



Couples Conference 2024 - Main Conference - May 3, 4, 5

The Couples Conferences have become a leading vehicle for learning clinical applications and the latest research on facilitating treatment with couples. At this Conference, you will learn from leading-edge theorists and practitioners as they define, describe, and discuss differing approaches that initially promote closeness and those that move toward managing difference and facilitating differentiation. By the end of this Conference, you will have advanced and refined your own thinking about how to approach the challenge of facilitating intimacy.

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Overview of what you will learn

Attendees will increase their clinical effectiveness by:

- Comparing and contrasting differing professional perspectives and translating these into specific interventions
- Evaluating basic principles and techniques of contemporary schools of therapy
- Utilizing multi-level therapeutic communication
- Comprehending the commonalities that underlie successful clinical work
- Appreciating the historical development of psychotherapeutic disciplines in working with couples

Eligibility

The Couples Conference is open to professionals in health or mental health-related fields, including physicians, doctoral-level psychologists and dentists who are qualified for membership in, or are members of, their respective professional organizations (eg. AMA, APA, ADA), and to professionals with health-related graduate degrees (eg. MSW, MSN, MA or MS) from accredited institutions. Full-time graduate students in accredited programs leading to such degrees will be accepted if they supply a letter from their department on letterhead stationery, certifying their full-time status as of May 2024.

Continuing Medical Education Policy on Disclosure

The Milton H. Erickson Foundation is justifiably proud of the conferences and other educational opportunities it sponsors, taking care that the conduct of these activities conforms to the standards and principles of behavioral and medical sciences, thus insuring balance, independence, objectivity and scientific rigor in all its individually sponsored or jointly sponsored educational activities. All faculty participating in a sponsored activity and those who review and therefore are in control of content are expected to disclose to the activity audience any significant financial interest or other relationship (1) with the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product(s) and/or provider(s) of commercial services discussed in an educational presentation and (2) with any commercial supporters of the activity. (Significant financial interest or other relationship can include such things as grants or research support, employee, consultant, major stockholder, member of speaker's bureau, etc.). The Foundation's compliance with these standards assures that potential conflicts of interest are identified prior to our educational activities. The intent of this disclosure is to provide listeners with information on which they can make their own judgments. It remains for the audience to determine whether there are interests or relationships that may influence the presentation with regard to exposition or conclusion.

The Milton H. Erickson Foundation Board of Directors, Administrative Staff and the following presenters have indicated neither they nor an immediate family member has any significant relationship to disclose.

Faculty

• Lilian Borges, MA, LPC

- Lilian Borges, MA, LPC, is a licensed professional counselor with more than 18 years of experience doing and teaching psychotherapy, Ericksonian hypnosis and brief therapy. She is an invited teacher at the Milton Erickson Foundation for their extensive hypnosis training programs. Lilian has been conducting seminars in the United States and internationally about couples therapy, and Ericksonian therapy.

- **Elliot Connie, MA, LPC**

- Elliott Connie, MA, LPC is a psychotherapist that practices in Texas. He is the host of the popular daily podcast, “The Aha Moments”. He has worked with thousands of individuals, couples, and families applying the solution focused approach to help them move their lives from the current problems towards their desired futures. He is the founder and Director of The Solution Focused Universe, an online learning community that also conducts training to help professionals master the Solution Focused Approach in their work. He is recognized around the world speaking at national and international conferences and events in such places as throughout the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, South Africa, Russia, Switzerland, England, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Scotland, Holland, Canada, and Asia training practitioners to apply solution focused questions and techniques in their work. He has authored or co-authored 4 books including “The Art of Solution Focused Therapy”, “Solution Building in Couples Therapy”, “The Solution Focused Marriage”, “Solution-Focused Brief Therapy with Clients Managing Trauma”, and the new book “The Solution Focused Diamond”.

- **William Doherty, PhD**

- Bill Doherty is a Professor in the Department of Family Social Science at the University of Minnesota where he directs The Minnesota Couples on the Brink Project and The Citizen Professional Center. Clinically, he focuses on couples on the brink of divorce, on relational ethics in the everyday lives of clients, and on political stress in relationships. Following the 2016 U.S. Presidential election, he co-founded [Braver Angels](#), a citizen initiative bringing conservatives and liberals together to counteract political polarization and restore the fraying social fabric in American society. Braver Angels now has volunteers working in all 50 states. His latest book is The Ethical Lives of Clients: Transcending Self-Interest in Psychotherapy, published by the American Psychological Association. Among his awards is the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Family Therapy Academy.

- **Shawn Giammattei, PhD**

- I personally feel called to be a bridge that helps people heal their separations: separations from themselves, from each other, from their communities, from their environment, and from the world/universe. It is in service of this mission that I teach, write, and speak on the subject of gender health, couples, youth, and families. I have had the honor of serving the transgender community for over 20 years. While it was never my intention to become a “professional queer,” it appears I was called to it. I am a member of the LGBTQ+. I identify as a queer male with a transgender history. I also have had the honor of being in a relationship with my amazing spouse for over 29 years. We are one of those couples that not only survived, but thrived through a medical transition that started ten years into our relationship. I also walked through all of this with my family, who had their own struggles, but we all became stronger through the process. It can and does happen! As a clinician and educator, I have gone on the journey to being a Gender Affirmative Therapist. Just because I am a part of the community, doesn’t mean I was automatically a good gender therapist. I had a lot to learn, uncover, and discover about myself, the models I use, and how I approached clients to get to where I am today. And I am

always learning. Needless to say, I bring a lot of knowledge and personal, true-life experience to the trans conversation. I have been on the journey and have helped many clients, families, romantic partners, and providers navigate their own journeys and heal their separations. Through the Gender Health Training Institute (GHTI), I provide live trainings & workshops, digital interactive courses, coaching, mentorship, and resources to help providers gain confidence in serving trans youth, couples, and families. GHTI represents my still ever-culminating endeavor to bring healing, knowledge, & real solutions to the problems affecting the trans community and their families, as well as guiding providers on their own self-discovery gender journeys along with data driven trainings that will move them from uncertainty to confidence in their gender affirmative practices. We're all on a gendered journey. I believe that being able to provide our clients with sincerity and gender-affirming solutions, we as clinicians must become aware and informed about our own journey.

- **Harville Hendrix, Ph.D., & Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph.D.**

- Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. and Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph.D., partners in life and work, are authors of three New York Times best sellers (Getting The Love You Want; Keeping The Love You Find; and Giving The Love That Heals), Making Marriage Simple, and six other books. Harville is a couple's therapist with more than 40 years' experience as an educator, clinical trainer and lecturer whose work has been on Oprah 17 times. They also are co-creators of Imago Relationship Theory & Therapy, which has spread globally through Imago Relationships International, an organization that has trained over 2,500 therapists in over 62 countries. In addition to Helen's partnership with her husband in the co-creation of Imago, she is sole author of Faith and Feminism and And the Spirit Moved Them. She was installed in the Women's Hall of Fame for her leadership in the global women's movement. Harville and Helen believe that how we interact with each other, in all contexts – family, workplace, schools etc. – is the key to our emotional, physical and economic well-being and to the well-being of our children and society. Together, they are committed to the transformation of relationships and to the evolution of a relational culture. To that end, they co-created, with other relational therapists, scientists, and business professionals, a non-profit organization called Quantum Connections that contributes to the creation of a relational culture through the distribution of new insights from the relational sciences, and through Safe Conversations® – a global social movement with the goal of teaching Dialogue to 3.2 billion persons in the next 30 years to help usher in a new, relational civilization. Helen and Harville have been married for over 40 years, have six children, eight grandchildren and reside in Dallas, Texas and NYC.

- **Rick Miller, MSW**

- Rick Miller, LICSW, is a psychotherapist with over 37 years of clinical experience whose career has evolved beyond practicing psychotherapy into becoming an acclaimed expert in interpersonal dynamics. Clients and institutions he works with report tremendous satisfaction with their results as a result of his focus on the experiential aspects of day-to-day life and the enhancement of interpersonal connections. Attendees at his speaking engagements consistently rate him higher than most speakers based on his approachable style and

inspiring messages. He is also an author, business consultant, public speaker, and teacher working with individuals and groups across the globe. He helps clients and audiences learn how to make life more fulfilling by paying particular attention to feelings and using one's internal body experiences to achieve success. He emphasizes that everyone has every resource they need within themselves by utilizing this awareness rather than pushing it aside. As a gay man, Rick uses a warm, relational style drawing on his own experiences to create a distinctive model for his clients emphasizing a practical, holistic approach. This paradigm gives attention to the unique ways gay men experience pain, their shared developmental challenges, and experiential opportunities to build comfort and alignment between mind and body. Not only has he written extensively on this topic, he has taught and inspired psychotherapists and medical professionals all over the world. Rick is a pioneer in creating mind/body and hypnotic scripts for gay men, has trained medical and mental-health providers how to create and use them, and wrote the first-ever book on the topic. Rick has brought this same model of enhancing richness in interpersonal interactions to the nonprofit organization he founded and of which he is executive director, Gay Sons and Mothers, educating groups, businesses, and individuals about the unique and powerful influence mothers have on their gay sons. He's also founded a series for clinicians, Secrets of the Masters, in which he interviews noted authorities in informal settings.

- **Tammy Nelson, PhD**

- Tammy Nelson, PhD, is a renowned expert in the field of sex and couples therapy. She is a TEDx speaker, the host of the podcast The Trouble with Sex, and the author of six books, including Getting the Sex You Want and Open Monogamy: A Guide to Co-Creating Your Ideal Relationship Agreement. She is a Board Certified Clinical Sexologist, a Certified Sex and Couples Therapist, and AASECT Certified Sex Therapist and Certified Imago Relationship Therapist and the founder and Executive Director of the Integrative Sex Therapy Institute. She has been featured in hundreds of press articles including in the NY Times, Washington Post, NY Times Magazine, Wall Street Journal, Time Magazine, and a guest on radio, podcasts and on television in the US and around the world. She can be found at www.drtammynelson.com

- **Terry Real, LICSW**

- Terry has been a practicing family therapist for more than thirty years, and his work has been featured on NBC Nightly News, Today, Good Morning America, the CBS Early Show and Oprah, as well as in The New York Times, Psychology Today, Esquire, and numerous academic publications. His most recent book Us: Getting Past You & Me to Build a More Loving Relationship is a New York Times Bestseller. In 2007 his first book I Don't Want to Talk About It: Overcoming the Secret Legacy of Male Depression quickly became a National Bestseller. Terry founded the Relational Life Institute (RLI), which is dedicated to teaching the general public how to live relational lives and to teaching mental health professionals the practice of Relational Life Therapy. RLI uses Terry's work to advance the concept of "Relational Living" to help people address relational and psychological health in three critical relationship areas: parenting, coupling, and workforce effectiveness. The institute offers workshops for couples and professional trainings around the country as well as support services, books, CD's

and other products.

- **Stan Tatkin, PsyD, MFT**

- Stan Tatkin, PsyD, MFT, holds a degree in clinical psychology. He is a clinician, researcher, teacher, and developer of A Psychobiological Approach To Couples Therapy® (PACT) which has training programs both nationally and internationally. In addition to his private practice, he teaches and supervises first through third-year family medicine residents at Kaiser Permanente, Woodland Hills, through which he is an assistant clinical professor at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, Department of Family Medicine. He is co-author with Marion Solomon of “Love and War in Intimate Relationships: Connection, Disconnection, and Mutual Regulation in Couple Therapy” from Norton’s Interpersonal Neurobiology Series. He has also authored “Wired for Love: How Understanding Your Partner’s Brain Can Help You Defuse Conflicts And Spark Intimacy” from New Harbinger, and most recently “We Do: Saying Yes to a Relationship of Depth, True Connection and Enduring“, published by Sounds True.

- **Ari Tuckman, PsyD**

- Ari Tuckman, PsyD is a psychologist, certified sex therapist, and ADHD expert. He is a popular and dynamic presenter who routinely earns excellent reviews for his ability to make complex concepts understandable and useful. He has given more than 450 presentations, across America and in nine other countries. He is the author of four books on adult ADHD, including his most recent book, ADHD After Dark: Better Sex Life, Better Relationship.

How the Conference Will Work

The Conference will be held on Friday, May 3rd; Saturday, May 4th; and Sunday, May 5th. Friday, May 3rd begins with an introduction to the Couples Conference with the conference organizer Jeffrey Zeig, PhD. This convocation begins at 8:45am.

Each day will feature two keynote presentations; a topical panel discussion; and a series of workshops. Keynote presentations and topical panels will be one hour in length. Workshops will be two hours in length. Three workshop sessions will be held concurrently, and registrants may choose which session they would like to attend.

Friday, May 3rd and Saturday, May 4th will have a total of 6 CE credits available each day. Sunday, May 5th will have a total of 5 CE credits available. There will be a 15-minute break between sessions, and one lunch break in the middle of the day.

Conference attendees may present questions to the Faculty using the Zoom chat feature. The Erickson Foundation will have a moderator collecting questions for the Q&A time at the end of each presentation. If you

would like to pose a question to the faculty, please use the Zoom chat feature to message our Q&A moderators.

In order to provide the best experience for all, please make sure your audio is muted when you join the conference. This will help prevent any inadvertent noise and distractions.

The Conference will be streamed live using the Milton H. Erickson Foundation's Zoom channel. It is recommended that registrants for the Conference download the Zoom app. This app is available on the Google Play Store for Android; the App Store for iOS; as well as for Mac and PCs directly through their site at <https://zoom.us/>. Please note - you **do not need to sign up for a paid account** with Zoom to access our Conference. You can sign up for a free account to access the stream via the links we provide.

If you are not familiar with Zoom, there are a lot of support resources, including tutorial videos on how to use the app. You can find these support documents here - <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>

The Erickson Foundation will record the conference and provide online streaming access to registrants of the Conference until November 8th.

If you have any issues connecting to the conference, please contact support@erickson-foundation.org

Join the Zoom Meeting

There will be one link for the conference. The link will be sent in an email. You will receive the email with the link each morning of the conference days. If you are having any issues with the link contact support@erickson-foundation.org.

If you do not receive the link 30 minutes before the conference, please check your Spam folder first and if you still cannot locate the email contact support@erickson-foundation.org.

Do NOT share the link with others. The links are only sent out to those who registered to the conference.

Conference Handouts and Review

Handouts for the Couples Conference will be made available here: <https://www.couplesconference.com/2024-handouts/>

The Couples Conference will be recorded in its entirety. Registrants of the live conference will get access to review the conference recording for six months. The recordings will be made available on the conference review page at a link that will be provided after the conference through email.

Continuing Education Certificate of Completion

Registrants of the Conference will be able to get their certificate beginning Monday, May 8th. This process can be completed entirely online by following the steps outlined on this page:

URL: <https://catalog.erickson-foundation.org/page/evaluation-how-to>

Pricing

Main Conference - May 3, 4, 5
All Conference Days
17 CE Credits included
Live access to conference, access to conference recordings for 6 months
Cost - \$399

Conference Schedule

Key

- *CE - Continuing Education Credit*
- *K - Keynote*
- *P - Panel Discussion*
- *WS - Workshop*

Friday, May 3 - Couples Conference Day 1

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
CON	May 3, 2024 8:45am - 9am PDT <i>Not for credit</i>	<u>Convocation</u> Join Jeff Zeig, Director of the Erickson Foundation to provide an introduction and overview of the conference.	Jeff Zeig, PhD
K01	May 3, 2024 9am - 10am PDT 1 CE	<u>Keynote 01 - Learning to Live Relationally: Teaching Our Clients; Saving the World</u> As practicing relationship experts we find ourselves steeped in war these days. In styles hot and cold, waring couples seek our advice. Conflict between nations haunts our consciences. Even Nature itself seems to be turning against us as a result of our own virtually suicidal behaviors. Across the globe, Democracy is on the ropes with an alarming resurgence of autocracy, the rise of the most virulent, savage aspects of Patriarchy. As a species, we are at a crossroads. We will trade in the millennial old paradigm of “power over” for a new life based on ecological wisdom, interdependence, or we may bequeath to our children and grandchildren a hot, mean, largely toleration world. How can we relationship experts stand by in “neutral” silence – when we have something so critical to say, to teach? The couples I work with may not have it in them to bring peace to the Mideast, but we can help them bring peace to their living rooms and bedrooms – by changing the same deluded paradigm harming us all at the macro level – the delusion of dominance. Our relationships are our biospheres. We don’t live above them, but inside them. The old individualistic world of win/lose; right/wrong, you versus me; us versus them must yield to the wisdom of enlightened self-interest. It is in my interest to keep my biosphere clean – by containing my temper perhaps, or perhaps on the other hand by learning to stand up for myself with love. This keynote introduces a new map – living relationally on this Earth – along with introducing a few core skills to accomplish it. Finally, it is past time for we therapists to accept the mantle of social activism, lift our voices, and share a perspective that might help our critically troubled, dangerous world.. <i>Educational Objectives:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehend how relationships have changed from previous generations 2. Equip our clients to work directly on their relationship to themselves in much the same way they’d work on an external relationship 3. Move from toxic individualism and patriarchy to ‘US’ 	Terry Real, LICSW

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
WS01	May 3, 2024 10:15am - 12:15pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 01 - From Control to Relational Empowerment: Transcending Patriarchy One Couple at a Time</u></p> <p>Relational Life Therapy, (RLT) specializes in couples on the brink no one else has been able to help. We produce deep, lasting change quickly by helping our clients step into a new world. We offer a map for a new way to live and a practical toolbox to realize it. Our clients move beyond the individualistic patriarchal mores we've all grown up with to discover the ecological wisdom of relationship, interconnectedness. This is not pie in the sky idealism but rather a practical "relational technology" that can effectively equip our clients to create and sustain the lifelong lover relationships we now long for.</p> <p>Couples first learn to think relationally – which is itself transformative. For example, the relational answer to the question: "Who's right and who's wrong?" Is: 'Who cares?' What matters is: "How do we face the issue at hand in a way that works for both of us?"</p> <p>RLT takes place in three stages</p> <p>Waking Up The Client Loving confrontation (joining through the truth) forms an immediate therapeutic alliance by helping clients see the repeating dysfunctional stances they bring into their relationships, for example, angry pursuit, their part in the vicious circle they're stuck in.</p> <p>Trauma Work in the Presence of the Partner RLT is unique in doing deep trauma work inside the couples therapy. Where did you learn to do this? What, and who, were you adapting to?</p> <p>Learning the Skills of Relational Living Essential, potent, and uncommon skills are taught and reinforced This workshop introduces and demonstrates all three phases</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Differentiate between the 'Three Phases of RLT' 2. Create an environment to do trauma work in front of the partner 3. Distinguish between shame and guilt, which is healthy and directs us toward interpersonal repair 	Terry Real, LICSW

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
WS02	May 3, 2024 10:15am - 12:15pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 02 - Introduction To Gender Affirmative Couple Therapy With Transgender/Gender-Expansive Couples</u></p> <p>Dr. Giammattei will present the underlying framework that therapists who work with transgender or gender-expansive (TGE) couples need to understand to provide gender-affirming treatment. He will share ways to explore your own hetero/cis-normative beliefs around coupling and how these influence the models you choose, the questions you ask, and the interventions you use. While TGE couples experience many of the same issues as other couples, we will explore the minority stress and unique stressors that impact these issues in profound ways. Dr. Giammattei will use experiential exercises and clinical vignettes to discover and utilize the basics of the gender-affirming approach to couple therapy.</p> <p>Regardless of the model of couple therapy used, being a gender-affirming couples therapist requires both an understanding of your own gender narratives, the hetero/cisnormativity in your models, as well as the key issues that may impact couples where one or more partners is TGE. It involves moving beyond simply holding a positive view of TGE clients or having some knowledge of the most obvious issues TGE individuals face; while these may be necessary, they are not sufficient even if you consider yourself a part of the LGBTQ+ community.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize and assess the impact of personal/social bias and list several ways to address these therapeutically 2. Recognize the ways traditional couple therapy models may uphold hetero/cis-normative practices and formulate gender-affirming tactics to address these 3. Identify the differences between sexual orientation and gender identity as well as the complicated ways these intersect for TGE couples 4. Demonstrate a basic understanding of how familial, social, cultural, economic, legal, and political experiences exacerbate minority stress for TGE couples and Identify gender-affirmative approaches to address the impact of this on TGE couples' relationships 	Shawn Giammattei, PhD

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
WS03	May 3, 2024 10:15am - 12:15pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 03 - Show Me, Don't tell Me – Experiential Approaches with Couples</u></p> <p>Experiential techniques can reach the heart of the matter sooner as it focus more on process and less on content but couples sometimes can resist engaging in it preferring to stay on the storytelling of the last argument. This workshop will present ways to circumvent the “blame game” using experiential techniques with a “twist” that will make sessions come to life, bringing more fun, and emotional impact to the sessions, and making it memorable.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name three experiential techniques to use in couples therapy 2. Describe Therapist Sculpting 3. Explain how to introduce experiential techniques with couples 	Lilian Borges, MA, LPC
K02	May 3, 2024 1:30pm - 2:30pm PDT 1 CE	<p><u>Keynote 02 - What The World Needs Now</u></p> <p>As with any approach, couple therapy must have a clear vision toward which the couple can navigate. We may call this the therapeutic goal or therapeutic narrative. The clarity by which the therapist holds this vision and expects the couple to meet this goal largely determines therapeutic success. We might ask the couple before us, “Why are you a couple?” “What’s the point of your relationship?” “Who or what do you both serve?” Most partners will say, “We love each other,” or, “We have children,” or, “We have similar things in common.” This speech focuses on what predicts long term success in adult romantic relationships. We will discuss how purpose and shared vision sets the stage for meaningful, long-lasting relationships, and how a lack of purpose, shared meaning, and shared principles of governance (guardrails that protect partners from each other) is a predictor of accumulated, psychobiological threat and eventual dissolution. Here we examine couple capacity to co-regulate distress states as essential to threat reduction as well as confront the couple attitude when it comes to what sustains relationships over the long run. Love is not enough to ensure relationship endurance given the ever-present, survival-based nature of the human primate.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be able to list at least five purpose-centered principles for a union. 2. To be able to name at least five examples of a shared vision. 3. To be able to define and describe shared principles of governance. 4. To be able to explain why a couple’s shared mythology, shared purpose, shared vision, and shared relationship ethics is vital to couple longevity and happiness. 	Stan Tatkin, PsyD, MFT

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
WS 04	May 3, 2024 2:45pm – 4:45pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 04 - Managing Acting Out in Couple Therapy</u></p> <p>Couple therapists often expend too much energy by failing to take up acting out in couple therapy. Therapists are working too hard because they fail to notice acting out by one or both partners and deal with it appropriately. Acting out should not be rewarded with doing therapy. Rather, acting out is a sign that the therapist does not have a therapeutic alliance with the couple and must use specific tools necessary to address it as soon as it arises. A therapeutic alliance means that the couple and therapist remain fully collaborative, cooperative, and on task. The task of couple therapy is to focus on the relationship, not on the therapist or partner on partner. The couple therapist must use supportive confrontation of the couple system itself (avoiding partners directly) in order to gain a therapeutic alliance. In this workshop, attendees will learn how to spot signs of acting out and practice — through demonstrations — various interventions. This workshop will help therapists work less and accomplish more with acting out couples.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be able to list at least five ways acting out appears during couple therapy 2. To be able to apply at least three interventions gaining a therapeutic alliance with insecurely attached partners 3. To be able to demonstrate the technique of confronting a couple “down the middle” 	Stan Tatkin, PsyD, MFT

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
WS05	May 3, 2024 2:45pm – 4:45pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 05 - Solution-Focused Couples Therapy</u></p> <p>This presentation will provide an overview of Solution Building Couples Therapy (SBCT). The presenter will introduce the Diamond Approach to SBCT and will provide detailed explanations of each step of the Diamond Approach. Participants will see real examples of actual couples engaged in SBCT. Participants will engage in in-depth discussions about how to conceptualize cases from this perspective.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the fundamentals of the Diamond Approach of Solution Building Couples Therapy 2. Articulate the underlying principles associated with Diamond Approach 3. Implement SBCT from the Diamond Approach with clients effectively 	Elliott Connie, MA, LPC
WS06	May 3, 2024 2:45pm – 4:45pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 06 - Integrative Sex and Couples Therapy</u></p> <p>Therapists and counselors need training and tools to intervene with relationship issues where there are sexual dilemmas. After an overview of clinical concepts, this course will offer skills to help therapists and counselors address concerns around intimacy, helping individuals and couples to improve their intimate relationships. These topics may trigger countertransference and projection for the therapist and couples can face frustration and repeat patterns that lead to destructive behaviors both individually and with a partner. We will the basics of the integrative sex therapy model and touch upon trauma, desire issues and recovery from affairs and how these unique issues impact treatment. Based on clinical practice, research and case examples, we will cover interventions and techniques that foster effective, ethical therapeutic relationships for clients struggling with intimacy issues.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will understand methods of approach to intervention in relationships that are experiencing sex and intimacy conflicts 2. Participants will review relational, emotional, sexual and intimacy skills in relationship therapy and how these affect therapeutic dynamics 3. Participants will review a range of sexual functioning and behavior, including desire discrepancy, difficulty with arousal, sexual trauma, affair recovery and how relationship therapy improves treatment outcomes 	Tammy Nelson, PhD

Saturday, May 4 - Couples Conference Day 2

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
K03	May 4, 2024 9am - 10am PDT 1 CE	<p><u>Keynote 03 - Therapists as Clients in Couple Therapy</u></p> <p>Therapists experience the same relationship issues we see in our offices. Although our clinical training may give us more access to our inner emotional lives than many people, we face “occupational hazards,” such as a tendency to read our partner’s mind and then explain it to them. With humility and humor, let’s explore the relational self of the therapist and how we sometimes show up in couple therapy. In this workshop, we’ll learn how to help fellow therapists when they come as clients to leverage their personal and professional strengths to have healthier relationships—and avoid blind spots that come with the territory.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify common challenges therapists face in their own relationships 2. Discuss how therapists’ relational blind spots can show up with their clients facing relationship problems 3. Practice skills for helping therapists who come to therapy for relationship problems. 	William Doherty, PhD
WS07	May 4, 2024 10:15am - 12:15pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 07 - What Not To Say In Couple Therapy</u></p> <p>Although nowadays we have great models of couple therapy, therapists can become pessimistic in working with difficult couples—and inadvertently send messages that undermine their relationships. Based on a new research study with clients who have been in couple therapy, this presentation will describe things to generally avoid saying to couples about their relationship and its prospects for repair. The workshop will offer a mindset for staying positive with couples and a set of skills for handling therapeutic impasses without resorting to making comments that undermine the therapy and the couple relationship.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify therapist comments in couple therapy that are associated with poorer outcomes 2. Discuss why these comments are generally not productive and can be harmful 3. Describe ways to maintain a positive mindset with challenging couples and deal with therapeutic impasses in a constructive way. 	William Doherty, PhD

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
WS08	May 4, 2024 10:15am - 12:15pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 08 - Living Relationally: Essential Skills</u></p> <p>This workshop focuses on the critical third phase of RLT – teaching couples how to actually do it. Four key areas will be introduced and illustrated:</p> <p>Relational Mindfulness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to work with and ultimately master our own – and our partners’ reactivity 2. The Three Steps to Getting More of What You Want 3. The Art of Repair 4. Am I Getting Enough? The Tool of “Relational Reckoning” <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the definition of ‘Relational Mindfulness’ – the core practice 2. Equipping our clients to use their relationships as crucibles for their own transformation. 3. How to give our clients a relational map and tool kit, a relational technology, that has the power to deliver on our new romantic ambitions. 	Terry Real, LICSW

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
WS09	May 4, 2024 10:15am - 12:15pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 09 - Naughty and Nice: How Male Couples Build and Sustain Connection</u></p> <p>Male couples face multiple challenges. Living with a status that is unrecognized or marginalized, and where societal homophobia is consciously and unconsciously internalized, serves to erode these couples' strengths and ability to thrive. This workshop will explore how male couples maintain successful long-term relationships while choosing the model (heteronormative, open, monogamous, polyamory, and betrayal) that is right for them. Additionally it will address how gay development impacts the wellbeing of male couples.</p> <p>Couples have the right to choose how they want to live and to expect the support of their therapist, but too often clinicians who have less experience working with gay men will try to make the couple adapt to an arrangement within the clinician's comfort zone. Workshop attendees will learn to stretch their own comfort levels in dealing with these cases and develop their own style of challenging couples who avoid intimacy or closeness.</p> <p>Additionally, tools for nurturing and sustaining intimacy will be provided. Clinicians wishing to improve their effectiveness in working with male couples will gain insights into different modes of connection and strengthen their expertise in treatment.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will expand skills and comfort in identifying models of relationships beyond heteronormative. Attendees will list developmental challenges unique to gay men. Attendees will incorporate interventions for forgiveness and acceptance following betrayals. 	Rick Miller, MSW
P01	May 4, 2024 1:30pm - 2:30pm PDT 1 CE	<p><u>Panel 01 – Initial Session</u></p> <p>The initial session may be even more important for couple therapy than individual therapy because the partners often have different levels of motivation and competing ideas about what problems to work on. They may also hijack the session when their reactivity is high, and then feel that nothing was accomplished. In this workshop, you will hear three experienced couple therapists describe how they take charge of the first session while communicating empathically with the couple, what key information they gather, and how they form a working alliance with two people who are at odds with each other.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the key challenges couple therapists face in the initial session Describe strategies for exercising leadership in this session while connecting with each partner Discuss skills for developing a therapeutic alliance that sets the stage for the work ahead 	Terry Real, LICSW; Stan Tatkin, PsyD, MFT; Elliott Connie, MA, LPC

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
K04	May 4, 2024 1:30pm - 2:30pm PDT 1 CE	<p><u>Keynote 04 - Unlocking Harmony: Navigating Relationships with the Diamond Approach of Solution-Focused Couples Therapy</u></p> <p>In this keynote, we will delve into the transformative realm of Solution-Focused Couples Therapy, exploring the Diamond Approach that unlocks the potential for harmony in relationships. This approach focuses on cultivating positive change, resilience, and effective communication, empowering couples to navigate challenges and deepen their connection. Join us on a journey to discover practical tools and insights that foster understanding, promote emotional intimacy, and pave the way for enduring relationship satisfaction.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mastering the Diamond Approach: Gain a comprehensive understanding of the Diamond Approach within Solution-Focused Couples Therapy, exploring its key principles and techniques. Learn how to apply this innovative framework to identify and amplify positive aspects of relationships, fostering a dynamic shift toward harmony. 2. Effective Communication Strategies: Explore and practice communication strategies that enhance connection and understanding between partners. Acquire valuable tools for addressing conflicts constructively, expressing needs and desires, and creating an open and supportive communication environment within the relationship. 3. Building Resilience in Relationships: Delve into the components of resilience within the context of a romantic relationship. Discover practical methods to strengthen emotional bonds, navigate challenges, and create a foundation for lasting harmony. Explore how the Solution-Focused Couples Therapy's Diamond Approach contributes to building resilience and sustaining a fulfilling and enduring partnership. 	Elliott Connie, MA, LPC
P02	May 5, 2024 9am - 10am PDT 1 CE	<p><u>Panel 02 – Modern Couples</u></p> <p>The needs of couples change as our times are changing. Flexibility around sexuality, gender and betrayal are skills that we need to continue to incorporate. This panel will discuss issues of gender, identity shifts, sex and intimacy, and multiculturalism that modern couples encounter in their relationships. We will also discuss alternative and modern monogamy structures and how to create new monogamy agreements.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe two issues that couples face regarding gender and sex/intimacy 2. Describe two issues that are specific to multicultural couples 3. Define a current and resilient model in how to effectively work with couples. 4. Identify ways to create monogamy agreements using alternative relationship continuum 5. Describe two issues that arise when one partner shifts genders in the relationship. 	Rick Miller, MSW; Shawn Giammattei, PhD; Tammy Nelson, PhD; Lilian Borges, MA, LPC

Sunday, May 5 - Couples Conference Day 3

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
K05	May 4, 2024 4 pm - 5pm PDT 1 CE	<p><u>Keynote 05 - Working with Male Couples: The Good, the Not-so-Good, and the Troubling</u></p> <p>Gay men in our culture are mythologized, pathologized, envied, ignored, and oversimplified. Clinicians may be experts in treating heterosexual couples, but too often they miss out on the most effective interventions for this specific population. Men presenting for couples treatment are frequently seeking closer ties—while simultaneously embracing independence and avoidant behaviors. These norms are accepted within the gay community and are also considered norms of masculinity for cisgender men.</p> <p>The couples therapist faces the challenge of transcending these norms and suggesting an intimacy regime that is satisfactory for men. To be effective, it's essential for clinicians to appreciate community nuances and to feel comfortable talking about gay sexuality.</p> <p>Cultural and racial backgrounds also need to be understood as part of the couples matrix.</p> <p>Rick Miller, LICSW has been treating male couples for 40 years and will share success and impasses in his couples work, as well as sharing his experiences as part of a long-term gay partnership.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will be adept at identifying specific norms for treating male couples compared to other populations. Attendees will be able to address how intersectionality complicates challenges for male couples. Attendees will recite avoidant behaviors that impact the wellbeing of male couples. 	Rick Miller, MSW
WS 10	May 5, 2024 10:15am - 12:15pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 10 - Hypnosis for Couples</u></p> <p>Hypnosis is a powerful tool for change and when used in couples therapy it can connect couples with their internal resources, teach them co-regulation, and help create secure bonding. This workshop will teach simple and impactful techniques that you'll be able to use right away with your couples to empower them to change and make therapy session memorable. No previous experience with hypnosis is necessary.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Name two hypnotic techniques to be used with couples Describe a hypnotic technique that enhances co-regulation Give three reasons for using hypnosis in couples therapy 	Lilian Borges, MA, LPC

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
WS11	May 5, 2024 10:15am - 12:15pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 11 - How To Talk With Anyone About Anything</u></p> <p>Talking is the most dangerous thing most people do, and listening is the most infrequent. Participants in this workshop will learn that “how” we talk, not “what” we talk about is the source of all human conflict. And they will learn a new way of talking without criticism, listening without judgment, and connecting beyond difference that will be transformative in all aspects of their lives, including how they do couple’s therapy.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss with others the root source of human conflict. 2. Teach the difference between monologue and dialogue. 3. Use the dialogue process in the clinical practice. 4. Teach dialogue to the general public. 	Harville Hendrix, Ph.D., & Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph.D.
WS12	May 5, 2024 9:45pm - 11:45pm PDT 2 CE	<p><u>Workshop 12 - Promoting Clients’ Self-Care Supports Relationships</u></p> <p>Stressed out, burned out couples don’t have the time or energy to take care of themselves, let alone to nurture their relationship. They come to couples therapy, but then say they’re too busy when they don’t apply what is discussed in session. They’re cutting corners on sleep, diet, and exercise and thereby have less cognitive and emotional bandwidth, including for their partner. They’re more irritable with each other, less patient, and less tolerant of differences. They can easily fall into a zero-sum tug of war where both partners hope for more support from the other, but neither has it to give, furthering the discontent with each other.</p> <p>Everyone knows the obvious good advice on sleep, diet, and exercise, yet then doesn’t always do it. What does this poor self-care reveal about the individual or the relationship? What are the deeper individual and relationship dynamics that interfere with this self-care? For example, someone who struggles to set limits with work or children and thereby loses time with their partner at night. Is it a problem of limit setting earlier in the day or an avoidance of their partner at night? In order to promote better self-care and more energy for the relationship, we need to identify and address these primary causes.</p> <p>There is also the possibly contentious situation where one partner wants the other to engage in better self-care. Whose goal is this? And how do the partners negotiate this apparent difference in priorities?</p> <p>Promoting self-care benefits the relationship and promoting better relationship functioning benefits self-care..</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss with others the root source of human conflict. 2. Teach the difference between monologue and dialogue. 3. Use the dialogue process in the clinical practice. 4. Teach dialogue to the general public. 	Ari Tuckman, PsyD

Session	Date and Time	Topic and Details	Faculty
K06	May 5, 2024 1:30pm - 2:30pm PDT 1 CE	<p><u>Keynote 06 - GIVING THE LOVE YOU WANT: From Romantic to Real Love</u></p> <p>The major difference between romantic and real love is that romantic love HAPPENS to you without your choice. It finds you. In contrast, real love is nowhere to be found and it does not exist without your choice. In fact, it comes into being only by an act of will. You create it, and, in that act, you become what you want. This lecture will describe the paradox of “giving what you want” is the only way to get it.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss with others the root source of human conflict. 2. Teach the difference between monologue and dialogue. 3. Use the dialogue process in the clinical practice. 4. Teach dialogue to the general public. 	Harville Hendrix, Ph.D., &Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph.D.
P03	May 5, 2024 2:45pm - 3:45pm PDT 1 CE	<p><u>Panel 03 - Is It Really Over?</u></p> <p>Perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of affair recovery is the worry by the betrayed partner that the unfaithful partner has not in fact ended contact with the affair partner or will re-establish contact. This can be especially pernicious and enduring when the unfaithful partner has been discovered to have had additional contact after vowing to end it. For many betrayed partners, these subsequent discoveries can feel like even deeper betrayals than the initial infidelity, even more salt in the wound. The unfaithful partner will swear up and down that there has not been any additional contact and that there will not be in the future. The betrayed partner desperately wants to believe it, but also needs to protect themselves against further pain. The dilemma for both partners (and the therapist) is that we cannot prove a non-event—it’s possible to show that something did happen, but a lack of evidence may also simply mean that it has not yet been discovered. “Is it really over?” will never have a fully satisfying answer, but both partners need to find a way to a satisfying enough answer. We will discuss how to help struggling couples in this crucial and challenging aspect of affair recovery that can sometimes be more difficult than the white hot emotions of the initial discovery.</p> <p><i>Educational Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the unique challenges of this stage of affair recovery 2. Apply strategies to help clients navigate the inherent uncertainty of all relationships 3. Facilitate discussions on what constitutes evidence and what are its limits 	Ari Tuckman, PsyD; Stan Tatkin, PsyD, MFT; Harville Hendrix, Ph.D., &Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph.D.
CLOSING	May 5, 2024 3:45pm - 4:00pm PDT Not for Credit	Closing	Jeff Zeig, PhD

Continuing Education Accreditation Information

The Couples Conference is open to professionals in a health-related field with a master's degree or higher, and students currently enrolled in an accredited graduate program in a health-related field. The Couples Conference offers a maximum of 17 CE credits, equivalent to 1 credit per hour of conference.

- **A.C.C.M.E.**

- The Milton H. Erickson Foundation, Inc. is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

- **A.M.A.**

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- **A.S.W.B.**

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- **B.R.N.**

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- **CA B.B.S.**

- Licensees with the California Board of Behavioral SciencesThe Milton H. Erickson Foundation, Inc is approved to provide CE's by the NBCC and the APA in the state of California. As of 7/1/15, California BBS accepts CE

hours from CE providers approved by either the NBCC or the APA for all license types per Title 16 California Code of Regulations (16CCR) § 1887.4.1 and § 1887.4.3

- **Florida L.C.S.W., L.M.F.T., L.M.H.C.**

- The Milton H. Erickson Foundation, Inc. is approved by the Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling as a provider of continuing education (CE Provider #: 50-2008).

- **N.B.C.C.**

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- The Milton H. Erickson Foundation is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed social workers #SW-0304.

- **NY L.M.F.T.**

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If the Milton H. Erickson Foundation (hereby referred to as MHEF) cannot hold the Couples Conference due to acts of nature, war, government regulations, disaster, civil disorder or curtailment of transportation facilitating other emergencies making it inadvisable, illegal, or impossible to provide the facilities or to hold the meeting, each prepaid attendee will receive a copy of related handouts and any other materials that would have been distributed. Fixed expenses will be paid from the pre-registration funds. Remaining funds will be refunded to pre-registrants. MHEF is not responsible for any other costs incurred by pre-registrants in connection with the Couples Conference.

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