

# Marriage Counselling

Couples bring a unique dynamic to therapy. Both parties play a role in building the relationship and implementing solutions to any problems they may be dealing with. It is important that couples who want to work specifically on their relationship see a [mental health professional](#) trained in addressing relationship issues, such as with Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) for couples.

When in doubt, ask the therapist about their training and experience; you deserve to know with whom you will be investing your time, money, and relationship.

## Choosing a Marriage Counselling Therapist

Finding the right 'fit' for both parties is essential for successful counselling. A couple needs to feel safe and at ease with their therapist. A qualified professional should provide a safe environment in which both partners can feel heard and understood. It is equally important that each member of the couple feel empowered to act and be accountable for contributing to the positive progress of counselling and life outside of the therapy room.

## Marriage Counselling Strategies

Marital counsellors want to be fair and balanced. An experienced and well-trained marital therapist will not take sides. Your therapist should take an active approach to counselling that will help strengthen the relationship bond, prioritize supportiveness and promote a collaborative approach to resolving conflicts. These methods have been proven to work well for both men and women in relationships.

Counselling should focus on getting to know both members of the relationship, learning what their issues are, and moving forward with techniques to build new skills that allow the couple to move past the old, repetitive arguments common in long-term relationships. The goal is to establish a new way of interacting.

## **Marriage Pitfalls**

Couples often get caught in the habitual dance of repetitive conversations and behaviours, even when they are aware of these patterns. Conflict with a partner can create the feeling of being threatened or fearful and we can quickly find ourselves in the 'fight or flight' part of our brain.

This part of our brain is useful if there is a serious, physical danger present, but not helpful if we are just trying to [work through an issue](#) with our partner. Your therapist can help you to understand how you may be struggling with the physiological flooding that happens when our brains interpret a threat or fear.

Couples can learn necessary skills to calm the flooding, be more fully aware of what is happening in our brains and bodies, and then engage with the calmer part of our brains to give ourselves the best chance of a good outcome in a difficult situation.

## **Deciding to Go to Marriage Counselling**

If you are struggling with your relationship, couples' therapy can be very helpful. If you are the partner introducing the idea of therapy, try doing it from a positive perspective, such as, 'We have been having some difficulties lately, and I would like us to get some help so we can resolve these issues.'

Try not to threaten your partner with an ultimatum, 'If you won't go to therapy with me, I will leave you.' However, if you are in crisis, don't be ashamed to reach out and ask for professional help. Therapists that work with couples are passionate about supporting and helping couples to heal their relationships.