

## PRIOR TO THE FIRST COUPLE MEETING WITH TODD HARVEY

Between the two of you, please bring one filled out copy of General Information (this page) and one copy of office policies signed by each of you (page 2 and 3).

A description of my approach is on page 4 and 5.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME		
AGE		
PROFESSION (WORK)		
Phone numbers		
Email address		

Address (or, if living separately, addresses)

Length of time together: \_\_\_\_\_ Years married (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Names, sex, and ages of children

Other information you think I should know

# OFFICE POLICIES

## Todd Harvey MFT

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** All information disclosed within sessions and the written records pertaining to those sessions are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone without your (client's) written permission, except where disclosure is required by law (which would include child abuse, elder abuse, preventing a murder, etc).

**When Disclosure Is Required By Law:** Some of the circumstances where disclosure is required by the law are: where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent or elder abuse or neglect; where a client presents a danger to self, to others, to property, or is gravely disabled. Also, if you place your mental status at issue in litigation initiated by you, the defendant may have the right to obtain the psychotherapy records and/or testimony by me.

**Between Partners In Couples Therapy:** If you are coming to me for couples therapy, I want you to know that anything that gets raised in any private conversation with me is not secret but may be disclosed to your partner at my discretion. I will disclose it or help you disclose it if I think it is helpful for your relationship.

**Emergencies:** If there is an emergency during our work together, or in the future after termination where I become concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring someone else, or about you receiving proper psychiatric care, I will do whatever I can within the limits of the law, to prevent you from injuring yourself or others and to ensure that you receive the proper medical care.

**Litigation Limitation:** Due to the nature of the therapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters which may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to divorce and custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc.), neither you (client's) nor your attorney's, nor anyone else acting on your behalf will call on me to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the psychotherapy records be requested.

**If/When I write a book:** I learn a great deal from experiences I have with my clients and plan on sharing with other therapists and other couples with written and online resources. If I share information about any of my clients in these resources I create, I will definitely modify, and withhold any information that could be used to directly identify who you are.

**Consultation:** I consult regularly with other professionals regarding my clients; however, client's name or other identifying information is never mentioned. The client's identity remains completely anonymous, and confidentiality is fully maintained.

**PAYMENTS AND INSURANCE:** Clients are expected to pay the standard fee at the beginning of each session. My fees are as follows:

\$250 for 50 minutes for sessions

\$375 for 80 minutes for sessions

However, you will need to file for reimbursement on your own. I will provide you with a receipt for service to submit to your insurance company. You can find forms to fill out at:

<http://toddharveymft.com/resources/forms/>

**CANCELLATION:** a minimum of seven days (7 days) notice is required for re-scheduling or canceling an appointment. Unless we reach a different agreement, the full fee (even if there is a reduced fee that is agreed upon) will be charged for sessions missed without such notification. I will charge for no-shows for the first session. After that, there is no charge for the first such miss. If there are a number of cancellations within a 6 month period, the full fee will be charged even if you give 7 days notice,

**I have read the above policies, understand them and agree to comply with them:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Client

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Client

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## COUPLE THERAPY WITH TODD HARVEY

**Brief description:** Fighting and withdrawing are inevitable in a couple relationship, but partners can become increasingly skillful in reducing their frequency, duration, and damage, and even turning them into opportunities. In couple therapy, I speak with and for partners, translating their fighting or withdrawing into intimate conversations. My goal is to help you restore your attachment bond. I help both of you to pathologize the negative dance you get in rather than each other. I then help create a safe place for you both to communicate your underlying attachment longings that are often hidden behind your complaints (or withdraws). I help you nurture empathy and restore your attachment longing. I also help you pay attention and be responsive to both your own and your partner's nervous systems. Most of the damage that we co-create in our relationships is when we are in states of overwhelm. By learning how to self-regulate and prioritize co-regulation over "being right", we awaken our already resourced parts of our brains that are already capable of nurturing and love.

**Longer description:** The quality of life in a relationship depends on the couple's ability to cope with their inevitable periods of fighting (quietly or loudly) and withdrawing (not talking about what mainly concerns them). Couples typically come to a therapy session in the midst of one of these two states. In either case, I move next to one of you and speak as if I were that person talking to the other. If you are fighting, I attempt to translate your angry and defensive comments into confiding ones. If you are withdrawing—that is, not talking about your feelings—I speculate about what these feelings might be and ask if my guess is correct. My goal is to turn fights or withdrawal into intimate conversations—to turn what is endangering the relationship into a means for deepening it.

### Longer description yet:

- In addition to whatever specific issues you both are struggling with (money, sex, children, in-laws), there is generally the added and often more significant problem of how you talk—or don't talk—about these issues: you fight or withdraw.
- *Fighting* is a deadlocked exchange in which each partner feels too unheard to listen, too misunderstood to be understanding, and too stung by what the other just said to do anything other than sting back.
- *Withdrawing* is a devitalized exchange in which partners don't talk about what most concerns them and may not talk much at all.
- *Intimacy*, the alternative to fighting and withdrawing, occurs when partners confide to each other the main things on their minds—what's "alive" for them in a way that works out, that is, that leaves each feeling closer rather than hurt, angry, defensive, or distant.
- Intimacy, this alternative to fighting and withdrawing, can be created by the way partners recover from fighting or withdrawing, that is, by means of a *recovery conversation* in which, unlike the fight or withdrawal, you confide feelings, make acknowledgments, reach out to the other, and look at things from the other's point of view.
- In such a conversation, you create a meta-level, a bird's eye view, a perch, a helicopter look at the traffic, a vantage point above the fray, a *platform*. You operate as joint troubleshooters talking in a dispassionate, compassionate, and intimate way *about* your fighting, withdrawing, and lack of intimacy. You develop a shared picture of your relationship—how it is special as well as its trouble spots.
- Every couple has its own set of unsolvable problems that they grapple with throughout the relationship. Creating a platform—operating as joint troubleshooters—is the premier way to deal with such problems. Operating as troubleshooters, you commiserate over your unsolvable problems and put them in perspective.

- In couple therapy, I translate the partners' fights and withdrawals into conversations. I show them how to construct a platform from which to hold recovery conversations that enable them to turn problems into occasions for intimacy—to turn what is endangering the relationship into a means for deepening it.

**Techniques and Modalities that I use (which are more thoroughly described on my website [www.todddharveymft.com](http://www.todddharveymft.com)):**

- I help couples “emotionally listen” that is: listen to the emotional content, listen to the actual person, pay attention to the non-verbals, listen to the longing underneath the complaint that is not verbally being articulated, listen and care about the nervous system and heart of your partner. In order to do this, we explicitly take turns on who is the “anchor” – the one who is loving and listening (even if they totally disagree with the content), and who gets to be “the loved one”.
- In order for this to work, at times, I take charge of the session and interrupt the cycle that is happening and help you both regulate your nervous systems and co-regulate (help you calm your partner’s nervous system too). This entails exploring how eye contact, touch, slowly breathing together, soft words, etc. can promote safety.
- I am inspired by the EFT (Emotional Focused Couples Therapy) It is a model that is statistically validated with a success rate of about 80% whereas most couples therapy is successful about 30% of the time. EFT informs me in how I prioritize the order of the work in couples therapy. The therapy is more successful if the person with the more withdrawing (and abandoning) / self-focused relational style is attended to earlier in the therapy than the person with the more pursuing and at times complaining / blaming relational style. I believe that EFT falls short in not teaching couples how to love in a way that more experientially lands on the nervous system level.
- I deviate from EFT, in that I am super-engaged in demonstrating, orchestrating, and creating live experiments that promote regulation of the nervous system and help love to be felt in the body and the heart (not just the mind).
- I am influenced by Jon Eisman’s Re-Creation of the Self model, Hakomi (psychodynamically inspired experientially focused therapy), Rob Fisher, David Deida, and others. What these modalities have in common is the therapist is authentic and engaged rather than passively listening.
- I am also trained in treating trauma (EMDR and The Flash Technique). So, if somebody’s nervous system is in a trauma or over-anxious place (where normal conversations, connection, learning, therapy, etc. are not possible); I help that person out of that state. I also coach on how to get you out of that state yourself. I also have created a super-effective technique that I teach all my couples that allows your partner to be an amazing resource that helps you out of the Trauma (fight/flight) part of the brain and into your pre-frontal cortex which has the ability to be resourced and grounded.
- I believe that since we all have grown up in an imperfect society, we all have developed patterns that pull us out of our Core self and into our Fragments. The Core is capable of considering self and others. The Fragments are learned patterns that helped us get through some BS at some point in our life but currently create collateral damage. I help individuals within the couple to shift into their Core and help heal their partner out of their Fragments. Some of the techniques we do in the room, I teach you how to do on your own couch at home. I honestly believe that some of these techniques, if regularly practiced over 6 months, will heal many attachment wounds and Fragments you got before you met your partner. One of my homework assignments if practiced correctly daily in less than a year will create emotional healing much faster than years of psychodynamic therapy.