Therapy-on-Sea

Power Play Reconnection Activities

Trust & Connection

- Cuddle time – Turn off the distractions and simply cuddle. When we hug each other, oxytocin is released. This chemical, also known as the cuddle hormone, is associated with lower blood pressure and heart rate

  Sneak this exercise whenever is suitable for you – in the morning or evening while watching a movie.

  The idea is to set aside time to practice it daily**.**

  It shows physical tenderness and helps to improve intimacy. This exercise is recommended in sex therapy as it can increase the erotic potential.

- The high and low – Simply put it is a check in exercise. This exercise is used in couples counselling to increase empathy and understanding. The couple take it in turn to share the highs and lows of the day. Both allowing equal time to speak. Whilst one is talking the other using active listening.

- Honesty hour – This is a "couple exercise" that should be done once a week, face to face. Couples will have an hour of honesty where they speak frankly, but kindly, about the state of their relationship.
  Partners will then be allowed to talk about improvements they would like to see in the marriage or speak of things that are bothering them. The listening partner agrees not to get overly offended or overreact.
  This arrangement allows both partners the opportunity to listen and to be heard. The calm atmosphere of this honesty hour check-in should encourage partners to speak freely to one another with a view to solving a problem, not attacking one another. Think solution focused, us against the problem not us against each other.

- Trust Fall – Do a trust fall in the therapy room. A trust fall is a trust-building exercise that may seem small but fosters large results.
  To do a trust fall, one partner stands behind their blindfolded spouse. The blindfolded spouse will then deliberately fall backward, and their partner will catch them.
  It sounds like an easy game, but it requires trust and blind faith in the blindfolded spouse that their partner will catch them. This may cause the blindfolded partner to turn around, fearing that their partner will miss.
  This exercise builds teamwork, trust, and fosters a feeling of safety and security in the relationship.
  Note: When doing any kind of exercise like this, always practice safety by choosing a physically safe place to conduct this exercise.

- Mirror work – Standing next to each other or behind each other and stare at each other's reflections. Inevitably there will be laughter and smiles, speaking out loud about the features they love about each other will build connection.

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- A weekly check in – This exercise is a good way to slow down, freeze time and reconnect.

  This exercise will only work if it is 1-2-1, no distractions and not children around.

  Allow up to 30 minutes over a drink or food. Some examples of questions are below

  - **How do you feel today?**
  - **How do you feel in our relationship?**
  - **Is there anything from the previous week which you feel is unresolved and needs to be discussed?**
  - **Do you feel loved?**
  - **What can I do to make you feel more loved?**

  Even though direct, these questions are meaningful and will inspire the couple to have a productive discussion. It is quite important to have these conversations regularly and treat them like as a non-negotiable.

- Icebreakers – Cringy as it may be Icebreakers work. There is always something new to learn or re-remember. Suggest that the couple take turn to ask some icebreaker questions:
  - **Tell me something weird about yourself**
  - **Tell me your favourite cereal brand**
  - **Tell me a childhood story**
  - **Tell me something embarrassing from when you were younger**

Calming down

- The 7 breath-forehead connection exercise – This close breathing exercise can be practiced anytime to feel in sync with each other and focus on the present moment.

  Lie next to each other and face each other. You should put your foreheads together without touching your nose or chins.

  The idea is to synchronize breath with the partners. At first, try to do 7 in a row. If it feels good, and it will extend it to 20 or 30 breaths. Prolong it for as much as it feels good and repeat any time there is a need to feel present and connected to each other.

- Unplug from technology – One of the best couples therapy exercises is to unplug from technology and have a talking session.

  Smartphones and devices are a great way to connect to the world, but they have a surprisingly bad effect on relationships. After all, how can anyone give undivided attention when checking a phone every ten minutes?

For this exercise, eliminate distractions such as television, video games, and smartphones for 10 minutes a day. Use these 10 minutes to talk to one another. Go back and forth telling expressing the things you love and appreciate about them.

- Creating a pause moment – Putting in a contract when things are flooded and over emotional and reactional. For 20 minutes and do separate things, anything that they both find relaxing.

Future & Fun

- Create a list of goals that you want for yourself and for the relationship. The categories form the wheel of life are a good starting point as they cover the most important areas of life.
  - **Health**
  - **Finances**
  - **Career**
  - **Hobby/Fun activities**
  - **Social interactions**
  - **Intellectual activities**

Friends and family

After you agree on which categories you want to work on, set goals for each of the areas. Agree on the timeline and put the goals somewhere visible.

- Create a bucket list – Happy couples are kinder to one another. Couples who try new things together build trust and cooperation skills and boost happiness levels.

  One of the best relationship-building activities is by trying new experiences together. Create a bucket list of things is a perfect way to do this.

  Include smaller and larger goals as this allows the couple to have something to look forward to but also something in the here and now.

  Try to do at least one of the activities each month, no matter how busy life gets.

- Music sharing – Music can be deeply personal and meaningful. Suggest setting aside some time and share the music without any judgment. You can each pick three songs that have high significance for you and explain why.

  Any couple therapists would tell you that this can lead to meaningful insights about each other and the relationship itself. This kind of sharing leads to deeper levels of understanding. Remind each couple to be gentle, this can be vulnerable work as each couple are risking a lot by showing something so personal.

- Date Nights/Outings – No matter the age or duration of the romantic relationship, all couples will benefit from regularly date nights. It is a great opportunity to reconnect emotionally and sexually in a fresh environment. Consider it as one of the fun and romantic couple counselling exercises.

  The closer a couple is, the better their communication and the physical relationship will be. Whatever happens on date night it is about focusing on each other and having a great time.

- Rage rooms/spaces where you can healthily express pent-up frustration

- Write an appreciation list – Some of the best couples therapy exercises have to do with restructuring how you think and feel about your partner. A great way to do this is with an appreciation list.

  Partners will write down five things their partner does that they appreciate, followed by five things their partner could be doing to make them feel more loved, secure, or appreciated in the relationship.

  By writing down and meditating on their spouse's good qualities first, partners will be able to focus on the good in the relationship before looking at ways to improve love and communication in a constructive way, rather than accusatory.

- Helpful hands – This fun couple activity involves the body and the mind. The couple have to work together to achieve a common goal, however, to make it spicy they each have an arm tied behind their back

  They need to communicate directions and actions concisely so that, with their free hand, each of them is working to achieve a goal. Their synchronicity is necessary for obtaining the objective.

  The activities can vary, and anything can be used such as buttoning a shirt, zipping a zipper, tying a shoe, or clasping a necklace.