



Informed Consent for Gottman Method Couples Therapy

Welcome: Before starting your therapy, it is important to know what to expect and to understand your rights and commitments. We have created this form to be as transparent as possible about the nature of the couples' therapy process, so you are fully informed prior to starting the therapy.

Our credentials: Dr. Shannon Curry is a Clinical Psychologist who is licensed in the state of California by the Board of Psychology. Dr. Curry has completed all three levels of advanced training in the Gottman Method of couples' therapy. She is also a trained Gottman *Bringing Baby Home* Educator and Gottman *Seven Principles* Workshop Leader.

Dr. Shannon J. Curry, PsyD MSCp

Curry Psychology Group
200 Newport Center Drive
Suite 204
Newport Beach, CA 92660

T. 949.258.9777
F. 949.258.9749

What to expect: *Gottman Method Couples' Therapy* consists of two phases:

1. **Assessment:** This process includes an interview with the couple, followed by individual interviews with each partner. Couples also complete online questionnaires which provide comprehensive data on the relationship's strengths and challenges. Feedback on the results of the assessment is provided, and the recommended areas for intervention are discussed. This phase yields a scientifically-based, personalized treatment plan from which interventions are selected.
2. **Therapeutic Intervention:** In this phase, structured interventions that are designed to strengthen friendship, intimacy, and conflict management are introduced and practiced in each session. Couples learn to replace negative conflict patterns with positive interactions and to repair past hurts, and begin to create shared meaning and purpose in their relationship. Therapy ends once couples have reduced the behaviors that predict a split and are able to effectively use conflict management tools without the therapist. However, during the first year or two after therapy ends, follow-up sessions are recommended at six-month intervals to reinforce the skills learned in therapy and prevent relapse into negative conflict patterns.

Gottman Method Intensive & Marathon Therapy Packages: *Intensive* and "*Marathon*" *Therapy Packages* are available for couples who need to get help immediately, whose schedules do not allow for weekly therapy sessions, or who do not live in the vicinity of a therapist trained in the Gottman method. "*Marathon*" therapy is an intensive approach that helps couples move more quickly through their issues. Like the typical Gottman Method of Couples' Therapy, our marathon therapy packages all begin with an assessment before progressing into therapeutic interventions. For full-day packages, the first session is scheduled to begin at 10:00 a.m., and lasts 2 ½ hours, followed by an hour break for lunch. The afternoon session begins after lunch and continues for 2 ½ hours, for a total of 5 hours of intensive therapy. Intermittent breaks are provided throughout each session, and couples will receive a take-home package of tools and supplemental materials. The following intensive options are offered:

1. **Half-Day Assessment Package (4 hours).** This half-day intensive is ideal for couples who want to get a quick start to the weekly therapy process by completing the assessment portion all at once. The assessment package includes the following:
 - Access to online Relationship Checkup Questionnaires
 - Interview with the couple - 90 min
 - Interview with each partner individually- 60 min each
 - Intervention plan prepared by Dr. Curry (60 min post-session)
 - Feedback session to be scheduled separately
2. **One-Day Intensive Therapy Package (5 hours + breaks).** This full-day intensive package is intended for couples who have already completed the assessment process and who want to work through issues in therapy as quickly as possible. The package includes:
 - 5 hours of intensive therapy
 - A take-home package of tools and supplemental materials

3. *Two-Day Assessment & Intensive Therapy Package (10 hours + breaks)*. Intended for couples who want to complete the assessment quickly and make rapid progress through their issues. This package includes:
 - All items in the Half-Day Assessment Package
 - Plus 6 ½ hours of intensive therapy
 - A take-home package of tools and supplemental materials
4. *Premarital Intensive Package (5 hours + lunch break)*. This full-day intensive is intended for couples who are hoping to strengthen their bond prior to marriage. It includes 5 hours of skill-building and relationship strengthening exercises to help couples increase intimacy and closeness before the wedding and preparing them to successfully manage future challenges. The premarital package includes a take home package of tools and supplemental material.

Limitations to couples' therapy: Gottman Method Couples' Therapy has been shown to have benefits for couples. It often leads to a significant reduction of feelings of distress, resolution of specific problems, and a stronger relationship. In many cases, it has moved couples from thinking of ending their relationship to recommitting to it in new ways. However, it is important that you also understand the risks involved. Despite the "nuts and bolts" approach of this method, you will be asked to address areas of difficulty in your relationship. As a result, you and/or your partner may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, loneliness, and helplessness. Your therapy may also involve recalling unpleasant aspects of your history together and/or individually. Difficulties between the two of you may become temporarily amplified. Additionally, difficulties with people important to you may also occur, family secrets may be disclosed, and despite our best efforts, therapy may not work out well. Couples' therapy will only be effective in cases where both partners put in a good faith effort to work on their problems and their relationship. Deliberate dishonesty or deceit, unwillingness to introspect and take responsibility for one's actions, or lack of interest and motivation to engage in the couples' therapy process by one or both partners will undermine the therapy. Thus, we can make no guarantees about how the therapy process will be for the two of you specifically or what the outcome will be for your relationship. In addition, couples' therapy is not advisable in the following situations:

- If there is active alcohol and/or drug addiction on the part of either or both partners, from either partner's perspective
- If there is serious violence in your relationship, threats by one or both partners that serious violence might occur, or fear of such serious violence on the part of one or both partners
- If either partner currently has an untreated major mental illness (schizophrenia, recurrent psychotic depression, or bipolar/manic-depressive illness.) This does not include past, successfully treated psychotic episodes (e.g. post-partum depression with psychosis).
- If there is an undisclosed, current affair that you are not willing to disclose (such secrets predict marital therapy failure)
- If either partner is currently experiencing suicidal or homicidal thoughts, or has a history of serious harm inflicted on him/herself or another person

Cancellation policies: Your appointment time is reserved especially for you. The practice of charging for no-shows or late cancellations (or retaining the deposit in the case of intensive package appointments) is standard practice in the field, and takes into account that you are not just paying for services rendered, but reserving a time slot which your therapist will not be able to offer to someone else on short notice. If you are prevented from attending your scheduled session, you understand that you will be charged the full cost of the appointment or that your retainer will be forfeited if notice of the cancellation is not received by our office within the following time frames:

- *Gottman couples' therapy appointments-* At least 48 *business hours* (2 business days) prior

- *Half day intensive package appointments*- at least one calendar week (7 days) prior
- *One & two-day intensive packages*- at least two calendar weeks (14 days) prior

Confidentiality: When you attend sessions with a psychologist, the information you share is protected by strict confidentiality laws enforced both by the California Board of Psychology and California state law. Without your written consent and permission, we cannot reveal whether or not you are a client of the Curry Psychology Group, nor can we discuss any information from our sessions with a third party.

The following are exceptions to this rule:

- If one of you pose an imminent danger to yourself, your partner, or a third person, we are allowed to disclose information to law enforcement personnel or hospital staff to keep you safe and coordinate your care.
- If you talk about events that lead us to believe that a child under the age of 18 or an elderly or disabled person is at risk of emotional, physical or sexual abuse; neglect; or exploitation; we are required by law to make a report to California Child or Adult Protective Services.
- If a Judge orders us to release information or if we are required to respond to a lawfully issued subpoena.

The couple is the client: When you attend couples therapy sessions, the couple is considered “the client,” and your mental health records therefore belong to both of you. This means that except in the circumstances outlined above, we will require a written consent from both of you to disclose any information from your record to a third party.

Litigation limitation: The ethics and rules of our profession preclude us from serving in a dual-role of therapist and evaluator, meaning that our role as your therapist prevents us from providing a formal evaluation that would render an opinion for legal or disability purposes. Furthermore, due to the private nature of the therapeutic process, it is agreed that this process should be protected and should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to divorce and custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc.), neither you, nor your attorney, nor anyone else acting on your behalf will call on our clinicians to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the psychotherapy records be requested. If we are ordered to provide testimony on your behalf, you agree to pay a fee of \$300 per hour to include all time spent on correspondence, record review, document preparation, travel to and from Court, and wait time at court.

Between-Session Contact: Please contact the office at 949-258-9777 with administrative or scheduling questions. On weekdays, we will typically return administrative calls within 24 hours. We do not discuss clinical matters by phone or without an appointment. In the event of a clinical emergency, such as acute thoughts of harming oneself or others or experiencing a traumatic life event, you may leave a message on your provider’s confidential voicemail indicating the nature of the emergency, and your provider will return your call as soon as possible. If you feel you are in imminent danger to yourself or others or if you feel that your health is at risk, please visit your nearest emergency room; dial 9-1-1; or call the National Crisis Lifeline day or night for free immediate support at 1-800-273-8255.

E-mail and/or text message appointment notifications: When appointments are scheduled, automatic email and text reminders of your appointment will be sent to the e-mail and phone number you used when scheduling your first appointment. *By signing this consent form, you agree to receive these notifications, and understand that email and text is not a confidential medium for transmitting health information.*

Termination by the therapist: We reserve the right to terminate treatment under certain conditions which compromise our ability to provide effective services, the client's ability to benefit from services, or when it is legally and/or ethically appropriate to do so. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Three missed appointments or late-cancellations within a six-month period
- Non-adherence to the treatment plan
- Non-compliance with practice policies & procedures
- Refusal to accept recommendations for a higher level of or supplemental care
- Behaviors that are disrespectful, devaluing, threatening, or otherwise inappropriate toward the provider, staff, other clients, or any persons present in the building
- Misrepresentation or omission of pertinent clinical information
- Non-payment of fees

No secrets: As couples' therapists who are entrusted with information from both partners in a relationship, we have a policy of "No Secrets", which means that we cannot promise to protect secrets of either partner from the other person, especially if the secret is harmful or destructive to the process of the therapy itself or undermines the agreed upon intention of the therapy.

We, the client, understand and consent to the above terms, and agree to initiate treatment.

Client Signature

Date

Client Name

Client Signature

Date

Client Name



Permission for Digitally Recording Couples Therapy Sessions

Video feedback is utilized as a primary tool in Gottman Method Couples therapy. This means that therapy sessions will be video recorded and certain exercises and dialogues will be reviewed from time-to-time. By reviewing the recordings in session, we can “stop action” and process how each partner might approach a discussion in a more productive way. Viewing the recordings also enables you to witness your progress as your relationship becomes more satisfying.

In addition to in-session use, your therapist may use brief segments of video recordings to receive consultation from Drs. John or Julie Gottman; Dr. Nancy Young, a certified master-trainer in the Gottman method, and/or another assigned Gottman master-trainer consultant. Case consultation is an important feature of Gottman therapy that assures quality care and continuing education among Gottman therapists. If a segment of a video recording in which you are featured is reviewed, your name will remain confidential at all times. Furthermore, all matters discussed in consultation will remain completely confidential within the aforementioned Gottman Institute Staff. Video recordings are not a part of your clinical record and will be erased when they are no longer needed for in-session feedback or consultative purposes.

Video recordings are the property of Curry Psychology Group and will remain in our possession or stored in locked facilities at all times. Copies may be sent to the Gottman Institute for the purposes noted above. Should you wish to review the recordings for any reason, we will arrange a session to do so.

Clients' Agreement

I understand and accept the conditions of this statement and give my permission to have my therapy sessions videotaped or digitally recorded. I understand I may revoke this permission in writing at any time but until I do so it shall remain in full force and effect until the purposes stated above are completed.

Client Signature

Date

Client Signature

Date



Dr. Shannon J. Curry, PsyD MSCp

Curry Psychology Group
200 Newport Center Drive
Suite 204
Newport Beach, CA 92660

T. 949.258.9777
F. 949.258.9749

Agreement to Pay for Psychological Services

Cancellation policies: Your appointment time is reserved especially for you. The practice of charging for no-shows or late cancellations (or retaining the deposit in the case of intensive package appointments) is standard practice in the field, and takes into account that you are not just paying for services rendered, but reserving your provider's time during which alternative bookings cannot be scheduled. You therefore understand that you will be charged the full cost of the appointment (or that your deposit will be forfeited) if notice of an appointment change is not received by our office within the following time frames:

- *Gottman couples' therapy appointments-* At least 48 business hours (2 business days) prior
- *Half-day intensive package appointments-* at least one calendar week (7 days) prior
- *One & two-day intensive packages-* at least two calendar weeks (14 days) prior

Please contact the front office at **949-258-9777** to make changes to any upcoming appointment. Note that a cancellation fee is not eligible for reimbursement by insurance.

Payment Policy: You or your payer will be charged at the time of each appointment according to the fees outlined in the attached fee schedule. For intensive packages, a deposit will be collected at the time the appointment is scheduled. The deposit will be applied toward the appointment fee when the appointment has been attended. We are in-network with Tricare West military insurance. We also bill out-of-network insurance plans with a deposit for the full service fee. Credit card information will be obtained at your first appointment with the Curry Psychology Group and automatic payments can be arranged for future sessions. Acceptable payment methods include credit card and cash.

To check your out-of-network insurance benefits, we recommend that clients contact their insurer at the number listed on the back of their insurance card to ask the following questions:

1. Does my plan include out-of-network benefits for mental health/behavioral healthcare?
2. What is the maximum allowed amount if I receive individual psychotherapy, service code 90837, at an office, with a psychologist?
3. What percentage of the allowed amount does my plan pay?
4. Do I have an insurance deductible that I would have to pay before my out-of-network benefits are provided?

Tricare West/Military Beneficiaries: Clients with Tricare West will be charged the appropriate copayment or deductible fee (as shown to our office from Tricare West's eligibility database) at the time of each appointment. If, after charging for the copayment or deductible fee, the office comes to know through your insurance's Explanation of Benefits that the client's amount due is greater or less than the amount originally charged to the client, the office will bill the client for the balance or refund the excess to your patient account as applicable. The client accepts financial responsibility for all eligible services that are not paid by their insurance plan within 30 days of the date of service.

Gottman Method Couples' Therapy Fee Schedule

ASSESSMENT PHASE

INITIAL INTERVIEW WITH COUPLE – 90 MIN <i>- Includes online completion of the Relationship Checkup Questionnaires</i>	399.
INTERVIEW WITH EACH INDIVIDUAL PARTNER – 60 – 75 MIN EACH	249./299.
ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK/INITIAL COUPLES' THERAPY INTERVENTION – 90 MIN	399.

THERAPY/INTERVENTION PHASE

(Standard appointment time is 90 min)

COUPLES' THERAPY/INTERVENTION SESSION – 75 MIN	329.
COUPLES' THERAPY/INTERVENTION SESSION – 90 MIN	399.
COUPLES' THERAPY/INTERVENTION SESSION – 120 MIN	529.

“MARATHON” COUPLES' THERAPY PACKAGES (weekend scheduling available)

NOTE: All intensive packages require a deposit at the time of booking.

<p style="text-align: center;">EXPRESS ASSESSMENT PACKAGE (3 ½ HOURS + SHORT BREAK) <i>Ideal for couples who want a quick-start to the therapy process.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online Completion of Relationship Checkup Questionnaires 120 min (pre-session) <li style="padding-left: 40px;">- Couple's interview - 90 min <li style="padding-left: 20px;">- Individual interview with each partner – 60 - 75 min each <li style="padding-left: 20px;">- Intervention plan prepared by Dr. Curry – 60 min (post-session)* <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;"><i>*(Feedback session to be scheduled separately)</i></p>	1099. \$549. <i>deposit</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">COMPLETE EXPRESS ASSESSMENT PACKAGE (5 HOURS + LUNCH BREAK) <i>For couples who want the fastest start to therapy, this package allows them to complete the entire assessment phase in one day.</i></p> <p><i>Includes all components of the Express Assessment Package (above), plus the 90-minute feedback session. Dr. Curry will evaluate the couples' assessment results and complete the treatment plan during the couples' lunch break, after which feedback on the couples' strengths and areas for intervention will be discussed.</i></p>	1699. \$849. <i>deposit</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">PREMARITAL INTENSIVE PACKAGE (5 HOURS + LUNCH BREAK) <i>Intended for couples who are hoping to strengthen their bond prior to marriage.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 hours of skill-building to learn how to prevent future relationship issues <li style="padding-left: 20px;">- A take home package of tools and supplemental material 	1599. \$799. <i>deposit</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">ONE-DAY INTENSIVE THERAPY PACKAGE (5 HOURS + LUNCH BREAK) <i>Intended for couples who have already completed the assessment process and who want to address issues as quickly as possible.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 hours of intensive therapy 	1799. \$899. <i>deposit</i>

- A take home package of tools and supplemental materials	
TWO-DAY EXPRESS ASSESSMENT & INTENSIVE THERAPY PACKAGE (10 HOURS + BREAKS) <i>Intended for couples who want to start the assessment and therapy process as quickly as possible.</i> - 3 ½ Hour Assessment Package plus 6 ½ hours of intensive therapy - A take home package of tools and supplemental materials	3599. \$1799. deposit
OTHER SERVICES	
BETWEEN-SESSION PHONE CONTACT - Per 15 min	50.
LETTERS AND FORM COMPLETION - Per 30 min	150.

By signing below the Client or Guardian indicates their understanding and agreement to the Curry Psychology Group's payment policies and fees as outlined in this document.

Signature of Client

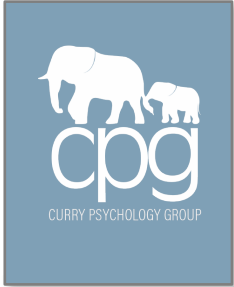
Date

Printed Name

Signature of Client

Date

Printed Name



Curry Psychology Group
200 Newport Center Drive
Suite 204
Newport Beach, CA 92660

T. 949.258.9777
F. 949.258.9749
www.currygroup.org
contactus@currygroup.org

Credit Card Authorization Form

Please enter the card information you wish to keep on file for automatic deduction of your service fee.
The following credit and debit cards are accepted: Visa, MasterCard, Discover and AMEX.

Client Name: _____

Credit/Debit Card Information:

Card Type (check one): Visa MasterCard Discover AMEX

Name on Credit Card: _____

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Security Code (3 or 4-digit code on card): _____

Billing Address:

Name (if different than on card): _____

Street: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email for Invoices: _____

Authorization for Payment of (check all that apply):

50% Deposit for Gottman Intensive Package (enter deposit amount): \$_____

Gottman couples' therapy charges outlined on the payment agreement form

I, the cardholder, authorize fees charged by Curry Psychology Group in accordance with the billing agreement to be deducted from the credit or debit card listed above.

Cardholder Signature

Date