

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Course	COUPLE THERAPY: AN INTEGRATIVE PERSPECTIVE COUN 0773 1S
Date, Time, and Delivery Format	JANUARY 15 – APRIL 9 WEDNESDAYS, 2:15 PM – 5:05 PM SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Instructor	DR. SUSAN ELLFELDT 416-226-6620 ext. 6787 647-223-2149 Email: sellfeldt@tyndale.ca
Class Information	The classes will be livestreamed <i>via Zoom</i> on Wednesdays 2:15 PM – 5:05 PM. Office Hours: by appointment.
Course Material	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Provides an integrative therapeutic perspective incorporating cognitive behavioural, solution focused and an integrative therapeutic orientation for couple counselling. Students should develop their own informed approach to couple counselling based on reflective consideration of the major systemic therapies and their own personal interactional style.

Pre- or corequisite: COUN 0601. COUN majors only or by permission of program coordinator.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- State one's philosophy of couple counselling and examine personal biases about couple life
- Identify and practice using several therapeutic approaches in counselling couples and critically evaluate these approaches
- Demonstrate competence in assessing and treating couples through a specific therapeutic orientation and evaluating outcome
- Identify challenging couple dynamics (anger, violence) and select appropriate treatment modalities
- Identify the stages of couple life and the critical points and issues in couple life that precipitate therapeutic intervention
- Demonstrate understanding of some inter-cultural and societal dynamics that impact couples and families today

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

1. Bader, E. and P. Pearson. (2012). *In Quest of the Mythical Mate*. New York: Routledge. ISBN 13:978-1-138-00459-7
2. Lebow, J. & D. Snyder. (2023). [*Clinical Handbook of Couple Therapy*](#). (6th ed.) New York: Guilford Press. ISBN 978-1-4625-1392-5
3. Assignment of one book from the **V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY** at the end of the syllabus for oral & written presentation (assigned by instructor on first day of class)
4. Allen, J.R. & S. A. St. George. (2001). [What couples say works in domestic violence therapy](#). *The Qualitative Report*, 6(3), 1-20.
5. Christians, Russell, Miller, & Peterson. (1998). [The process of change in couple therapy: A qualitative investigation](#). *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 24(2), 177-188.
6. Ware, Bruce. (2007). [Summaries of the egalitarian and complementarian positions](#). Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood
7. Fishbane, M. & DeKoven. (1998). [I, thou and we: A dialogical approach to couples therapy](#). *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 24(1), 41-58.
8. Goldner, V. (1992). Making room for both/and. *Family therapy Networker*, 16(2), 55-62.

9. Hampton, K. (2013). New communication technologies and the nature of community. *Family Therapy*, March/April, 10-15.
10. Valenzuela, S., Park, N. and Kee, K.F. (2009). [Is There Social Capital in a Social Network Site?: Facebook Use and College Students' Life Satisfaction, Trust, and Participation.](#) *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14: 875-901.
11. Vatcher, C. & Bogo, M. (2001). [The Feminist/Emotionally Focused Therapy practice model: An integrated approach for couple therapy.](#) *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 27(1), 69-83.

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING:

- Beck, A. T. (1988). *Love is never enough: How couples can overcome misunderstandings, resolve conflicts, and solve relationship problems through Cognitive Therapy*. New York: Harper and Row. ISBN 0-06-091604-
- Dattilio, F. (Ed.) (1998). *Case Studies in couple and family therapy: Systemic and cognitive perspectives*. New York, NY: Guilford Press. ISBN 1 57230 696 3
- Gottman, J. (2002). *The Relationship cure: A 5 step guide to strengthening your marriage, family, and friendships*. Harmony Books.
- Gurman, A. (2010). [Clinical Casebook of Couple Therapy.](#) New York: Guilford Press. ISBN 978-1-4625-0968-3
- Heitler, S. (1990). *From conflict to resolution: Skills and strategies for individual couple and family therapy*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company. ISBN 0 393 31093 0
- Hudson, P. & O'Hanlon, W. (1993). *Rewriting love stories: Brief marital therapy*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton. ISBN 0 393 31094 9
- Levine, A. & Heller, R.S.F. (2010). *Attached: The new science of adult attachment and how it can help you find and keep love*. New York, NY: Penguin Group (USA) Inc. ISBN 978-1-58542-913-4
- Luquet, W. (2007). *Short-term couple therapy: The Imago Model in action*. (2nd Ed.) New York, NY: Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-95380-1
- Papp, P. (2001). *Couples on the Fault Line*. New York, NY: Guilford Press. ISBN 1572307056
- Spring, J. & Spring, M. (1997). *After the affair: Healing the pain and rebuilding trust when a partner has been unfaithful*. New York, NY: Harper. ISBN 0060928174

C. INTERACTIVE LIVESTREAM AND/OR HYBRID COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

*exceptions with permission from professor

D. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Book Review: Due on Feb. 26; 30% of final grade.

You will be assigned a **book** from the [Selected Bibliography Reading List](#) at the end of the syllabus. Prepare a **6 – 7 double-spaced typed** commentary on the book addressing the following questions:

- What is the basis for the author believing in this orientation (include the model's foundational values or truths, and why the author thinks the model works). Discuss your own views on the foundational values of the model given your own theological perspectives.
- Does this model add to your ability to do effective couple therapy? Why and why not? Please give specific examples.
- What was the most significant learning **for you personally** in this book? In other words, if you apply this theory to you and your partner or spouse (or to your family of origin), what is helpful and why? What does not resonate with you and why?

2. Class Therapy Presentation: Due dates vary from February 12th onward. 25% of final grade.

Students will be assigned to groups of 5 or 6 and each group will present an oral report on the contents of their assigned book to the class and a brief demonstration of a vignette, demonstrating one key therapeutic intervention described in the book (and not already presented in class demonstrations). The intervention chosen should be one for which the orientation is noted. The book assignments and schedule of presentations will be available the first week of class.

Presentation will be done as follows:

- Overview of the therapy (1-2 people, 8 minutes total) Be sure to summarize the therapy well and present the reasons the authors formulated the therapy, the population the therapy addresses, and the goals or outcomes the authors of the therapy expect.
- What interventions are particularly helpful in working with clients (1-2 persons, 8 minutes total; include the therapy intervention to be demonstrated). Be sure to mention what conditions the interventions address and outcomes expected.
- Brief demonstration (role play) of one therapy technique presented in the book. Try to pick an intervention for which the therapy is well known. (3 people, 10 minutes) You may video this and/or the whole presentation ahead of time and present the video in class. Be sure that you can be heard by the class. **Questions will then be left for the last 4 minutes of your presentation.**
- Total 30 minutes

3. Final Paper: Due on April 9th; 45% of total grade.

10-12 double-spaced pages: Choose one of your current couple's cases or one from past experience (or present a fictional couple or one from literature or movies). The identity of any cases used for discussion should be protected by changing names and details sufficiently to protect identity. If you use a fictional couple, be careful that they are a realistic couple. If you chose from literature, be careful of plagiarism. **You may not apply a therapeutic orientation to a couple found in a book on the same theory you are utilizing. And you may not "plug a couple into" a set of structured steps presented by the author of the orientation.** This must be your own thinking about application of this model in working with a couple.

- a. Describe this couple adequately and tell which of the three models presented in lecture you would choose for this couple and why. You must present a sufficient rationale for use of the model with this particular couple based on their values, problems, stage of couple development and maturational skills. You must choose from the 3 models presented in class (Solution Focused Therapy, New Cognitive/Behavioural Couple Therapy or the integrative approach of Bader and Pearson's Developmental Couples approach). **You may not use the theory you presented in class.**
- b. Outline your own philosophy of couple therapy and values about marriage and coupling, and assess the chosen model for alignment with your philosophy and values.
- c. Thoroughly outline your selected therapeutic orientation, how you would assess the couple via that orientation, your treatment goals, and the interventions you would select for this couple from this model.
- d. Describe the strategic intervention steps (what comes first, second, third, etc.) and what change you might expect each of those interventions to effect. Include any limitations you can foresee in working with this model with these clients, and describe what therapeutic interventions you might need to utilize from other models. Describe

what changes you would expect these additional interventions to effect. Or describe why you feel your model would not require interventions from other models.

- e. Describe how you would use one of your chosen interventions in greater detail using a therapist/client running-dialogue format. This should sound like a transcript of a session, moving back and forth from client to therapist (like the verbatim transcripts required for the Labs). This intervention should be a hallmark of the orientation you are presenting.
- f. Finally, relate how you would know when it is time to terminate with this couple and how you would assess the success of therapy.

For the model you select, **additional literature (at least two sources)** beyond that presented in class should be resourced and incorporated into your paper. Please use APA notation in your work. A list of references is to be included.

E. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

F. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Class Therapy Presentation	25%
Critical Book Review	30%
Final Paper	45%
Total	100%

Given the nature of this course, the class will consist partly of lectures, partly of student presentations, and partly of skills practice. Each student is expected to participate in the large group practice sessions. Therefore, attendance is required.

G. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

1. **The reflection papers** should demonstrate the student's ability to process his/her internal responses personally and professionally. The ability to reflect upon and process feelings and thoughts is an important skill in counselling work.

2. **Title page:** The title page should include the name of the course, name of the instructor, title of the paper/assignment, student's name, and the date due.
3. **Documentation:** Papers must be typed, double spaced, and written using inclusive language. Students are required to retain a copy of all assignments in hard copy or electronic form. Graduate level spelling, grammar and style are expected, and grades will be lowered if written expression is poor. Reports of psychological research should follow the rules set forth in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th ed. (2019). All parts of the report are typed double-spaced, and without justifying the right hand margin. Use a 12 point font ("Times New Roman" or "Courier" is preferred). The [APA Style Guide](#) is a helpful web site for all questions regarding APA style. Students are expected to honestly reflect use of materials other than their own. Tyndale does not tolerate plagiarism in any form.
4. Tyndale Seminary's **policy on late assignments** will be followed. For each week late, the grade will be **reduced by a letter grade**. Extensions will be considered if the circumstances are extreme. **No final assignments or examinations will be accepted later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 14.**

Academic Integrity

No A-I use is permitted in the writing or editing of the course assignments. Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details.

Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#). Citation and other [tip sheets](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (aau@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

H. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

SESSION 1: January 15

- Overview of course and assignments
- Statistics about family life today
- Complexities of couple life (**References – Papp text**)
- What does a healthy couple relationship require?
- Genesis 1-3 Beginning Theology of Marriage and Family
- Assign book groups

Readings:

- *Teens, Cell phones and Sleep (on class page)*
- Hampton, K. (2013). New Communication Technologies and the nature of community. *Family Therapy*, March/April, 10-15.
- Valenzuela, S., Park, N. and Kee, K.F. (2009). [Is There Social Capital in a Social Network Site?: Facebook Use and College Students' Life Satisfaction, Trust, and Participation.](#) *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14: 875-901. (on class page)
- Genesis 1-3

SESSION 2: January 22

- Power and Gender
- Dealing with personal biases in couple work
- The process of change
- Current Treatment models

- Levels of complexity in couple therapy

Readings:

- Victor Shepherd: *What did Paul really say about women?* (on class page)
- *Summaries of gender role position* (on class page)
- Manfred Brauch: *Male over Female* (on class page)
- Margaret Swanson: *Marriage and Modern Society: Lagging Evolution toward Egalitarianism* (on class page)
- Article: *The Process of Change in Couples Therapy* (on class page)

SESSION 3: January 29

- Contra-indicators to couple therapy
- Couple assessment protocols
- Practice sessions – intake sessions

Readings:

- Lebow and Snyder: Chapter 1 & 2

SESSION 4: February 5

- Introduction to Solution Focused Couple Therapy
- **Video:** Irreconcilable Differences Part I
- Practice Session: Solution Focused intake session

Reading:

- Gurman: Chapter 3 (class page)

SESSION 5: February 12

- **Gottman: Class Presentation**
- Video: Irreconcilable Differences Part II
- Solution Focused Tool kit
- Practice: Session Solution Focused

Reading:

- Lebow and Snyder: Chapter 11

READING WEEK - FEBRUARY 19 (No Class)

SESSION 6: February 26

- **Assignment #1 due – Book Review**
- Enhanced Cognitive Behavioural Couple Therapy - introduction

- Video: Stuart: New Behaviourism
- Assessment using CBCT
- Practice: Assessment CBCT - large group demo

Reading:

- Lebow and Snyder: Chapter 4

SESSION 7: March 5

- **Hendrix: Class Presentation**

- More about CBCT interventions
- Communication model
- Diagrammatic & other Helps for CBCT Couple Therapy
- Practice: Communication training
- Other CBCT interventions important to couple work

Readings:

- Diagrammatic Helps (on class page)
- Thought Record sample (on class page)
- Communication model and feeling sheets (on class page)
- Communication model (on class page)
- Inquire/Respond communication model: Bader and Pearson

SESSION 8: March 12

- **Class Presentation: Richardson**

- Introduction to Integrative Stage Developmental Approach
- Stage theory maturational milestones
- Case study using Integrative Stage Development Theory (Leslie & Bill)

Readings:

- Bader and Pearson: Chapters 1, 2 and 3

SESSION 9: March 19

- **Class presentation: Ripley and Worthington**

- Principles of intervention Stage Developmental Model
- Motivation and goals
- Specific assessment technics
- The Differentiating/differentiating couple
- Hardy video - case study

Readings:

- Bader and Pearson: Chapters 6 & 7

SESSION 10: March 26

- Symbiotic/Symbiotic couple, hostile dependent type
- Analysis of video couple Susan Heitler: The Angry Couple
- Impasses and intervention tools
- Large group practice

Readings:

- Bader and Pearson: Chapter 5

SESSION 11: April 2

• **Class Presentation: EFT**

- Practice: Symbiotic/Symbiotic couple, hostile dependent type
- Couples with Violence (reference: Chapter 7, Papp)
- Treatment modalities
- Complexities & intersectionalities
- Risk factors

Readings:

- Bader and Pearson: Chapters 8-9
- Article: What couples say works in treatment of domestic violence (class page)
- Article: Making room for both/and (class page)
- Lebow and Snyder: Chapter 17

SESSION 12: April 9

• **Assignment #3 due (final paper)**

- Long term Symbiotic Couple, Enmeshed type
- Video - Scharf and analysis
- Practice

Readings:

- Bader and Pearson: Chapter 4,

No assignments accepted after 5pm April 18

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY (one book will be assigned to each student for report and class presentation)

([Tyndale Library](#) supports this course with [e-journals, e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).)

Gottman, J. (1999). *The seven principles for making marriage work*. New York, NY: Crown Publishers. ISBN 0 609 60104 0

Hendrix, H. (1990). *Getting the love you want: A guide for couples*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial. ISBN 0 06097292 0

Johnson, S. (2004). [*The practice of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy: Creating connections*](#). New York, NY: Routledge. ISBN 0415945682

Richardson, R. (2010). [*Couples in conflict: A Family Systems approach to marriage counseling*](#). Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. ISBN 978-0-8006-9628-3

Ripley, J. and E. Worthington Jr. (2014). [*Couple Therapy: A new hope-focused approach*](#). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. ISBN 978-0-8308-2857-9