RECOMMENDATION HIGHLIGHTS

Self-Help Books
• On improving relationships with communication and cognitive therapy:
  ★★★★☆ Love Is Never Enough by Aaron Beck
  ★★★★ The Relationship Cure by John Gottman and Joan DeClaire
• On the nature and the forms of love:
  ★★★☆ The Art of Loving by Erich Fromm
  ★★★☆ The Triangle of Love by Robert Sternberg
• On improving relationships by understanding yourself and relationships:
  ★★★☆ The Dance of Intimacy by Harriet Lerner
  ★★★☆ The Dance of Connection by Harriet Lerner
  ♦ In the Meantime by Iyanla Vanzant
• On improving relationships by learning effective communication:
  ★★★☆ I Only Say This Because I Love You by Deborah Tannen
• On seeking partners and maintaining a loving relationship:
  ★★★☆ Keeping the Love You Find by Harville Hendrix
• On improving gay and lesbian relationships:
  ♦ Permanent Partners by Betty Berzon

Films
• On changing romantic partners as couples grow old together:
  ★★★ The Four Seasons
• On the complexity and challenge of heterosexual relationships:
  ★★★ When Harry Met Sally

Internet Resources
• On understanding love:
  ★★★★☆ Love Is Great  http://loveisgreat.com
  ★★★★☆ The Nature of Attraction and Love
  http://mentalhelp.net/psyhelp/chap10/chap10d.htm
• On dating:
  ★★★★★ One Straight Male’s Thoughts and Advice on Successful Use of Internet Personals by Dean Esmay
  http://www.deanesmay.com/straight-faq.html
  ★★★☆ Singlescoach  http://www.singlescoach.com/resources.html
• On talking and flirting:
  ★★★★★ Erotic Talk for Lovers and Performers
  http://www.sexuality.org/talk.html

• How automatic negative thinking leads to conflict.
• How partners cognitively distort a relationship, which drives couples apart.

In the last half of the book, Beck presents a number of different cognitive methods to fit the specific needs of couples. The book was written primarily as a self-help guide to improve love relationships, and it remains the highest-rated book in its category. Practical, inspiring, and clear.


Leading researcher John Gottman describes how happiness is based on everyday communication that involves emotion. He says that this happiness depends on “bids” and how other people respond, or fail to respond, to such approaches. Gottman puts forth a five-step program to show readers how to become a master “bidder” in the emotional communications. Numerous case studies, sample dialogues, and self-assessments are included. A superb, research-supported book that would probably have reached five-star status had more psychologists in our studies rated it.


Written for women and about women’s intimate relationships, The Dance of Intimacy weaves a portrait of the current self and relationships that Lerner believes is derived from long-standing relationships with mothers, fathers, and siblings. Drawing on a combination of psychoanalytic and family systems theories, Lerner tells women that, if they are having problems in intimate relationships, they need to explore their upbringing to find clues to the current difficulties. Women learn how to avoid distancing themselves from their families of origin and overreacting to problems. Lerner intelligently tells women that they should balance the I and the we in their lives, and be neither too self-absorbed nor too other-oriented. To explore unhealthy patterns that have been passed down from one generation to the next, Lerner helps women create a “genogram,” a family diagram that goes back to the grandparents or earlier. This is an outstanding self-help book on understanding why close relationships are problematic and how to change them in positive ways. It does not give simple, quick-fix strategies. Lerner accurately avows that change is difficult, but she shows that it is possible.


Continuing the themes of The Dance of Intimacy (reviewed above), psychologist Lerner describes the importance of positively connecting with the people who matter most to us in life. She and tells readers to separate. Individuals face betrayals and

★★★★ Keeping a Relationship: How to Keep Someone You Love in Love (1996) by Harry Hendrix describes relationships and maintains a little slick book positively.

★★★★ The Art of New York: Row.

This philosopher says Fromm, a well-known as different. The relatedness of love is an act of faith, for developing process requiring skills. He stresses the principle of love in the human condition in our national examples. Rather than how society can be a classic, this is an interesting book.

★★★★ I Only Say Dom H.

Tannen explains with their loved ones of conversating more of ample.

★★★★ The Therapeutic in relationships: emotional sharing, quality of a relationship partner and how it has its own time shape, whereas it’s progress. In the
RECOMMENDATION HIGHLIGHTS

Self-Help Books
- On healthy and unhealthy marriage styles:
  ★★★★★ Why Marriages Succeed or Fail by John Gottman
- On solving marital problems and improving the relationship:
  ★★★★★ The Seven Principles for Making Marriages Work by John Gottman and Nan Silver
  ★★★★ Intimate Partners by Maggie Scarf
  ★★★ Divorce Busting by Michele Weiner-Davis
  ★★★ Fighting for Your Marriage by Howard Markman et al.
  ★★★ Reconcilable Differences by Andrew Christensen and Neil Jacobson
- On pastoral marital counseling:
  ♦ Love for a Lifetime by James Dobson

Internet Resources
- On improving your marriage:
  ★★★★★ Relationship Information for Couples http://www.positive-way.com/relation.htm
  ★★★★★ Parenting and Marriage Articles http://www.drheller.com
  ★★★★★ Marriage Mythology http://researchmag.asu.edu/articles/marriage.html
- On rebuilding relationships after extramarital affairs:
  ★★★★★ The Other Woman http://www.gloryb.com

tempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling), and in concluding chapters, four keys to improving a marriage and reversing the spiral are discussed. Gottman's advice is logical, clear, and research-based. Quizzes allow couples to self-identify the status of their marriages. According to our mental health experts, this a very valuable and research-based self-help book.


This outstanding self-help book received very high ratings. Written by leading marriage researcher John Gottman (who also wrote Why Marriages Succeed or Fail, reviewed above) and based on his extensive observations, this book provides a number of positive strategies for work. Gottman turns to solvable problems and-self-care in this category.

★★★★ Intimacy

This book tells the stages of couples in transition. She starts with their children and families, intimates partners often repeat the marriage from stages. Scarf describes marriage and...

★★★★ Getting Divorced

This book is based on childhood centered readers how to homes. In a sensitive, to partners' needs into a mutual superb for maring relationships.

★★★★ Divorce

This book advises on the Author Weiner-says she came to be unhappy after future, and lengthy therapy only four, to five follow to make the
CHANGES THAT WILL IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP

Aimless wandering can be an enjoyable and sometimes profitable activity; however, if you want to accomplish something, you’ll probably find that it’s best not to count on serendipity to save the day. Pilots are required to file a flight plan before taking off. Lenders require a business plan before they lend money. If you haven’t defined goals for your relationship recently, you may find this exercise helpful in getting you started making the changes you are looking for to reduce your depression over the relationship.

1. Between now and your next session, make a list of the things you would like to change in your relationship.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 

2. When you are finished with counseling, what will be different that will make you able to look back on the things you wanted to change and say to yourself, “Getting into counseling and doing the work I did there was one of the best things I’ve ever done for myself and my relationship?”

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
3. What will be, or perhaps has been, the first and smallest sign that change is beginning?

4. When you notice that first change, what can you do to keep the ball rolling?
IDENTIFY YOUR PARTNER'S FEELINGS

Sometimes the simplest solution is to just stop and listen to what your partner is saying and image how he or she could be feeling that way or seeing things in that light.

Try this experiment between now and your next session. Choose three situations when your partner is complaining about your or something you did. Don’t try to defend yourself, correct his/her perceptions, or talk him/her out of his/her feelings. Just put yourself in his/her position and try to hear how he/she understands, interprets, and feels about the situation and imagine how you would feel or act if you were seeing things that way. (If what he/she is saying sounds crazy or unreasonable, consider the possibility that you are missing something and listen more to see if you can understand.) Express that understanding and let him/her know how difficult it must be for him/her, given how he/she is feeling about the situation.

1. Record your experiences for each situation:

   Partner Complaint One: ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

   Partner Complaint Two: ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

   Partner Complaint Three: __________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

2. Why does your partner feel as he/she does about this issue?

   Issue One: ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
Issue Two: ______________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Issue Three: ______________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

3. What did you learn by listening?

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_________________________________________________________________

4. How will your increased understanding of your partner's thoughts and feelings affect your future behavior?

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_________________________________________________________________
INCREASE ROMANTIC BEHAVIORS

It takes ongoing effort to keep a relationship fresh and alive. But what if you’re among the ranks of the “romantically challenged”? For many people, exciting, spontaneous activities are things they observe others doing that make them say, “Why don’t I think of doing those things?” One way to answer this query is to plan some spontaneous activities that break your old mold. Remember that many new activities feel awkward and uncomfortable when you are learning them. If you do this exercise frequently enough, you may find that you start to enjoy being romantic.

1. List 10 or more things that you and your partner have done in the past that he or she considered romantic:

2. Go to the library or bookstore and find one of the many popular books that gives ideas for romantic things to do. Find 10 or more that you would consider doing and write them below:
3. Over the next month, watch and listen to what goes on around you for things that other people do that are signs of caring. Listen to coworkers. Pay attention to television shows. Use any and all sources of information. Note five things you learn:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________

4. Once a week, get out your list and look it over for inspiration. Plan a specific time to surprise your partner with your activity. Record what you plan to do:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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