

**Toronto Centre For Psychotherapy And Counselling Education
TCP 5104 Psychotherapy With Couples**

Summer Intercession

Five Days – 8:30 am – 4:30 pm (Dates to be announced)

Instructor: TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This graduate level course (36 academic course-credit hours) will focus on approaches to couple therapy from both systemic and relational psychodynamic perspectives. Special attention will be given to family systems theory and the use of genograms, attachment theory including eco-maps, the theory and practice of Imago Therapy, intimacy and sexuality in couple relationships, narrative therapy, and emotionally focused couple therapy. Students will be invited to examine and integrate knowledge of the psychological significance of spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, sexual, gender, and biological development themes in working with couples, as well as be provided the opportunity to develop and practice their clinical skills in couple therapy. This course is highly experiential and interactive. Students are invited to share their own examples of the interventions used by them in their work with couples. This course will be of interest to students preparing for registration in the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario.

COURSE FORMAT

The class will meet daily for 5 days from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. The course format will consist of the following: class lectures, practice interventions, case discussion and video demonstrations.

COURSE OUTCOMES

As students consider the various theories of human development, they will begin to:

- Gain an understanding of the differences between practicing psychotherapy with individuals and practicing psychotherapy with couples.
- Develop an understanding of narrative therapy
- Understand attachment theory and its implications for psychotherapy
- Develop an understanding of the basic tenets of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy
- Become more comfortable in addressing intimacy and sexual issues in working with couples
- Integrate knowledge of the psychological significance of spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, sexual, gender, and biological development themes in working with couples

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM

This is a required course for students pursuing a certificate in psychotherapy from the Toronto Centre for Psychotherapy and Counselling Education (TCPCE).

PREREQUISITES

The prerequisite for this course is the successful completion of the TCPCE year one program.

REQUIRED READING

Boeree, C. George, R. (2017). *Personality Theories: From Freud to Frankl*. South Carolina: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Other Course Readings / Journal articles may be assigned in class.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READING

Chapman, G. (2015). *The five love languages: The secret to love that lasts*. Chicago: Northfield Publishing.

Eagle, M. (2013). *Attachment and psychoanalysis: theory, research and clinical implications*. New York: Guilford Press.

Gilbert, R. (2006). *The eight concepts of Bowen theory*. Lake Frederick, VA: Leading Systems Press.

Hendrix, H. (2019). *Getting the love, you want: A guide for couples, (3rd. Ed.)*. New York: St. Martin's Griffen.

Johnson, S.M. (2004). *The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy*. Abingdon UK: Routledge.

McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petry, S. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention. (3rd ed.)*. New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company.

Richardson, R. (2011). *Family ties that bind: A self-help guide to change through family of origin therapy*. North Vancouver: Self-Counsel Press.

Schnarch, D. (2009). *Passionate marriage: Keeping love and intimacy alive in committed relationships*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company

White, M. (2007). *Maps of narrative practice*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company

ASSIGNMENTS

Genogram and Reflection Paper (20%) Due: Class # 3 Date TBA

The student will create his or her own genogram. The genogram should be as thorough as is reasonably possible and should include relationship lines etc. If the student is in a couple relationship, the genogram should also include the information for the student's partner. The student will include a

short reflection paper (3-5 pages) discussing what they learned about themselves and their family of origin in the creation of the genogram.

**Theories of Couple Therapy Paper (35%) Due: Two weeks following the intensive course.
Date TBA**

The student will select 2 of the major methods of Couples Therapy discussed in the textbook and compare and contrast the theories selected. The paper should include a section describing each of the methods selected and also a compare and contrast section. Other source material in addition to the textbook may also be used. This is to be a 10 page academic paper with references cited.

Case Study (35%) Due: Six weeks following the intensive course. Date TBA

Students will be provided with a sample case study during the intensive course. The students will develop a dynamic formulation, then create a treatment plan with proposed concrete interventions for the case. The student is to include consideration of Family Systems Theory (Bowen), Attachment Theory, Imago Therapy, Intimacy and Sexuality, Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy, and Narrative Therapy as applicable to the case provided. This paper is to be 10-15 pages in length.

Class participation and attendance (10%)

Class participation and attendance are central components of this course. As this is a 5 day intensive course, students are expected to attend all five classes and participate fully in all aspects of the course.

ASSIGNMENT STYLE GUIDE

APA Style Guide, 6th Edition.

LATE SUBMISSIONS / EXTENSIONS

Students are expected to submit assignments on their due dates. If a student is unable to meet an assignment deadline, they are required to request an extension from the instructor prior to the assignment due date. Extensions granted by the instructor will be no more than 1- 2 weeks.

GRADING

TCPCE courses use the following system of grading.

A+	(90-100)
A	(85-89)
A-	(80-84)
B+	(77-79)
B	(73-76)
B-	(70-72)
Failure	

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Early in the course, the issues related to confidentiality will be discussed. This will be most relevant to the in course training, practice therapy segments of the classes. Students will agree that they will not discuss any confidential or identifying information shared in class with others. Once this confidentiality agreement is discussed in class and verbally agreed to by the student, it will be understood that the student will comply with this agreement. Failure to comply will be considered ethical misconduct and will result in an incomplete grade for the course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND POLICIES

Unless otherwise stated, the course follows established policies with respect to academic integrity and misconduct. The student is required to know these guidelines. Students are cautioned that in addition to a failure in the course, a student may be suspended or expelled from the program for cheating and the offence may appear on one’s transcript.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full citation of sources of both words and ideas. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks or indented as per the APA Style Guide. Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic and professional ethics.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topics	Required Reading
Day 1	Introduction To Course Family Systems Theory (Bowen) The Use of the Genogram in pre-marital and couple therapy	
Day 2	Attachment Theory Power and Control in Couple and Family Relationships	
Day 3	Imago Therapy: A Therapeutic Model For Working With Pre-Marital and Couple Relationships Due: Genogram Assignment	
Day 4	Intimacy And Sexuality Narrative Therapy: Sharing And Re-creating Our Relational Stories	
Day 5	Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy	

RELATIONSHIP TO CRPO ENTRY-TO-PRACTICE COMPETENCIES

FOR REGISTERED PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

CRPO Entry-To-Practice Competencies		Addressed In Human Development Course
1. Foundations		
1.1 Integrate a theory of human psychological functioning		
b	Integrate knowledge of contextual and systemic factors that facilitate or impair human functioning.	This course will discuss the contextual and systemic factors that are very important in practicing psychotherapy with couples.
c	Integrate knowledge of the psychological significance of spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, sexual, gender, and biological development.	Students will become familiar with the concepts of a Family Life Cycle and will understand the developmental issues inherent in the various phases of the Life Cycle.
1.2 Work within a framework based upon established psychotherapeutic theory		
a	Integrate the theory or theories upon which the therapist's practice is based.	In this course, students will learn about some of the key psychotherapeutic modalities used in therapy with couples. In gaining a knowledge of the theories of couple therapy, they will continue to integrate the theories upon which their practice is or will be based.
b	Integrate knowledge of how human problems develop, from the viewpoint of the therapist's theoretical orientation.	This course focuses on psychotherapy with couples. Students will learn the kinds of problems which occur in couple relationships and how these develop.
c	Identify circumstances where therapy is contraindicated	Students will learn that there are circumstances where couples therapy is not recommended. They will also learn that there are issues that are better addressed in individual therapy.
d	Recognize the benefits, limitations, and contraindications of differing psychotherapeutic approaches.	As students are exposed to a variety of therapeutic modalities, they will learn which modalities are the most effective for specific presenting problems.
e	Establish a therapeutic relationship informed by the theoretical framework.	Each of the theories presented in the course have their own way of developing a therapeutic relationship. Students will learn the variety of methods of therapeutic relationship development that each model of therapy uses.
f	Integrate a theory of change consistent with the therapist's theoretical orientation.	As students continue to learn a variety of therapeutic modalities, they will learn that there are theories of change inherent in these models.
g	Integrate knowledge of the impact of trauma on psychological functioning.	Students will learn the impact that trauma can have on a couple relationship.
1.3 Integrate knowledge of comparative psychotherapy relevant to practice		
a	Integrate knowledge of key concepts common to all psychotherapy practice.	Each model of couples' therapy discussed has key concepts. Many of these are similar across all psychotherapeutic modalities. These concepts will be discussed as each theory / modality is presented.
b	Recognize the range of psychotherapy practised within the province of Ontario.	As several different models of psychotherapy with couples are presented in this course, the students will develop the ability to recognize the range of cognitive therapies that are practised in Ontario.
1.4 Integrate awareness of self in relation to professional role		
a	Integrate knowledge of the impact of the therapist's self on the therapeutic process.	This course includes discussion of family of origin issues, sexuality and intimacy. In discussing these issues the student will have opportunity to reflect on the impact that these issues have on them and then also on how this

		impact may have an effect on their therapeutic relationships.
b	Recognize how the therapist's values and attitudes, both in and out of awareness, may impact diverse clients.	In the writing of a reflection paper, students will address their own development including values, attitudes etc. This will form a foundation for understanding how these can impact the therapeutic relationship.
c	Recognize the cognitive, emotional and behavioural patterns of the therapist that may influence therapeutic relationship.	In the creation of their personal genogram and reflection paper, students will address their family of origin and current relationships. This exploration will assist the student in understanding how their own patterns may impact the therapeutic relationship.
d	Recognize instances where the therapist's life experiences may enhance or compromise therapeutic effectiveness.	As students reflect on their own experiences, with the topics presented in this course, they will also come to understand how their own experiences may enhance or compromise the therapeutic relationship.
2. Collegial & Interprofessional Relationships		
2.1 Use effective professional communication		
a	Use clear and concise written communication.	Students are required to write a research, a reflection paper and a case study paper during this course. They are required to demonstrate clear graduate level writing skills.
b	Use clear and concise oral communication.	The student is expected to communicate well orally in the classroom discussions and group discussions.
c	Use clear and concise electronic communication.	Students will practice clear and concise electronic communication skills in their communication with the instructor and also with their student peers.
d	Communicate in a manner appropriate to the recipient.	Students engage in communication with each other and with the instructor during the class presentations and discussion. They have opportunity to practice communication skills in all forms of communication.
e	Use effective listening skills.	Students will practice effective listening skills in class discussions. They will also learn the techniques of listening that are used in each model of therapy presented.
f	Differentiate fact from opinion.	As each of the theories of psychotherapy with couples are presented, students will learn to differentiate the facts of the theory from their own personal opinions and biases.
2.2 Maintain effective relationships		
a	Show respect to others.	Students are expected to show respect to each other and the instructors during all class activities.
c	Recognize and address conflict in a constructive manner.	While conflict is not normally expected in this course, should conflict arise, it will be dealt with by the instructor in a constructive manner as a model for the students to follow.
d	Demonstrate personal and professional integrity.	Students will demonstrate their personal and professional integrity in their oral and written communication with each other in all aspects of the course. They will also demonstrate personal integrity by submitting assignments as required and by following the guidelines of academic integrity in those assignments.
2.3 Contribute to a collaborative and productive atmosphere		

b	Create and sustain working relationships with colleagues of diverse socio- cultural identities	Our students come from a variety of diverse socio – cultural identities. In the formation of student peer groups during this course, students will learn to create and sustain working relationships with a variety of people.
3. Professional Responsibilities		
3.2 Apply and ethical decision making process		
a	Recognize ethical issues encountered in practice.	Students will learn that there are ethical issues that arise in the practice of psychotherapy with couples. They will learn how to recognize these issues when they arise.
3.4 Evaluate and enhance professional practice		
a	Undertake critical self-reflection.	As students consider their own development stage and processes, they will learn to critically evaluate themselves against the norms of that stage.
4. Therapeutic Process		
4.2 Establish and maintain core conditions for therapy		
a	Employ empathy, respect, and authenticity.	Students practice the skills of empathy, respect and authenticity during class discussions and their interaction with peers and instructors. This will serve as a foundation on which to build the utilization of these skills with clients.
b	Establish rapport.	As each of the theories of couple’s therapy is presented, students will learn how rapport is established in the context of each model.
e	Assume non-judgmental stance.	Students practice a non-judgmental stance during class discussions. Periodically issues that have the ability to produce strong reactions in the students are discussed in class. Students practice the ability to bracket their own reactions in favour of listening to and understanding their peers. This will serve as a foundational learning for using these skills with clients.
l	Demonstrate dependability.	Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to be on time. They are also expected to complete assignments on time as scheduled. In so doing, they will demonstrate their dependability.
4.3 Ensure safe and effective use of self in the therapeutic relationship		
a	Demonstrate awareness of the impact of the therapist's subjective context on the therapeutic process.	Students will learn that their own subjective context will sometimes impact the therapeutic context. This can happen when the value systems of therapist and client differ from each other. It can also happen when the therapist believes one partner more than the other. Students will learn to recognize these pitfalls in themselves so that they do not impact the therapeutic process.
b	Recognize the impact of power dynamics within the therapeutic relationship.	There are often power dynamics that exist in couple relationships. Sometimes these dynamics are also present in the therapy room. Students will learn to identify these dynamics when they exist.
c	Protect client from imposition of the therapist's personal issues.	Students will learn that it is not appropriate for the therapist to discuss his or her personal issues with clients.

e	Use self-disclosure appropriately.	Students will learn that there are times when judicious self-disclosure may be helpful in a therapeutic relationship and times when it may also not be helpful or appropriate. The student will learn to recognize these.
4.4 Conduct an appropriate risk assessment.		
a	Assess for specific risks as indicated.	Students will learn how to assess client's for safety or self-harm and will learn how to do this in the context of couple therapy.
b	Develop safety plans with clients at risk.	Students will learn how to create a safety plan with clients who are assessed as being at risk.
c	Refer to specific professional services where appropriate.	Students will learn that there are times when either one or both of the couple would benefit from being referred to specific professional services.
4.5 Structure and facilitate the therapeutic process		
c	Respond non-reactively to anger, hostility and criticism from the client.	Within the context of the theories of couple's therapy that are presented, students will learn how to respond appropriately to anger, hostility and criticism from the client.
e	Anticipate and respond appropriately to the expression of intense emotions and help the client to understanding and management.	Students will learn that client's often express strong and intense emotions when discussing something that they are struggling with in their couple relationships. They will learn how to anticipate and respond to these expressions of emotion.
f	Recognize a variety of assessment approaches.	Each therapeutic model presented has its own assessment approach. As each model is presented, the students will learn a variety of assessment processes.
g	Formulate an assessment.	Students are required to complete a case study paper which includes doing a thorough assessment of a case from a variety of therapeutic perspectives. In this assignment, the student will practice the skills of assessment of a couple.
l	Engage client according to their demonstrated level of commitment to therapy.	It is quite common in couples' therapy for one partner to be less committed to the therapeutic process than the other. Students will learn the skills of engaging with both partners at their level of engagement and also will learn some tools that may help increase the engagement of the less engaged partner.
m	Facilitate client exploration of issues and patterns of behaviour.	Students will learn the skill of encouraging client couples to explore the issues and patterns of behaviour that have contributed to their presenting problem.
n	Support client to explore a range of emotions.	Students will learn that client's sometimes need to express emotions that they are holding. Students will learn how to recognize when it might be helpful for a client to express certain emotions. They will also learn how to facilitate the expression of these emotions.
o	Employ a variety of helping strategies.	Each of the modalities presented in this course have specific techniques and strategies that they utilize. Students will learn a variety of helping strategies that they will be able to use as appropriate in their clinical work.
r	Identify contextual influences.	It is especially important in psychotherapy with couples that the therapist understand the contextual issues and influences that contribute to the presenting problem.

		Students will learn to assess and identify these issues and how to ask questions of clients to assist with this.
t	Recognize when to discontinue or conclude therapy.	Students will learn how to recognize when therapy should be discontinued or concluded. They will learn the variety of reasons why this is necessary.
4.6 Refer Client		
b	Identify situations in which referral or specialized treatment may benefit the client, or be required.	There are periodically issues that arise in couple therapy where one or both clients would benefit from a referral to another therapist / treatment program would be beneficial. Students will learn how to identify these issues.
5.1 Remain Current With Professional Literature		
a	Read current professional literature relevant to practice area.	Students are required to prepare written assignments which require them to read current professional literature pertaining to the topic of the assignment.
b	Access information from a variety of current sources.	Students are encouraged to access information from a variety of books, journals and online publications.
c	Analyze information critically.	In the research for assignments, students learn to analyze the information gained critically. They learn what information is solid and sound and what information is based on biased opinion.
d	Determine the applicability of information to particular clinical situations.	As students learn about the various therapeutic models used with couples and the relevant current research, they will come to understand how this information is applicable to their clinical situations.
e	Apply knowledge gathered to enhance practice	Students are in the process of developing a toolkit from which to draw in their psychotherapeutic practice. The knowledge gained in this course will be part of their toolkit to be utilized as necessary in their practice.
f	Remain current with developments in foundational areas	The various presenters in this course are up to date with the relevant literature in their field. They present from their up to date knowledge of the areas being presented.
5.2 Use research findings to inform clinical practice.		
d	Apply knowledge gathered to enhance practice	The knowledge gained in this course will serve as a foundation upon which the student can develop tools which will enhance their practice.