do AFTER invitation)
 - Rules vs Roles (may do AFTER invitation)
- Agenda Setting / Assessment of Resistance
 - Paradoxical Invitation
 - Psychoeducation (if not done in Empathy)
 - Moment in Time (Relationship journal – Part 1 & 2)
 - Rules vs Roles (if not done in Empathy)
 - Miracle Cure Question
 - Assessment of Resistance (CBA of Blame)
 - Paradoxical Inquiry
 - Willingness Scale
 - Process Resistance
 - Willingness Scale
- Methods Part 1
 - Relationship Journal – Part 3 (Empathy Errors)
 - Relationship Journal – Part 4 (Cost of Poor Empathy)
 - Relationship Journal – Part 5 (Revise My Communication)
- Methods Part 2
 - Davids' IE: 1 Min Drills, Forced Empathy, Reattribution, DML and Mood work, and so on.
 - CBCT
 - EFT
 - Faith tools, and more

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Mood Work first?

I prefer to do mood work with clients BEFORE relationship work. Addressing distorted thinking can help the client be more receptive in applying that new mindset to their relationships. In addition, if one is struggling with depression it is harder to do the work necessary to improve the relationship. Finally, if we address SDB's we create a shift in the unconscious values that can automatically improve the relationship. That said, we never force a client to do the work we want. Just be sure to present all the options and why the order can be helpful.

Personal Values Check In

- Do I have any personal biases about relationships (e.g., commitment, monogamy, separation, divorce) that might influence my approach to couples work?
- How can I navigate working with couples / individuals when my values, and even perspective on what a healthy relationship looks like, are different from the clients?
- Working with relationships can be much more difficult than working with individual mood problems when there is a difference in how we view the world compared to our clients. It's ok to have differences but they need to be acknowledged.

What tools / methods will you offer

You will need to decide on what tools and methods you will offer. There are several options in TEAM for tools and methods. You can stick with David's tools or add some from other modalities. Whether or not you want to work with couples together in the same room may influence the modality you choose.

Other options include:

- **EFT or EFCT - Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy**
- **CBCT (CBT for Couples)**
- **Other: Attachment Theory, Gottman, etc.**
- **Faith Tools**

Practice

Some exploration with a small practice:

- Discuss what modalities you are trained in or are thinking of exploring?
- What are your thoughts on working with individuals for relationship work, is this new to you?
- How might you approach a client you feel should do some mood work before doing client work?
PRACTICE what you might say in certain scenarios (make it up). IE: For an anxious parent = "Beth, I respect you want to get closer to your daughter at the same time in my clinical experience it's wise to explore a few things about yourself first. You mentioned you constantly worry about her. That worry shows you are caring and loving. That worry may also get in the way of the kind of relationship work I do. Would you be willing to explore your anxieties and concerns first?"
 - For an angry spouse who is tired of their partner buying expensive shoes but also seems to have Conflict Phobia and Emotional Perfectionism.
 - For a severely depressed person who says they want a closer friendship with Mark, an acquaintance.