Psychology of Romantic Relationships
Jim Graham, Ph.D.

What is an intimate relationship?
How do intimate relationships differ from casual relationships?

The neither necessary nor sufficient components of an intimate relationship
- Knowledge
- Caring
- Interdependence
- Mutuality
- Trust
- Commitment

Humans have an inherent need for relationships
- Social support affects health and mortality
- Social contact affects psychological well-being
- Relationships are evolutionarily advantageous
- Interpersonal contact is required for procreation
- A group has more resources, and is better able to defend itself from danger

We’ll be talking primarily about romantic relationships

Building Blocks of Relationships
- Culture
- The Influence of Experience
- Individual Differences
- Human Nature
- Interaction
Then (1960ish)
- 94% of people married at some point of their lives
- Average age at marriage: 20/23
- 5% of couples cohabited
- 5% of babies born to unwed mothers
- 75% of mothers stayed at home until kids were school-age

Then (1960ish)
- 94% of people married at some point of their lives
- Average age at marriage: 20/23
- 5% of couples cohabited
- 5% of babies born to unwed mothers
- 75% of mothers stayed at home until kids were school-age

Now
- 85% of people will be married (2007)
- Average age at marriage: 26/27
- 50% of couples cohabited
- 37% of babies born to unwed mothers (2005)
- 60% of mothers return to work before their babies were 1 year old

Divorce Rate Over Time

Why are things changing?
- Socioeconomic development: The more industrialized and affluent a society, the more divorce and single people it tolerates
- Individualism: Western culture has been emphasizing the individual more and more.
- Technology: Reproductive technology makes it so that a relationship is no longer needed for procreation

Why are things changing?
- Sex Ratio: The number of men for every 100 women in a population.
  - 100 means there are equal #s of men and women
  - High sex ratios means there are more men
  - Low sex ratios means there are more women
- Because men are an average of 2 years older than women at time of marriage, sex ratios compare # of women to # of men 2 years older

High
- Traditional, old-fashioned gender roles
- Sexually conservative
- Women stay in the home
- The ideal newlywed is a virgin bride
- Unwed pregnancies are shameful
- Long dresses

Low
High

- Traditional, old-fashioned gender roles
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Low

- More liberal, open gender roles
- Sexually open
- Women encouraged to work
- Sexual relationships outside the marriage
- Unwed pregnancies are acceptable
- Short skirts

Sex Ratios

- The correlates of sex ratios hold true over time and across cultures
- Ancient Rome?
- Victorian England?
- Roaring 20s?
- The sexual revolution and women’s liberation movement of the 60s?

Sex Ratios in the US

Why Sex Ratios?

- Some argue that the rules are set up to favor those in society with the most power: Men
  - If there are few women available, keep them home, locked up, and safe from other men
  - If there are plenty of women to go around, why be tied down to just one?
- We don’t know this is true, the implications have many excited (and outraged).
- Polygamy

Building Blocks of Relationships

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- Infants’ interactions with their caregivers shape their attachment styles, their learned orientations towards relationships with others.
- Developmental psychologists identified three broad types of attachment styles:
  - Secure: trusting and relaxed
  - Anxious-ambivalent: nervous and clingy
  - Avoidant: suspicious and withdrawn
• These patterns are found in adults, too.

• Only about 60% of us are secure and trusting in our romantic relationships.

• The rest of us are insecure, being avoidant or anxious about depending on others.

- Attachment styles are learned through our experiences in close relationships.

- Our global beliefs about the nature and worth of intimate relationships are shaped by our experiences within them.

- We’re all individuals with our own combinations of talents and traits.
  - Sex differences
  - Gender differences
  - Personalities
  - Self-esteem

- The common perception is that sex differences are quite large.

**Building Blocks of Relationships**

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**Sex Differences**

- The common perception is that sex differences are quite large.
Actually, within-group differences are much larger than between group differences. Sex differences are actually quite small, and tell us very little about individuals.

Men are not from Mars
Women are not from Venus
“Men are from North Dakota, women are from South Dakota” (Wood & Dindia, 1998)

Gender Roles: the patterns of behavior that our culture expects from “normal” men and women
Men are expected to be “masculine,” instrumental, or assertive, self-reliant, ambitious, decisive, and competitive.
Women are expected to be “feminine,” expressive, or warm, sensitive, compassionate, and kind.

Only half of us fit our expected gender roles.
Many of us are androgynous: instrumental and expressive.
We want our partners to be warm and supportive (expressive)
People low in instrumentality tend to have low self-esteem and be bad at completing tasks.
Some research suggests that androgyny is associated with better relationships.

Personality

Openness – Imagination, creativity, open to new experiences and ideas
Conscientiousness – Dutiful, dependable, reliable
Extraversion – Warm, outgoing, gregarious
Agreeableness – Cooperative, trusting, good-natured
Neuroticism – Prone to worry, depression, anger

Openness – Not related to relationship satisfaction.
Conscientiousness – Good for relationships, more likely to keep promises
Extraversion – Good for relationships, cheerful and enthusiastic
Agreeableness – Good for relationships, take others into account when making decisions
Neuroticism – Bad for relationships
Self-Esteem

- When others like us, we like ourselves.
- **Sociometer Theory**: Self-esteem is how we measure the quality of our relationships
- People with low self-esteem
  - Undervalue how much their partners love them
  - Perceive disregard where none exists
  - Are less optimistic about lasting love
  - Respond less constructively to conflict

Homosexuality

- The processes of close relationships are very similar in heterosexual and homosexual couples.
- What differences there are may occur because a gay couple involves two men and a lesbian couple involves two women

Building Blocks of Relationships

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Human Nature

- Evolution may have instilled in us certain tendencies that shape our relationships.
  - Three Assumptions of Evolutionary Psychology:
    - Natural selection has sculpted our species
    - Men and women differ only to the extent they have faced different reproductive dilemmas
    - Cultures determine whether certain behaviors are adaptive, and cultures change faster than human nature does

How do men and women differ?

- **Parental Investment**: Men and women differ enormously in the minimum time and effort they have to invest in each child they produce.
  - So, it's adaptive for women to be more careful in choosing their mates.
- **Paternity Uncertainty**: Men, but not women, may face doubts about whether or not a particular child is theirs.
  - So, men are especially vigilant toward the threat of marital infidelity.

Mating Strategies

- Different partner attributes are desirable depending on the expected length of the relationship.
  - **Short-term**
    - Men – tend to prefer sexually available women
    - Women – tend to prefer sexy, charming, dominant men
  - **Long-term**
    - Men – tend to prefer sexually chaste women
    - Women – tend to evaluate finances and ability to provide for children
What used to be adaptive may no longer be so. What used to be adaptive may no longer be so.
Culture determines what is adaptive, and changes more quickly than human nature:
- Reproductive technology
- AIDS

1 + 1 = 3
The combination of partner’s experiences and abilities is greater than the sum of their parts.
Relationships are fluid processes.
Relationships also have a cost, but we’re a social species, and we need them.

Marc and Wendy met during their junior years in college, and they instantly found a lot to like in each other. Wendy was pretty and very feminine and rather meek, and Marc liked the fact that he was able to entice her to have sex with him on their second date. Wendy was susceptible to his charms because she unjustly doubted her desirability, and she was excited that a dominant, charismatic man found her attractive. They started cohabitating during their senior years, and married six months after graduation. They developed a traditional partnership, with Wendy staying home when their children were young, and Marc applying himself to his career. He succeeded in his profession, winning several lucrative promotions, but Wendy began to feel that he was married more to his work than to her. She wanted him to talk to her more, and he began to wish that she was eating less and taking better care of herself.

In your opinion, what does the future hold for Marc and Wendy? How happy will they be with each other in another 10 years? Why?

Attraction

- Rewards
- Proximity
- Physical Attractiveness
- Reciprocity
- Similarity
- Barriers
- So, What Do Men and Women Want?

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**Rewards and Attraction**

- We like those who reward us.
  - Direct – Positive consequences we obtain from being with someone
  - Indirect – Positive consequences that we indirectly associate with the presence of someone
- What is rewarding depends on our experiences, personality, etc.

**Proximity**

- We tend to be attracted to those with whom we share physical proximity.
- Proximity has a profound effect on attraction.

**Why is proximity so related to attraction?**

- Convenience
  - When others are nearby, it's easier to enjoy the rewards they offer
  - When others are far away, it takes more effort to enjoy the rewards they offer.
- How might this effect long-distance relationships?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List your 3 closest friends:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 door away, 41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 doors away, 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 doors away, 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 doors away, 10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Festinger et al., 1950

- Rewards
  - Proximity
- Physical Attractiveness
- Reciprocity
- Similarity
- Barriers
- So, What Do Men and Women Want?

**Close proximity also makes you more likely to cross paths with someone**

**Familiarity**: The more you are exposed to someone, the more you will be attracted to them.

**Mere Exposure Effect**: The more times you are exposed to someone, the more you will be attracted to them (Mooreland & Beach, 1992)
Limits of Proximity

- Proximity won’t make you like things you normally wouldn’t like.
- Proximity accentuates your pre-existing feelings about others.
- Friends and enemies are proximal (California Condo Study 1976).

Physical Attractiveness

- We have a bias for beauty; we assume that attractive people are more:
  - Kind, strong, outgoing, sensitive, interesting, sociable, nurturing, sexually responsive, poised, happy, well-adjusted, etc.
  - Talented
    - Attractive employees earn higher salaries (each extra point on a 5-point scale is worth $2,600/$2,150)
    - Attractive professors earn higher student ratings

This effect is culture-free, though the desirable traits may vary by culture

- In Korea, attractive people are assumed to be more concerned for the well-being of others.

What is beautiful?

- Features considered attractive are relatively stable across cultures, and are similar to features that newborn babies find attractive.
- Women:
  - “Baby Face”: Large eyes, small nose, small chin, full lips
    - plus
  - “Mature”: Prominent cheekbones, narrow cheeks, broad smile
Baby-faced, warm, friendly, attractive
More attractive when not ovulating

Strong jaws, broad foreheads, look strong and dominant
More attractive when ovulating and fertile

“Average” faces are more beautiful
Facial features are neither too large nor too small
Faces are symmetrical

What is beautiful? – Women’s bodies
Normal weight > underweight > overweight
Waist-to-hip ratio of .7
Larger breasts preferred if paired with a low WHR
What is beautiful? – Men’s bodies

- More difficult to pin down
- Waist-to-hip ratio of .9 (only matters if they also have resources)
- Broad shoulders (shoulder-to-hip ratio of 1.2)

Attractiveness Misc.

- Men and women prefer his height > her height
- Attractive people smell better.
- Men prefer longer, versus shorter, hair on women.

Why is it attractive?

- Evolutionary perspective
  - What is considered attractive is cross-cultural
  - Babies have the same preferences as adults
  - Symmetrical faces = symmetrical bodies = better mental and physical health
  - In women, WHR close to .7 get pregnant more easily than higher WHR
  - In men, WHR of .9 in better health than higher WHR

- Culture also influences what is beautiful.
  - E.g., Heavy women are more desirable during times when the food supply is uncertain
  - Physical attractiveness is the most important feature in determining initial attraction.

Why is it attractive?

- Evolutionary perspective
  - Younger women are more likely to have longer hair than older women, and youth = health
  - Larger breasts display the effects of aging
  - Physical attractiveness matters most in equatorial regions.
  - Attractiveness preferences are closely tied to the menstrual cycle in women.
  - We prefer healthy, robust mates; physical attractiveness is a cue towards health

- Costs and benefits of beauty:
  - Looks have a greater effect on the social lives of women than men
  - Attractive people are a little happier than unattractive people, but don’t trust others as much
  - Contrast effects: Unrealistic media portrayals causes us to under-estimate the attractiveness of others (less attracted to own partners after viewing very attractive models)
  - Matching: people pair off with others of similar physical attractiveness (more obvious in long-term couples)
- Rewards
- Proximity
- Physical Attractiveness
- Reciprocity
- Similarity
- Barriers
- So, What Do Men and Women Want?

- We like people who like us

\[
\text{Desirability} = \text{Physical Attractiveness} \times \text{Probability of Acceptance}
\]

- The most attractive partner is one who is moderately beautiful and highly likely to accept us.

- Most people find it hard not to like those who like them.

- Balance theory suggests that we prefer consistency and symmetry in our relationships

- …so we like those who like us, and dislike those who dislike us.

- We’re not likely to ask someone out unless we think they’ll respond positively

- Pick-up lines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Clever” Openers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innocuous Openers</td>
<td>Innocuous Openers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Openers</td>
<td>Direct Openers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Your body must be a Visa, because it's everywhere I want to be.
- If you were a burger at McDonalds, you’d be named McGorgeous.
- Didn’t we go to different schools together?
- I hear your body is made up of 75% water, and man, am I thirsty!
- God was showing off when he made you.
- Could you please step away from the bar? You’re melting all the ice.
- Hi, are you here to meet a nice guy, or will I do?
- You must be a parking ticket, because you have fine written all over you.
- Excuse me, do you have a neck brace? I think I injured myself when I fell for you.
- Was your Dad in the Air Force? Because you’re the bomb.
- Can I borrow your library card, because I'd like to check you out.
- You're more beautiful than 100 pink flamingos on a golf course.
### Pick-up lines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Clever&quot; Openers</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innocuous Openers</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Openers</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>&gt;90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Strategic Partner Selection

- If the possibility of rejection is high (and made salient), folks prefer potential partners with less desirable characteristics (to minimize the chance of rejection).
- If the possibility of rejection is low (and made salient), folks prefer potential partners with more desirable characteristics (to maximize the potential gains).

### Rewards
- Opposites attract.
- Birds of a feather flock together.
- Opposites attract.
- Birds of a feather flock together.
- Like attracts like.
  - Demographic: age, ethnicity, education, social class, weight
  - Attitudes and values: There’s no such thing as “too much in common”
  - Personalities: Couples with similar personalities tend to do better;

- C’mon, don’t opposites attract?
- Often, it seems that way, when it’s not.
- People are attracted when they have a similar “mate value”
  - Men – often determined by resources (youth not an issue, as men are fertile through old age)
  - Women – often determined by youth/looks (fertility ends in middle age with menopause
  - Men married in their 20s are 2 years older than their wives
  - Men married in their 50s are 15 years older than their wives

- Discovering similarities takes time
  - Initial attraction may be based on perceived (rather than actual) similarities
  - Stimulus-value-role theory suggests that there are three different types of information about new partners that gradually unfold over time.

- Stimulus: age, sex, physical appearance
- Value: attitudes and beliefs
- Role: parenting, careers, life tasks
Fatal attractions: When qualities that initially attract someone become a source of disagreement.

- Sometimes, we are attracted to people who are similar to our ideal selves
  - Though, the differences should not be too great
- Dissimilarity decreases over time

OK, so sometimes opposites do attract:

- Complementarity – when opposite characteristics complement one another
  - Though even then, similarity often rules the day.
- Why is similarity important?
  - It affirms our sense of selves
  - We can anticipate friendly relationships with similar others, because they’ll like us
  - Fewer areas of disagreement

Barriers

- Reactance – When people lose freedom of action or choice, they struggle to regain that freedom.
- Romeo and Juliet Effect: The more our parents interfere with our romances, the more desirable that partner becomes.
- Closing time effect: Others become more attractive at closing time (not just beer-goggles)

World wide, attractive partners are ones who possess:

1. Warmth and loyalty
2. Attractiveness and vitality
3. Status and resources

- For short-term flings, 2 > 3 & 1
- For women’s long term relationships, 3 & 1 > 2
- For men’s long term relationships, 1 & 2 > 3
The Anxiously Attached: Unpopular and Unselective
- Anxiously attached individuals are rated as less desirable in speed dating situations.
- Anxiously attached individuals are less selective in choosing mates – they pick more people than the securely-attached.
- This puts them in a situation where they are more likely to experience rejection.
- Are they anxiously attached because they experience more rejection?

Social Cognition
- How we think about our relationships has a large impact on our relationships.
- What we think determines how we feel and act.

First Impressions
- First impressions last a long, long time …
- First impressions aren’t actually ‘first’ – we start with stereotypes based on physical characteristics (male/female, old/young, etc.)
- Primacy Effect – information we have about an individual influences how we interpret later information.
- Confirmation Bias – We’re more likely to seek out information that confirms (rather than contradicts) our previous biases.
- We to rarely confront convincing evidence that our first impressions are wrong.
- As a result, we tend to be overconfident: We put too much faith in our judgments, and think that we’re right about others more often than we really are.
- We make more mistakes than we realize!
How well do you know your partner’s sexual history?

Our beliefs can change over time, but first impressions:
- Direct our attention to certain types of information
- Influence our interpretation of later facts.
- Our existing beliefs about our relationships are always important
- … but we’re often wrong!
- Your friends can predict the outcomes of your romantic relationships better than you can.

First Impressions
Perceptions
Impression Management
How Well Do We Know Our Partners?

Positive Illusions: Our perceptions of our partners tend to emphasize their virtues and minimize their faults.
- These perceptions are a combination of real information and our idea of what an “ideal lover” would be.
- Faults aren’t overlooked as much as minimized
- Positive illusions are associated with greater love, satisfaction, trust, and commitment
- Disillusionment can be avoided by revising the ideal.
- Friends can judge our partners more accurately than we can!

Attributions
- **Attributions**: The explanations we develop for why something happened (or why someone did something)
  - Emphasize the role of some influences
  - De-emphasize the role of other influences
- We can emphasize influences that are:
  - **Internal**: to a person, such as personality or mood, or external, describing the situation the person faced.
  - **Stable** and lasting, or unstable and temporary.
  - **Global**: affecting many situations, or specific, affecting only a few.

Actor/observer effect: People generate different explanations for their own actions than they do for the similar actions they observe in others.
- As actors, we note external pressures, but as observers, we make internal attributions.
- Self-serving bias: People want to take credit for their successes and avoid blame for their failures
• Therefore … Problems in our relationships are not our fault!

• Relationship Attributions: The meaning we attribute to the causes of our partners’ behavior.
  - Relationship attributions can be:
    - Relationship-Enhancing
    - Distress-Maintaining

Memories

• Our perceptions of current events are influenced by our memories of past events
  - **Reconstructive Memory** is used to describe the fact that our memories are continually revised and rewritten as new events occur.
  - Partners’ current feelings about one another influence how they view the past
    - How we first met …

Relationship Beliefs

• **Romanticism** is the view that love should be the most important basis for choosing a mate:
  - Our love will be nearly perfect.
  - There’s only one “true love” for me.
  - True love will find a way to overcome any obstacle.
  - Love is possible at first sight.
  - Romantic beliefs are associated with more love, satisfaction, and commitment in romantic relationships (but doesn’t predict who breaks up)

• Some relationship beliefs are dysfunctional:
  - Disagreements are destructive.
  - “Mindreading” is essential.
  - Partners cannot change.
  - Sex should be perfect every time.
  - Men and women are different.
  - Great relationships just happen.
  - **Destiny beliefs** assume partners are either well-suited, or not
  - **Growth beliefs** assume that good relationships are hard work.
**Expectations**

- We often get the reactions we expect from others.
- **Self-fulfilling prophecies** are false predictions that come true because they lead people to behave in ways that make the erroneous predictions come true.
- Self-fulfilling prophecies are extraordinary examples of the power of perceptions.
- The events that result from them occur only because people expect them to, and then act as if they will.

**Self-Perceptions**

- If we expect to be liked by a stranger, we are liked.
- If we expect to be disliked by a stranger, we are disliked.
- Rejection sensitivity
  - Folks who expect rejection tend to act in ways that make rejection more likely.

- If people have positive self-concepts, they tend to associate with others who compliment and praise them.
- However, if one has a negative self-concept, the two motives conflict:
  - They like praise, but upon reflection, don’t trust it.
  - They may avoid praise because it doesn’t gel with the way they see themselves.

**People seek intimate partners who support their existing self-concepts, good or bad.**

**Marriage-Shift:** In committed relationships, self-verification wins out

- My wife praises me – I feel good!
- I don’t deserve it.
- My wife couldn’t have meant it.
- Therefore, I don’t trust her.
Impression Management

- **Impression Management** is the attempt to influence the impressions of us that others form.
  - This is often not done intentionally
  - People wash their hands more in public restrooms
  - Women eat less on dates with attractive men
- Impression management usually involves showing others -- perhaps in a selective fashion -- who we really are.
  - It rarely involves lying and pretense. People seldom pretend to be things they are not

Impression Management Strategies

- **Ingratiation** – doing favors, paying compliments, and being friendly and charming to elicit liking from others.
- **Self-promotion** – recounting accomplishments or displaying skills to elicit respect from others.
- **Supplication** – appearing inept or infirm to elicit help and nurturance from others.
- **Intimidation** – appearing threatening or dangerous to elicit fear and compliance from others.

As romantic relationships progress, we worry less about creating a favorable impression (even though those relationships are the most important)

- We already know they like us, so there’s less motivation to gain approval.
- They know us well, so there’s little we can do to affect what they think.
- And some people simply get lazy and work less hard to be polite and charming.
- Once a relationship is formed, people often engage in management of their partner’s impression

Not as well as we think we do.

Knowledge

- Intimate partners have detailed knowledge about each other…
  - …and they do come to understand each other better as their relationship develops
Motivation
- However, long periods of close contact gradually result in less, not more accuracy.
- Accurate judgments depend in part on the interest and effort with which two people try to understand each other.
  - Women spend more time thinking about their established relationships than men (and are better judges when fertile)
  - Women are better judges of others than men (but men can do just as well if you pay them)

Partner Legibility: Some people are just easier to read than others
Perceiver Ability: Some folks are better judges than others
- Intelligent, open-minded people
- Secure attachment style
- Training can improve empathy

Threatening Perceptions
- There may things we do not want to know.
  - The closer their relationship, the less accurate people were in judging their partners' interest in other attractive people…
  - …unless they had an anxious-ambivalent attachment style. (Does such accuracy lead to chronic anxiety?)

Perceiver Influence – We are not passive perceivers
- If we realize that our partners are not the people we wish they were, we may try to change them.
- Due to perceiver influence, judgments that are initially inaccurate may become more correct as we induce our partners to become the people we want them to be.

Communication
- More often than we realize, we face an interpersonal gap
  - in which a sender’s intentions (what he or she wanted to communicate)
  - differ from the messages that others actually receive.
Nonverbal communication involves all the things people do in interaction except for what they say.
- What people say — the vocabulary, grammar, and syntax they use — is verbal communication.
- But the sound of their voices — or how they say things — is nonverbal communication.

Functions of Nonverbal Communication
- Providing Information
  - A person's moods, intentions, and meaning are usually evident in his or her nonverbal behavior.
- Regulating Interaction
  - Subtle nonverbal cues allow people to take turns in a conversation smoothly and gracefully (dropping your voice at the end of a statement).
- Defining Relationships
  - Nonverbal actions express intimacy and carry signals of power and status.

Components of Nonverbal Communication
- Facial Expressions
  - All over the world, people display particular facial expressions when they are feeling certain emotions.
  - As a result, facial expressions are good guides to others' moods and feelings (when they're authentic and honest.)

People sometimes try to control facial expressions in order to follow display rules, the cultural norms that dictate what emotions should be present in particular situations.
- Intensifying, or exaggerating, them
- Minimizing, or lessening, them
- Neutralizing, or withholding, them
- Masking, or replacing, them with other apparent emotions
- However, even when people try to control their facial expressions, the truth may leak out.
- Feigned expressions tend to be subtly different from authentic ones.
- **Microexpressions**, authentic flashes of real emotion, may be visible during short lapses of control
  - Paul Ekman’s Facial Action Coding System
Components of Nonverbal Communication

**Gazing Behavior:** The direction and amount of a person’s eye contact is also influential.
- Looking at someone can communicate interest and affection
- Strangers who spend time gazing into each other's eyes tend to like each other.
- But a lot of looking can also communicate dominance and status.

\[
\text{The visual dominance ratio} = \frac{\text{look-speak}}{\text{look-listen}}
\]

High-status people tend to use a higher visual dominance ratio than people of lower status do.

**Body Movement:**
- Gestures can replace spoken words, but they vary widely from culture to culture (unlike facial expressions).

US: “Okay!”
France: “Zero.”
Japan: “Money!”
Some Mediterranean Countries: “A—hole!”

The posture and motion of the body are also informative.
- Brief observation of the behavior of others allows us to judge their personalities with some accuracy.
- Body postures also signal status. High-status people adopt open, asymmetric postures that take up a lot of space.
Some studies suggest sexual orientation can be assessed by observing a 10 second video of body movements (72% accuracy).

- **Gait**
  - Heterosexual men move their shoulders when they walk.
  - Heterosexual women move their hips when they walk.
- **Differences in posture and gazing**
  - Homosexuals are better at judging sexual orientation (higher investment).

### Components of Nonverbal Communication

- **Touch:** Touching defines relationships.
  - Closeness and affection
    - Partners touch each other more as their relationship becomes more intimate.
  - Dominance and status.
    - High-status people are more likely to touch those of lower status than vice versa.
  - Men and women react differently to touch.

- **Paralanguage** is all the variations in a person’s voice other than the actual words he or she uses:
  - Rhythm, pitch, volume, rate, accent.
  - E.g., “baby talk,” is a vocal style characterized by variable intonation, high pitch, and unique rhythms.
  - used with babies, lovers, pets, and elderly people.

- **Interpersonal Distance:**
  - Public zone – formal interactions at more than 12 feet away.
  - Social zone – business-like interactions 4 to 12 feet away.
  - Personal zone – the area 1½ to 4 feet away used for interactions with friends and acquaintances.
  - Intimate zone – the area within 1½ feet of the front of our chests.
- **Distance differs by**
  - culture (French, Arabic, and Latin cultures are closer than US)
  - gender (men use greater distances)
  - Status (high status folks get afforded more space)

- **Combining the Components**
  - Nonverbal behavior usually reinforces our verbal meaning.
  - When there is a discrepancy the true meaning usually lies in nonverbal communication.
  - Sarcasm – when people say one thing but mean another (usually the opposite).
  - Nonverbal actions also allow us to fine-tune the intimacy of our interactions to establish a comfortable level of closeness.
  - We can increase or decrease the perceived intimacy of an interaction by adjusting, for instance, our distance, gaze, lean, and touch.
Flirting

- Facial Expressions
- Gazing Behavior
- Body Movement
- Touch
- Interpersonal Distance
- Paralanguage

Sexual Interest

- Facial Expressions: Even more Smiling, open pouting mouth
- Gazing Behavior: Even more increased eye contact
- Body Movement: Tilted head
- Touch: Even more touch
- Interpersonal Distance: Even closer distance
- Paralanguage: Even more intimate

Nonverbal Sensitivity

- The accuracy with which couples communicate nonverbally predicts how happy their relationships will be.
- Spouses who do poorly at nonverbal communication tend to be dissatisfied and when such problems occur
- A person is assigned a meaning to convey; the partner and a stranger try and interpret the meaning
  - If the partner is wrong but the stranger is right, the fault lies with the partner’s decoding skill
  - If both are wrong, the fault lies with the person’s encoding skill
Women work harder at nonverbal communication than men usually do.

- Women send clearer, more comprehensible messages
- Women attentively interpret others' behavior more accurately.
- When spouses communicate poorly, both of them make a lot of mistakes, but the husbands usually make more of them.

Nonverbal deficits may occur either
- because people lack the necessary skills
  - Convicted rapists have a hard time identifying negative emotion in women
  - Abusive mothers misinterpret negative emotions as positive in infants
- because they're not trying very hard to do well.
  - For most of us, nonverbal insensitivity is likely due to inattention and a lack of effort.
- Men read others as well as women do when they are equally motivated to make good judgments.

Nonverbal Communication

Verbal Communication

Dysfunctional Communication

Sex and Power Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonverbal Behavior</th>
<th>Low Status</th>
<th>High Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smiling</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gazing</td>
<td>low VDR</td>
<td>high VDR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posture</td>
<td>closed, symmetric</td>
<td>open, asymmetric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch</td>
<td>less</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>less</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralanguage</td>
<td>submissive</td>
<td>assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal Sensitivity</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Self-disclosure: revealing personal information to someone else
- A defining characteristic of intimate relationships

Social Penetration Theory: partners become more intimate by increasing two aspects of their verbal communication:
- Breadth – the variety of topics they discuss
- Depth – the personal significance of the topics they discuss.
Breadth increases faster than depth does at the beginning of a relationship;
- Reciprocity is evident, as the partners match each other’s level of openness;
- Responsiveness sustains intimacy and depth;

Taboo topics are sensitive matters that partners agree, explicitly or implicitly, not to talk about.
- The state of one’s relationship.
- Current relationships with other partners

As relationships worsen,
- Depenetration occurs, as the wedge returns into a sliver
- Breadth lessens, while depth remains: “a long, thin dagger of words designed to hurt”

Self-disclosure is usually, but not always, gradual.
- Rapid self-disclosure may violate others’ expectations and engender poor evaluations.
- We reveal more personal information to those we like;
- We also tend to like others more because we have opened up to them;
- Reciprocal self-disclosure builds trust; and
- We’re liked more by others when we self-disclose.

High openers are people who pull for more self-disclosure
- More attentive during conversation
- More gazing and nodding
- Verbally express interest
- Look interested

Gender Differences in Verbal Communication

Topics of Conversation
- Women discuss their feelings and gossip about others more often than men do.
- Men tend to stick to more impersonal matters such as sports, and they seek a few laughs instead of support and counsel.

Styles of Conversation
- Women speak less forcefully, using more hedges and questions, and less profanity, than men do.
- Men also do most of the talking. Men interrupt more
Gender Differences in Verbal Communication

- **Self-Disclosure**
  - Men tend to disclose less to their partners than women do, but they do disclose more personal information to women than to other men.
  - Interactions that involve a woman tend to be more intimate than are interactions that involve only men.

- Men and women tend to differ in their reactions to neutral interactions that are devoid of either affection or animosity.
  - If a man isn’t complaining, women tend to think everything’s okay.
  - If a woman isn’t overtly affectionate, men tend to think something’s wrong.

Nonverbal Communication

- **Dysfunctional Communication**
  - Unhappy partners do a poor job of saying what they mean.
    - **Kitchen-sinking**: confusing issues by addressing several topics at once, rather than being specific and precise.
    - Their conversations frequently drift off-beam, wandering from topic to topic.

- **Mindreading**: Jumping to conclusions and wrongly assuming that they understand their partners.
- **Interrupt**: to express disagreement frequently.
- **Cross-complaining**: responding to a partner’s complaint with one of their own.
Miscommunication

- Unhappy partners also display negative affect when they talk with each other:
  - Criticism attacks a partner’s personality or character (rather than complaining about a behavior)
  - Contempt in the form of mockery and insults occurs; (Name-Calling, hostile humor, mockery, body language)
  - Defensiveness leads to excuses or counterattacks
  - Stonewalling may follow when someone withdraws; and
  - Belligerence and aggressiveness can result.
- When communication routinely involves these contentious patterns, the outlook for the relationship is grim.

What Do We Do?

- Say what you mean
- Behavior description: Identify as plainly as possible a specific behavior that annoyed you.
- I-statements: Start with “I” and then describe a distinct, specific emotional reaction.
- XYZ statements: Combine behavior descriptions with I-statements:
  “When you do X in situation Y, I feel Z.”

Active Listening

- As listeners, we face two vital tasks:
  - Accurately understanding what our partners are trying to say, and
  - Communicating that attention and comprehension to our partners so that they know we care about what they’ve said.

Active Listening

- Paraphrasing: repeat the message in our own words and give the sender a chance to agree that that’s what he or she really meant.
- Perception checking: Assessing the accuracy of our inferences by asking for clarification and feedback.

Be Polite and Stay Cool

- Staying cool when you’re provoked, and being able to calm down when you begin to get angry, are very valuable skills.
- Avoid the temptation to attribute hostile intent to your partner.
- Schedule regular meetings for the polite airing of grievances.
- Don’t keep trading sarcastic insults when you get angry; take a “time out”.
- Take just six long, slow, deep breaths per minute, and you’ll calm down faster than you think.

Respect and Validation

- Validation: Acknowledge the legitimacy of our partners’ opinions and communicate respect for their positions (even when we disagree with them)
- Recognition of, and respect for, a partner’s point of view can make disagreements much more tolerable.
Interdependency

- Interdependency takes an economic look at relationships.

Social Exchange

- The Economies of Relationships
- Are We Really This Greedy?
- The Nature of Commitment

Social Exchange

- Successful relationships entail the mutual exchange of desirable rewards with others.
- Rewards are results of an interaction that are gratifying, welcome, and fulfilling.
- Costs are consequences that are frustrating, distressing, and undesirable.
- Outcomes are an interaction’s net profit or loss.
  \[ \text{Outcome} = \text{Rewards} - \text{Costs} \]

Expectations

- Comparison level: (or CL) describes what we expect and feel we deserve in our dealings with others.
- When our outcomes exceed our comparison levels, we’re happy and content.
- But when our outcomes are lower than our comparison levels, we’re disgruntled and distressed.

Interdependence theory suggests that we evaluate the outcomes we receive with two criteria:
- Expectations: What we expect from our relationships, and
- Alternatives: How well we think we can do with other partners.
- CL is thus the standard with which satisfaction with a relationship is assessed.

Outcomes – CL = Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction

- Even if a relationship is profitable and rewarding, you may not be satisfied if the profit isn’t big enough to meet your expectations.

- If we think we can do better in another relationship, we’re likely to leave our present partners and pursue those bigger payoffs even if we’re currently happy with what we’ve got.

- If we’re currently miserable, we won’t leave unless a better alternative presents itself.

Alternatives

- Comparison level for alternatives (or CL\textsubscript{alt}) the outcomes we (think we) can get elsewhere, also used to evaluate our relationship.

- Our CL\textsubscript{alt}s are the lowest level of outcomes we will accept from our current partners.

- Why?

 Four Types of Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Outcomes</th>
<th>Current Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CL</td>
<td>CL\textsubscript{alt}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When outcomes exceed both CL and CL\textsubscript{alt}, it’s a HAPPY and STABLE relationship.

| Poor Outcomes | CL\textsubscript{alt} |

When outcomes exceed CL\textsubscript{alt} but fall below CL, it’s a UNHAPPY but STABLE relationship.

- CL\textsubscript{alt} is a complex, multifaceted judgment involving both the costs of leaving and the rewards offered by others.

- Investments are the things we lose when a relationship ends.
**Four Types of Relationships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Outcomes</th>
<th>CL &lt; CL&lt;sub&gt;alt&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>CL &gt; CL&lt;sub&gt;alt&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor Outcomes</td>
<td>CL &lt; CL&lt;sub&gt;alt&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>CL &gt; CL&lt;sub&gt;alt&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When outcomes exceed CL but fall below CL<sub>alt</sub>, it's a HAPPY but UNSTABLE relationship.

When outcomes fall below both CL and CL<sub>alt</sub>, it's an UNHAPPY and UNSTABLE relationship.

---

**CL and CL<sub>alt</sub> Change**

- CLs are based on our past experiences, and they fluctuate along with the outcomes we receive.
- **Hedonic treadmill**: Excellent outcomes delight us at first, but cause our CLs to rise, and those outcomes become less satisfying because our expectations have gone up.
- Our CL<sub>alt</sub>s have increased as the costs of departing a marriage have decreased, and people have more options and partners available to them.
  - Women work
  - People are mobile
  - Legal and social barriers to divorce have eroded

---

**Social Exchange**

**The Economies of Relationships**

**Are We Really This Greedy?**

**The Nature of Commitment**

---

**Appetitive**: Motivation to gain positive outcomes

**Aversive**: Motivation to avoid negative outcomes

---

Counting up the rewards and costs of a relationship provides information about its current state and likely future.

- Costs are particularly influential because bad is stronger than good (Negative events carry more psychological weight).
- Rewards need to outnumber costs by at least 5-to-1 if we're to stay satisfied with a close relationship.
- Gottman – Accumulating Pos-Neg over time
Boredom in Relationships

- Data from the Early Years of Marriage Project suggests that relationship boredom undermines closeness, and leads to BIG declines over 9 years.
- Relationship boredom is defined as a low appetitive state not an aversive experience (Harasymchuk; Strong).

Rewards and Costs over Time

- Overall, marital satisfaction declines over time.

Why does satisfaction decrease?

- Lack of Effort – People may stop working as hard as they once did to be charming.
- Conflict is Magnified – Conflict is more consequential, and annoyances more aggravating, because of the close and frequent contact that comes with intimacy.
- Access to Weaponry – Intimate partners know our foibles and our secrets, and that gives them the means to hurt us, even unintentionally, in ways others can’t.
- Unrealistic Expectations – Some surprises are inevitable.
- Self Expansion – Intrinsic appetitive rewards decrease as we learn more about our partner.

On average, people who marry with the highest expectations of how special and wonderful wedlock will be are the least happy spouses a few years later.

When it comes to making relationships work, there may be more danger in naïve optimism than in informed caution.

Social Exchange
- The Economies of Relationships
- Are We Really This Greedy?
- The Nature of Commitment
If you value a relationship, you’ll want to keep your partner happy, so that he or she will want to stay with you.

Providing rewarding outcomes to your partner, even if it involves effort and sacrifice, can be self-serving if it causes a desirable relationship to continue.

Exchange relationships: people expect quick repayment of any favors or benefits that are provided.
- Partners are more content when favors are repaid immediately
- Partners keep track of each other’s contributions to the relationship.

Communal relationships: people do favors for each other without expecting explicit repayment.
- Partners are more content when favors are not quickly repaid
- Partners do not keep track of each other’s contributions to the relationship.

| TABLE 4.1 Differences between Exchange and Communal Relationships |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
|                        | Exchange Relationships  | Communal Relationships  |
|                        |                         |                         |
| When we do favors for others | We prefer those who pay us back immediately. | We prefer those who repay us over time. |
| When we are working with others on a joint task | We keep track of our contributions and those of others. | We don't keep track of our contributions and those of others. |
| When others help us | We keep track of the favors they provide. | We don't keep track of the favors they provide. |
| When we help others | Our contributions and outcomes change rapidly. | Our contributions and outcomes change slowly. |
| When we don’t help others | Our outcomes do not change. | Our outcomes do not change. |
| When we acquire more | Our outcomes increase. | Our outcomes increase. |

Even though communal relationships seem generous, social exchange theory still applies

Tit-for-tat exchanges still take place in communal relationships, but they involve diverse types of rewards that are provided over a long span of time.

People don’t need to “sweat the small stuff” in happy, highly rewarding relationships, but they begin to do so if dissatisfaction looms.

Equitable Relationships

- When equity exists, a relationship is fair:
  - Each partner gains benefits from the relationship that are proportional to his or her contributions to it:

    \[
    \frac{\text{Your outcomes}}{\text{Your contributions}} = \frac{\text{Your partner's outcomes}}{\text{Your partner's contributions}}
    \]

- When a partnership is inequitable:
  - one partner is receiving too much, and is said to be overbenefited, and
  - the other partner is receiving too little, and is said to be underbenefited.

- It’s distressing to be underbenefited. In response:
  - People may try to restore actual equity, changing their (or their partner’s) contributions or outcomes.
  - People may try to restore psychological equity, convincing themselves that they are getting what they deserve.
  - Or, people may abandon the relationship, seeking fairness elsewhere as a last resort.
Inequity is not ideal, but equity may not matter much if a relationship is highly rewarding and both partners are prospering.

Social Exchange
- The Economies of Relationships
- Are We Really This Greedy?
- The Nature of Commitment

Commitment: the intention to continue a relationship.
- Committed partners expect their relationship to continue,
- They take a long-term view, and
- They are psychologically attached to each other.

Personal commitment—when people want to continue a relationship because it is satisfying.

Constraint commitment—when people feel they have to continue a relationship because it would cost too much to leave.

Moral commitment—when people feel they ought to continue a relationship because it would be wrong to break their vows.

Investment Model of Commitment

Consequences of Commitment
- Accommodative behavior—temporarily tolerating provocation from one’s partner without fighting back
- Willingness to sacrifice—putting the well-being of the relationship ahead of one’s own self-interest
- Perceived superiority—considering one’s relationship to be better than those of other people
- Even if we’re motivated by greed, greed makes us unselfish, considerate, and caring to those we love.
Love

- Consider this:
  - You have met a potential long term mate – Everything is perfect, and the two of you are perfectly suited, with one exception: you do not love this person.
  - Would you marry them?

- For one of the first times in history, love is considered a prerequisite for marriage
  - In 1967, 76% of women and 35% of men would marry an otherwise perfect match who they did not love.
- Why is love suddenly so important?

- Attitudes toward love across time and cultures vary on at least 4 dimensions:
  - Cultural value: Is love a desirable or undesirable state?
  - Sexuality: Should love be sexual or nonsexual?
  - Sexual orientation: Should love involve homosexual or heterosexual partners?
  - Marital status: Should we love our spouses, or is love reserved for others?
Ancient Greece: Passionate attraction is madness! Platonic love is perfect, as epitomized by the love between two men.

Ancient Rome: Marriage had to do with making favorable alliances, etc. Love has nothing to do with it.

12th Century Europe: Passionate love is bad, courtly love is adulterous.

17th / 18th century England – Romantic love could have a happy ending.

Theories of Love

Triangular Theory of Love

- Sternberg proposed that love is comprised of 3 components:
  - Intimacy: Warmth, understanding, communication, support, sharing
  - Passion: Physical arousal and desire
  - Commitment: Decision to devote oneself entirely to a relationship, and to work to maintain it.

Different types of love are defined by the three components:

- **Nonlove** – The absence of all three components (acquaintances, strangers)
- **Liking** – Intimacy only – Friendship
- **Infatuation** – Passion only – Often experienced when you are aroused by someone you barely know.
- **Empty love** – Commitment only – In the west, a “burned out” relationship; in arranged marriages, often the first step.

- **Romantic love** = Intimacy + Passion
  - Typical of many early relationships, dating relationships, summer love affairs
- **Companionate love** = Intimacy + Commitment
  - Deep, long-term friendship; tends to typify the end of a long, happy marriage
- **Fatuous love** = Passion + Commitment
  - Whirlwind “Hollywood” romances, investing heavily in passion
- **Consumate love** = Passion + Intimacy + Commitment
  - The ideal – easy to do for a while, but hard to maintain

What predictions does the theory make?

- Passion and intimacy are affective experiences, commitment is cognitive in nature
- Passion decreases over time, commitment builds
- Neurochemically, sexual desire is distinct from attachment and commitment
- Men experience more love towards their partner when sexually aroused (even by sexually explicit material) – contradicts prior research

Doesn’t demonstrate the distinctions between the way different types of love are experienced.
Passionate (Romantic) Love

- “I love you, but I’m not in love with you” refers to a lack of passionate love.
- Passionate love is:
  - Physiological arousal
  - The belief that another person is the cause of your arousal.
- **Excitation transfer** occurs when arousal caused by one event fuels stronger emotional reactions to a second, unrelated event.

So, if physiological arousal = passion, does attractiveness of the target matter?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attractiveness of Women</th>
<th>Arousal of Men</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arousal serves to magnify the original response.

Does the source of the arousal matter?
- Negatively arousing: Description of brutal killing
- Positively arousing: Steve Martin
- Neutral: Description of the circulatory system of a frog.
- The effect of misattribution of arousal was the same regardless of the source of the arousal
- This explains why “make-up” sex can be so passionate
- Horror movies are “date movies”, roller coasters, etc

Passionate love is:
- Physiological arousal
- The belief that another person is the cause of your arousal.
- Preoccupation and obsessive thinking are part of the course in passionate love.
- Once romance enters into the picture, undesirable information about potential partners gets tossed by the wayside.

Passionate Love (Hatfield and Sprecher)
- Intense desire to be with other
- Reciprocity is met with ecstasy
- Unrequited love is met with despair and agony
- Phenylethylamine (PEA) has been suggested as the chemical basis for passion
  - Related to amphetamines, elevates mood and increases energy
  - This is why you can stay up all night talking with/making love to someone with whom you are deeply in passionate love.

![Passionate Love Graph](image)
Self-expansion theory – love causes our self-concept to change and expand
- Early relationships are exciting and challenging
- Rapid self-expansion occurs as we incorporate aspects of our partner into our sense of self
- Resource management tasks suggest that partners are treated as the self.
- Keeping passion alive in relationships is a matter of maintaining growth, challenge, and excitement.

Couple Friends
- Used Aron’s closeness induction to study the effect of new social experiences on relationship quality
- When one couple engaged in a closeness exercise with another couple, both couples were more satisfied with their own relationships
- This was not true of the “small talk” group
- Shared social experiences create feelings of closeness (and self-expansion), with creates positive affect, and in turn spills over into the relationship
- Is this how marital enrichment programs work?

Companionate Love
- I married my best friend.
- “Comfortable, affectionate, trusting love for a likable partner, based on a deep sense of friendship and involving companionship and the enjoyment of common activities, mutual interests, and shared laughter”. (Grote & Frieze, 1994, p. 275)
- Triangular love calls it a combination of intimacy and commitment

Love Styles
- Eros – erotic love with a strong physical component
- Ludus – playful and uncommitted; love is a game
- Storge – love that emphasizes friendship and commitment
- Mania – possessive, obsessive love that is full of fantasy
- Agape – altruistic, selfless, dutiful love
-Pragma – practical and pragmatic, dispassionate love
- Men score higher on ludus than women do, and
- Women are more storgic and pragmatic than men.
- These love styles allow researchers to fine-tune their analyses of the diverse experiences people have with love.
Individual Differences in Love

- Certain types of people experience more love than others.
- Early studies demonstrated that people with secure attachment styles experience more intimacy, passion, and commitment than people with anxious/ambivalent or avoidant styles do.
- More recent attachment research suggests 2 different types of avoidant attachment styles.

Attachment Styles

- **Positive**
  - Secure: Comfortable with intimacy and interdependence; available and available
  - Anxious/ambivalent: Sensitive and overinvolved in intimacy; insecure and independent
  - Fearful: Fearful of rejection and undervalued of others; suspicious and shy

Two themes are now thought to underlie the four styles:

- **Anxiety over abandonment** – describing the worry that others will find us unworthy and leave us, and
- **Avoidance of intimacy** – describing the ease and trust with which we accept interdependent intimacy with others

- **Beliefs, expectations, and memories** – secure people have more favorable views of others than insecure people do.
- **Communication** – secure people are more open and self-disclosing with their partners than insecure people are.
- **Coping and caregiving** – secure people provide more effective help and support to their partners than insecure people do.
- **Sexual behavior** – secure people are more satisfied with their sexual interactions with their partners than insecure people are.

- **Personal well-being** – secure people have better mental health than insecure people do.
- **Relationship satisfaction** – day by day, secure people are more satisfied and content with their relationships than insecure people are.

Importantly, the quality of our attachments can vary from partner to partner.
Age Differences in Love
- Emotions become less intense, and generally more positive as people age.
- The burning, urgent, intense emotions that lead young people to marry seem to dwindle with time, being replaced by a more genial outlook on love.

Sex differences in Love
- Men and women are more similar than different when it comes to love.
- However, men are more likely to believe in “love at first sight,” and they want their loves to be passionate.
- Women are more cautious and selective, and they feel passion more slowly.
- Why?

Does Love Last?
- No
- Romantic/Passionate love declines after marriage
- After two years of marriage, average spouses express affection for each other only half as often as they did when they were newlyweds.
- Divorces occur more frequently in the fourth year of marriage than at any other time.

Passion = Testosterone?
- Griffin Hansbury, TAL Episode 220
- 17:00

Does Love Last?
- Some research suggests that the brain habituates to high levels of PEA – even if you are just as passionate, you experience it less intensely.
Often, the love that encourages people to marry is not the love that keeps them together decades later. Companionate love is more stable than romantic love is. So, don’t be disappointed if your urgent desires gradually resolve into more placid but deep affection for your beloved. That happy result is likely to make you a lucky lover.

Can Romantic Love be Long-Lasting?

- There are lots of reasons why passionate love should decline over time:
  - Habituation to PEA
  - Evolutionary function of passion is to mate
  - Intensity of emotions declines with age
  - Self-expansion, once you learn all you can about your partner, self-expansion slows.
- However, some folks are starting to suggest otherwise.

Can Romantic Love be Long-Lasting?

- However, some folks are starting to suggest otherwise.
  - Evolutionary psych: Passion gives folks alertness, energy, toned bodies, etc (all of which are adaptive)
  - Buss has admitted it’s a cue to long term relationships
  - Self-expansion suggests ways in which relationships can be reinvigorated
  - Survey data always has some outliers – intensely passionate well-established couples

Can Romantic Love be Long-Lasting?

- Survey data suggests:
  - Established couples with high passion still experience focus, valuing, sexual interest, craving for union
  - Established couples do not experience the “manic” correlates of passion: jealousy, obsession, etc.

Can Romantic Love be Long-Lasting?

- fMRI data in young couples suggest passion is active:
  - In the major reward centers (Ventral Tegmentum Area, VTA)
  - In the areas associated with obsessive-compulsive disorders
- New fMRI data in older, passionate couples suggest passion is active:
  - In the major reward centers (VTA)
  - NOT in the OCD areas
- Therefore, passion still exists (in some couples), it just loses the immature, possessive, dependent, and jealous qualities
- This effect is NOT a function of closeness

Can Romantic Love be Long-Lasting?

- What differentiates the couples who maintain passion from those that don’t?
  - They tend to be passionate and energetic about everything
  - Securely attached
- So, it seems love can last, after all (even passion!)
Is Love Universal?

- Evolutionary psychology says yes.
- However, romantic love is a distinctly Western concept.
- In China, love is defined partly by sacrifice and obligation.
- Aron's fMRI studies were replicated with a Chinese sample.
- Even if the ways of expressing romantic love differ, the experience of love is the same.

Eighty-one studies representing 103 samples and 19,387 individuals provided data for the meta-analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Love</th>
<th>Obsession</th>
<th>Friendship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubin</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>(.65)</td>
<td>-.05 (.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>(.41)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.69</td>
<td>(.09)</td>
<td>-.20 (.05)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Envis</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>(.31)</td>
<td>.06 (.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludus</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>(.32)</td>
<td>.12 (.13)</td>
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Predictors ($\beta$) of

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<td>.077** ( .125)</td>
<td>.792** ( .767)</td>
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<td>.106</td>
<td>-.291** (- .202)</td>
<td>-.127** (- .099)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practical Friendship</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.103* ( .061)</td>
<td>.157** ( .089)</td>
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Note: $r = $Structure coefficient.

*  $p < .05$

**  $p < .001$

Sexuality

- Sexual Attitudes
- Sexual Behavior
- Sexual Satisfaction
- Sexual Communication
- Sexual Aggression

What we know about sexual attitudes, practices, etc. are largely due to the pioneering work of Alfred Kinsey.

Kinsey worked with Gall Wasps, and became interested in the variety of sexual experiences in humans.

While his work is argued by some to be biased in favor of unusual sexual practices, they remain very important:

- Sexual Behavior in the Human Male, 1948
- Sexual Behavior in the Human Female, 1953
Attitudes About Casual Sex

- Most people in the U.S. believe that sex among unmarried people is acceptable as long as it occurs in an affectionate, committed relationship.
- We’re no longer expected to “save sex for marriage”.
- Men are more permissive and accepting of casual, uncommitted sex than women are.
- Sexual double standard - Permissive women are judged more harshly than permissive men. (it’s getting weaker!)

Attitudes about Same-Sex Sex

- 62% of Americans disapprove of sexual relations between people of the same sex (2002).
- 39% say Same-sex sexuality is unacceptable (2007)
- Tolerance is increasing:
  - The more contact people have with gays and lesbians, the more favorable their feelings toward homosexuals tend to be.
  - More gays and lesbians presented favorably in the media

Cultural Differences in Sexual Attitudes

- The United States holds more conservative, less permissive attitudes about:
  - premarital sex
  - teenage sex
  - extramarital sex, and
  - homosexual sex
- than do Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Israel, & Japan (and Australia, Netherlands, Russia, Spain, and Sweden!)
- Why?

Sexuality

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Two introductory points:

- There’s enormous variability in behavior from person to person.
- Sexual behavior that is common is not necessarily more desirable or appropriate than is behavior that is less typical.
How common is sex before marriage?

- 95% of Americans have intercourse before marriage (2007)

Average age of first time sex?

- Recent data suggests 17 for men and women (2007)
- Depends on ethnicity
  - African American (15 men, 17 women)
  - Latinos (16 men, 18 women)
  - White (17 men, 18 women)
- Reasons for having sex are almost all relationally-oriented: (Love, pleasure, conformity, social recognition, pleasing partner)

Who has sex earlier?
- Desire to have a dating partner
- Adulthood: desire for independence, physical maturity
- Single-parent homes (emulating dating behavior or less supervision?)

How often do people have sex?
Sex in Committed Relationships

- How often do people have sex?
  - Cohabiting, not married – 3 times per week
  - Married – 2 times per week
  - Single – much less!
- Older people have less sex than younger people
  - Decreased hormones in women = less vaginal lubrication
  - Circulatory problems in men = shorter duration erections
- Gay men > heterosexual > lesbian, at first

Monogamy

- Most folks have a negative view of extradyadic sex
- A meta-analyses of “mostly marrieds” suggests:
  - 21% of women and 32% of men have been sexually unfaithful at least once
  - Men are more accepting of extradyadic sex, and have more partners than women
- Gay couples report a much higher % of extradyadic sex
  - Though, often with the consent of the other partner

Sociossexual Orientation

- **Sociossexual orientations**: the beliefs and behaviors that describe our feelings about sex.
- As is often the case, a research measure is included in the book

- “Restricted” sociossexual orientations:
  - Prefer to have sex only in the context of a close, committed relationship
  - Tend to have secure attachment styles
  - Are committed to their romantic partners
  - Are less likely to have extradyadic sex

- “Unrestricted” sociossexual orientations:
  - Pursue sex in casual, uncommitted relationships
  - Tend to be dynamic, flirty, sociable people
  - Tend to be relatively uncommomfortable with intimacy
  - Are committed to their romantic partners
  - Are more likely to have extradyadic sex

- Seal et al., 1994
- Watch a video of an attractive member of the opposite sex. Would you like to enter a drawing to win a date from them?
  - 36% of unrestricted said yes (not related to commitment to current partner)
  - 4% of restricted said yes (related to commitment to current partner)
Why Cheat?

- People who engage in extradyadic sex:
  - Are less satisfied with their relationships
  - Are less committed to their relationships
  - Underbenefitted do it more than overbenefitted

Do to lower parental investment, men can afford more sexual partners.

- The good genes hypothesis suggests that women can benefit from a dual-mating strategy:
  - Pursue long term partners with resources to care for offspring
  - Seek good genes for their children for other men

Sexual Desire

- Men tend to have higher sex drives than women do.
- They experience more frequent and more intense sexual desires than women do…
- …and they are routinely more motivated to engage in sexual activity than women are.

- 50% of men with a regular sexual partner masturbate at least once a week
- 16% of women with a regular sexual partner masturbate at least once a week
- Men want to have sex earlier in a relationship than women; as such, women serve as gatekeepers
- Men think about sex more, spend more money on sex, and fantasize about sex more

Safe Sex

- 75% of college students have had hookups, or sexual interactions with casual partners that last only one night.
- About half of these interactions involve oral sex or intercourse, and when intercourse occurs, condoms are used only half the time.
- Why does any high-risk sex still occur among (otherwise) smart young adults?

People who know better sometimes neglect to use condoms because:
- Men make worse decisions when sexually aroused (e.g., more OK to drug women)
- People consider condoms to be awkward or embarrassing (or falsely believe they are unpopular)
- Alcohol myopia blinds them to the potential consequences of unsafe sex
- The illusion of unique vulnerability leads them to underestimate the risks they face
- Guilt or anxiety about sex gets in the way of accurate knowledge
People who know better sometimes neglect to use condoms because:
- Abstinence education programs sometimes teach that condoms are ineffective
- Inequality in power – coerced not to use one by partner

Sexuality
- Sexual Attitudes
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Sexual Frequency and Satisfaction
- Most people say they’re quite satisfied with their sex lives
- People who have sex more often are happier with their sex lives than are those who have sex less frequently.
  - More frequent sex is more satisfying.
  - If you’re happy with sex, you’ll want more of it.
  - Those with stronger sex drives have sex more AND are more satisfied.

Sex and Relationship Satisfaction
- Couples who are happy with their sex lives tend to be happy with their relationships, as well.
  - Good sex probably makes a partnership more gratifying
  - And a happy, loving relationship makes the sex better, too.

Self Determination Theory and Sex
- Sex is most satisfying when it meets our needs for:
  - Autonomy: Ability to choose own actions
  - Competence: Ability to feel confident and capable
  - Relatedness: Ability to establish close relationships with others

Does size matter?
- 52,000 female respondents:
  - Only 6% classified partner’s penis as “small” (versus “medium” or “large”)
    - 14% = Wish partner’s penis was larger
    - 84% = Partner’s penis size is just right
    - 2% = Wish partner’s penis was smaller
Interdependence Theory and Sex

- Sexual interactions involve various rewards and costs, and sex is more satisfying when:
  - It is more rewarding than costly (Outcomes)
  - Rewards: Pleasure, comfort, closeness
  - Costs: mismatched sexual desire, availability, preferences
  - our expectations are met (Comparison Level)
  - in a relationship that is just, reasonable, and fair (Equity)

Sexuality

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Sexual Communication

- People are often uncomfortable talking about sex. As a result, there are often problems.

Communicating Desire

- People often never tell their partners that they're interested in sex.
- People rarely straightforwardly say, “Yes, I'd like to have sex.”
- They signal their desire and consent through indirect, nonverbal means.
- They don’t say “Yes”, but rather don’t resist and don’t say “No.”
- Ask partner if they have a condom
- Kissing and touching

Sexual Communication and Satisfaction

- Partners who talk candidly about sex have more fulfilling sexual interactions with each other than do those who just grunt and moan now and then.
- They are more likely to know what their partners like
- They are more likely to have their needs met
- Reciprocal sexual self-disclosure promotes intimacy
- Masters & Johnson (1970) argued that gays and lesbians routinely enjoy better sex with each other than most heterosexual couples do because of more open communication about sex.
4 Broad Types of Sexual Violation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Verbal Coercion</th>
<th>Physical Force</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intercourse</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fondling</strong></td>
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### Sexual Aggression

- **Rape**: Penile penetration via the use or threat of force (13%, 3.3%)
- **Attempted rape**: unsuccessful rape attempts (18.3%, 5.6%)
- **Sexual assault**: Use of objects to penetrate any orifices via force or threat of force (22%, 14.2%)
- **Sexual contact**: Unwanted sexual play, kissing, etc. obtained through force, threat of force, or continues arguments or authority (24%, 7.9%)
- **Sexual coercion**: Intercourse obtained through authority or persistent arguments (25%, 23.2%)

Spitzberg, 1999; meta-analysis of 120 studies (100,000+ participants)

- The % of victims is larger than the % of perpetrators
- Perhaps a small number of perpetrators victimize most people
- More likely, perpetrators underestimate the force they use or the harm they do.

- Date rape is a serious problem, potentially due in part to the fact that:
  - Men over-interpret sexual interest in women
  - Poor communication means that verbal consent is not expected
  - Our society creates an expectation that women should play hard-to-get
- Clear communication can reduce the risk of sexual aggression

### Power

- **Power and Interdependency Theory**
- **The Two Sides of Power**
Power is the ability to influence the behavior of others and to resist their influence on us.

From an interdependency perspective, power is based on the control of valuable resources.

One need not necessarily possess these resources; one needs only to control access to them.

One’s power varies with the other person’s desire and need for the resource.

One’s power is reduced if the desired resources are readily available elsewhere.

The principle of lesser interest: the partner who is less dependent on the relationship (who desires it less) has more power within that relationship.

There are two different broad types of power:

Fate control allows one to control a partner's outcomes no matter what the partner does.

Behavior control allows one to encourage, but not compel, desired behavior from a partner.

In most relationships, one partner's power is matched by the other partner's counterpower, so that each partner gets what they want over time.

Types of Power

Reward power is the ability to bestow desired rewards; these may be either tangible, material goods or intangible, interpersonal benefits.

Coercive power is the ability to levy unwanted punishments, doing something a partner doesn’t like, or taking away something the partner does like.

Legitimate power exists when one partner has a reasonable right – by dint of authority, equity, social responsibility, or reciprocity – to tell the other what to do.

Referent power emerges from respect and love for a partner. Affection and adoration from another provides one some ability to influence that other person.

Expert power exists when one partner has superior knowledge and experience that is recognized and acknowledged by the other.

Informational power exists when one partner has specific pieces of information that the other wants.

Traditional norms lead us to expect:

Men to have higher levels of expert and legitimate power than women.

Women to have higher levels of referent power than men.

Universalistic resources (such as money) can be exchanged with almost anyone in a wide variety of situations.

Particularistic resources (such as love) are valuable in some situations and not in others, and they confer power to their owner only with particular partners.
Love is a particularistic resource. We have referent power over one who loves us, but that power is limited to that lover, and no one else. 

- If men control more universalistic resources that are widely influential in social life, and 
- women control more particularistic resources, it shouldn’t surprise us to find 
  - men being more influential than women in many relationships

If men control more universalistic resources that are widely influential in social life, and women control more particularistic resources, it shouldn’t surprise us to find men being more influential than women in many relationships.

Influence tactics may be **direct** or **indirect**. 
- They are also **bilateral** (involving both members of a couple in negotiation and bargaining) or **unilateral** (with individuals doing what they want without involving their partners).
  - Men tend to be more direct and bilateral
  - Women more indirect and unilateral (My Big Fat Greek Wedding)
  - Traditional norms accord husbands more status than wives, and high-status people are more direct and bilateral than people of lower status are.

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**Power**

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**Power**

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- The Two Sides of Power

- **Don Juan syndrome**: the higher their need for power in some men, 
  - the less love they feel for their partners and 
  - the less satisfied they and their partners are. 
  - These people are more likely to abuse, more narcissistic, and more likely to have wives who don’t work.
  - Committed, happy lovers often use their influence to benefit their partners and to enhance, rather than undermine, their mutual contentment.

  Power need not be a corrosive, deleterious thing.

**Conflict and Violence**

- The Nature of Conflict
- The Course of Conflict
- The Outcomes of Conflict
- Violence and Abuse in Relationships

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- The Nature of Conflict
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- **Interpersonal conflict** occurs whenever one person’s motives, goals, beliefs, opinions, or behavior interfere with, or are incompatible with, those of another.
  - Conflict occurs when one’s wishes or actions actually impede those of someone else, that is, when one partner has to give up getting or doing something that he or she wants because of the other partner’s influence.
Conflict is inescapable in close relationships, for two reasons:

- Any two people will occasionally differ in their moods and preferences.
- There are certain tensions that are woven into the fabric of close relationships that will, sooner or later, always cause some strain.

These opposing motivations, or dialectics, can never be completely satisfied because they contradict each other.

**Opposing Dialectics**

- Personal autonomy and close connection to others.
- Openness versus closedness
- Stability versus change
- Integration with, versus separation from, a social network.

---

**Frequency of Conflict**

- Dating couples report 2.3 conflicts per week.
- Married couples experience one or two unpleasant disagreements each month.
- High neuroticism, low agreeableness experience conflict more.
- Anxious attachments leads to more conflict.
- Conflict decreases with age.
- The less similarity, the more conflict.
- Alcohol increases conflict.

**Conflict and Violence**

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---

**Instigating Events**

- Instigating events can be almost anything.
- Four different types of events cause most conflicts:
  - Criticism is behavior that seems unjustly critical, being perceived as demeaning or derogatory.
  - Illegitimate demands are requests that are excessive and that seem unjust.
  - Rebuffs occur when one’s appeals for help or support are rejected.
  - Cumulative annoyances are relatively trivial events that become irritating with repetition.

**Attributions**

- The partner’s have different explanations for events:
  - The event is often not as important as the attribution.
  - Misunderstanding may occur if partners fail to appreciate that each of them has his or her own point of view.
  - Attributional conflict can occur, with partners arguing over whose explanation is right, and whose is wrong.
  - Happy couples are less likely than unhappy couples to regard their partners as selfishly motivated and behaving with negative intent.
**Engagement and Escalation**

- When an instigating event occurs, the partners may **avoid** the issue and let it drop.
- If the issue is engaged and conflict begins, **negotiation** and rational problem-solving may follow.
- However, in other cases, **escalation** occurs and the conflict heats up.

- **Direct** actions explicitly challenge one's partner:
  - Accusations
  - Hostile commands and threats
  - Surly and sarcastic putdowns
- **Indirect** actions are more veiled and implicit:
  - Condescension
  - Whining
  - Evasion

**The Demand/Withdraw Pattern**

- When one partner criticizes and nags the other, and the other retreats from the confrontation and becomes defensive.
- The demander tends to become more insistent while the withdrawer becomes more resistant.
- In heterosexual couples, women tend to be the demanders and men the withdrawers more often than not.
  - Why? Men are often more powerful, and if they're getting their way, they may resist change.
  - Gender roles that encourage men to be autonomous and independent may also be influential.

**Negotiation and Accommodation**

- **Direct**
  - Offering concessions
  - Engaging in active listening
  - Providing approval and affection
- **Indirect**
  - Using friendly, non-sarcastic humor
- Responses to conflict may either **active** or **passive**, and either **constructive** or **destructive**.
- When these two different dimensions are combined, four different responses to conflict and dissatisfaction result.

- **Voice** — actively, constructively working to improve the situation
- **Loyalty** — passively waiting and hoping for things to get better
- **Exit** — active but destructive responses such as leaving the partner
- **Neglect** — passively allowing things to get worse

- **Voice** is more likely
  - when a relationship has been satisfying in the past, and it is
  - most likely to be used by people with secure attachment styles.
- Tempting alternatives, avoidance of intimacy, and masculine gender roles are associated with more destructive responses to dissatisfaction.
- Relationships are at risk when both partners choose destructive responses to conflict,
- **Accommodation**, the ability to remain constructive in the face of a lover’s temporary disregard, is advantageous.
- when partners respond to provocation by inhibiting the impulse to fight fire with fire.
- couples who are able to swallow occasional frustration from each other without responding in kind are happier than those who are less tolerant.

### 4 Types of Couples
- **Volatile** couples have frequent and passionate arguments, but they temper their fights with plenty of wit and evident fondness for each other.
- **Validators** fight more politely and calmly, behaving more like collaborators than like antagonists.
- **Avoiders** rarely argue; they duck confrontation and often just try to fix problems on their own.
- **Hostiles** fight with criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and withdrawal, and their marriages are more fragile than those of the other three groups.

### Conflict and Violence
- The Nature of Conflict
- The Course of Conflict
- The Outcomes of Conflict
- Violence and Abuse in Relationships

### Fighting is good for a relationship
- The more unexpressed nuisances and irritants partners have, the less satisfied with their relationships they tend to be.
- So, the prevailing view among conflict researchers is that conflict is an essential tool with which to promote intimacy.

*It is the deft and skillful management of conflict—and not its absence—that allows relationships to grow and prosper.*

### 5 Ways to End Conflict
- **Separation** occurs when one or both partners withdraw without resolving the conflict.
- **Domination**, one partner gets his or her way when the other capitulates.
- **Compromise** occurs when both parties reduce their aspirations so that a mutually acceptable alternative can be reached.
- **Integrative agreements** satisfy both partners’ original goals and aspirations, usually through inventiveness, creativity and flexibility.
- **Structural improvement** occurs when the partners not only get what they want, they make desirable changes to their relationship.
Conflict and Violence

- The Nature of Conflict
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Violence involves acts carried out with the intention of physically hurting another person.

- 22% of the women and 7% of the men in the U.S. have experienced a violent assault by an intimate partner.
  - Gay > Heterosexual > Lesbian
  - Native American & Black > White and Latino > Asian

Types of Couple Violence

- Situational couple violence erupts from specific angry arguments that get out of hand.
- Intimate terrorism, one partner uses violence as a tool to control and oppress the other.
- Mutual violent control, which is uncommon, occurs when both partners engage in intimate terrorism.
- Violent resistance occurs when a partner forcibly fights back.
  - Situational couple violence (SCV) and intimate terrorism (IT) are the more common forms of couple violence.
  - Men and women engage in similar amounts of SCV, but a huge majority of those who use IT are men.

Women act violently towards their husbands just as often as men act violently toward their wives.

- However, men are more likely to cause injuries.
- Men are also more likely to use violence as a tool in an ongoing pattern of domination and force.

Cycle of Violence

- Phase 1: Tension Building Phase

**Batterer may:**
- Pick fights
- Act jealous & possessive
- Criticize, threaten
- Drink, use drugs
- Be moody, unpredictable
- Be crazy-making

**Victim may:**
- Feel like she's walking on eggshells
- Try to reason with the batterer
- Try to calm the batterer
- Try to appease the batterer
- Keep silent, try to keep children quiet
- Feel afraid or anxious
- **Phase 2: Crisis Phase**

  **Batterer May:**
  - Verbal Abuse
  - Sexual Assault
  - Physical Abuse
  - Increase control over money
  - Restrain partner
  - Destroy property, phone
  - Emotionally Assault

  **Victim May:**
  - Experience fear, shock
  - Protects self & children
  - Use self-defense
  - Call for help
  - Try to flee, leave
  - Pray for it to stop
  - Do what is necessary to survive

- **Phase 3: Calm Phase, “Honeymoon”**

  **Batterer May:**
  - Ask for forgiveness
  - Promise it won't happen again
  - Stop drinking, using drugs
  - Go to counseling
  - Be affectionate
  - Initiate intimacy
  - Minimize or deny abuse

  **Victim May:**
  - Forgive
  - Return home
  - Arrange for counseling
  - Feel hopeful
  - Feel manipulated
  - Blame self
  - Minimize or deny abuse

- Men who are spouse abusers feel superior to women and believe that their aggression is a legitimate response to the provocation and disrespect they receive from their wives.

  They also maintain, because they do not enjoy hurting women and did less damage than they could have, that they are not “real” abusers.

- Women who encounter such violence feel betrayed, but they sometimes blame themselves for their partners’ aggression.

- **Blame, minimize, deny**

  - "I just need to be understood”.
  - "I had a bad childhood.”
  - "I can't control it.”
  - "I get angry.”
  - "She fights too.”
  - "She pushes my buttons.”
  - "If I don't control her, she will control me.”
  - "My smashing things isn’t abusive, it's venting.”
  - "I have a lot of stress in my life.”
  - "I just have an anger management problem.”
  - "I just have a problem when I drink or use drugs.”

- **Why Don’t They Leave?**

  - Most battered women either end the violence or leave their partners.
  - However, about a third stay. They believe that, despite the abuse, they will not be better off if they go...
  - …perhaps because they have no money and no place to go, or because they fear even greater violence if they leave.

- **Barriers to Leaving**

  - Lack of Financial Resources
  - Not Enough Shelter Resources or Other Safe Places to Go –
  - Threats of Murder
  - Social Stigma
  - Threats of 'Outing' the Victim
  - Religious Beliefs
  - Immigration Issues
  - Victim Blaming
  - Wanting to Keep the Family Together
  - Societal Acceptance
Why Don’t They Leave?

- Social Exchange Theory
  - No alternatives are available (mate-guarding)
  - The potential costs of leaving outweigh the costs of staying
- Self-Verification motive
  - It’s what I deserve
- Investment Theory
  - I’ve already given up so much for the relationship

Intimate violence is associated with:
- Cohabitation instead of marriage
- Life stress
- Low socioeconomic status
- Family background, including growing up in a violent home

Violence is also regrettable prevalent in premarital relationships, being more common in cohabiting partnerships than in marriages.

The sources of violence in dating relationships appear to be similar to those in more committed relationships

Couples counseling is generally counterindicated in violent relationships.
- Couples therapy often assumes equal responsibility, which impedes overcoming minimization, denial, and blame
- Group treatment for batterers has best outcome

52 week programs are standard

The Changing Rate of Divorce
- The Predictors of Divorce
- The Road to Divorce
- The Aftermath of Separation and Divorce
Divorce Prevalence

- The current rate of divorce in the U.S. is a bit lower than it was at its peak back in 1980, but the chance that a recent marriage will ultimately end in separation or divorce is still close to 50%.
- About 1 out of every 9 adult women in the U.S. is presently divorced.
- More than a third of the children do not live with their biological fathers.
- 27% of children live in single-parent families.

Divorce Rate Over Time

Divorce is more common in the US than in other countries:
- # of divorces per 1000 people in US: 4.5
- Mexico: 0.4
- South Africa: 0.8
- Japan: 1.8
- Canada: 2.6
- UK: 2.9
- Russia: 4.5

Why has the divorce rate increased?

- **Demanding expectations** — People may expect more out of marriage than they used to.
- **Women work outside the home** — Both spouses now have access to money and alternative partners, and an *independence hypothesis* suggests that the economic freedom to divorce generally makes divorce more likely.
- **Gender roles are changing** — Women are becoming more assertive and self-reliant.

- **Divorce is more common now than it used to be.**
- Nevertheless, because people live longer than they used to, the average time that spouses spend together is much longer than it used to be.
  - Marriages used to end early through the death of one of the partners.
  - Now, they end early through divorce.

Why has the divorce rate increased?

- **Western culture is more individualistic** — Disconnected from our communities, we rely on our spouses for more social support than ever before.
- **Sex ratios are lower** — A surplus of women encourages men to be less committed to any one partner.
- **Divorce is less shameful and easier to obtain** — We tend to feel that a no-fault divorce is a more reasonable and more desirable response to a bad marriage than our grandparents did.
- **Cohabitation is more prevalent** — Casual cohabitation leads to less respect for marriage and increases people’s willingness to divorce.
**Why has the divorce rate increased?**

- **There are more children of divorce** — And children who experience the divorce of their parents are more likely to divorce themselves when they become adults.
- All of these influences are merely correlated with the increasing prevalence of divorce in the U.S., so diverse possibilities exist.
- The cultural climate may support lasting marriages less effectively than it did 40 or 50 years ago.

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"Winwood Reade is good upon the subject," said Holmes. "He remarks that, while the individual man is an insoluble puzzle, in the aggregate he becomes a mathematical certainty. You can, for example, never foretell what any one man will do, but you can say with precision what an average number will be up to. Individuals vary, but percentages remain constant. So says the statistician. But do I see a handkerchief? Surely there is a white flutter over yonder."  - The Sign of the Four

"As a single atom man is an enigma: as a whole he is a mathematical problem. As an individual he is a free agent, as a species the offspring of necessity." The Martyrdom of Man

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**Levinger's Barrier Model**

- George Levinger proposed that three factors influence the breakup of relationships:
  - **Attraction** — the desire to remain in a partnership is enhanced by its rewards but diminished by its costs
  - **Alternatives** — tempting alternatives increase the appeal of leaving one's current partner
  - **Barriers** — various social pressures, religious constraints, and financial costs may make it hard to leave

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**The Changing Rate of Divorce**

**The Predictors of Divorce**

**The Road to Divorce**

**The Aftermath of Separation and Divorce**

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The Barrier Model reminds us that unhappy partners who would like to break up often stay together because it would cost them too much to leave.

People are usually aware of several obstacles that they would have to overcome in order to divorce.

However, those barriers may not deter a divorce when the spouses are genuinely miserable.
Vulnerability Stress Adaptation (VSA) Model of Marriage

- Benjamin Karney and Thomas Bradbury suggested another three factors that can contribute to divorce:
  - **Enduring vulnerabilities** – personal liabilities or weaknesses with which people begin their marriages
  - **Adaptive Processes** – the techniques with which partners try to cope with stress
  - **Stressful events** – the difficulties people encounter

### Results from the PAIR Project

- For decades, Ted Huston et al. have been tracking 168 couples who married in 1981. Fewer than half are still happily married.
- **Why?** Three possibilities have been investigated.

### Enduring dynamics
- Spouses may bring to their marriages problems that surfaced during courtship.
  - These frustrations are usually recognized by the partners **before** they marry
  - Marriages that are headed for divorce are weaker than others from their very beginning.

### Emergent distress
- The problems that destroy a couple begin after they marry
  - When they begin, there aren’t any obvious differences between marriages that will succeed and those that will fail;
  - The difficulties that ruin some marriages usually develop later.

### Disillusionment
- Couples typically begin their marriages with rosy, romanticized views of their relationship that are unrealistically positive.
  - Romance fades and disappointment gradually sets in as people realize that their spouses and their partnership are less wonderful than they originally seemed.
Two of these three possibilities do seem to be at work in many (if not most) marriages.

Which two do you think are influential?

- Both the level of satisfaction a couple experiences and the change in that satisfaction over time are key players in relational outcomes.
- Importantly, couples that are doomed to divorce do not always turn surly and spiteful, but they do tend to lose the joy they once experienced.

Causes of Divorce

- Our marital outcomes are influenced by:
  - The cultural context, such as laws, social norms, and economic opportunities,
  - Our personal context, including our social networks and neighborhoods, and
  - A relational context that we create through our interactions with our partners.

People tend to focus on only one of these three when they generate explanations for their marital problems.

- The enduring dynamics model predicted how happy marriages would be.
  - Couples who were destined to be distressed were less loving and affectionate—and more ambivalent and negative—toward each other when their marriages began.
  - Doubts or difficulties that people faced when they were engaged were imported into their marital relationship, and they caused trouble later on.
  - The best predictor of which couples would actually divorce was the disillusionment model.
  - The drop in marital satisfaction during the first years of marriage was sharper and more pronounced in some couples than in others, and they were the spouses who were most at risk for divorce.
  - Some couples who were especially affectionate when their marriages began divorced years later when that “magic” faded.

Early Years of Marriage Project

- The EYM project has been following 174 white couples and 199 black couples since they married in 1986.
- Most of the black couples (55%) have divorced, compared to about a third (36%) of the white couples.
- The social context of marriage is important: Being poor and poorly educated can put any couple at risk for divorce.

- When divorced people were asked what caused their divorces, they reported:
  - Infidelity
  - Incompatibility
  - Drug or alcohol use
  - Growing apart
  - Personality problems, and
  - Abuse

- Very few people considered broader influences, such as income and education, to be important.
### Specific Factors Associated with Divorce
- Socioeconomic status – people with low incomes and low education are more likely to divorce.
- Race – black Americans are more likely to divorce than white Americans are.
- Sex ratios – divorce rates are higher when women outnumber men and the sex ratio is low.
- No-fault legislation – laws that make divorce easier to obtain make divorce more likely.
- Working women – divorce rates increase when higher proportions of women enter the workforce.
- Prior marriage – second marriages are more likely to end in divorce rates than first marriages are.

### Specific Factors Associated with Divorce
- Parental divorce – parents who divorce increase the chances that their children will divorce.
- Premarital cohabitation – divorce rates increase if couples live together before they are engaged.
- Personality – the higher one’s neuroticism, the more likely one is to divorce.
- Attachment style – people who are high in avoidance of intimacy are more likely to divorce.
- Genetics – a person with an identical twin who divorces is more likely to divorce.
- Time apart – couples who spend less time together are more likely to divorce.

### Specific Factors Associated with Divorce
- The Changing Rate of Divorce
- The Predictors of Divorce
- The Road to Divorce
- The Aftermath of Separation and Divorce

### Specific Factors Associated with Divorce
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### Specific Factors Associated with Divorce
- Negative interactions – couples that fail to maintain a 5-to-1 ratio of positive to negative exchanges are more likely to divorce.
- Sexual dissatisfaction – greater satisfaction with one’s sex life is associated with a lower likelihood of divorce.
- Marital dissatisfaction – people who are more satisfied with their marriages are less likely to divorce.

### The Changing Rate of Divorce
- Divorce rates increase if couples live together before they are engaged.
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### The Predictors of Divorce
- The Changing Rate of Divorce
- The Road to Divorce
- The Aftermath of Separation and Divorce

### The Road to Divorce
- The usual sequence of events that results involves ambivalence, vacillation, and a lengthy process of relationship dissolution.

### The Aftermath of Separation and Divorce
- Breaking up with premarital partners
- Most of the time, they never tell their partners that they seek to leave, so their efforts are indirect rather than explicit and direct.
- Their efforts are usually selfish and self-oriented instead of considerate and other-oriented.
- There is rarely a critical incident that suddenly changes their feelings about the relationship; instead, their discontent usually grows gradually rather than suddenly.
- Most of the time, only they and not their partners, want the relationship to end.
- They typically make several protracted attempts to end the relationship instead of succeeding quickly.
- Most of the time, no formal effort to repair the relationship is made.
- The usual sequence of events that results involves ambivalence, vacillation, and a lengthy process of relationship dissolution.

### Specific Factors Associated with Divorce
- A long period of ambivalence and discontent precedes most divorces
- People usually do not initiate a divorce until they finally come to believe that they will be better off without their spouses.
Steps to Divorce

- The process of divorce may take several years, and four general stages may occur:
  - In an initial **personal phase**, one partner grows dissatisfied.
  - In the **dyadic phase** that follows, that discontent is revealed, and confrontation, negotiation, and attempts at reconciliation may occur.
  - If the end nears, a **social phase** begins; the partners publicize their distress and seek support from friends and family.
  - Finally, at the end, a **grave-dressing phase** begins. People put the failed relationship behind them with reassessment, rationalization, and accounts.

Consequences of Divorce

- Negative emotions are common.
- Preoccupied and fearful people experience more pain than secure or dismissing people do.
- Social networks shrink.
- People lose some of their friends, and not all of the remaining members of one’s social network are likely to be supportive.
- Women’s finances usually deteriorate.
- Some fathers don’t pay child support, and mothers may have several mouths to feed.
- On average, then, a woman’s standard of living decreases after she divorces, whereas a man’s improves.

Relationships between former partners

- Ex-spouses may develop one of four types of relationships:
  - **Fiery Foes** remain fierce antagonists.
  - **Angry Associates** stay bitter, but they manage to work together in parenting.
  - **Cooperative Colleagues** collaborate without rancor.
  - **Perfect Pals** maintain a respectful friendship.
- A year after their divorces, half of ex-spouses have amicable relationships (with 12% being Perfect Pals and 38% Cooperative Colleagues)...
- …and half have distressed relationships (25% Angry Associates and 25% Fiery Foes).

Children of divorce exhibit lower levels of well-being when they reach adulthood than do those whose parents stay married.

Why?

http://answers.google.com/answers/threadview?id=36398
- **Parental loss** -- children may be less well off with one parent instead of two
- **Parental stress** -- parents’ own difficulties may affect the quality of their parenting
- **Economic hardship** -- the poverty that often follows divorce, and not the divorce per se, may be damaging
- **Parental conflict** -- acrimonious interactions between one’s parents cause anxiety and stress

- **All may be true, but parental conflict is the best supported:**
  - If children live in a family with little conflict or discord, they’re worse off if a divorce occurs.
  - But if they live amidst constant conflict, children are worse off when the parents don’t divorce.
  - When a divorce breaks up an angry, embattled household, there’s almost no decrease in the children’s well-being at all.

- Children are less affected by divorce if they are able to maintain high-quality relationships with their parents thereafter.
- The poorer outcomes often experienced by children of divorce largely disappear when the children continue to have meaningful, loving contact with their parents.
- Many of the poorer outcomes experienced by children of divorce gradually fade with time.
  - People are resilient, and children heal if they are provided sufficient love and support.

**INSERT EXAM II ABOUT HERE**
So, What Now?

- Relationship science has shown us that bad is stronger than good, conflict is unavoidable, romantic passion declines over time, and a lot of us are insecure.

- But there’s no reason to pessimistic about your relationships…

Relationship maintenance mechanisms are the strategic actions people take to sustain their partnerships.

Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships

Staying Committed

People who are committed to a partnership -- who want and expect it to continue -- both think and behave differently than less committed partners do.

Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships

Cognitive Maintenance Mechanisms:

- **Cognitive interdependence** – Committed partners think of themselves not as separate individuals but as a couple. Plural pronouns such as "we," "us," and "ours" replace "I," "me," and "mine."

- **Positive illusions** – Partners idealize one another, judging each other’s faults to be relatively trivial, the relationship’s deficiencies to be relatively unimportant, and the partner’s misbehavior to be an unintentional or temporary aberration.
Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships

Staying Committed
Cognitive Maintenance Mechanisms:
- **Perceived superiority** – People consider their relationships to be better than most.
- **Inattention to alternatives** – Committed partners pay less heed to the other potential partners that are available to them. They are relatively uninterested and unaware of how well they could be doing in alternative relationships.

Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships

Staying Committed
Cognitive Maintenance Mechanisms:
- **Derogation of tempting alternatives** – When committed partners do notice attractive rivals to their relationships, they judge them to be less desirable than others think them to be. Commitment leads people to disparage those who could lure them away from their existing relationships.

Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships

Staying Committed
Behavioral Maintenance Mechanisms:
- **Willingness to sacrifice** – Committed people often make various personal sacrifices, doing things they would prefer not to do, or not doing things that they would like to do, in order to promote the well-being of their partners or their relationships.

Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships

Staying Committed
Behavioral Maintenance Mechanisms:
- **Michelangelo phenomenon** – Committed lovers also promote their partners’ growth, helping them become the people they want to be by supporting their development of desired new skills and endorsing their acceptance of promising new roles and responsibilities.

Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships

Staying Committed
Behavioral Maintenance Mechanisms:
- **Play** – Committed partners find ways to engage in novel, challenging, exciting, and pleasant activities together. Couples that play together really do tend to stay together.

Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships

Staying Committed
Behavioral Maintenance Mechanisms:
- **Forgiveness** – Committed partners offer forgiveness after a betrayal more readily than less committed partners do. Forgiveness benefits both the relationship and the partner who was wronged because it is less stressful to forgive an intimate partner than to nurse a grudge.
Maintaining and Enhancing Relationships

Staying Content
Communication scholars have noted other actions that distinguish happy partners from those who are less content. They include:

- **Positivity** – Contented partners strive to be polite and cheerful to one another.
- **Assurances** – Contented partners continue to announce their love, commitment, and regard for each other.

Sharing tasks – Contented partners do their fair share of household chores.

Openness – Contented partners share their thoughts and feelings with one another.

Support – Contented partners provide comfort and advice when they’re needed.

These various actions seem to work: Partners who routinely engage in these activities are happier than are those who work less hard to maintain their partnerships.

However, the effects of these actions are short-lived, and people apparently need to keep doing them in order for them to be beneficial.

Repairing Relationships

Do It Yourself
There’s plenty of advice available to those who wish to fix their relationships themselves…

…but some of it is faulty.

Sometimes, popular, best-selling advice is simply wrong.

Preventive Maintenance
It can be helpful to seek useful advice and counsel before anything goes wrong.

The PREP program tries:
- to instill realistic expectations,
- to open lines of communication, and
- to encourage play among partners.

Repairing Relationships

Do It Yourself
However, some self-help information is provided by reputable scientists, and when it is conveniently accessible, it may be very beneficial to its consumers.
Repairing Relationships

Preventive Maintenance

The centerpiece of the PREP program is the speaker-listener technique. It provides a structure for calm, clear communication about contentious issues that increases the chances that partners will understand and validate each other despite their disagreement.

PREP training seems to result in increased satisfaction during the first years of marriage. Some premarital preventive maintenance appears to facilitate a few years of smooth sailing when marriages begin.

Couples Therapy

Once real problems emerge, more intensive interventions may be needed. Conjoint therapy, in which a therapist sees both partners together in the same sessions, is the most common form of marital therapy… …but people in troubled relationships may benefit from individual therapy even when their partners refuse to seek help with them.

Different therapeutic approaches vary with regard to:
- their focus on problematic (a) behavior; (b) thoughts; or (c) feelings,
- their focus on partners’ individual difficulties or those of the couple, and
- their emphasis on past events or present difficulties as the source of distress.

Family Systems

- A theoretical orientation defines a therapist’s beliefs about the causes and solutions to clients’ problems. Theoretical orientations define:
  - The theory underlying common problems
  - Factors that cause and maintain problems
  - Specify techniques to enact change

- Common theoretical orientations include:
  - Psychodynamic
  - Cognitive Behavioral
  - Family Systems

- “Family Systems” as a theoretical orientation is actually a misnomer – there are MANY theories of family therapy.

- History - Family therapy popped up simultaneously in several places during the 50’s; the time was just ripe for it
  - Jay Haley and Virginia Satir in Palo Alto
  - Murray Bowen in Topeka (treated schizophrenics and their mothers in cottages)
  - Carl Whitaker in Atlanta

- All were influenced largely by cybernetics; an interdisciplinary field of study which started in the 40s
  - Looked at communication in systems (mechanic or organic)
  - Communications are always reciprocal/ feedback loops are unavoidable
  - Looked at how communication changes and adapts within a system.
Most family theories have the following in common:
- The individual does not exist in a vacuum, rather as part of a system
- The different parts of the system interact and affect one another; family members impact one another in a reciprocal manner
- The “system” is larger than the sum of its parts; it is not just a combination of individuals
- Families tend to maintain a steady state (changes are resisted to maintain homeostasis)
- While family therapists typically see themselves as treating the entire system, the family often comes in wanting help for a specific "problem member", aka the identified patient;

Couples therapy grew out of family therapy.
The couple is a system.

Some common factors are common to most theoretical orientations:
- **Client/Extratherapeutic Factors** (40%) Client characteristics, such as inner strengths, religious faith, goal directedness, personal agency, and motivation, as well as things outside of the control of the client, such as fortuitous events, social support, and winning the lottery.
- **Relationship Factors** (30%) Relationship-mediated variables that occur between therapist and clients in the therapy room. Warmth, respect, genuineness, and empathy.
- **Model/Technique Factors** (15%) Theory-specific methods and processes that therapists use to intervene in the lives of their clients.
- **Placebo, Hope, and Expectancy Factors** (15%) Changes that occur simply because the client is in treatment of some kind.

Therefore, most change isn’t due to the theory.
- **Dodo bird effect** – All have won, and all must have prizes
- However, it is important to have a theory (it just doesn’t really matter which)

Couples Therapists
- Licensure laws differ by state.
- Psychiatrist – M.D. Differentiated by the ability to prescribe medications
- Psychologist – Ph.D. or Psy.D. Differentiated by the ability to use a wide variety of assessment tools.
- MFT – Marriage and Family Therapist
- "Master's Level Counselor" – Mental Health Counselor, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor
- Social Workers (LCSW, MSW)
- "Lay counselors", Religious counselors, etc.

Advanced Degrees
- Sex therapy is generally considered a specialty certification (AASECT)
- Psychologists can receive an ABPP diplomate in Couples and family therapy
- MFTs can become AAMFT-approved supervisors
Repairing Relationships

Emotionally Focused Therapy:

**Emotionally focused couple therapy** seeks to train spouses to treat each other in ways that allow them to feel safe, loved, and securely connected to one another.

Its primary focus is on the emotions the partners experience as they seek acceptance from one another. Partners are taught to provide reassurance and comfort that acknowledges and fulfills the other’s needs.

EFT

- Seeking and maintaining interpersonal contact is the primary motivation of humans (dependency is part of being human)
- EFT draws from attachment theory:
  - + attachments lead to comfort and security (safe haven, buffer against stress)
  - - attachments lead to distress
- Secure bonds are built by
  - Emotional accessibility – Making one’s emotions known to oneself and one’s partner
- Responsiveness – Having one’s emotions appropriately responded to
- When the bond is threatened, attachment behaviors are activated; if attachment behaviors fail to activate the attachment figure, this can lead to anger, crying, despair, detachment

Primary Emotions: Here-and-now direct responses to situations

Secondary Emotions: reactions to, or attempts to cope with the primary emotions (which often obscures the original response)

Instrumental Emotions: Used to manipulate the response of others

Maladaptive Emotions: out-of-context responses which constrict how new situations are processed (paranoia, numbing from trauma, etc.)

EFT

- People have different attachment styles, typically learned when young: Secure, Anxious, etc.
- Problematic behavior in relationships is a response to past or present threats to attachment
- Emotion is the key to intimacy and connection; secure attachments help us regulate negative affect such as anger, sadness, loss, and shame
- Our implicit and explicit definitions of self and others emerge in emotionally charged marital interactions (and hence become available for modification)

In an intimate relationship, spouses react to the emotions displayed by their spouse (and the ways in which their own emotions and attachment needs are met by their spouse)

Particularly when secondary emotions obscure the primary emotions, this can lead to problematic interactions (e.g., if anger is covering my hurt, and you respond to my anger (defensiveness, etc.), my “hurt” needs won’t be fulfilled, and we will be less connected)

Common patterns: Distancer/Pursuer; Blamer/Defender,
EFT Goals

**Goals of Therapy:**
- Address attachment concerns (decrease attachment insecurities, create a secure bond)
- Access primary emotions, and use them to create new patterns of interaction
- Focus on dis/connection, loss of trust, isolation, and attachment fears and how these interactions maintain distress

**Task 1**

- **Task 1: Create and Maintain a Therapeutic Alliance**
  - If you are asking them to be vulnerable and share their emotions and attachment fears, couples HAVE to trust that it is safe to do so
  - **Empathic Attunement:** Aka, empathy – stepping into a client’s experience to better understand them, and communicating that understanding to the client
  - **Acceptance:** Take a non-judging stance of people’s experiences
  - **Genuineness:** You can’t expect your clients to be trusting and truthful unless you are
  - **Active Monitoring:** Actively seek info about the alliance from the clients and take steps to repair it when necessary
  - **Join the system:** support/validate the individual and the relationship

**Task 2**

- **Task 2: Help Partners Access New Emotions**
  - Begin with validating secondary emotions and move towards uncovering and focusing on primary emotions
  - **Reflection:** Particularly things that include important emotional content (selective reflection)
  - **Validating:** Nothing is shameful; differentiate the experience from the intention/character of the one experiencing it
  - **Evocative Responding:** Help client "try on" unclear or emerging parts of their experience; Ask questions to help them better explore and understand their experience (ALWAYS be cautious – take a not-knowing stance)

**Task 3**

- **Task 3: Restructuring Interactions**
  - **Track and Reflect:** Pay attention to and reflect back problematic interactions as a recurring pattern (while externalizing the interaction – it is separate from the couple)
  - **Reframing:** Interational responses are reframed in terms of underlying vulnerability and the attachment process
  - **Restructuring Interactions:**
    - Enact present positions so that they can be accessed, experienced, and modified
    - Turn a new emotional experience into a new response for the other partner (a new emotion should evoke a new response, not the same old problematic response)
    - Heighten new responses – draw attention to anything outside the negative pattern
    - Choreograph change events: help set up new ways of interacting based on new information – reinforce the new positive modes of interacting

**EFT in 9 steps (12 to 20 sessions)**

1. Delineate conflict issues in core struggle
2. ID negative interaction cycle
3. Access underlying and unacknowledged feelings
4. Reframe problem in terms of
   - 1. Underlying feelings
   - 2. Attachment needs
   - 3. Negative cycles
5. Promote ID with disowned aspects of self; intergrate them into interactions
6. Promote acceptance of partner’s experience and new interactions
7. Facilitate the expression of needs and wants
8. Facilitate the emergence of new solutions
9. Consolidate new positions
The therapist reinforces new positive interactions and helps the couple to share their needs and wants with their partner. This should lead the couple to being comfortable with new dialogue.

**EFT Steps 5 & 6**

- **Promote ID of disowned Needs and Aspects of Self (and integrate these into the relationship)**: Promote acceptance of Partner's Experience and New Ways of Interacting
- Here, things become a bit intra-psychic
- Previously identified primary emotions are more easily identified and symbolized by the clients
  - when this happens, the therapist validates the emotion and the action (withdrawal, etc.) that it causes, to help them further differentiate and own the experience
  - If someone is getting into deep emotional content, the therapist blocks them from escaping or block the partner from interfering
- When one partner reaches a sense of understanding of their emotions and how they relate to habitual responses in the partner:
  - the therapist helps them relate those experiences to the partner (talking from their own experience; the spouses are not expected to be necessarily receptive)

- **Change Events**: Events that indicate a change in the couple’s maladaptive patterns

- **Withdraw Engagement**: Withdrawer experiences real fear of contact, processes this with therapist, shares it with partner, accesses a more specific hurt, partner responds with disbelief first, then struggles with relationship … etc.

- **Softening**: Rather than focusing on the faults of others, they focus on their own attachment-related fears

- The therapist reinforces new positive interaction patterns as they occur

**EFT Steps 7**

- **Facilitate the Expression of Needs and Wants and the Creation of Emotional Engagement**
- When a partner reiterates or expands emotional experience, but doesn’t symbolize the associated needs and wants, the therapist helps them do so to the other partner
- When the partner expresses wants and needs to therapist, or starts and then goes off into a more superficial area, the therapist directs them to share need and wants with their partner
- The therapist heightens and fosters positive reactions in the partner to expression of needs and wants;
  - The other spouse is helped to remain emotionally engaged and respond with their own needs and wants

**EFT Steps 8 & 9**

- **Facilitate emergence of new solutions and consolidate new positions**
- Issues become much simpler when they do not evoke attachment insecurities, power struggles, and battles over self and relationship definition
- The therapist supports decisions to interact differently and take steps to meet one another’s needs
- The therapist highlights changes and positive interactions and how they differ from previous negative interactions
- The therapist facilitates a discussion about fear of not having the “safety net” of therapy, validates the couple’s strengths, and helps them along
Behavioral Marital Therapy

A classic approach, behavioral marital therapy, focuses on the couple’s present interactions and seeks to replace any negative and punishing behavior with more gracious and generous actions.

Couples may enter into explicit contracts to reward positive behavior from their partners with desirable behavior of their own.

BMT

- Classic behavioral Couples Therapy sees couples’ interactions as being formed and maintained through intertwined stimulus-response-reinforcement cycles.
- Coercion – Using aversive stimuli to control the behavior of another (e.g., using shouting to stop nagging)
- Negative reinforcement – Strengthening a behavior by removing an aversive stimulus (e.g., I stop nagging when you do your chores)
- Positive reinforcement – Every time your partner does something you like, let them know you appreciate it.

Communication skills training:
- Define problems in a non-blaming way
- Listen empathically
- Formulate “I want” statements
- Generating, deciding on, and implementing solutions

Contingency contracting: A written contract outlining the behavioral expectations of each member of the couple, and the consequences for not meeting those expectations.

Token Economy: Dropping a poker chip (or jelly bean, etc.) into a jar every time your partner does something you appreciate; may include rewards and fines.

Behavioral Exchange: Couples identify desirable behaviors, and exchange things that one another appreciate.

Caring days: Intended to increase the rewards of a relationship.
- A list is made of behaviors that a partner finds desirable, the frequency of those desirable behaviors is tracked, and special days are set aside to increase the number of desirable behaviors.

Repairing Relationships

Behavioral Approaches:

The newest behavioral therapy, integrative behavioral couple therapy tries to teach troubled spouses to accept the incompatibilities they cannot change.

The partners are taught to accept their imperfections through empathy, detachment, and tolerance building.

IBCT

- Does not include the term “marital” in the title – the approach is intended to apply to a larger group of dyads than just marrieds.
- Integrates the idea of acceptance into BMT

Acceptance focuses on the idea that not all problematic behaviors can be changes; rather we must learn to live with some.
Behavioral Approaches:

IBCT

- **Functional analysis** is a method for identifying:
  - How individuals in a relationship are influenced by one another, and
  - How external factors influence the relationship
- When looking at an individual’s relationship satisfaction, an emphasis is placed on the behavior of the partner

- **Acceptance** is used when behavioral change does not occur
  - This is not a dichotomy; rather, varying amounts of acceptance are necessary, depending on the amount of change
  - Acceptance makes it unnecessary for the behavior to change

- **IBCT Techniques**
  - **Faking negative behavior** – Instruct one partner to engage in a negative behavior deliberately, when they are not angry – in order to observe the impact it has on the other
  - **Role playing** – Often the reversal of the negative behavior is rehearsed in the session
  - **Self-care** – partners are trained to engage in some sort of self-care activity whenever faced with negative partner behaviors

Repairing Relationships

Behavioral Approaches:

In addition to encouraging desirable behavior, cognitive-behavioral couple therapy seeks to change various aspects of the ways partners think about their partnership.

Participants are taught to:
1. Track and test their thoughts,
2. Actively considering various attributions for any negative behavior
3. Recognize and challenge unrealistic beliefs
4. Generate lists of the pros and cons of the expectations they hold.

CBMT

- Several cognitive processes affect the relationship:
- **Selective attention**: Partners attend more to relationship-relevant events that fit the way they see the relationship
- Distressed couples underestimate the number of positive events by about 50%
- **Attributions**: The meaning attributed to one’s partner’s behavior
- **Expectancies**: What partners expect the future to hold
- Self-fulfilling prophecies
- **Assumptions**: Beliefs about the way the relationship operates and how things actually are
  - Men are from Mars, women are from Venus
  - Spouse cannot change
- **Standards**: Beliefs about what a relationship and partner should be like.
Repairing Relationships

Behavioral Approaches:

All three of these behavioral approaches to marital therapy work.

60% to 70% of those who seriously undertake them achieve notable reductions in their dissatisfaction and distress.

Repairing Relationships

Marital Therapy

Insight Oriented Therapy:

A last approach, insight-oriented couple therapy, seeks to free spouses of some of the problematic emotional baggage they carry from prior relationships.

People are helped to comprehend how the personal habits and assumptions they developed in other relationships may be creating difficulty with their present partners.

Repairing Relationships

Marital Therapy

Insight Oriented Therapy:

Participants typically re-imagine their relationship histories in an effort to identify problematic patterns in their pasts.

Thus, unlike the other therapies, this approach looks to the past for insights about the present. But it, too, helps most couples.

Repairing Relationships

Marital Therapy

All of these therapies share key features:

- Each provides a reasonable explanation of why a couple has been experiencing difficulty.
- Each offers hope for desirable change.
- Each increases a couples’ repertoire of more effective and more advantageous behavior.

Their emphases differ, but they all equip couples with more constructive ways of relating to each other.

Marital therapy helps most couples.

So, which one is for you?

Pick the therapy—and the therapist—that appeal to you the most.
Repairing Relationships

Marital Therapy
If you choose a therapist who you respect and trust…
…and enter any of these therapies with positive expectations…
…any of them is likely to provide you real benefits.

Thus, it is regrettable that all of these therapies tend to be underutilized.

Most people who divorce do so without ever consulting a marital therapist, and those who do usually wait to seek help until their problems are severe.

Time counts; the sooner marital problems are addressed, the easier they are to solve.

Sex Therapy
- Masters and Johnson are well known as the founding pioneers of sex therapy
- *Human Sexual Response* (1966) was based on observational research on 694 individuals (with 75 married couples)
  - Excitement
  - Plateau
  - Orgasm
  - Resolution
- Masters & Johnsom
  - Provided deeper understanding of female sexuality
  - Many women are multi-orgasmic
  - No physiological distinction between vaginal and clitoral orgasms (no stigma from not having orgasms from vaginal intercourse alone)
  - Stressed the importance of learning (and relearning)
  - Used direct behavioral techniques (e.g., squeeze technique)
  - Emphasized role of anxiety
    - Performance anxiety is concern over whether one will be able to perform sexually
    - Spectatoring is anxiously watching one's own sexual performance in a detached manner
  - Treated the dyad, stressed conjoint treatment, used sexual surrogates when there was no regular sexual partner.

Helen Kaplan
- Argued that sex therapy is different from other types of therapy.
- Focused on what was necessary to address the problem (start-stop technique, etc.)
- Added the “desire” phase to precede excitement, focused on disorders of desire.
- Focused on organic causes of disorders

Sex Therapy Techniques
- Female Orgasms
  - Masturbation: the most common technique for treating female inorgasmia
  - Bridge Maneuvers: Direct clitoral stimulation during intercourse – eventually ceases prior to orgasm
  - Coital alignment technique: High-ride, slow, rhythmic, man-on-top position used to increase pleasure and treat female inorgasmia
Sex Therapy Techniques

- Male Orgasms
  - Squeeze technique: Penis is squeezed just below the head to stave off orgasm
  - Stop-start: Alternative to squeeze, focuses on pre-orgasmic feelings instead of suppressing them

Sensate Focus

- Developed by Masters and Johnson to minimize anxiety
- Couple engage in sensual (non-sexual) touch, concentrating on enjoying giving and receiving touch.
  - Receiver gives clear feedback about what feels good
  - Giver gets in touch with their feelings
  - Encourages clear sexual communication
- 3 stages:
  - Non-sexual (no genitals or breasts)
  - May pleasure primary erotic areas, but NOT to orgasm
  - Orgasm may be included

Desire Disorders
- Hypoactive
- Aversion

Orgasmic Disorders
- Inorgasmia
- Premature Ejaculation

Pain Disorders
- Dysoareunia
- Vaginismus

Sexual Desire Disorders
- Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder
  - Persistently or recurrently deficient sexual desire
- Sexual Aversion Disorder
  - Persistant or extreme aversion to and avoidance of genital sexual contact

Sexual Arousal Disorders
- Female Sexual Arousal Disorder
  - Inability to attain/maintain an adequate lubrication/swelling response
- Male Erectile Disorder
  - Inability to attain/maintain adequate erection

Orgasmic Disorders
- Female Orgasmic Disorder
- Male Orgasmic Disorder
- Premature Ejaculation
  - Ejaculation with minimal sexual stimulation before the person wishes it
Sexual Pain Disorders
- Dyspareunia
  - Genital pain associated with intercourse (male or female)
- Vaginismus
  - Involuntary spasm of the muscles in the outer third of the vagina that interfere with intercourse
  - Dilators, Botox

Substance-Induced Sexual Disorder
- SSRIs, etc.

Paraphilias
- Exhibitionism
  - Exposure of genitals to unsuspecting strangers
- Fetishism
  - Sexual urges/fantasies/behavior involving the use of nonliving objects
- Frotteurism
  - Touching or rubbing against a non-consenting partner
- Pedophilia
  - Sexual urges/fantasies/behavior involving pre-pubescent children
- Sexual Masochism
  - Sexual urges/fantasies/behavior involving REAL infliction of pain and suffering
  - Transvestic fetishism
  - Sexual urges/fantasies/behavior involving clothing of the opposite sex
- Voyeurism
  - Sexual urges/fantasies/behavior involving watching an unsuspecting person disrobe, engage in intercourse, etc.
- Paraphilia NOS
  - Telephone scatologia, necrophilia, partialism, zoophilia, euprophilia, klêrrophilia, amöphiä, etc.

Behavioral treatment (aversion therapy, classical conditioning)
- Chemical castration (Depo Provera)
- Detecting Pedophilia

Divorce Therapy
- Marital therapy focuses on maintaining and strengthening the marital bond.
- Divorce therapy focuses on ending it.
- Pre-divorce decision making
  - Divorce is seen as an alternative to the relationship
  - Focus is on non-destructive communication
  - Discuss consequences of divorce
- Divorce re-structuring
  - Therapist helps the family make the legal, emotional, financial, and parental arrangements necessary for the shift
- Post-divorce recovery
  - Ex-spouses are supported in developing autonomous lives
  - Difficulties with custody, etc. are dealt with
In Conclusion

Most of us hope that we will ultimately construct an intimate relationship with a particular partner that we will find fulfilling for the rest of our lives.

We may.

In Conclusion

Relationship scientists hope that, now that you have studied their work, you are better equipped to create, understand, and manage successful, happy, rewarding relationships that last.

I wish you the very best in the interpersonal journey that awaits you.