

Couples Therapy Intensive Sample Schedule

This sample schedule will give you an idea of what your intensive can look like and many of the topics we cover. In all of our intensives, the first day is largely the same as what's below. Subsequent days will be designed with your specific needs and situation in mind.

DAY 1 (four hours)

- Welcome and establish specific, achievable goals for the intensive.
- **How did we get here?**
 - Review each partner's family history and the history of your relationship together, highlighting significant events or themes.
 - Review the Gottman Relationship Checkup Assessment - highlight strengths and growth areas in the relationship.
- Refreshment break
- **Where do we want to go?**
 - Identify specific relationship needs and feelings that create emotional pain.
 - Review how emotional pain is usually expressed and received.
 - Practice expressing needs and feelings using "I" vs "You" language, so that you can work together as a team instead of being critical or defensive.
 - Identify each partner's deepest held personal values.
 - *Away* moves: What are you saying and doing in times of stress or conflict that move you away from your values, create disconnection, or give your partner the impression that you don't care?
 - *Towards* moves: How would you like to behave towards each other in moments of conflict that would move you towards your values, communicate that you care and help you to work together as a team?
 - Session summary. Assign homework/exercise/experiment for each partner.

DAY 2 (four hours)

- Review DAY 1 and any homework exercise. Set clear goals for DAY 2.
- ***I don't matter: How you can overcome the worst feeling in a relationship.***
 - Why feeling misunderstood, ignored, or unimportant/unseen can lead us to turn "against" or "away from" each other.
 - Review specific situations that trigger the "*I don't matter*" feeling, each partner's response, and assess whether these responses help or hurt your relationship.

- ***I can count on you: How to create and maintain safety, security and connection.***
 - Learn and practice emotion recognition, regulation and expression skills in times of stress and conflict, in order to turn “towards” each other with curiosity, compassion and determination.
- Refreshment break
- **Create an Action Plan**
 - Conversations that build connection: “The State Of The Union.”
 - Revisit and practice helpful strategies and tools that help you to deepen connection, build trust and strengthen the relationship.
 - Highlight strengths in each other and in the relationship that you can draw from in future challenges.

This is a sample outline and your intensive can be custom-designed for you and your partner based on your needs. 8-hour intensives can be great for couples looking to get unstuck quickly or get a jump start on regular therapy sessions. Interested in a longer intensive? We can arrange that as well. We look forward to working with you to create an individualized experience that will pave the way for lasting change.