

Romantic Relationships and Couples Hypnotherapy

GracePlace Wellness™ feels that couples hypnotherapy is probably the most relaxing, cost-effective and direct way for couples to align their desires for their relationship, to deal constructively and productively with conflicts such as child rearing, religious differences, sexual attraction to others and infidelity. In a 2-person hypnosis session at GracePlace Wellness™, we guide both partners to a place within themselves where they can clearly discern what they really want for themselves and the relationship.

There is no tension and no struggling with ‘saying the right thing’. All discussions between parties while in hypnosis are calm, heart-centered and productive. The process is not only very relaxing, but it is blameless and non-judgmental and in the deepest state of relaxation that is afforded by hypnosis, partners can experience win-win resolution and open and honest communication that, without the benefit of hypnotherapy, might result in hurt feelings and wholesale misunderstandings.

In couples counseling, as your hypnotherapist, I do not have any input into the content of the discussion, but rather guide the process to maximize the benefits to the couple. I pass no judgment on the relevance, importance, value or choices and decisions made by the couple. Certainly I take no sides! The process of hypnotherapy with couples is one of self-healing, the ‘self’ being the couple. As the couple identifies and resolves their own issues and concerns, they are further empowered and their relationship directly benefits from this empowerment.

It is clear that low self-worth and poor self-image manifests in many ways that can directly inhibit the growth of a romantic relationship: inability to communicate clearly and honestly about one’s true feelings, self-consciousness, timidity, over-sensitivity, feelings of rejection, chronic indecision, perfectionism, attention seeking, emotional withdrawal, issues around sex, stinginess, trust issues, aggression, defensiveness, etc.

An individual who is free of negative beliefs about themselves

- ✦ don’t feel they have anything to prove to anyone, nor do they need anyone to ‘make’ them feel OK.
- ✦ realize that what their partner does, says or thinks really has little to do with them.
- ✦ feel ‘whole’ and content with their partner and the relationship because they feel connected with themselves in a way that their confidence and body-image is unshakably positive and they need not have the endorsement of another to feel great.
- ✦ if the relationship ends do not feel depreciated or ‘broken’ because the other is not in their life.

As you well know if you have ever tried to argue with someone who puts themselves down continually, it is very hard to genuinely compliment them or give them positive feedback. We have all met people who feel more comfortable in relationships with people who treat them badly - because that person seems to see things the way they do. We have also all met the person who

is so dissatisfied with themselves that their every waking moment is spent trying to make everything perfect. Eventually they try to ‘perfect’ their partners and their relationship.

No matter how great a person is considered to be by their partners, co-workers or friends, if they don’t genuinely feel great about themselves and who they are, their behaviors betray the fact in many ways. In romantic relationships partners will often simply adapt to the other’s subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, expressions of negative beliefs about themselves. A partner (or friend) who tries to genuinely compliment a physical or intellectual aspect of their partner, but who is always rebuffed, soon stops giving compliments altogether... a heavy cost to the relationship and intimacy. It becomes very draining to find oneself constantly working to lift a partner or friend up only to have them return to the negatives about themselves.

Often when individuals persistently doubt their own value and goodness, they want their ‘loved ones’ to prove their value and goodness to them...they often want major changes from them as ‘proof’ they are loved. At the other end of the low self-worth continuum we find those individuals abused by a partner who will seize every opportunity to control them by threatening abandonment. We also find partners blaming themselves and inadequacies for their partner’s cheating.

When individuals with low self-esteem don’t get the re-enforcement they crave, they may openly doubt the reliability of their partner and relationship in various ways; jealous reaction to innocent incidents is a common example. How often have we heard a spouse/partner say “*if he/she loved me, he/she would quit doing that, or would do this or that*”? The leap is obvious; if he changes, he loves me and if he loves me I must be ok! Where the partner is not meeting their expectations the deficiency is taken as an indication that they are not lovable or desirable enough, rather than as a heads up that perhaps the relationship is missing an essential ingredient...honest communication.

Or, they may internalize, worry, become frantic, allow their inner voice to constantly criticize and even immobilize them. They often tolerate neglectful, demeaning and/or abusive relationships out of fear no one else would want them, or that they may not survive on their own. Out of fear of rejection they may lower their standards and self-respect.

Romantic relationships are greatly affected by low self-esteem in one or both partners. Those with low self-esteem tend to become either aggressive, passive, or passive-aggressive when their safety and security in the relationship is perceived to be threatened. They become defensive and argumentative or they withdraw and isolate - behaviors which do not contribute to healthy communication and a building of trust. Those with low self-esteem tend to be confused about who and when to trust and often make poor choices in partners. They tend to have difficulty finding the partner they can feel ‘equal’ to.

Intimacy requires both romantic partners to be fully approachable on all subjects and honest communication is essential. A person who does not trust themselves cannot trust others to the degree that is necessary for true intimacy and rarely make decisions in their highest good. Being an over-giver, over-responsible or co-dependant are exhausting and fruitless efforts to prove they belong and that they deserve love and acceptance.