

February, 2007

Love: Principles of Healthy Relationships

In the month of February, our focus frequently turns to the theme of “love”. Dr. John Gottman, a premier marriage researcher/therapist, has authored a book I frequently recommend to couples who would like to enhance their relationship. Below is an outline of the 7 key principles Dr. Gottman’s research shows can have a positive influence for couples wanting to develop a more loving relationship.*

The Seven Principles for Making Marriages Work

By John M. Gottman, Ph.D. and Nan Silver

- 1. Enhance Your Love Maps:** (“Couples who have detailed love maps of each other’s world are far better prepared to cope with stressful events and conflict.”)
- 2. Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration:** (focus thoughts on positive; “I appreciate/cherish this about you”; history and philosophy of marriage)
- 3. Turn Toward Each Other, Instead of Away:** (connect-turn toward)
- 4. Let Your Partner Influence You:** (by accepting partner’s influence, open attitude heightens positive by strengthening the friendship)
- 5. Solve Your Solvable Problems:** (soften startup, receive/make repair attempts, soothe self and other, compromise, tolerate faults)
- 6. Overcome Gridlock:** (dreams acknowledged and respected)
- 7. Create Shared Meaning:** (conviction of rituals, roles, goals, symbols)

*Three other books I also recommend: High Conflict Couples, Dr. Alan Fruzzetti; Passionate Marriage, Dr. David Schnarch; The Road Less Traveled, Dr. M. Scott Peck.

-“New Skills For Living”: KOLOTV, Sunday, February 18, 2007, interview with Professor Tom Harrison on “Therapy: Helping People Change”.

