

[\(back\)](#)

## **5-Day Intensive Training in Pragmatic/Experiential Therapy for Couples**

Brent J. Atkinson, Ph.D.

Relationship problems are among the top three reasons why people seek coaching or psychotherapy. In recent years, researchers have zeroed in on the habits of people who are highly successful in their relationships. And, neurobiologists are beginning to unravel the secrets of why relationship habits are so hard to change, and how the brain can be rewired for greater flexibility. Dr. Brent Atkinson has translated these scientific discoveries into a clinical approach for helping individuals and couples develop more satisfying relationships, Pragmatic-Experiential Therapy for Couples (PET-C). In this 5-day training you'll spend 30 hours with Brent Atkinson, receiving personalized tutoring in the implementation of PET-C assessment and intervention. You'll learn the "ins and outs" of all of the major PET-C methods and techniques by watching and discussing videos of Dr. Atkinson's work with couples, reviewing critical steps involved in specific interventions, engaging in skill-building simulations, and engaging in thoughtful reflection about your own emotional habits.

### **An Introduction to the Science of Relationship Success**

- The habits of people who are good at getting others to treat them well, and how they differ from what everybody else does
- Watershed moments: How people react when they feel offended or mistreated.

### **Dealing with Differences in Nervous System Wiring**

- How to recognize differences in nervous system wiring that most often lead to interpersonal strife.
- Five core differences in nervous system wiring
- Teaching clients how to handle these differences

### **The Emotional Brain**

- Why people continue with dysfunctional relationship habits even though they don't work?
- What you need to know about how our brains' take over when we get upset.
- Interpersonal habits are rooted in *emotional habits*
- What primes the brain for maladaptive emotional habits?
- A close-up look at the brain's specialized neural response systems.
- Why great relationships begin with internal regulation.

## **A Step-by-Step Blueprint for Helping Your Client Get More Respect, Cooperation and Understanding**

- How people who get others to treat them well go about doing it: A 12-step sequence
- Launching a complaint effectively – Crucial first steps

## **Helping Your Clients Stand Up for Themselves Without Putting Others Down**

- It's essential for your clients to know when and when not to stand up for themselves.
- A powerful formula for standing up
- Common pitfalls in sticking up for yourself

## **Under Hostile Fire**

- Practical methods for helping your client maintain his/her cool.
- Common Ineffective Reactions to Criticism
- How and when your client should distance him/herself.
- Refusing to continue business as usual
- Why “getting on the high horse” weakens your client's influence
- The missing factor in successfully standing for oneself.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the Standing Up Process**

- “What about when the other person has done something that is clearly wrong or harmful?”
- “Aren't ultimatums counter-productive for relationships?”
- “Shouldn't I take the high road...be the bigger person?”
- “What if I use all of these methods to stand up effectively for myself and my partner *still* continues to treat me badly?”

## **Motivating Clients to Develop New Emotional Habits**

- A roadmap for getting clients to take ownership of their relationship problems
- How to convince clients that the key to getting more respect and cooperation lies in their own hands.
- Three strategies for cutting through a client's tendency to project blame.

## **Welcoming and Neutralizing Resistance**

- Five reasons why your clients will resist developing new relationship habits.
- How to give your clients critical feedback without them feeling criticized.
- Five methods for cultivating receptivity in your clients.

- How to avoid getting into an argument.

### **Resolving resentment – The Single Greatest Obstacle to Motivating Your Clients to Change**

- Why your client's belief that other person is more to blame is self-defeating (and why it also isn't true!)
- How to undermine the belief structure that fuels resentment.
- A lesson in the advantages of humility.
- Three widely applicable alternatives to "the other person is the villain."
- A time-tested method for helping your client release the other person from the role of villain.

### **Helping Your Clients Learn from Failed Experiences**

- Developing 20/20 hindsight through retrospective review
- Pinpointing automatic reactions for your client's focus
- How to get precise about the target for change.

### **Creating Internal Shifts during Conjoint Couple Sessions**

- Advantages of conjoint sessions
- Putting mirror neurons to work: Coaster Method.
- Why you must prevent partners from getting into each other's business
- Why session breaks are needed and how to select the optimal times.
- How to intervene firmly without criticizing or shaming.

### **Reconditioning Automatic Internal Reactions**

- Hebb's Law and how to use it effectively
- The problem: One part of the brain doesn't know what another part is doing!
- The necessity of practicing "during game conditions"
- Why you need to know your way around a digital audio recorder
- Digital Audio 101 (for the digitally challenged therapist)

### **Creating Personalized Tutorials for Your Client in the Skills of Emotional Intelligence.**

- How recordings of the partner's dismissive attitude can be used as a powerful teaching tool.
- Step-by-step procedures for coaching your client to ask his/her partner to make recordings.
- Three reasons why your client's partner will want to cooperate.
- Practical mindfulness methods for helping your client.
- Three potent methods to rewire your client's internal reactions.

## **Enhancing Love Relationships**

- Helping clients use what they've already got
- Ten simple exercises for the relentless introduction of positivity
- Going through the motions: Why "caring "acts" aren't enough
- The attachment paradigm: What partners feel is more important than what they say or do.
- The brain's 4-cylinder engine for intimacy

## **Making and Responding to Bids for Connection**

- Making a successful bid: Common Pitfalls
- A four-part formula for making a successful bid
- A formula for responding to a bid.
- Responding to a bid: Common Pitfalls
- Using the questionnaire, "What Makes You Feel Loved"

## **Strengthening the Capacity for Closeness**

- When being smart" isn't enough
- Why the brain's intimacy states sometimes go dormant.
- Releasing playfulness and awakening emotional longing.
- The crucial role of needing to be needed
- Rekindling sexual desire
- Focusing: A powerful step-by-step method for awakening the intimacy states

[\(back\)](#)