

Preparing for Your First Couples Therapy Session

A guide to entering therapy with openness, clarity, and care

At Emotional Wellness Therapy, I see your first couples session as an invitation to begin again — with curiosity, care, and a shared commitment to growth. Whether you are feeling hopeful, hesitant, or somewhere in between, I will help you feel grounded and emotionally safe as we begin. Before you arrive, I encourage you to gently discuss your hopes and expectations with your partner, reflect on the patterns or concerns you would like to explore, and organize your thoughts in a way that feels emotionally attuned. Completing any intake paperwork beforehand allows me to begin understanding your unique dynamic. Most importantly, come with openness, a willingness to listen without judgment, and patience for the process — healing unfolds over time, and your courage to begin is already a meaningful step.

Before the Session: Align Together

- **Talk openly with your partner**

Share your hopes, fears, and hesitations about starting therapy. This conversation does not need to be perfect — it is about creating emotional alignment and reducing uncertainty.

- **Set shared intentions**

Gently explore what you both hope to gain from therapy. You might long for clearer communication, a renewed sense of trust, fewer moments of conflict, or a deeper emotional and physical connection. Whatever your goals, naming them together can be a tender act of care and a meaningful first step toward healing.

- **Identify key concerns**

Each of you may want to reflect on specific issues you would like to explore, such as recurring arguments, emotional distance, or unmet emotional needs. Writing these down can help focus the session.

- **Reflect on your relationship history**

Think about your journey together — how you met, what drew you to each other, and significant milestones or stressors. This context helps your therapist attune to your dynamic.

- **Complete intake forms thoughtfully**

If you have received paperwork, fill it out with care. These forms offer a starting point for your therapist and can prompt meaningful self-reflection.

- **Explore therapist fit**

If you have not yet chosen a therapist, consider researching together. Look for someone whose approach feels emotionally safe and aligned with your values. Many offer free consultations to help you decide.

Personal Preparation: Reflect Individually

- **Focus on your own experience**

Prepare to speak from your perspective using “I” statements. This helps reduce defensiveness and fosters emotional clarity.

- **Write down questions**

If you are curious about the therapist’s style, what to expect, or how sessions are structured, jot down your thoughts. Feeling informed can ease anxiety.

During and After the Session: Stay Open

- **Expect a calm, structured space**

Your therapist will guide the conversation with neutrality and care, ensuring both partners feel heard and respected. Ground rules will support emotional safety.

- **Manage expectations**

The first session is a beginning — not a solution. It is a time to share your story, clarify goals, and begin building trust.

- **Be ready for emotions**

Therapy can stir deep feelings. Allow space for vulnerability and try to respond with compassion — for yourself and your partner.

- **Listen with intention**

Practice active listening. The goal is not to win or blame, but to understand each other more deeply.

- **Give yourself time to process**

Clear your schedule before and after the session if possible. Emotional work takes energy, and quiet time afterward can help you integrate what surfaced.

- **Trust the process**

Feeling nervous is normal. Your willingness to show up, reflect, and engage is already a courageous act of care—for your relationship and yourself.

Preparing for couples therapy isn't about perfection—it's about presence. By taking time to reflect, align, and show up with openness, you're already tending to your relationship in a meaningful way. Whether this is your first step or one of many, I want you to know you're not alone. I hold space for your story with care and curiosity, and I'm honored to walk alongside you as you begin this journey together. Healing takes time, but every moment of courage, every shared glance, and every honest word is part of the path forward.

It is never too early to seek support. If something feels off — or if you simply want to strengthen your connection — I am here to help you begin.

Warmly,

Cheryl

Relationship Counseling
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