

PACT A Psychological Approach to Couple Therapy® 1

## SEWING PARTNERS TOGETHER: TECHNIQUES FOR MOVING COUPLES TOWARD SECURE FUNCTIONING

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## THERE ARE TWO MAJOR TRACKS IN ANY TREATMENT MODEL

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What is it  
What to do about it

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## OUR CHALLENGE AS COUPLE THERAPISTS IS THIS:

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We need to find out what is actually going on!  
*Who are these people?*  
*What do they really want?*  
*And what are they up to?*

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- The reason we can't get this info readily is because we (most of us) have been trained only to listen to the words
- And we haven't paid close enough attention to the body
- We're wired for words from the beginning which is why we are mesmerized when people talk
- Not a problem with animals and babies

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### NARRATIVES LIE

There are reasons why words are NOT reliable

1. People don't know what they are doing (most of the time) or why
2. In the absence of knowing, people make shit up
3. People also lie
4. Memory drives knowledge
  - Memories are shaped by present state and state changes perception
  - Things are rarely what they seem
  - Even for us as therapists, we are shackled by the same limitations
  - We don't know what is going on and we are making shit up too

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### OUR BIG JOB

Locate pain, amplify it, and leverage it toward secure function – rinse and repeat

Move partners toward clarity within a secure functioning environment

Find the baby

No angel, no devils

Partners are more alike than not

Where there's one, there's the other

Look both ways or else

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### What is Secure Functioning?

- Partners are in the foxhole together
- Partners put the relationship first (couple bubble)
- Partners have each other's backs
- Partners are experts on one another
- Partners are fully collaborative, fully mutual
- Partners are mostly fair, just, and sensitive
- Partners fully agree to principles of both personal and mutual good (e.g. thou shalt not kill)
- Partners use attraction, not fear, guilt, or shame
- Partners care for the self and the other simultaneously
- Partners are good stewards of the safety and security system

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### What is Secure Functioning?

- Partners never threaten the relationship itself
- Partners tell each other everything (why not?)
- Partners accept each other as burdens
- Partners accept that we are in each other's care
- Partners are the go to people
- Partners protect each other in public and private
- Partners' decisions are always based on what is good for *both*
  - Broker win/win situations
- Partners administer to each other immediately when in distress

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### We have to rely on the body not the narrative

- *Crossing Technique*
- This technique of getting and using information will greatly speed up the information you get and are able to use now and in the future
- Here's what it looks like: I cross watch and track with my eyes, I cross question partners, and I cross interpret partners to each other
- Here's what it is
  - Cross tracking
  - Cross questioning
  - Cross commenting (interpreting)
- Here's how it works

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### Conclusion

- Before we can do anything, we must be clear about what it is that is in front of us
- People lie, deflect, defend, hide, mislead, and most of all, make things up in the absence of knowing why they do what they do
- Real time is too fast
- We are all automatic
- Memory drives state, and vice versa
- State changes alter perception
- The couple therapist must apply pressure and maintain a certain level of stress and distress otherwise partners won't care or be interested
- Cross track, cross question, and cross interpret (comment) as a way to sew partners together

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The image displays three book covers side-by-side. From left to right: 1. 'Wired for Love: How Understanding Your Partner's Brain and Attachment Style Can Help You Defuse Conflict and Build a Secure Relationship' by Stan Tatkin, PsyD, with a foreword by Harville Hendrix, PhD. 2. 'Love and War in Intimate Relationships: Connection, Disconnection, and Mutual Regulation in Couple Therapy' by Marion Solomon and Stan Tatkin, with a foreword by Daniel J. Siegel. 3. 'Your Brain on Love: The Neurobiology of Healthy Relationships' by Stan Tatkin, PsyD.

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The image shows the book cover for 'Wired for Dating: How Understanding Neurobiology and Attachment Style Can Help You Find Your Ideal Mate' by Stan Tatkin, PsyD, MFT, with forewords by Harville Hendrix, PhD, and Helen Lakely Hunt, PhD. The cover features a colorful brain graphic with a heart in the center. Below the book cover, the text 'Available Now!' is displayed.

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	Newcastle, England

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## HAVE FUN WITH YOUR COUPLES!

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