

The Science of Relationships

What 4 Decades Of Research Can Teach Us About Healthy, Happy Relationships

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AGENDA & OBJECTIVES

Importance of Relationships

- Articulate importance of healthy relationships

Gottman's Research

- Be introduced to research methodologies

The Four Horsemen & Antidotes

- Learn skills and techniques to reduce conflict

The 7 Principles

- Discover concepts designed to increase connectedness

Resources

- Obtain additional information relating to this topic

IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

- Developmental Approach
- Relational Health
- Benefits
- Loneliness Epidemic
- Application Beyond Romantic Relationships

GOTTMAN'S RESEARCH

- 45 Years of Research
- The Love Lab
- Signs of Trouble 6 Years Early
- The "Magic Ratio" – 5:1
- First 3 Minutes – Start Up Matters
- Non-Traditional Relationships

THE FOUR HORSEMEN

- Criticism
- Contempt
- Defensiveness
- Stonewalling

Criticism

Character attack → Request need

Criticism

“You are the most selfish person I know. You’re always talking about yourself.”

Antidote – Gentle Startup

“I’m feeling left out, and I need some support, too. Can we take some time to talk about my day?”

Contempt

Moral superiority → Appreciating your partner

Contempt

“Why are all your clothes laying all over again? Did you forget about the hamper? You’re such a moron!” (eye roll)

Antidote – Small Things Often/Positive Perspective

- Remember the time when the clothes were put in the hamper
- Say thank you when you see notice the clothes in the hamper
- Gentle Start-Up: “Honey, I know that you’ve been really busy and overwhelmed lately. It would really help me to help you if you could toss your clothes into the hamper. I’d really appreciate it.”

Defensiveness

Response to criticism → Accept Responsibility

Partner A:

“Did you call and cancel the diner reservation for this weekend?”

Partner B Response – Defensiveness

“No. I was just too busy today. You know how crazy this week has been. Why didn't you just call?”

Partner B Response Antidote – Accept Responsibility

“Opps. No, I didn't. I should have asked you to do it this morning knowing how busy I was going to be. I'll call right now.”

Stonewalling

Withdrawal → Self-Soothing → Reengage

Stonewalling

- Lack of interaction or engagement
- Response to emotional overstimulation

Antidote – Self-Soothing

“I’m feeling overwhelmed and too angry to continue this conversation. How about we take a break and come back to this in one hour? It will be easier to work through this together once I’ve calmed down.”

THE 7 PRINCIPLES



Enhance

Enhance Your Love Maps



Nurture

Nurture Your Fondness and
Admiration



Turn

Turn Toward Each Other



Influence

Let Your Partner Influence
You



Solve

Solve Your Solvable
Problems



Overcome

Overcome Gridlock



Create

Create Shared Meaning

Enhance Your Love Maps

- Deeply Knowing Each Other
- Update Maps



Nurture Your Fondness & Admiration

- Positive Perspective
- Reflect on History
- Gratitude



Turn Toward Each Other

- Respond to Bids
- Engage with One Another



Let Your Partner Influence You

- Abandon traditional roles
- Foster “we-ness”



Solve Solvable Problems

- Soft Startup
- Repair
- Soothe
- Compromise
- Address issues early



Overcome Gridlock

- Nothing seems to work
- Use Other Principles
- Understand History
- Discuss Deeper Issues



Create Shared Meaning

- Rituals of Connection
- Common Goals
- Shared Memories



RESOURCES

Gottman

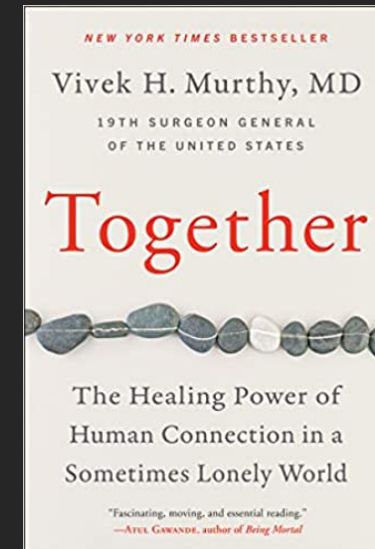
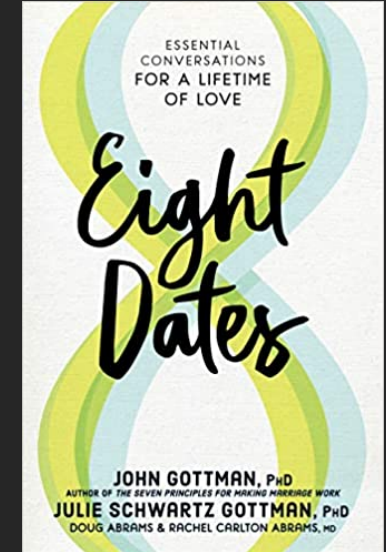
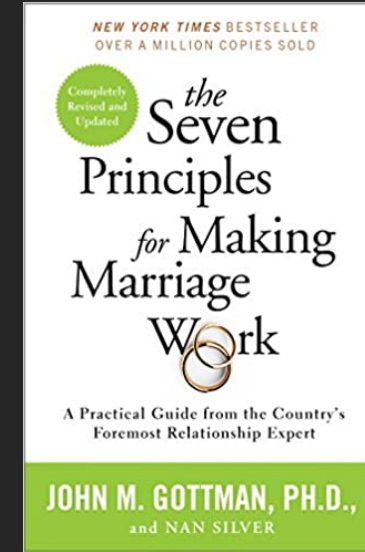
- The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work
- Eight Dates – Essential Conversations for a Lifetime of Love
- The Gottman Card Deck (App Store)
- www.gottman.com

Other Books

- Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes-Lonely World

Handouts

- The Four Horsemen
- Cobb's Rules for Fair Fighting
- How to Support Your Partner When You're Hurting Too





Questions?

Want More?

To discuss bringing this topic to your department or organization, reach out to your internal Assistance Program administrator or your Account Manager.

We would be happy to discuss options to support you!

