



THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP COMMITMENT CONTRACT

Partner A: _____ Commitment Level (1-10): _____

Partner B: _____ Commitment Level (1-10): _____

1. We agree to commit to couple counseling for the next _____ weeks / months, beginning _____ through _____.
2. We agree to sign mutual *Authorization to Release Information Forms* for each other so that our therapist is able to communicate freely with each of us about issues pertinent to our individual growth and our growth as a couple.
3. We agree not to cancel or change session times unless there is an absolute emergency.
4. We agree to share the cost of our couple counseling in a fair and equitable manner.
5. We agree that during the period of our couple counseling, neither one of us is to use or infer he or she is leaving the relationship as a way of dealing with conflict or punishing the other partner.
6. We agree that during the period of our couple counseling, neither one of us is to use or threaten to use any form of violence as a way of manipulating or controlling our partner because we understand that family violence creates an unsafe environment for couple counseling. This includes any form of violence such as verbal abuse, financial maneuvering, sexual coercion, or physical assault. It also includes threats to harm children, possessions, or pets as well isolating people from their support systems. If this should happen we agree to alert our therapist immediately and the appropriateness for continued couple counseling will be re-evaluated at our next session.
7. We agree that during the period of our couple counseling, we will attend our couple counseling free from the influence of alcohol and/or drugs for at least 24 hours prior to our appointment. We also understand that the use of alcohol and/or drugs at other times during the week most likely plays a role in the nature of our conflict and we agree to keep our therapist apprised of our patterns of alcohol and drug use.
8. We agree that during the period of our couple counseling we will practice listening to each other (not interrupting), will speak respectfully to each other (no name calling), and will speak quietly to each other (no yelling). We understand our therapist will redirect us immediately if we forget these agreements.
9. We agree that the goal of our couple counseling is to find the best outcome for our relationship and that this outcome could include: 1) leaving things as they are; 2) separating or terminating our relationship; or 3) changing significant aspects of ourselves and our interactions with one another so that our relationship can in turn change. We understand that our actions and behaviors toward one another from this point on will

Revised: 11/5/10



reflect which of these outcomes we are committed to as much as our stated outcome. Our stated outcome at this point is:

10. We agree to incorporate the following elements into our lives outside the couple counseling and understand that each of these elements will be further explained below:
 - a. Weekly Family Meeting
 - b. Date Time

11. We agree that during the time in which we are in couple counseling we will approach conflict and other difficulties in communication by using the following three steps:
 - a. Step #1: We will try to resolve conflicts and miscommunications when they arise by using the communication and conflict management skills learned in therapy.
 - b. Step #2: If we are unable to reach resolution at the time of the conflict, we agree to table the conflict until our Weekly Family Meeting, at which time we can attempt to resolve the issue more productively.
 - c. Step #3: If we are unable to reach resolution at the Weekly Family Meeting, we agree to once again table the conflict until our next Couple Session, at which time we can enlist our therapist in helping us resolve the issue more productively.

12. We agree that during the next _____ weeks / months, we will have a weekly family meeting between the two of us. The meeting is to be at least 30 minutes and no longer than one hour in length. It should be at a consistent time, day, and location. A neutral location is recommended (i.e. not someone's house).
 - a. Suggested meeting time: _____
 - b. Suggested meeting day: _____
 - c. Suggested meeting location: _____

13. We agree that the Weekly Family Meeting needs to include all of the following:
 - a. A check in about each person as an individual during the week including one victory you can claim and one challenge you are facing in your personal life
 - b. A check in about the relationship during the week including one victory you can claim as a couple and one challenge you are facing as a couple
 - c. Follow up on any unresolved conflicts or miscommunications
 - d. Appreciation for something you noticed about your partner during the week

14. We agree that during the next _____ weeks / months, we will set aside one time per week that will be our *Date Time*. This time is a chance for us to come together in a fun and playful way. We agree to put away conflict for this time so that we can focus on enjoying each other's company and remembering the reasons we fell in love.

15. We agree that during our couple sessions, the Weekly Family Meeting, and especially during the week we will use the following resources from the *Successful Couple Tool Kit*:
 - a. Using "I Messages"
 - b. Using "And" Instead of "But"
 - c. Using Reflective Listening Skills

Revised: 11/5/10



- d. Using Responsibility rather than Blame
- e. Using Eye Contact and Facing (in other words, “show up!”)
- f. Telling the “Microscopic Truth”
- g. Focusing on your own experience instead of trying to control the other person
- h. Avoiding Superlatives or Extreme Statements (The best/The worst; The most/The least; Everything/Nothing; and Always/Never)
- i. Avoiding the Drama Triangle
 - i. Victim
 - ii. Rescuer
 - iii. Persecutor
- j. Using the Six Healing Phrases
 - i. I’m Sorry
 - ii. Thank You
 - iii. I Love You
 - iv. I Need Help
 - v. That’s Not Enough
 - vi. Stop!
- k. Using Structured and Practiced Time Outs
 - i. Call the “Time Out”
 - ii. Respect the Time Out by separating for the specific amount of time (one hour is generally a good place to start)
 - iii. Use the time during the Time Out to reflect on what went wrong. Which skills could you have used that you didn’t? What can you take responsibility for? What is the Microscopic Truth? How did you get pulled into the Drama Triangle? How can you get out
 - iv. Get back together after the Time Out and try to solve the problem again using the insights you discovered during the Time Out.

16. We agree that that during this time, _____ (Partner A) will live and/or sleep _____ (where) and _____ (Partner B) will live and/or sleep _____ (where).

17. We agree that if there is anyone or anything else sexually, emotionally, or otherwise involved in our relationship that is cause for concern that we will:

18. We agree that during this time sexual or intimate relations will be:

19. We understand that conflict can be healthy if approached in a healthy manner. This includes focusing on relating/understanding rather than on being right or wrong.



20. We understand that we can renegotiate any part of this agreement at any time if needed or desired or add additional agreements in the space below:

We, the undersigned, have read and understand the preceding information and agree to all the conditions of this contract:

Partner A Name: _____

Partner A Signature: _____ Date: _____

Partner B Name: _____

Partner B Signature: _____ Date: _____

Therapist/Witness: _____ Date: _____