**Couples Therapy Disclosure Statement**

Your counsellor has a Level 2 certificate with the Gottman Institute. We use an integrated approach using the Gottman method and other effective couples therapy interventions.

**Confidentiality in Couples Therapy**

Our confidentiality policy also stands for couples therapy. However, MLC couples therapy has a no secrets policy between individuals in the couple. All information disclosed to the counsellor will be privy to the other individual. In the event information is disclosed that the individual is not willing to share with their partner then the counsellor will cease couples counselling and discuss referral to another therapist.

**Overview of Gottman Method Couples Therapy**

'The Gottman Method of Couples Therapy is based on Dr. John Gottman's research that began in the 1970's and continues to this day. The research has focused on what makes relationships succeed or fail. From this research, Drs. John and Julie Gottman have created a method of therapy that emphasizes a "nuts-and-bolts" approach to improving clients' relationships. This method is designed to help teach specific tools to deepen friendship and intimacy in your relationship. To help you productively manage conflicts, you will be given methods to manage "resolvable problems" and dialogue about "gridlocked" (or perpetual) issues. We will also work together to help you appreciate your relationship's strengths and to gently navigate through its vulnerabilities.

Gottman Method Couples Therapy consists of five parts:

* Assessment (3 sessions)
* Treatment
* "Phasing Out" of Therapy
* Termination
* Outcome Evaluation

Early in the assessment phase, you will be given some written materials to complete that will help me better understand your relationship. In the first sessions we will talk about the history of your relationship, areas of concern, and goals for treatment.

In the next session, I will meet with you individually to learn each of your personal histories and to give each of you an opportunity to share thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. In the final session of assessment, I will share with you my recommendations for treatment and work to define mutually agreed upon goals for your therapy.

Most of the work will involve sessions where you will be seen together as a couple. However, there may be times when individual sessions are recommended. I may also give you exercises to practice between sessions.

The length of therapy will be determined by your specific needs and goals. In the course of therapy, we will establish points at which to evaluate your satisfaction and progress. Also, I will encourage you to raise any questions or concerns that you have about therapy at any time.

In the later stage of therapy, we will "phase out" or meet less frequently in order for you to test out new relationship skills and to prepare for termination of the therapy. Although, you may terminate therapy whenever you wish, it is most helpful to have at least one session together to summarize progress, define the work that remains, and say good-bye.

In the outcome evaluation phase, as per the Gottman Method, four follow-up sessions are planned: one after six months, one after twelve months, one after eighteen months, and one after two years. These sessions have been shown through research to significantly decrease the chances of relapse into previous, unhelpful patterns. In addition, commitment to providing the best therapy possible requires ongoing evaluation of methods used and client progress. The purpose of these follow-up sessions then will be to fine-tune any of your relationship skills if needed, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the therapy received.

**Assessments**

Assessment requires about 4.5 hours in 3 or 4 sessions. It also requires 1 to 2 hours of paperwork between sessions 1 and 2 for each individual.

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The components of the assessment are as follows:

* Session #1 - Intake Interviews - 90 minutes
* Session #2 - Individual Interviews - 45 minutes/ea. (90 total)
* Session #3 - Treatment Planning - 90 minutes