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Eft couples worksheets

What is eft therapy for couples.

Relationship Growth Activity

Discovery Questions

Instructions: Sometimes in relationships we become so focused on the problems that we forget to see our partner as a person. You can strengthen your relationship by learning more about your partner and discussing their thoughts and feelings.

Take turns selecting a question from each section below to ask your partner. If you believe you know all of the answers in a section, see if you can answer each one correctly!

The Fun Things

What was your partner's favorite TV show when they were a child?

Where would your partner most like to visit on a vacation?

What song is your partner into right now?

Are there any movies your partner is excited to see?

Has your partner ever read a book that had a major impact on their life?

About Us

When did your partner realize they were interested in you? Was there a specific moment?

What motivates your partner to keep working on your relationship?

What does your partner want your relationship to look like in 5 years?

When was a moment that your partner felt happy about your relationship?

What is your partner's favorite thing to do, or place to go, as a couple?

Hopes & Dreams

How does your partner hope to change over the next year? 5 years? 20 years?

What are three realistic goals your partner has for their lifetime?

What is the happiest life your partner can imagine?

_____ or their career, family, and their personal growth?

_____ could place on their bucket list?

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Does eft work for couples.

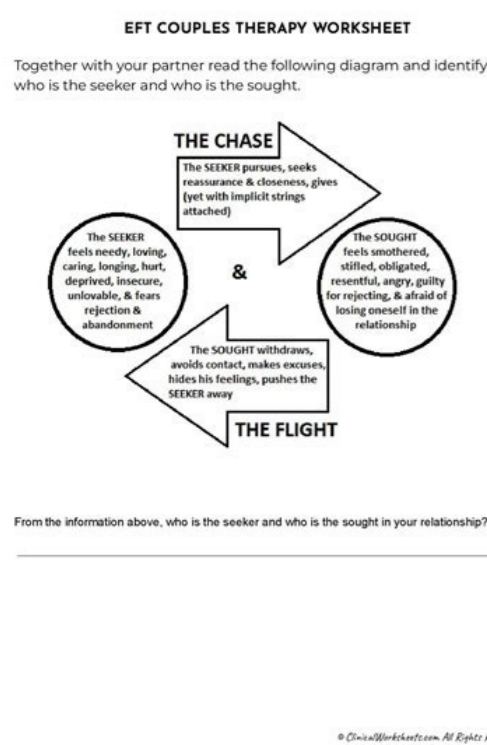
Below are two worksheets to help couples become familiar and map out their negative cycle(s). One of the first tasks of a therapist is to determine the cycle of negative interactions of a couple, which is conceptualized as a pursue/withdraw pattern in EFT. A pursuer protests the separation and distance he has experienced in love; This indicates an anxious attachment style. On the contrary, the withdrawer often distances themselves from their partner in the form of criticism or rejection to protect themselves from the lack of security in the relationship. This is a typical feature of avoidance attachments. Of course, the more times a pursuer tries to contact (usually through nagging, criticizing, and demanding closeness), the withdrawer needs to distance themselves to establish a sense of security. Pursuers often express underlying emotions, such as feeling hurt, lonely and unwanted, while withdrawers often show feelings of rejection, inadequacy or judgment. OUR NEGATIVE CYCLE: WHEN I AM UPSET BY YOU WHEN WE ARE NOT GETTING ALONG, I FEEL (some feelings are on the surface, and some are deeper, less conscious feelings): Angry, Pissed off, Sad Alone, Abandoned, Disappointed Justified in my anger, Like I have to figure this out myself Frustrated by him/her, Deprived Annoyed, Irritated Despairing, Hopeless Scared, frightened, Like I want to protect myself Anxious Hurt, Not heard, Not valued, Not important WHAT I THEN DO IS (BEHAVIORS): Criticize you, blame you Interrupt you Try to manipulate to get what I want from you Yell, Attack, Say nasty things to you Beg or Plead Demand Point out how you are letting me down or hurting me; try to get you to understand how you hurt me Explain again and again what I want Pull away, Withdraw, Give up Refuse to talk to you Get logical and point out how irrational you are Find solutions, try to fix it so the conflict will stop or so that you won't be so upset or angry Defend myself Try to show why I am right and you are wrong Justify my feelings and actions Counter-criticize or counter-blame or counter-attack and say nasty things to you I BEHAVE AS I DO (ABOVE) IN THE HOPE THAT (WHAT I LONG FOR IS): BUT WHEN I DO THIS, YOU SEEM TO (CHOOSE FROM THE BEHAVIORS ABOVE); WHEN YOU DO THIS, I FEEL (CHOOSE FROM THE SURFACE FEELINGS ABOVE); THESE BEHAVIORS DON'T WORK. INSTEAD, WE GET STUCK IN THESE REPETITIVE CYCLES THAT UPSET US BOTH. BUILDING A SAFE AND SECURE RELATIONSHIP Changing Negative Cycles to Positive Cycles Begins with De-Escalating as a Couple WHEN I AM UPSET BY YOU WHEN WE ARE NOT GETTING ALONG, I FEEL (some feelings are on the surface, and some are deeper, less conscious feelings): Angry, Pissed off, Sad Alone, Abandoned, Disappointed Justified in my anger, Like I have to figure this out myself Frustrated by him/her, Deprived Annoyed, Irritated Despairing, Hopeless Scared, frightened, Like I want to protect myself Anxious Hurt, Not heard, Not valued, Not important WHAT IF WHEN WE WERE HAVING DIFFICULTY I TOLD YOU THAT.... I realize we are beginning a negative cycle and that I am contributing to it I realize we are a system and I am affecting you I would like to be safe and close to you rather than distant, disconnected, alone, and afraid of what will happen Our cycle feels like it is present and I want to help alleviate it I care about our relationship and I won't do the next thing that hurts or scares you and pulls you deeper into our negative cycle I'd love it if you slow down with me so we can reconnect. We can always figure out what to do about the problem later when we've provided assurance and safety and our physiology has returned to normal. If you aren't ready to de-escalate with me as a team, I will anyway because I love you and want to be close and connected. I realize and take seriously that you need to experience me as safe. I realize that when I'm wrapped up in my own needs and hurts and feel a need to protect myself, I'm not thinking about you and how you feel. I'd like to shift into protecting you and us instead of protecting just me. I realize and take seriously that if I am anxious, scared, angry, and frustrated, you probably are, too. I realize you are upset, too, and I am pledging you support and empathy even though I'm also upset. I want you to be happy. I want you to know how important you are to me, how much I care for you, and that I want to protect our relationship. I realize and take seriously that I have to trust you and also be trustworthy. WHEN I'VE DONE THESE THINGS, YOU SEEM TO: WHEN I SEE YOU DE-ESCALATING AND REASSURING ME OF YOUR AFFECTION, I FEEL... Adapted from: Hold Me Tight, Dr. Sue Johnson; Little, Brown & Company, NY 2008. Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) Overview for CouplesEFT Summary Emotionally focused therapy (EFT) is one of the most researched methods in the field of psychotherapy it is a proven treatment for couples and families. Not only does it qualify as evidence-based treatment, but it is also an... EFT Treatment Plan for CouplesEFT Treatment Plan for Couples For couples experiencing relational distress and/or conflict, EFT therapists might use the following treatment plan to help them conceptualize and guide their treatment. Initial Phase of Treatment: EFT for Couples Initial Phase Therapeutic Tasks Create... Effectiveness of EFT for depressed couplesEmotionally focused therapy was founded by Johnson and Greenberg in the early 1980s. Given the major role of emotions in attachment theory, EFT emphasizes emotions and employs them to organize interaction patterns (Hinkle et al., 2015). Hence, EFT concentrates on... Emotions are one of the most complex biological processes of humankind. The word dates back to 1579 from the French word *emouvoir*, which means "to stir up" (Dixon, 2003). Emotions are experienced physically, influenced by thoughts, and guide our actions and behavior. They are powerful. They can be debilitating but also beautiful, allowing us to connect to others in a way that heals, gives life, and produces joy. Since emotions are so impactful, Emotionally Focused Therapy can be a beneficial tool, especially for relationships. We look at what Emotionally Focused Therapy is and include techniques and worksheets for you to use.

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Ultimate Printable Premarital Counseling Worksheets & Wedding Prep Couples Therapy Workbook

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Before you continue, we thought you might like to download our three Emotional Intelligence Exercises for free. These science-based exercises will not only enhance your ability to understand and work with your emotions but will also give you the tools to foster the emotional intelligence of your clients, students, or employees. What Is EFT and Is It Effective? Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) is a therapeutic approach designed for individuals, couples, and families. EFT incorporates elements of experiential therapy such as gestalt and person-centered approaches, systemic therapy, and attachment theory (Corey, 2013). These therapies are based on the idea that human emotions are connected to human needs, and working through them can help individuals change distressful emotional states and improve interpersonal relationships (Johnson & Greenberg, 1992). EFT is typically a short-term treatment of 8-20 sessions (Johnson, 2006). Emotionally Focused Therapy was developed in the 1980s by Canadian psychologist Sue Johnson, who focused on emotions because they are typically left out of interventions, especially those focusing on relationships (Johnson, 2008). This type of therapy is designed for couples working to develop an understanding of their partner's and their own emotions. Johnson and Greenberg (1992) developed the EFT approach by reviewing videos of couple therapy sessions and performing task analysis to identify what elements led to positive change. They took an experiential-systemic approach by viewing problems as a cyclical reinforcement of patterns and interactions between partners.



Emotions are seen both as a within-individual phenomena and as part of an entire system created by the interactions between partners (Johnson, 1998). Efficacy EFT is considered to be an empirically supported treatment for depression, interpersonal problems, avoidant personality disorder, and trauma according to the American Psychological Association (n.d.). Practitioners claim that both individuals and couples demonstrate significant improvement after therapy, suggesting that it is an effective way to lead individuals into safe and secure bonds with lasting results (Johnson & Brubacher, 2016). A meta-analysis of EFT studies found that Emotionally Focused Therapy with couples had a higher success rate than any other couple intervention at the time and that it reduces the brain's response to threat from a romantic partner (Johnson et al., 1999). Steps in Emotionally Focused Therapy The purpose of EFT is to help people address attachment-related insecurities and learn how to interact with other people. There are nine steps within three stages of EFT. Stage 1: Cycle de-escalation This stage helps the couple identify and understand how their negative interactions create a cycle of distress. In Step 1, the key issues of concern are identified. Step 2 reveals the negative patterns of interaction that arise when these key issues arise. This is where the therapist looks for the actual problem that causes detachment or stress between the couple. Step 3 is the recognition of unacknowledged fears and negative emotions related to attachment underlying negative interaction patterns. Partners will explore each other's feelings and how they are related to the detrimental interaction cycle. In Step 4, the therapist reframes key issues, negative patterns, and underlying emotions and fears as they relate to each individual's attachment needs. Stage 2: Changing interaction patterns This is the stage of identifying the underlying attachment styles that are leading to negative emotions. In this stage, individuals voice their wants, needs, and deep emotions (Step 5), and then partners are taught ways to express acceptance and compassion for the other person's needs and emotions (Step 6). In Step 7, partners continue to learn to express needs and emotions while also learning ways to discuss the issues that normally cause conflict.

Why I Like Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy (EFT) - Better Couples Therapy

Stage 3: Consolidation and integration In the final steps (8 and 9), the therapist coaches the couple to use new communication styles to discuss old problems and create new solutions. The couple will practice the skills in therapy outside of the sessions and develop a plan to make new interaction patterns a consistent part of their life.



These detailed, science-based exercises will help you or your clients understand and use emotions advantageously. 5 Foolproof EFT Techniques In Emotionally-Focused Therapy, a variety of techniques are used to achieve specific goals based on where the individual or couple is. These techniques are also known as “therapeutic tasks,” which were discovered through a task analysis of psychotherapy session transcripts. This analysis attempted to describe the process of a client’s cognitive and emotional change to provide therapists with a more reliable condition for therapy (Rice & Greenberg, 1984). These techniques or tasks are classified into five groups: empathy-based, relational, experiencing, reprocessing, and action (Elliott, 2012). Empathy-based techniques Empathy-based techniques use empathic exploration for problem-relevant experiences and empathic affirmation to move painful emotions to a place of self-affirmation. For example, identifying the feeling of vulnerability (a painful emotion related to self) moves to self-affirmation where the client feels understood, hopeful, and strong. Relational techniques Relational techniques are those concerned with establishing the therapeutic alliance such as creating a productive working environment, exploring goals, and investing in therapy for greater self-understanding. These techniques are typically used in the beginning stages of therapy but also extend to stages where the clients may experience difficulty or withdrawal. In these cases, the alliance needs to be repaired, and an opportunity for greater self-understanding and a deeper bond can be found. Experiencing techniques Experiencing techniques include clearing space, focusing on experiences, and teaching the client to feel and express the emotion. Things like systematic evocative unfolding and chair work are used to help the clients learn to successfully express appropriate emotions. Reprocessing tasks Reprocessing tasks are both situational and perceptual. They include dealing with difficult or traumatic experiences through trauma retelling. Additionally, tasks may include creating and working through problematic reaction points, which are known as “meaning protests” (when a life event violates a cherished belief, such as having a baby out of wedlock, which would violate many religious belief systems). Action tasks Action tasks are just that: “action” oriented. They involve chair work such as two-chair dialogue and enactment to address self-evaluative split (self-criticism, “tornness”) and self-interruption split (blocked feelings and resignation).

Empty chair work helps with unfinished business like resentment and unforgiveness. And finally, compassionate self-soothing helps with stuck, deregulated anguish. 4 Useful Worksheets for Your Sessions The Recognizing How We Think, Feel, and Behave worksheet allows clients to identify patterns in their reactions and behavior. By recognizing opportunities to change unhelpful beliefs, thoughts, and automatic psychological processes that impact emotions, there is a basis for growth, self-reflection, and change. This Conflict Resolution Checklist is great for both couples and individuals. It can serve as a reminder between therapy sessions or after learning about de-escalation. Using an objective checklist can point out sticking points that are causing distress. This Emotion Regulation Worksheet helps individuals identify their typical responses to situations and events and contrasts it with more appropriate or healthier response possibilities.

This worksheet helps clients understand how expressing their emotions affects others. By increasing awareness of the ‘footprint’ of expressing emotions, clients can learn new and appropriate responses to the emotions that they experience. A List of EFT Interventions In Emotionally-Focused Therapy, there are specific interventions for the three stages of the process (Diener, Hilsenroth, & Weinburger, 2007). The first intervention is designed to create awareness through accessing emotional experiences and linking them to patterns. The intervention uses evocative questions that allow the client to respond, leading to an emerging experience. The therapist will also validate the client’s realities and emotional responses. A second intervention is de-escalating using “parts language” and an attachment perspective. This looks at conflicting attachment strategies such as anxiety and avoidance. During de-escalation, the therapist will direct the enactment and dialogue between clients, explore the underlying needs/wants, and support a new experience of safety and empowerment. The goal is to integrate previous emotions, soften critical parts, and consolidate that integration or bond. The final intervention involves consolidation of the newly developed models of self and/or other. This allows internal and external positive interaction cycles. Positive narratives are contrasted with old ways of coping, thinking, and feeling.

The goal is increased security (Diener et al., 2007). Top 3 Activities and Interventions The Emotional Mental Models exercise is a perfect activity for Emotionally-Focused Therapy that can help clients develop emotional awareness through visualization. It is designed to help individuals think about how they could use these emotional insights in the future. This worksheet is a DBT exercise that you can use to help clients deal with intense negative emotions and experiences. It is a useful exercise to help them acknowledge that they cannot control every aspect of what they experience. In this way, they can start to move beyond the distress they are experiencing without trying to change or control situations. In this exercise, clients can begin to identify the extent to which they struggle or accept their negative feelings and thoughts. By completing this exercise, they can start to think of helpful ways that they might cultivate a more well-balanced relationship with their emotions. Couples and Family Counseling The conflicting patterns of interaction between couples and family members is referred to as a “dance” in Johnson’s (1998) literature. EFT for couples includes the same nine-step model described previously. Johnson (2008) discusses leading the couple or family through these steps in a spiral fashion. One step leads to another. The speed of moving through the steps and stages depends on the level of distress in the relationship or family (Johnson, 2008). While working with couples and families, problems can often be traced to identify core concerns such as issues with self-worth or needs for validation. When this is the case, the individual and family can be best treated using therapeutic methods directed toward the self rather than interactions between family members (Goldman & Greenberg, 2015). For example, if an individual’s core emotion is one of shame, soothing from a partner or family member may be helpful but will not ultimately solve the problem. In order for structural emotional change to take place, the individual must alter their own view of themselves for improvement in the family dynamic to occur. Strengths and Critiques of EFT Emotionally-Focused Therapy is collaborative in that it uses a combination of theoretical (attachment) and applicable (person-centered, meaning-making) approaches. The strategies for change and specifically timed interventions are clearly outlined in the psychotherapy process with the use of nine steps within three stages. Additionally, EFT has been validated by 30 years of research, which includes the change process and predictors of success. EFT is effective for helping with marital distress and has also successfully been applied to various problems among individuals and populations (Pascual-Leone, Greenberg, & Pascual-Leone, 2009). One of the main criticisms of EFT is regarding its foundational premise that emotional regulation is a key aspect of therapeutic change and that it is critical to psychotherapeutic success. Ecker (2015) disagrees with this claim, arguing that the key ingredient to therapeutic change is the perceived mismatch between the expected and experienced patterns of behavior.

Problems occur when there is a perception that the world functions differently than one’s learned model (Ecker, 2015). The discrepancy is not based on emotion, but on learning and past experience. Additionally, claims have been made that EFT would be strengthened by including additional factors that improve treatment for more serious mental health problems (Lane et al., 2015). EFT does not account for the diversity that the concept of “psychopathology” encompasses. It is also not designed to be used with violent couples, highly dysfunctional individuals, or those who have already decided to separate/divorce. Top 5 Books and Workbooks 1. Hold Me Tight – S. Johnson Hold Me Tight presents Emotionally-Focused Therapy in a nonclinical way that the general public can access. It teaches couples how to save or enrich a relationship through safe connection and attachment bonds. Find the book on Amazon. 2. Working with Emotions in Psychotherapy (The Practicing Professional) – L. S. Greenberg and S. C. Paivio The book Working with Emotions in Psychotherapy is designed for professionals in the field of psychology. It uses case studies and examples to help clinicians work with processes and techniques for specific emotions. Find the book on Amazon. 3. Emotionally Focused Family Therapy: Restoring Connection and Promoting Resilience – J. L. Furrow, G. Palmer, S. M. Johnson, G. Fallor & L. Palmer-Olsen This book provides practical guidance and suggestions to work with families using emotionally focused therapy. Applying EFT to family counseling sessions is an effective way to improve family dynamics and individual wellbeing. Find the book on Amazon. 4. The Practice of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy (Second Edition): Creating Connection – S. M. Johnson This book is an updated version of the original publication and is designed for therapists treating couples in the field. It addresses basic aspects of EFT in addition to complexities that relationships often have such as partners with mental health conditions, PTSD and trauma. Find the book on Amazon. 5. Couples Therapy Workbook for Healing: Emotionally Focused Therapy Techniques to Restore Your Relationship – L. C. Schade A handy workbook which provides a toolkit for couples working through distress and wanting to improve their relationship. It is based on concepts of EFT and offers assessments, practical techniques and guidance to navigate relationship issues. Find the book on Amazon. A Note on Training in EFT There are numerous trainings designed to teach the steps, stages, and processes involved in Emotionally-Focused Therapy. The International Centre for Excellence in Emotionally-Focused Therapy (ICEEFT) offers both training and certification in the evidence-based approach to helping individuals and couples.

The certification includes core skills training and individual supervision for licensed practitioners. According to the ICEEFT, the purpose of certification is to promote the excellence and maintenance of high standards to the EFT approach. More information and training can be found on their website. PositivePsychology.com Tools The Emotional Intelligence Masterclass© is a perfect resource to tap into aspects of EFT with individuals, couples, and families. The masterclass can help provide a solid foundation and framework for understanding and explaining emotions in Module 1. Modules 2 and 3 expand on emotional intelligence and emotional awareness, which are critical for working through the steps of EFT. When clients can identify the beliefs they have about emotions, it can help them relate to the emotion-need connection and finally provide healthy ways to express these emotions in order to fulfill their needs. If you’re looking for more science-based ways to help others develop emotional intelligence, this collection contains 17 validated EI tools for practitioners. Use them to help others understand and use their emotions to their advantage. A Take-Home Message The emotionally-focused therapist is characterized as active, engaged, and flexible and provides a “hands on” clinical experience (Greenberg, 2004). They are often seen as a “choreographer” and collaborator who works with an individual or couple to discover amazing possibilities of change and growth. Emotions are powerful, directly impacting physical, psychological, and social wellbeing. Based on the premise of EFT, emotions provide insight to personal identity, choice, and decision making. EFT is an approach that can improve emotional awareness and regulation to avoid distress and gain access to the important information emotions can provide. We hope you enjoyed reading this article. Don’t forget to download our three Emotional Intelligence Exercises for free.

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