

MAIMONIDES UNIVERSITY

STAYING TOGETHER: A COMPATABILITY MODEL  
FOR PREDICTIVE ASSESSMENT OF  
COUPLES THERAPY AND RELATIONSHIP OUTCOME

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF MAIMONIDES  
UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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NORTH MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA  
2006

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am especially thankful to those who have provided their expertise and guidance in the development of this manuscript. Specifically to the members of my advisory committee, Dr. William Granzig, Dr. Walker, and Dr. Beverly Norris in helping to clarify and direct my efforts in the final works presented here.

Special recognition is given to my brother, Richard Krieger, M.D , who's words of wisdom and "believing eyes" provided me with this opportunity, and to my father, Max Krieger, who always advised me, "if you are looking for a helping hand, look at the end of your own arm." Well stated Dad.

I dedicate my work to my three children, Karly Kaplan, M.D., Jordan Kaplan, D.C. and Brandon Kaplan, three beautiful souls and young adults who stood by my side, unwavering in their belief in their mother's quest for this journey.

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to develop a measurement model that can be implemented at the onset of couple's therapy. Intake data and the self-administered Krieger Compatibility Inventory (KCI) will provide a framework for prognostic and predictive assessment of the presenting couple's relationship and or marital success. The model is designed to clarify the dynamics of couple compatibility with the unit of assessment being the couple as opposed to individual intervention. This dissertation attempts to address the predictors of marital stability by exploring specific variables. Data will be analyzed using a discriminant analysis formula. This research will examine both a historical review of the instruments previously utilized and provide an updated guide for further exploration of what is necessary for better prediction of success in relationship outcome. The findings of this study may also increase the awareness in both clinical and research settings, providing for a richer contextual understanding for marital therapy.

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*Once you Have Flown  
You Will Walk The Earth  
With Your Eyes Turned Skyward;  
For There You Have Been,  
There You Long To Return.*

*-Leonardo Da Vinci*

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to develop an instrument that can be implemented at the onset of couples' therapy, providing a framework for prognostic assessment of the presenting couple's relationship and/or marital success. The key question of attachment and relationship continues to remain mostly unanswered. Partly through guidance provided by earlier literature in this field, the question of how and why we as human-beings love becomes a central theme in this study. The nature of love is further explored by means of a review of recent brain psychobiology, the complex study of brain science. The self-administered Krieger Compatibility Inventory (KCI) is designed to include questions about specific human behavioral characteristics and traits. The literature reviewed in the development of this conceptual model looked to these variables in formulating its hypothesis. Although designed in respect to characteristics and traits, also considered are contextual aspects of social and interpersonal boundaries related to relationship. The model will explore and define these variables; in how people, (defined as two groups; man and woman/ or partner and partner) interact in relationship experiencing their coupling, interactions, and perceptions of themselves in marriage and relationship. The objective is to determine possible influences on the prognosis for

positive marital and relationship outcomes at the onset of couples' therapy. For the purpose of this model, the term "compatibility" is meant to utilize a classification matrix at the end of this hypothesis and analysis; so as to be able to differentiate between the two groups.

This research will provide both a historical review of the instruments previously utilized in this field as well as an updated guide for further exploration of what is necessary for better prediction of success in relationship outcome. As a researcher and through the processes as a therapist with experiential work in couples' therapy, a central idea in the development of this model is to aid the therapist in his/her professional endeavors with patients and to promote social change in the movement toward larger meanings and depth in marital relationship therapy. The purpose and theme of this research is to point to certain core correlations and concepts that appear to be necessary for long-term, successful relationship, thus enabling couples to 'stay together'. This theory also indicates a fundamental basis of relevant and predictive criteria between couples, which by their very nature require application to the institution of marriage. The variables presented in the KCI are important in this context because they represent items that might impact the effectiveness of interventions in marital therapy outcome. I am presuming that the need for adequately measuring such important variables is significant in our efforts as clinicians to advance our knowledge base of how these marital interventions affect the differences in couples presenting for marital therapy.

## CHAPTER I

### RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODEL

The purpose of this study is to predict couple's therapy outcome using data gathered at marital therapy intake. Intake data includes a self-report questionnaire and clinical interview including demographics information. The research will provide a simple framework that captures key domains of marriage and relationship by suggesting specific variables and outcome measurements that can be used to assess important phenomena in these domains. It is hoped that the development of this standardized assessment battery will help to meet the clinical demands of both practitioners and their patients.

The early days of marital research were dominated by a focus on marital satisfaction, the focus shifted in the mid 1970's to a sustained, intense and productive focus on "communication" and "conflict" (Stanley 1992) led by researchers such as Robert Weiss, John Gottman, Howard Markman, and Clifford Notarius. This focus some now consider to have been extreme to the exclusion of other important constructs (1992). However, beginning in the mid 1980's and greatly accelerating into the 1990's and beyond, the focus at least among psychologically trained marital researchers shifted greatly toward "constructs that are richer, and that have potential to elucidate important aspects of how couples form and function" (1992).

Thus, such constructs as support, commitment, attachment, acceptance, and forgiveness are regular features of the landscape of more recent research on marriage and family relationships. Such constructs have become available for use in intervention

research and implementation in therapeutic contexts. These dimensions also move research closer to a broader conception of marriage that has the potential to get at deeper values and beliefs that affect marriages and how people behave in them (e.g. Fowers 1989). With this in mind, this project's hypothesis comments on the KCI model's specific constructs proposed, research of the earlier interventions, conducting couples therapy within private practice, and recent relationship research.

In the last century, between four and six out of every ten marriages in the United States were expected to end in divorce (Coontz 2005). The statistics still point to a 50% divorce rate, notwithstanding the unaccountable percentage of persons in unhappy marriages. Nonetheless, marriage and re-marriage continue to be a preferred choice and a way of life for many. Divorce and remarriage research asks the question of what we know about the nature of marriage as a way of life. Unless research captures the contemporary experience of marriage, we the therapist, and our patients, risk naively believing the images created by the media or the social myths that have evolved over time. Such images and myths may obscure the truth about marriage. Therefore, this research project endeavors to reveal the experience of contemporary enduring marriage by focusing on married individuals as a whole systemic unit in contrast with the earlier research and testing instruments that have focused only on the individual as the identified patient.

There have been numerous attempts to develop typologies of marriages. The majority of the earlier attempts looked to intuitively oriented variables and did not involve quantitative verification (Fowers 1988). Although these results were extremely useful for understanding relationship from an individual assessment protocol, they did not

provide the kind of information necessary to enhance marital interventions. (Fowers and Owen 1991). Many of the earlier studies used sophisticated cluster-analytic methods, with large samples to develop marital typologies based on observational data (Gottman 1979), the Inventory of Marital Conflict (Miller and Olson, 1990), the Marital Satisfaction Inventory (Snyder and Smith 1986), and the marital inventory ENRICH (Olson et. al. 1993). Most of the research to date has focused on one or two traditional dimensions of marriage variables (e.g. global satisfaction or power) rather than couples (1993).

Among this plethora of psychological theories about how to fix broken marriages, Gottman (1994) remarks on the research conducted by David H. Olson, professor of family social science at the University of Minnesota. Although he maintains that Olson's questionnaire does a fairly good job of predicting marital satisfaction, he further suggests the Olson (1994) study could not predict which among the "dissatisfied" couples in his study were destined to stay married and which were headed for "a fall". Olson developed a premarital test called PREPARE that detects differences between prospective husbands and wives. Olson assumed similarity in opinions safeguards against divorce. According to Gottman (1994), that does not seem to be true. Gottman's research indicates that much more important than having compatible views is how couples work out their differences. In contrast to the Olson study (1994), Gottman states, that the challenge for his research teams has been to identify the truly crucial ingredients to a sound marriage. In his study, Gottman further reveals that it required his teams to follow marriages over a very long period of time. "There is simply no shortcut to staying in touch with the same couples for many years if you want to find out which will go on to live happy, fulfilled lives together and which will end up separating" (1994). In questioning whether

‘compatibility’ would be a necessary foundation for a successful marriage, it is important to clarify the meaning of the term, “Compatibility” for the purposes of this research.

When referring to the term “Compatibility” Gottman defers to Olson’s (1994) work, and contends that Olson assumed “similarity” safeguards against divorce.

Thus, Gottman implies that “compatibility” and “similarity” mean the same thing. As stated in, *The New Century Dictionary of the English Language* (1957) the definitions of these two terms are incongruous and defined as follows: “Compatibility; capable of existing together in harmony; such as to agree; consistent; congruous.” “Similarity”; like or alike to a greater or less degree; having likeness or resemblance in a general way or in some respects, also, of the same nature or structure throughout, likeness; resemblance.”

In consideration of the above definitions, it is my hypothesis and purpose to introduce and define the Krieger Compatibility Inventory (KCI) as a predictive assessment model for couples’s therapy. Thus, it is maintained that the definition of compatibility for purposes herein will encompass the meaning as defined above. The items and variables are described in the proposed methodology section of this research. This study seeks to add to the current knowledge in this field, and to explore an area of research that will have a significant impact on the concepts of relationship outcome. Currently many researchers are asking just how important the construct of compatibility and scientific aspects of psychobiology are when assessing couple’s relationships. Is it possible to identify the constructs that warrant an accurate assessment of positive outcome in couple’s therapy? What exactly is positive relationship and what has been gained by all the research and attention to interventions focusing on improvement in the

healthy functioning of couples? Much of the research focuses on components of conflict and distress and whether these elements warrant a central role in the conceptualization of marital theories and interventions. In the literature review for this research model, there appears to be a need for updated assessment tools that are not focused solely on antiquated models or interventions which have failed to fully access the most poignant aspects of human relationships and the core issues of compatibility.

Relationship itself is a complex concept. This is a generation that has given new meaning to the meaningful relationship. Individuals and couples presenting in therapy seek to find both happiness and salvation, long-term passion and romance, and their best friend till death do them part. As reported by many patients in my private practice, their personal happiness is most always perceived by themselves to be based on what their partners can or cannot provide for them. Statements of, “my needs are not being met” are often at the forefront of initial sessions. Choosing a partner in a more reasoned, wise and precise manner is rarely reported to have been considered during the courting, dating, and decision to marry processes.

### Paradigm of Relationship Today

To fully comprehend the shifting paradigm in the understanding of the marital and/or relationship contract in today’s western society, it is essential to explore the different constructs that existed centuries ago and their influences on today’s expectations of relationship. It is important to consider the past in order to comprehend the present. Closer examination of the history of relationships may assist in comprehending the

enormous impact Western religion and patriarchal thought have had on the consciousness of mankind, and thus relationships in today's society.

This research and development of a model describes a conceptual framework for couple-based assessment strategies grounded in empirical findings linking couple outcome in relationship therapy to what factors differentiate between the two groups. These differences can contribute to, exacerbate or result in relationship problems and poor predictive outcome in therapy. Couple assessment is distinguished from individual assessment by its emphasis on relationship processes that interact with but transcend individual characteristics. Although most individual assessment strategies offer at least token acknowledgment of the potential contributing role of relationship and broader sociological factors, they do not emphasize relationship issues. It is contended that more basic work still needs to be done concerning parameters which adequately define the inter-correlation in relationship. In the development of this model, a statistical technique called discriminant analysis is proposed, to determine the differences between the two groups of individuals man & woman/ or partners in relationship. The unit of analysis for this model will be the "couples" together as a whole, as the IP (identified patients') being assessed. Therefore, the present research has methodological implications for research on marital conflict and compatibility issues based on this premise



## Gender Role Socialization

Marital conflict typically begins when one partner behaves in a way that is unpleasant for the other. Once this initiating event has occurred, the couple makes a crucial decision either to engage in discussion or to avoid discussion of the issue (Pretzer 1991). Christensen and Heavey (1990) point out in their research that, “if the couple engages in discussion, they may enter a positive process of mutual validation (Gottman 1979) and direct negotiation, until each person’s views are aired and understood and perhaps an agreement reached to do things differently in the future”.

The clinical literature on marriage has often discussed a pattern of interaction regarding negative process that occurs when one partner pressures the other through emotional demands, criticism, and complaints, while the other retreats through withdrawal, defensiveness, and passive inaction. There has been a variety of labels to describe this dynamic, the “pursuer-distancer” pattern (Fogarty 1976), in which the pursuer chases the distancer, who retreats. In the “rejection-intrusion” pattern the abandoned partner clasps tightly for security, while the “imprisoned” mate retreats. In the pattern of demanding-withdrawn partners, the couple struggles with the withdrawal of the one and the pressure for contact by the other (1990). Past researchers have often indicated a gender linkage in this pattern, with women in the demanding role and men in the withdrawing role. A number of previous empirical studies have revealed gender differences in conflict behavior consistent with the patterns described. One of the earliest studies of marriage found that dissatisfied wives complained of their husbands’

withdrawal whereas dissatisfied husbands complained of their wives' criticisms, complaints, and emotionality.

Christensen (1987, 1988) argued that these kinds of socialization differences generate a core conflict concerning intimacy in marriage. Christensen and Heavey (1990) argue that through "sex-role" conditioning, women are trained to be affiliative and expressive and thus, more likely to fear rejection and abandonment in relationships, whereas men are trained to be strong and independent and thus more likely to fear intrusion and engulfment in relationships. According to these formulations, men and women are socialized differently, with women's identity developed within the context of separation. Because of these different developmental experiences, in adult close relationships, women are said to be "more commonly threatened by separation and men by attachment and intimacy." Christensen (ibid) gathered questionnaire data from 142 married couples and couples living together. His data showed that, (a) couples who had a conflict of interest about closeness/autonomy had higher levels of demand/withdraw interaction; (b) those members who wanted more closeness tended to be demanders, whereas those members who wanted more autonomy tended to be withdrawers; and (c) women tended to want more closeness and to be demanders, whereas men tended to want more autonomy and be withdrawers." Gottman and Levenson (1999) also endorsed an individual differences explanation for observed discrepancies in men's and women's conflict behaviors. However, these authors implicated gender differences in physiological stress reactivity, rather than socialization, as the "cause" of the discrepancies (1999). In the summary of their research, they suggested that men are more physiologically reactive to stressful stimuli than women and suggested that men's avoidance of conflict,

withdrawal from conflict, and attempts to reconcile conflict result from “men’s greater arousal from conflict” and thus, discomfort. Their position is that, being less reactive than men to stress; women can function more effectively in a climate of negative affect and are more likely to escalate conflict.

In contrast to the “individual-differences or personality perspective”, other theorists take a social structural view of gender differences in the “demand-withdraw” interactional pattern of behavior. From this perspective, the interaction pattern has its origins not in the “personality traits” of men and women, but in their position in a social structure. Jacobson (1984) argued that men are the primary beneficiaries of traditional marital relationship structures. He presented research establishing that “women carry the burden of household and child care responsibilities” even when both spouses are employed full time. He further claims that marriage increases a woman’s risk of depression, but it reduces a man’s risk of depression and other psychopathology. In summary, Jacobson suggested that men are the one’s most likely to be the stabilizing force in relationships, with a “vested interest in preserving the status quo”, whereas women, he suggests, are more likely to be the “agents of social change”(1984). In looking to the empirical contrast of the above theoretical perspectives on gender differences-- personality and individual differences view vs. a situational or social structural view, it is clearly evident that all spouses desire some changes in the other during marriage. It is implicit in the literature that women were conflicted about the multiple societal pressures that expected them to be selfless and self-fulfilled at the same time. Women and men of today are attempting to reconcile these conflicts through an understanding of socialization and its comprehensive effects on his/her life.

### Sexological Nature of the Model

Sexual science or Sexology is defined as a biological science that studies the forms and effects of human sexuality in their physical, psychological, individual and social aspects. Objectivity is central in regard to human sexual behavior and the therapist's attitudes about sexuality. It is maintained in this field that the therapist can only think about what they know to be true, not what they personally believe about sexuality. Weiderman (1998) contends that studies conducted in the U.S. indicate that a substantial proportion of the adult population experiences some sort of sexual dysfunction. Although many individuals do not seek professional intervention for their sexual difficulties, a great number of people do.

Despite criticism from some professionals regarding its legitimacy, a specific field commonly referred to as sex therapy, has evolved to address sexual difficulties presented by clients (Szasz 1980, 1983). For the purposes herein, the term "sex therapy" is defined broadly and refers to systemic attempts by a board certified clinical sexologist to alleviate sexual dysfunction or difficulties experienced by a specified client.

Weiderman pointedly notes that over the past decade or so, the types of cases commonly seen in sex-therapy clinics have changed dramatically from the earliest days of contemporary sex therapy (1998). As the proportion of clients who simply needed education and direction dwindled, the proportion of clients with more pervasive and chronic sexual problems increased. Accordingly, instances of erectile failure, low sexual desire, and compulsive sexual behavior have become an increasing part of sex therapist's

caseloads (Leiblum and Rosen 2000). These problems present a greater challenge to clinicians and hence do not evidence the high rates of improvement found among the earlier reports on the success of sex therapy (Kilmann, Boland et. al 1986; Rosen & Leiblum 1995). Corresponding to the changing nature of the cases that sex therapists typically encounter, therapeutic approaches have changed as well. With increasing frequency, systemic approaches have been used to treat the more complex relationship-bound sexual problems presented to sex therapists (2000).

It is also important to note that greater attention has been paid to the role of early sexual trauma in subsequent sexual dysfunction. In general, a more complex, integrative or “postmodern” approach to the conceptualization and treatment of sexual dysfunction has emerged (LoPiccolo 1992). Currently, sex therapists appear to employ a broad range of treatment modalities, including bibliotherapy and group therapy. At the same time, sex therapists have witnessed a marked “medicalization” of treatment for many sexual problems. This medicalization of sexual dysfunctions broaches the subject presented by many clients in marital therapy. The patients arrive with concerns of erectile dysfunction or hypoactive sexual desire, but the question still remains; physical or medical causality and treatment? Weiderman reports that in the 70’s the majority of sexual dysfunctions were viewed as psychogenic, but with increasing regularity medical and physical causes of sexual dysfunction are being proposed (1998). Although he maintains that the shift appears due at least partly to advances in medicine, the growing popularity of physical/medical interventions in the treatment of sexual dysfunctions seems to be motivated also by professional and sociocultural issues. That is, pharmaceutical companies stand to profit from proliferation of such interventions, insurance companies

are more likely to reimburse for interventions by urologists and gynecologists' than from behavioral sex therapists, and, because of social stigma over sexual dysfunction, many Americans would prefer to be diagnosed with a medical disorder than a psychological one (Schover and Leiblum 1994). I will not attempt in this research to consider the underlying assumptions of various sex-therapy approaches. However, I am in agreement with the basic assumption that all sex-therapy approaches appear to share the underlying assumption that there is a "natural" or "healthy" state of sexual functioning that therapists aim to restore for the client (Haeberle 1983). For the purpose of the KCI model from a systems perspective, it is not possible to attempt to understand a sexual problem by focusing on an individual client in isolation. Sexuality entails interpersonal intimacy and interaction with a partner. Each partner brings to the general relationship a set of developmental experiences embedded in their family of origin as well as the larger social system, and these experiences within other systems have an impact on the meanings each individual ascribes to the behaviors of the other partner (Hof & Berman 1986). In addition, for any couple, the sexual interaction does not occur in a vacuum but rather within the larger context of their ongoing relationship. Hence, relationship conflicts in nonsexual domains (e.g., a relative imbalance of power in the relationship) are believed significantly to affect sexual functioning of one or both partners (Bogarozzi 1987).

In sex therapy from a systems approach, the sexual problem is seen as indicative of problems elsewhere in the relationship, or the sexual problem is believed to serve some larger function within the relationship. Accordingly, systems theorists avoid labeling one relationship partner as having "the problem" and instead conceptualize the sexual dysfunction as a couple's problem. However, they may question why one

particular partner is identified within the couple as the “carrier” of the dysfunction (Goldman A.et.al). From a systems approach the couple is the unit of treatment. However, to effect a change in the couple, one or both members must, initiate change. Change in one member will, given the nature of relationship systems, result in a change in the couple.

In general, conducting outcome research in psychotherapy is a daunting enterprise (Bergin and Garfield 1994), and conducting outcome research in sex therapy may be even more difficult, given the variety of physical and psychological etiological factors that may be relevant to a group of individuals, all of whom evidence the same manifest sexual dysfunction (Wiederman 1998). This issue may partially explain the apparent decrease in outcome studies in sex therapy. As the clinical presentation of sexual difficulties has become more complex, the idea of applying the same therapeutic approach to all cases may seem increasingly absurd (LoPiccolo 1992).

Key to this study is the question of; who is the unit of treatment? What do proponents of the various theoretical perspectives in sex therapy hold as the appropriate unit for treatment, the individual or the couple? (1998). From the standpoint of Weiderman’s study, traditional psychodynamic perspectives held that sexual dysfunction resulted from an individual’s psychosexual conflicts. Accordingly, from this view, the treatment of sexual dysfunction would be addressed with the individual client, as the “problems” would be assumed to reside with him or her; “the partner is involved only as the object upon which the sexual difficulty is projected” (1998). Thus, Masters and Johnson (1986) were seen as breaking with tradition by explicitly working with the couple to resolve sexual difficulties. However, although Masters and Johnson historically worked with “the

couple” to effect improvement in the sexual functioning of the IP (identified patient), their approach was essentially based on individual etiological factors underlying the sexual dysfunction in the presenting couple’s relationship. Though having traditionally developed behavioral sex therapy focusing on the couple as the unit of treatment, Masters and Johnson focused primarily on the individual during their meetings with couples (1986). These earlier works then corroborate the historical view of the individual as the focus of most sex-therapy approaches, although the patients may have been seen together in therapy as a “couple.” Therefore, though many sex therapists work with couples, ultimately the interventions have been mostly individually based.

Again, within the parameters of this study, the focal point is to specify the difference that makes the difference (notable differential variables) in assessing couples as an interactive unit in therapy. Also, still of concern in an era of increasingly complex clinical presentations, it is also important to be able to determine empirically the active components of sex therapy, especially as pertaining to particular types of clients, dysfunctions, and etiological factors. “What type of sex-therapy approaches, with what type of sexual problems, what type of clients, and what type of sex therapist is most likely to result in a positive outcome?” (McCarthy 1995). As Wiederman further points out in this regard,

The future of sex therapy is dependent on the future of sexual science. Advances in theory and research on the components of, and factors related to, human sexual experience allow for further growth regarding interventions to alleviate sexual dysfunction. However, it is also incumbent on those who actually perform sex therapy to elaborate their theoretical assumptions and test the relative efficacy of their interventions through empirical study. The current nature of the complex cases with which the sex therapist is faced makes such research both more difficult and more needed than was true two decades ago.



The question still remains as to what a healthy sex life is, and correspondingly, what an unhealthy sex life would be. This research does not attempt to resolve such matters here, except to note dimensions that could be important in gauging the effects of the specific variables and intervention proposed here, that might result in healthy and long term relationship and marriages.

### How Relationship Exists and Emerges

In the United States today, the most salient indicator of couple distress remains a divorce rate of approximately 50% among married couples, with about half of these occurring within the first 7-8 years of marriage (Fischer 2004). Aside from divorce, the research literature suggests that many marriages experience periods of significant turmoil that place them at risk for dissolution or symptom development (e.g. anxiety, depression) in one of both partners at some point in the relationship. Only about one third of married persons report being “very happy” with their marriage (2004). Recent research indicates that most frequently cited causes of acute emotional distress were relationship problems including divorce, separation and other marital stressors. This linkage of relationship distress to disruption of individual emotional and physical well-being emphasizes the need for and importance of integrating empirically based strategies for assessing couple’s compatibility and what it is that promotes couples’ staying together in long term relationship.

Looking to a broader assessment including issues of sexuality and intimacy as an addition to effective intervention strategies within our practice as therapists and clinical

sexologists, the new “neurophysiological” research provides updated answers to the questions of relationship and love, and how they lead to “reported euphoric highs and the most anguished lows of this most baffling complex human experience” (2004). As written in the Song of Songs (c. 900-300 B.C.E.),

For love is as strong as death.  
 Its passions are as cruel as the grave  
 And its flashes of fire are the very flame of God

These findings are reviewed in general in this section and will be further defined in greater detail in Chapter 4, Neuro-Science and Psycho-Biology. In part, much of the research for the development of this model entailed study of this aspect of human behavior, the quest for loving and wanting to be loved by another human being.

Statements involving wanting to be, “happy” and “in love” are often raised in the therapeutic environment with clients. It is within this context of helping clients interpret their emotionality and feelings that the premise and notion of “romantic love” is given lengthy attention in the preliminary chapters and research of this project. Intimacy and healthy sexuality are also utilized as basic reference in compiling the innovative phenomenon of complex systems and brain science research.

Within this arena of research, Helen Fischer, Ph.D., is one of this country’s most prominent anthropologists. Dr. Fisher has conducted extensive research on the evolution, expression, and chemistry of love. Fischer (2004) maintains that romantic passion is, in fact, “hardwired into our brains by millions of years of evolution.” Further, it is not an emotion; it is a drive as powerful as hunger. What we experience when we fall in love, why you choose one person rather than another, and how romantic love biologically affects your sex drive and your feelings of attachment to a partner are all part of the

integral inner workings of which makes some couples stay together and others part ways. Fisher's studies also discuss the differences in the male and female brains, the "range of love" and what this means for the way we choose our partners, and what love means for each and every one of us based on our physiological and biological needs and instincts (2004). Ultimately, evaluating one as you would a friend, looking at characteristics such as personality, values, character, generosity of spirit, the relationship between his/her words and actions, sensitivity to others needs,, his/her relationships with others, are key character traits essential to success in marriage & relationship. With this at the forefront of what it is that promotes long-term relationship, further research indicates that these studies are corroborating what scientists have long known; there is definitive brain activity central to the experience of being in love. Specifically two regions of the brain appear to be active in the "love-struck" subjects in Fisher's studies. These studies have shown that their most important findings were "activity in the caudate nucleus" the reward center of the brain. This is the primitive part of the brain, referred to as the "reptilian brain" or R-complex because this brain region evolved long before the mammals proliferated some 65 million years ago (2004).

The brain scans showed that parts of the body and the tail of the caudate became particularly active as a lover gazed at the photo of a sweetheart. Though reportedly astonished by these results, Fisher maintains that scientists have long known that this brain region directs bodily movement. Only recently have they come to understand that this is part of what they term the brain's "reward system," the mind's network for general arousal, sensations of pleasure, and the motivation to acquire a reward and plans specific movements to obtain a reward. The caudate is also associated with the acts of paying

attention and learning. Fischer reports that not only did the research team's subjects exhibit activity in the caudate, but the more passionate they were, the more active their caudate was. Fischer's innovative scientific research utilized a self-report questionnaire, the "Passionate Love Scale" that her subjects filled out before entering the brain scanning machine. When the subject's responses on the questionnaire were compared with the activity shown in their brains, the results evidenced a positive correlation: those who scored higher on the "Passionate Love Scale" also showed more activity in a specific region of the caudate when they looked at the picture of their sweetheart. According to Fisher, this response verifies that self-report questionnaires actually reflect one's inner feelings. She further reports that her team would be among the first to show a direct link between responses to a survey questionnaire and a specific pattern of brain activation (2004).

There are several dimensions in Fischer's work that seem obvious based on current and existing research, which are foundational and a premise for many of the elements of development in the KCI. Although Fisher maintains that she and her team hadn't planned to investigate how love changes, she discovered that the subjects in her study who were in longer relationships (over 7 months) showed activity in "the anterior cingulate cortex and the insular cortex, as in the London study. According to Fisher (2004) they don't know what this actually means. The anterior cingulate gyrus is a region where emotions, attention, and working memory interact. Some parts are associated with happy states; others involve awareness of one's own emotional state and the ability to assess other people's feelings during social interactions; and some are associated with split-second emotional reactions to a win or loss, thereby judging a

reward's value. Further described, the insular cortex collects data from the body regarding external touch and temperature, as well as internal pain and activities of the stomach, gut, and other viscera. With this brain part we register "butterflies" in the stomach, a pounding heart, and our many other bodily reactions. Parts of the insular cortex also process the emotions. Fischer's study suggests that as a relationship lengthens, brain regions associated with emotions, memory, and attention begin to respond in new ways. Exactly what these brain parts are doing, no one knows (2004).

With the advent of this new neurophysiological research, it is important not to overlook the historical views of neuropathology. Krafft-Ebing (1932) mentioned only 22 cases of brain disorder in *Psychopathia Sexualis* : 3 cases of idiocy were attributed to innate mental weakness, whereas 2 cases of brain injury, 5 of late stage syphilis, and 12 of epilepsy were attributed to mental weakness. In the meantime, the functional and structural neuropathological determinants of sexuopathology have become a rapidly developing field of human clinical and animal experimental research, as the new technology of brain scanning emerges. The neurohormonal chemistries of sexuopathology were unknown and unknowable to Krafft-Ebing or anyone else in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the sex hormones were not isolated and synthesized until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Money 2003).

The research still leaves at question; is the brain laying down and consolidating emotional memories of the love relationship? Are we using our emotions to analyze the relationship? All that Fischer reports for sure is that love changes over time; she states, "When we come to understand these results, they may tell us how and why" (2004).

### Theoretical Stance:

From a solution focused and narrative therapy perspective these issues in the context of relationship appear to be developed and maintained systemically. For the purposes of this study, the approach and interventions applied are based on systemic marriage and family therapy theories, both solution focused and narrative therapies. For this purpose, a synopsis of these therapeutic modalities is provided. According to William' Hanlon (1989) solution-oriented therapy is conversational and emphasized the use of ordinary language. Further defined, "people are understood to be caught up in the framework of meaning that defines a problem. If assumptions of the framework are examined, "problems may be redefined and new solutions may be forthcoming" (Becvar and Becvar 1996). Solution focused theory further proposes "that there isn't any single 'correct' or 'valid' way to live one's life" (O'Hanlon and Weiner-Davis 1989). Thus, reality is not a given. Meaning and perception are embedded in language, and language becomes the vehicle for change as reflected in the vocabulary used; the world view is mirrored in the language. Therapy moves from a problem focus to a solution focus through the steps of "joining, describing the problem, finding exceptions to the problem, description of the problem, normalizing, and goal-setting" (1989).

The basis of solution focused therapy is that there is no right or wrong answer, only a different way of looking at the problem that "has entered the client's lives." The goal is to capitalize on the couples' strengths and minimize their weaknesses. Instead of problem

talk the therapist urges solution based talk. The therapist takes an active role and directs the conversation toward goal-oriented solutions.

Michael White and David Epston's work (1990) in Narrative therapies seeks to empower clients to develop their own unique stories or narratives about themselves. Citing Michel Foucault, they assert that what the human science disciplines do is "characterize, classify, specialize; they distribute along a scale, around a norm, hierarchize individuals in relation to one another, and if necessary disqualify and invalidate" (White and Epston 1990). Thus, "people are objectified and their rich personal experiences and personal stories are subjugated, repressed, denied in favor of the normative classification schemes offered as the way people are supposed to experience themselves in order to be members of Western society" (1990).

In essence, "people internalize and take on the identity of the "objective" categories set forth and validated by human science professionals (1990). They then describe the category or classification as within themselves or as themselves and others (e.g., "I am schizophrenic"- "I have a behavior disorder", "I am paranoid,"etc.). Accordingly, people begin to think about and experience themselves and the problems in their relationships and families ways that are logically consistent with the standardized, problem-saturated story." In Foucault's terms, to be a member of a Western society is to participate in a process of normalization and to submit to "compulsory objectification," which he describes as an insidious method of social control of which the practice of normal human science in the Western tradition is an integral part ( 1990).

As people internalize the normative experience offered, they may deny a large part of their "lived experience" and how this lived experience is "storied." White and

Epston's model of therapy therefore assumes a postmodern, social constructionist position and helps a client build an alternative story, which can be derived from the person's own lived experience and "which falls outside the dominant stories" about the lives and relationships of persons (1996).

In the case studies encountered in my private practice, the presenting couples often show failure to achieve personal and/or couple ideals in their relationships. It is here that the therapist is presented with the challenge of working with the couple in facilitating their transformation to a more fully realized potential, optimally, a healthy and successful relationship. What then, is this thing called love and committed relationship? Although divorce rates have decreased somewhat from their peak in 1980, estimates indicate that 40% to 50% of all first marriages still end in divorce (National Center for Health Statistics, 1988). The professional response to the powerful familial and societal costs of this level of divorce has included preventative, ameliorative, and research efforts attempting to reduce both the frequency and difficulty of divorce (Gottman 1997).

Social theory informs us that marriage is socially constructed (Schutz 1967). Social construction theory recognizes the influence of the social context on marriage while acknowledging the effect of marriage on society. This research study generates knowledge about our contemporary social context that influences marriage from the perspective of both individuals and as couples in enduring marriages. By describing the essence of enduring marital experience, the aim is to provide foundational research about contemporary marriages that last at this turn of century. This study provides knowledge that can be compared and contrasted to research on marriage during different times



throughout history, and at different stages of marriage in contemporary times. This approach is unique to the study of marriage.

When turning to the literature, it is found that current research depicts marriage from the perspective of, what constitutes a good marriage? (Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1995). Gottman mostly asks “why do marriages succeed or fail? (1994). Compare this if you will to, “how can marriages be improved? (Notarius and Markman 1993). Revealing a particularized focus on marriage, these studies make an important contribution to the way marriage is understood. However, approaching marriage from a more comprehensive perspective utilizing the KCI, the lens is widened and provides a broader perspective for understanding marriage, thus providing a deeper understanding of what it means to be married. In this research, the “whole experience” of enduring marriage is questioned, rather than just inquiring as to what makes a good marriage or how marriage may be improved.

If marriage changes over time and is an ever-changing relationship, then research that describes the relationship or differential variables that occur and affect success or failure in marriage makes a contribution to the literature. It is hypothesized in this study that the earlier intervention models are not useful for early prediction of marital or relationship difficulties, or for the illumination of the differentials in marital compatibility. A further advantage of the present study is that the scoring system will allow this research to focus on couples as the unit of analysis. In the development of this research and the Compatibility Model questionnaire, it is proposed that the data will indicate the most relevant and predictive components by which to assess the couple’s current state of being in their relationship. From this theoretical stance, the therapist will

be better able to understand the contextual and present dynamics operating within the couple's relationship as a whole. Thus, it is hoped that this development model evidences empirical and methodological implications for evidentiary predictive outcome in couples therapy and marital satisfaction. It is clear that an interesting relationship exists between these many factors, including but not limited to gender differences, social structural hypotheses, and power differentials in marital functioning.

With this in mind, these earlier findings clearly demonstrate a need for further research to assess what aspects, and/or additional contextual variables determine this linkage. The resulting review of literature provides some insight into which of these factors may be important and hence, about which factors might merit consideration in assessing marriages and relationships. Readers, who study this research, assist in our pursuit of an integrated synthesis of contextual knowledge of intimacy, relationship and marriage. By being cognizant of the links between the chapters presented here, readers will likely be in a better position to forge the state of our future understanding of these relationship processes.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

A large majority of adults marry in their lifetimes and many couples and individuals seek professional assistance at some point in their relationship or marriage. It is common practice nowadays for many young couples to participate in pre-marital and early marital relationship programs. Couples planning to end their marriages are now mandated by the courts to attend divorce mediation. As a result, marriage and family practitioners are confronted commonly with diverse and complex tasks to help these clients that present for therapy, in clarifying, understanding, and modifying their marital relationships. Despite the importance of marital dissolution, empirical research has not been very successful at predicting which married couples will stay together, separate or divorce. Attempts at this prediction have most often in the earlier research been epidemiological, focusing on demographic groups that are thought to be at the greatest risk for marital dissolution.

The current lack of knowledge concerning which patterns of interaction and sequences of behavior lead to marital discord is manifested partly by antiquated attempts at intervention. There are currently over one million divorces a year in the United States, with estimates that almost 50% of marriages will ultimately end in divorce (Coontz 2005). Marital discord and dissolution is a serious social issue in terms of its negative consequences for the mental and physical health of spouses and their children.

Since this paper deals at length with issues of influence on marriage and relationship today, it is important to examine what came before; the history of complex human experience.

### Early Oriented Assessment Models

The most fundamental task the practitioner encounters in the therapeutic environment is assessing the nature and quality of the client's relationship or marriage. This initial intake assessment is expected to play a central role in helping to determine which interventions are to be utilized and their prognostic effectiveness. In contrast to the availability of testing instruments and interventions, there is evidence indicating that standardized assessment is not routine practice for the majority of marriage and family therapists.

In a survey of 598 Clinical Members of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy it was found that 70% of their respondents rated standardized assessment as either "not at all important" or "not very important," and only 33% of the respondents reported using any standardized assessment instruments (Boughner et, al. 1994). Of the instruments that were used, respondents relied most commonly on individually focused measures such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), the Meyer-Briggs Type Indicator, and the Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis. With this in mind, looking at the disparity between the availability of measures and how often they are used in therapy, it can be inferred that practitioners are not gathering as much information as possible when selecting, implementing, and evaluating

their interventions. From the standpoint of Boughner (et. al. 1994), “the reasons for this gap are no doubt complex.” With this in mind, it is important to recognize that relatively infrequent use of standard assessment tools is not equivalent to the absence of careful assessment by other means and that the use of standard assessment tools provides no assurance of a sound clinical conceptualization or successful treatment outcome.

Boughner (1994) further conceptualizes that one key consideration in understanding the restricted use of formal assessment procedures, is the belief by practitioners that such procedures are of little importance and, presumably, that using them would not enhance the quality of their interventions. Further still, the number and range of instruments has proliferated to such a degree that practitioners cannot afford to evaluate and select them properly and, as a consequence, avoid using them altogether or “revert to familiar instruments, even if they provide limited information about marital functioning” (1994).

Literature reviewed provided support for the rationale of this research, particularly in the conclusion that, 1) marriage has changed over the past several decades; 2) marriage is an ever-changing relationship requiring a commitment on the part of both parties, with comprehension of the transitional phases, and 3) marriage today exists in a social context of the couple as a whole, which challenges marriage as a long-term commitment.

Couple distress, or “partner relational problems”, as defined by the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4<sup>th</sup> ed.; DSM-IV; American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p. 681)*, “involves communication or related interpersonal difficulties associated with clinically significant impairment to individual or relationship functioning or the development of symptoms in one or both partners.” Previous research has shown

couple distress to relate to a broad range of individual and relationship characteristics. Effective assessment of these characteristics requires a conceptual framework for directing both assessment and methods.

This literature review indicates that there are commonly used self-report measures specific to communication including the Communication Patterns Questionnaire (CPQ; Christensen 1987) and Styles of Conflict Inventory (SCI; Metz 1993). Couples conflict-resolution patterns may be observed directly by instructing partners to discuss problems of their own choosing representative of both moderate and high disagreement and then either formally or informally coding these interactions using one of the behavioral coding systems available.

According to Gottman (2001), questioning to what extent to partners express and reciprocate negative and positive feelings about their relationship toward each other, partners have been best observed directly during either structured or unstructured interactions. He further maintains that key to observed expressions are physical indicators of contempt and disdain. Separated from observational strategies are numerous self-report measures tapping such affective components of relationship functioning as satisfaction (e.g., the Dyadic Adjustment Scale; DAS; Spanier 1976); the MSSI-R; and the Relationship Satisfaction Scale, Burns and Sayers 1992) and intimacy (e.g., the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships; Schaefer and Olson 1981). Self-Report measures assessing emotion regulation in relationships include the Managing Affect and Differences Scale (Arellano and Markman 1995) and recently developed Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (Gratz and Roemer 2004).

It is noted that partner's descriptions and interpretations of couple interactions observed directly in therapy can be compared with the clinician's own assessment of these same exchanges. Partners' response sets from completed self-report relationship measures can also be assessed; for example, the Conventionalization (CNV) scale on the MSI-R assesses the tendency to distort relationship appraisals in an overly positive direction.

Although much of the couple literature emphasizes negative emotions, it is equally important for positive emotions, such as smiling, laughter, affection, expressions of appreciation or respect, comfort or soothing, and similar expressions, to be assessed through observation, self-report, or clinical inquiry. Given these findings regarding the impact of couple distress on treatment of individual disorders as well as the favorable impact of couple and family therapy (Law and Crane 2000), screening for relationship incompatibility should be routine when individuals are evaluated for emotional, behavioral, or physical health problems (2000).

Marriage integrates into social life and current climates of culture over time. This suggests that what marriage was formerly in social history may not be what it is today. In an article about recent trends of marital success in the United States, Glenn (1991) states that, "entering marriage without a fairly good awareness of the problems that will be encountered is hardly conducive to marital success." However, Glenn also makes the opposite case that too precise knowledge of all the trials and tribulations over the course of marriage, "may tend to prevent the commitments and investment necessary to build and sustain a relationship that meets the needs of both spouses" (1991). Glenn's interpretation of marital trends highlights the delicate balance required for a successful

marriage and raises intriguing questions about awareness, knowledge and popular discourse about the marital experience.

In an effort to dispel popular myth about marital experience, Notarius and Markman (1993) investigated happiness, love, and marriage. Their research reveals that marital happiness depends on how couples cope with conflict. These authors suggest that love may be needed to get a relationship off the ground, but love does not ensure marital success over time (1993).

If existing research suggests that 1) marriage is an ever-changing relationship, 2) marriage involves balancing a fairly good awareness of marital problems with a certain degree of hope, 3) love may be important to begin a marriage, but love does not ensure marital success, and 4) marital success requires learning how to resolve conflict, then what do we know about this experience from individuals who experience it every day? More specifically, if original commitment and love are not enough to keep a marriage going, what is going on for the couples that do have marriages that have endured? These questions remain unanswered and were in part the motivation to undertake research about what enduring marriage means for persons in relationship today. Participants were interviewed at the onset of this research study who talked about their early experience of marriage, how marriage changed them, the changes that occurred in the marriage, and what marriage is for them now.

The attention given to marriage and relationship patient outcome over the last thirty years continues to leave many questions unanswered and brings many researchers to question the constructs necessary for successful relationship. This may be because earlier studies focused on individual interventions rather than the couple as a system



(Fowers and Owen 1992). It is estimated that more than nine million couples in the United States go to a marriage and family therapist every year for help with problems ranging from intimacy to infidelity to dissolution. Research points out that people are hard-wired to seek out intimate relationships (Fischer 2003). However, much of relationship distress and discord can be attributed to or thought of in terms of; what defines intimacy and compatibility? In hopes of finding answers to this question many individuals and couples seek out marriage counseling, often times, not timely enough to save their marriage. Marriage counseling is a type of psychotherapy for a married couple or established partners that try to resolve problems in the relationship. Typically, two people attend counseling sessions together to discuss specific issues. However, the parties may attend sessions individually. Marriage counseling helps individuals and couples to learn to deal more effectively with problems, and can help prevent small problems from becoming serious.

A systemic view of couples therapy and intervention includes assessing the presenting couple both individually and as a system thereby helping couples access and express unacknowledged emotions as well as identifying negative patterns of interaction and sequences of behavior. The blending of short term solution focused therapies and systems theory can additionally help couples learn new ways of interacting that help them develop new ways of developing long-term satisfying relationships. Research shows that marriage counseling, when effective, tends to improve a person's physical as well as mental health, in addition to improving the relationship (Robles and Kiecolt-Glaser 2003).

In beginning the research for the development of a Compatibility Model for predictive assessment of couple's therapy outcome, all of the findings in the literature review pointed to antiquated and dry methods of assessing couples, based primarily on standard measures and instruments designed long ago. None of these testing measures looked to empirical and scientific typologies from a physiological, social, or mind/body context and point of view.

### Synopsis of Psychobiology

Neither, did the historical review of tests and measurements look to the more complex neuro-science/psychobiology systems that illuminate some of the mechanisms by which people become and stay attracted in long-term relationships. These systems will be further discussed in detail in Chapter 4. Outlined in this section of review, this greater depth of research purports to answer some of the questions of what the notion of "romantic love" is (2001). Studies around the world confirm that though the concept of romantic love may be universal in some countries, still, the early experience of romantic love and passion usually ends. Scientists are now discovering that the mix of brain chemicals that ignites romance is very much different from the mix that promotes long-term attachment. What is this thing called love and relationship? Love makes you bold, crazy and burning bright. You run real risks while being "in love" which you sometimes survive, and often you don't. *The New York Times* reported a study from Cornell University on the chemical effects of love, evidenced by Doppler color scans of the brain (2005). In this report, the state of falling in love was likened to that of being insane and

the after effects of failed relationship to be much akin to that of the withdrawal symptoms experienced by addicts.

It is important to take into consideration in this study and development of model what is being called 'Brain Science', the chemistry of love and the influence of hormones and neurotransmitters with their effects on long-term love and relationship. According to anthropologist Helen Fisher (2001) when a new couple is in love, there are present elevated levels of naturally occurring hormones such as fenylethylamine, while naturally occurring amphetamine like neurotransmitters, such as dopamine and norepinephrine flood the brain. Fischer also concludes that biologically speaking, the reasons romantic love fades may be found in the way our brains respond to the surge and pulse of dopamine that accompanies passion and makes us feel as though we can fly. Pair bonding is ultimately driven by the mating instinct, states Fisher, "wired into the most primitive part of our brains."

Fischer has suggested that relationships frequently break up after four years because that's about how long it takes to raise a child through infancy (Fischer 2004). Passion, she states, "that wild, prismatic insane feeling turns out to be practical after all." However, Scientists now believe that romance is panhuman, embedded in our brains since Pleistocene times. In a study of 166 cultures, evidence of passionate love was observed in 147 of them (Jankowia and Fischer). Biochemists, however, say this feverish stage of love typically burns out after a few years, proposing that the brain can't maintain the intense neural activity of infatuation and passion. The attachment phase is then reported to take over with the release of substances such as endorphins and encephalines, which provide the committed couple with a feeling of peace, tranquility and security.

In search for answers to what predicts success in relationship, psychoanalysts have concocted countless theories about why we fall in love and with whom we do so. Of interest in the study of committed relationship between man and woman is the recent climate of thought examined by researchers such as Thomas Lewis, an assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of California at University of California at San Francisco's School of Medicine (Lewis 2001). Lewis maintains that "Evolutionary Psychology has left Freud and the psychodynamic theories in the past and is in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, looking toward more scientifically based and empirical evidence of love and relationship" (2001).

A significant contribution of Lewis's work, is the notion that as adults, we can still develop and change what he terms "attractors" for how and whom we choose to love. Within these structures, new answers to the questions most worth asking about human lives; what are feelings of love, and why do we have them? What are relationships and why do they exist? What causes emotional pain and how can it be mended? What is therapy and how does it heal? How should we configure our society to further emotional health? (2001). The investigation of these queries is not just an intellectual excursion. On the contrary, people must have the answers to make sense of their lives. He contends, people who do not grasp the principles of love waste their lives and break their hearts. Lewis writes, "The evidence of that pain surrounds us, in the form of failed marriages, hurtful relationships, neglected children, unfulfilled ambitions, and thwarted dreams." From the standpoint of Lewis, the roots of that suffering are often unseen and passed over, while proposed remedies cannot succeed, ( e.g. pathologizing and medication) because they contradict emotional laws that our culture does not yet recognize

(2001). Lewis further holds the assumption that academic papers do not hold the key to the mysteries of love, he states as William Osler observed, “those who attempt to study the body without books sail an uncharted sea, while those who only study books do not go to sea at all” (2001). And so, Lewis professes, wherever possible, he and his constituents compared what research had to say against the emotional experience of their patients, their families, and themselves.

Further still, Lewis holds that love emanates from the brain, but, love unavoidably partakes of the subjective. With this in mind, he claims that in spite of what science teaches; only a delicate mixture of evidence and intuition can yield the truest view of the emotional mind. In exploring the nature of love, Lewis and his colleagues draw upon imagination, invention and the “ascendant scientific knowledge that biotechnology places at our disposal” (2001). Thus, it is hoped that as neuroscience unlocks the secrets of the brain, new insights into the nature of love will become possible.

### Historical Review: Marriage in Ancient Religions

To full comprehend marriage in Western society today, it is essential to first explore several different constructs and to understand the influence they exert on our modern concepts of relationship. The following sections of historical literature and Biblical text are designed to illustrate each construct at length, exploring each one along a historical and philosophical path. Still it is maintained that much of what is written in the Bible is relevant to life and relationship today. These biblical bastions persisting throughout human history, have survived very much so today, still to the detrimental subjugation of women in particular. The vast historical resources utilized in this research

were from a range of all ages and cultures. It is crucial to therapeutic relationship with clients to take into consideration their theoretical, religious and cultural position when they enter therapy. The purpose of this section, then, is to acquaint the reader with various domains of western society and modern culture; most specifically the varied religions presented here.

Margaret Monahan-Hogan (2002) is the Chairperson of the Philosophy Department at King's college and served as President of the Center for Academic Integrity at Duke University. She has served on the Independent Review Board for the Diocese of Scranton since 1993. The review board oversees clergy sexual misconduct. Monahan-Hogan examines the notion of marriage and its ends in the documents of recent tradition. She writes,

Moral philosophy within the ethical institution that is Roman Catholicism has witnessed and is witnessing, with increasing intransigence, the debate regarding the very meaning as well as the appropriate means of accomplishing the Biblical injunction, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gn 1: 27–28) and the Biblical injunction, "For this reason a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" (Gn 2:18, 22–24). The issues within the debate include (1) the delineation of the essential nature of marriage, (2) the specification and valuation of the ends of marriage, and (3) the examination of the implications in regard to the regulation of the accomplishment or avoidance of the reproductive finality brought about by the transition in the understanding of the nature of marriage and the ends of marriage. The debate continues within a matrix that is marked by the presence in modern society of a variety of pressures including the affirmation of the dignity of women as full participants in the progressive enterprise of human existence, the advances in the sciences as they relate to humanity, and the increasing demands on the resources of families to educate children to be contributing members, as people called to union with God. (Monahan-Hogan 2002).

Monahan-Hogan further states, "In this new profile, marriage is characterized as a special kind of human relationship. It is an intimate personal union which is to supply the

matrix of conditions for the perfection of the marriage, for procreation, and for the perfection of the partners.” From this standpoint she maintains marriage has three ends:

1. personal union — intrinsic necessary end
2. procreation — intrinsic contingent end
3. personalist — intrinsic contingent end.

These ends press for actualization on three distinct but interrelated levels: horizontal, vertical, and transcendental. Governance of the reproductive finality is directed from within the marital matrix. Further clarified and as follows: (1) the personal union, (2) children, and (3) the flourishing of the individual persons, whose actualization brings about the perfection of the marriage (2002).

As exhibited above, the result is three sets of ends of marriage, the unitive, the procreative, and the personalist, each operative on three distinct but related levels: (1) the level of horizontal finality, (2) the level of vertical finality, and (3) the level of transcendental finality. Horizontal finality is the reference of each thing to its commensurate motives and ends. Vertical finality is marked by the upthrust from lower to higher levels of appetite. Transcendental finality is the reference of all things to God. The development of the ends of marriage on these three levels derives from the ethical theory developed and continuous from Aristotle to Thomas Aquinas to contemporary ethicists, including Bernard Lonergan. The unitive end as the relation between the partners on the level of horizontal finality pursues satisfaction of appetitive, passionial inclinations of the organisms, on the vertical level the upward dispositive striving is toward friendship, the deliberate friendship of reason, and on the transcendental level the finality is from friendship to charity. The procreative end as the accomplishment of children on the horizontal level tends to the existence of children, on the vertical directs

the education of children as members of the family and the community, and on the level of transcendental finality aspires to the eternal salvation of children. The personalist end as the development and actualization of the individual on the level of horizontal finality pursues life, on the level of vertical finality the good life, on the level of transcendental finality eternal life (2002).

This “presence in modern society of a variety of pressures including the affirmation of the dignity of women as full participants in the progressive enterprise of human existence” is not inherent to any specific religion in today’s society, as evidenced in the following historical review of Judaism (2002). Our religious and cultural doctrines are hard pressed to sustain their reverence in today’s society. For this purpose, we continue with historical review in this section.

### The Commandments

The classic compendium of Jewish law, the “Mishneh Torah,” lists 613 commandments, as recorded by Maimonides in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. There are differences of opinion over the applicability today of some commandments in this list (Hahn 1996). Hahn points out that the list should not be used as a source for any practical Halachic ruling. There are differences of opinion over the applicability today of some of some commandments in this list. Similarly, distinctions must often be made between rabbinically-decreed commandments and those that still have binding force as Torah-law today. The partial list below is an excerpt from the list of commandments. They are introduced in this study as a historical view on relationship and the roles that were expected of man and woman at that time.



The Bible states in Book Four: The Book of Women,

Laws of Marriage

122	To marry a wife by means of ketubah and kiddushin	Deut. 22:13
123	Not to have relations with women not thus married	Deut. 23:18
124	Not to withhold food, clothing, and relations from your wife.	Ex. 21:10
125	To have children with one's wife.	Gen. 1:28

Mitzvot, or commandments, are directives from G-d as recorded in the Five Books of Moses. When many people think of commandments they think of the Ten Commandments, which Moses brought down from Mt. Sinai on two stone tablets. Some might even be familiar with the Seven Noashide laws (which were given to Noah and his descendants); these are binding and generally accepted as being so) upon all individuals of all civilizations.

They are:

1. Establish a system of civil justice
2. Do not curse G-d
3. Do not practice idolatry
4. Do not engage in one of the forbidden carnal relations
5. Do not murder
6. Do not steal
7. Do not eat a limb that was severed from a live animal

Many people, however are unaware that the total number of commandments as listed in the Torah, is 613: There are 248 positive commandments (i.e. commandments to do something), and 365 negative commandments (i.e. to refrain from doing). Every commandment is an expression of philosophical thought and of the Divine wisdom.

In these ancient texts are written sacred laws that continue to hold everlasting importance for us in today's societies. Retrospectively, all of us want to have lived a life of fulfillment, contentment, and peace. Most are looking to find the right path to personal happiness and self-development, many turn to religious faith or understandings in some context or another.

Our historical religious and cultural roots still play a large part in the concepts and expectations of modern day marriage and relationship. This is evidenced by the highly frequent reports by female patients in therapy today of coercion and guilt for not meeting their wifely duties, or obeying their spouse according to custom, religion or cultural mores and values. These religious convictions, still much in place in the western world today, continue to impact human relationships and define the marital experiences they engender.

### Character Traits

The Bible is viewed for the purposes of this research as a document that proposed to teach us how to live. For the purposes of this study the highlighting of commandments and the character traits within the text as outlined in the Torah, helps to pinpoint tools that can be used towards the assessment of a person's active self-fulfillment and goals of long-term, committed relationship. Much of the formation of the compatibility questionnaire was based on these laws of righteousness.

It is maintained that; "the essence of the Bible is to teach us how to live" (Hahn 1996). To fully comprehend this, this perspective proffers that, "the road to success is found within your own character traits, the way you think and behave." There are literally

thousands of traits throughout the Bible. Further, “it is inherent in the human condition to constantly go through self-evaluation.” In fact, the only aspect of humanity that changes from society to society, and from generation to generation, is the standard by which people measure themselves. In these ancient texts, it is stated, that when G-d described himself to Moses, he did so in terms of character traits (Hahn 1996). According to the Thirteen Attributes of God, when G-d described Himself to Moses, He did so in terms of character traits,

God, God, Omnipotent, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in kindness and truth. Preserver of kindness for thousand of generations, forgiving transgression, rebellious sins and errors. He does not clear [the unrepentant], but keeps in mind the transgressions of the fathers to their children and grandchildren, to the third and fourth generation.

As technical as the Torah may become, whether dealing with the laws of torts, or the laws of rituals, the underlying theme behind all commandments, stories and narratives is righteousness. According to Jewish philosophy, the true measure of human success is in the area of character traits (Hahn 1996). It is maintained that knowing these traits and thinking about them is already a change in the right direction, an important first step towards becoming a success in the eyes of Torah, one’s fellow man, and, or course, in your own eyes as well. As the Torah teaches, what you become and the good name you create is essentially the inheritance you leave to your family, friends, and the world. Today, these moral teachings continue to provide a basis for a more profound understanding of human behavior and the decisions we make in life. It is maintained in the Bible that finding this right path to knowledge and the path to self-development is a key factor in successful relationship.

## Religiosity

Although there has been some overall lessening of the degree in which religious practice affects society in the U.S. today, there is little doubt religious beliefs and backgrounds continue to exert a strong influence on the relationship decisions and marriages of many couples. This religious faith and practice affects couples decisions about not only the prospects of marriage, but also living together, how many children they wish to have, what religion to raise the yet unborn children, and which religious convictions should take precedence within the family. It is further suggested, that active co-involvement together of partners in their beliefs and the practice of faith is strongly associated with marital quality (Mahoney, Pargament, et. al 1999) According to Heaton & Pratt, religious dissimilarity among partners is a known risk factor in marriage (1990).

Annette Mahoney is currently studying deeper constructs related to religious beliefs and marriage at Bowling Green state University. These constructs are suggested to be profitably used in some evaluations of healthy marriage interventions. A current example of her research includes a “sanctification of marriage” measure. These are stated to evaluate the degree to which a couple holds religious beliefs that marriage, and especially their marriage, is of particular spiritual significance (Mahoney et al., 1999). Mahoney contends that such beliefs would add to the motivation and investment that partners might make to build and sustain their marriages, not only when things are going smoothly, but conversely during tough times because, “ they have attached marriage goals to higher order, transcendent meanings” (1999).

### Changing Social Trends in the Western World

“Is there something fatal to marriage at the heart of human longing?” This is one of Rougemont’s key questions (1983). Rougemont bases his question on his awareness of a highly common literary theme, that the only true passionate love is adulterous love, the love of the forbidden. To summarize the thesis of *Love in the Western World* (1983) it appears that, “the idea of the “Myth of Love” in the Western literary tradition through the past seven centuries finds a central theme, that the love of passion, the love of Eros is not the love of Agape, the love of Christian charity. It is instead Rougemont writes; that “sinful forbidden love for the one who one has no right to. Everything changes except the human heart, say the old sages, but they are wrong. Metaphorically speaking, the human heart is strangely sensitive to variations in time and place” (1983). Thus, a mistaken identify of love with passion. From this standpoint, passion is taken as an index of love not of this world, a longing for the infinite.

This theme is in contradiction to the image of another kind of love, Biblical love, of Abraham’s love for Sarah, of Jacob’s love for Rachel. Those loves, at the beginning of one side of Western literary tradition, may suggest a kind of passionate intimacy, whose model is sanctity. What we call ‘passionate love’ is unknown in India and China. They have no words to render this concept. The West is distinct from other cultures not only by its invention of passionate love in the twelfth century and the secular elaboration of conjugal love, but by its confusion of the notions of Eros, agape, sexuality, passion (1983).

In attempting to define passion and jealousy Rougemont writes,

For he does not understand either how to possess or how to enjoy what reality has given him. He has lost the one essential—a sense of constancy. For to be faithful is to have decided to accept another being for his or her own sake, in his or her own limitations and reality, choosing this being not as an excuse for excited elevation or as an ‘object of contemplation’, but as having a matchless and independent life which requires active love.

Though he alludes to passion as a mere “myth” he claims not to attack passion but merely to describe it. According to Rougemont, (1983) “passion wrecks the very notion of marriage at a time when there is being attempted the feat of trying to ground marriage in values elaborated by the morals of passion.” In his critique of marriage, he further suggests that it is clear that the present breakdown of marriage in Europe as in America, results from “a plurality of profound or proximate causes of which the cult of romance is but an instance.” However he maintains that there is more to it and defers to “Woman’s emancipation—her entrance into the professions and her claim to equality of treatment” as a perceptible factor in the breakdown along with blame on the “popularization of psychological knowledge” as another factor (1983). It is also of great import to note that female liberation at the least seemingly coincides with if it does not correlate with the decline of marriage in the western world.

By the 1790’s the theory of sexual complementarity had swept Europe and passed, in some cases, into national legislation. The revolutionary French government in a pivotal decision denied women political rights and the right to assemble, citing as justification newly established definitions of woman’s nature. According to the National Convention, women did not possess “the moral and physical strength required for the exercise of the rights of citizenship.” According to the Convention, social stability results

from, among other things, “the differences between man and woman.” Each sex is called to the occupation that is fitting for it.” Theories of sexual complementarity proposed by Rousseau and others seemed plausible because they described divisions of labor between the sexes that were both ancient and real. Complementarians merely accepted what was customary or well established and called it natural (Schiebinger 1996). Rousseau’s great success in framing a new brand of complementarity for the eighteenth century came from his clearly articulated solution to the two threats women posed to middle-class men: the threat of traditional power and privilege wielded by aristocratic women, and the new demands for equality coming from women of the third estate. With this in mind, we see that the great liberalizing French revolution was not liberal toward women.

Rousseau’s theory of sexual complementarity met with success because it developed new foundations for old arguments. The ancient theory of humors had correlated character (or temperament) with physical characteristics: a sedentary style of life was thought to cultivate a moist body, which, in turn, housed a soft mind. Modern science changed the causal structure of the argument but not its components. For Rousseau, physical asymmetries between the sexes explained the differences one observed in men and women’s moral character and daily lives. Natural philosophy was to read in the book of nature “everything which suits the constitution of her [woman’s] species and her sex in order to fulfill her place in the physical and moral order” (Schiebinger 1996).

The Industrial Revolution launched a trend of more women in the workplace. Tracing this single phenomenon in the United States explains much about the current modes of modern family life, relationship and marriage today.

Fischer (1992) writes,

European settlers began to dot the Atlantic coast; American women began to make money outside the home by selling their surplus soap, their jars of raspberry preserves, their scented candles, and home-baked pies. A few spinsters set up shops to sell books or imported clothes. Some widows became innkeepers or land agents. But the vast majority of women kept a home. By 1815, however, textile mills had begun to rise behind the cherry trees and chicken yards and some young women had begun to leave home for factory work. They sought regular pay and shorter work hours — time and money to spend thumbing through catalogs for store-bought clothes. Even married women began to take home piecework for extra cash. America was turning industrial. And around the middle of the nineteenth century the divorce rate started to rise.

Divorce rates have leaped greater since. In the mid-1800's, cheap labor and immigrant men stole women's jobs. This vast new work force, the flight of the American men from the farm into the factory, the belief that working women drive men's wages down, and the conviction that more children produce a larger tax base, a stronger military, a larger consumer market, and more bodies in church on Sunday then popularized the dictum A woman's place is in the home. By 1900 only about 20 percent of the women were in the labor force, most of them immigrants, youths, and singles. Nevertheless, more married women worked than in preceding decades and divorce rates increased.

The twentieth century saw a periodic escalation of these social trends launched by the industrial age: more working women, more divorce. However, America's emergence as a superpower after World War II brought an era of marital stability some tend to think of as a golden age" (1992). Actually the 1950s was the most unusual decade of our century. Millions of women left the labor market as war veterans returned home and claimed their jobs in industry. Tuition loans, cheap life insurance for servicemen, government-guaranteed mortgages, tax advantages for married couples, and the expanding economy provided economic opportunities for postwar husbands. These young men and women had also grown up during the Great Depression, when family life was



particularly turbulent. They valued a stable home. So in the 1950s Americans settled down. Adlai Stevenson summed up the times in 1955, advising graduating women of Smith College to "influence man and boy" through the "humble role of housewife." America took Stevenson's advice. Homemaking became fashionable. Women's magazines warned brides of the dangers of mixing work with motherhood. Psychiatrists described women with careers as struggling with "penis envy." And social critics proclaimed that mothering and keeping house were women's natural roles (1992).

Anthropologist Ashley Montagu delivered the coup de grace, saying, "No woman with a husband and small children can hold a full-time job and be a good homemaker at one and the same time." Not surprisingly, men and women married younger in the 1950s than in any other twentieth-century decade; 20.2 was the median age for women and 22.6 for men. The divorce rate remained unusually steady. Remarriage rates declined. And the birthrate rose to its twentieth-century high — the baby boom. In 1957 the bumper crop of infants peaked; the spreading suburbs became a cradle" (2002).

Coontz (2005) argues that most women did not need the threat of external sanctions to get them to enter male breadwinner marriages and make homes of their own. For instance, she refers to the sexualization of mass culture into the 1950s, "Sex, its magic spell everywhere, was accompanied by the stern warning: Don't do it." To further comprehend the climate of thought at the time, she refers to an interview with a woman recollecting moving to the suburbs in the 1950's. "We thought we had the ideal life, we knew little about the outside world of poverty, culture, crime and ethnic

It is clear that in the 1950s marriages, low expectations could lead people to put up with truly terrible family lives. Historian Elaine Tyler May comments that in the

1950s, “the idea of a working marriage was one that often included constant day to day misery for one or both partners.” In the 1950s married couples represented 80 percent of all households in the United States. By the beginning of the twenty-first century they were less than 51 percent, and married couples with children were just 25 percent of all households. For the first time ever, there were more single-person households than those with married couples and children. Married persons were still a majority of the workforce and of the homebuyers in 2001 but unmarried individuals were gaining fast, accounting for 42 percent of the workforce and 40 percent of home buyers (Coontz 2005).

Marriage was once part of the credentialing process that people had to go through to gain adult responsibility and respectability (2005). Today however, moving through a series of predictable societal norms is no longer a route to personal security. For instance, each man and woman today must put together a highly individualized sequence of transitions in and out of school, work, and marriage in order to take advantage of shifting paradigms and be ready to handle unexpected setbacks (e.g. divorce, separation, financial demands).

Modern marriage has thus, been transformed forever. This revolution is not confined to the United States. Despite cultural variations, almost all industrial countries have experience similar changes. As in the United States, divorce rates began to fall in Western Europe in the 1990’s but rates of marriage fell even faster. By the late 1990s, 40 per cent of all births in France and Britain were to unmarried women. In Iceland, in 1991 more than 60 percent of all births were to unwed parents. The trend toward solitary living is likewise widespread. There are also changes in marital norms in countries that were “holdouts” in the 1980s and early 1990s (2005). Although divorce is still stigmatized,

there has also been a huge fall in the rate of marriage, suggesting we are looking at a massive historical changing of tides. More than half of Spanish women aged twenty-five to twenty-nine are single. The rate of marriage in Italy is much lower than in the United States. Japan shares with Scandinavia in the distinction of having the highest percentage of unmarried women between age twenty and forty of anywhere in the world (2005).

Coontz also reports that recognition of same-sex unions is another global trend. Of current import are the statistics, between 2000 and 2004 of same-sex marriages legalized in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Canada. Spain, Iceland, Germany, Hungary, South Africa, Portugal, Taiwan and Argentina gave same-sex couples many of the same legal rights as married heterosexuals (2005). With this in mind, and despite all these changes, marriage is not considered to be doomed. For most persons, marriage is the highest expression of commitment they can show for one another. It also seems those most still hold marriage in high regards and have increased their standards for what constitutes a “good marriage.” Marriage today as a relationship between two human beings is taken very seriously and promotes higher emotional expectations than ever before.

In considering this research, it is not hard to understand the task put upon modern day relationships. Today individuals and couples, young and old, have forged ahead into our modern day age of technology and instant gratification. How are couples, with “relationship mandates”, societal, religious, and cultural, including every day pressures of the plain mundane, supposed to succeed? Within the context of the modern day relationship, today’s prevailing social discourse contributes to and generates rigid roles.

These problems within the context of relationship are often developed and maintained systemically.

This sacred pairing of persons in “relationship,” although held to much of the religious and cultural views of the past, takes on the burden of new meaning in today’s world. This is reflected in the statistics of failed marriages and broad based dynamics of presenting couples in therapy with needs which are reportedly not met. Blame is most often cast on the partner that is rendered “the enemy,” not having fulfilled the respective spouse’s dreams and expectations for their marriage.

Culture can, however, change the incidence of adultery and divorce, the number of people who play out this ancient text. Will American divorce rates go up and up? What kinds of families will we see? Where are we headed now? As stated, all sorts of sociological, psychological, and demographic forces contribute to divorce rates. The vast majority of us have moved away from home; our parents live in different cities, often with new partners. So the wide network of family and community support that couples need when times are tough has vanished, increasing the likelihood of divorce. Those who choose partners with different habits, different values, different interests, and different leisure activities are more likely to divorce (Fisher 2001). Urbanism and secularism are also to be considered in association with marital dissolution.

According to recent bibliographic research, women had fantasies of children, sex, Olympic triumphs, and a house with beautiful paintings and a view of the sea (Mayerson 1996). Women imagined being rich and famous and having a brilliant career all the while married. About half the women in her study reported having frequent daydreams about marriage. These tended to focus on the setting, the style of life, and the children. She

further claims that “neither pretend games nor fantasies had much to do with a husband, if a man was present; he was rarely a well-rendered person (1996). She further notes that in the women interviewed, the dreams are remarkably similar from generation to generation as quoted in this woman’s statement; “I kind of had the image of the knight in shining light, the white knight in the shining armor who would rescue me from the hard times I had with my parents. But I never had a real picture of him. Really, I never got beyond the wedding. My ideal was the children and the dog and the station wagon. I thought I was going to be spending the rest of my life with plants, and kids running around, and dogs in the minivan. It was this great big friendly, bucolic, idyllic scene” (1996).

The contemporary emphasis on individualism and self-fulfillment has also contributed to the rising incidence of divorce. But of all the major factors that promote marital instability, perhaps the most powerful in America today can be summed up in two words: working women. Divorce rates are high in marriages where the husband's income is markedly lower than the wife's. Men in higher socioeconomic classes maintain more stable marriages because they tend to have more money than their spouses. And generally women with a good education and a high-paying job divorce more readily.

Money spells freedom. Working women have more of it than those who mind the house. And demographers regularly cite this correlation between working women and high divorce rates. This is not to blame working wives for the high American divorce rate. Although 60 percent of today's divorces are filed by women, demographers will never know who actually leaves whom. But where women work outside the home and

bring back staples, luxuries, or money, people caught in difficult relationships can leave each other. And they do (Fischer 1992).

I do. I do. I do. "Marriage," Voltaire said, "is the only adventure open to the cowardly." Indeed, and we continue to participate with zest. Today over 90 percent of all American men and women eventually wed, and although our newspapers tell us that fewer men and women are willing to take the plunge, marriage rates have changed very little through our history. In fact, the percentage of "never married" people was almost the same in 1989 as in 1890, almost a hundred years ago (1992).

Americans aren't even marrying any later — as we are often told. In 1990 the median age at which a bride wed was 23.9 and her groom's age was 26.1; in 1890 a woman married at the median age of 22.0 and a man wed at 26.1. Because Americans tend to compare present marriage patterns with those of the 1950s, when men and women did indeed wed much earlier, we think the current marriage age is a new phenomenon. It is not. Furthermore, despite claims that marriage is passé, Fischer writes, "marriage is a badge of Homo sapiens." To bond is human. This drive evolved some four million years ago and if we survive as a species, it should be with us four million years from now (Fisher 2001).

The question posed in this research is what marriage means for individuals and couples in enduring relationships and marriages. What are the variables that make it what it is? What helps relationship and marriages survive? What are the predictive items that allow us to determine the differences that occur between husband and wife? After exploring the essence of enduring marital experience, it was possible to compare and contrast the findings with existing knowledge about marriage and relationship. In

assessing the couple at onset of therapy with the predictive KCI, the therapist is better able to predict the outcome of the couple's therapeutic process. In considering the limitations of these earlier assessment instruments reviewed in this literature review, and in routine therapeutic practice today, I advocate a strategy and model of more detailed assessment when indicators of relationship or marital distress are presented in therapy. Thus, it is hoped that this research will allow better prediction of marital satisfaction and success, and provide additional information for a better understanding of the development of the state of successful relationship.

## CHAPTER III

### PHILOSOPHY OF EROTOLOGY: DEFINING LOVE

#### The Physical and Emotional Expression

One of the questions in this research and model development is concerns the effects of social and cultural discourse regarding the meaning and purpose of marriage. As reported in Ch. II of the literature review, in order to maintain a lasting and loving marital relationship today, one cannot depend solely on the values of morality and religious compendiums. Along with moral duties, rights and responsibilities, the elements of mutual respect and love appear to strengthen the foundations of stable and reportedly happy marriages. These components of “mutual respect and love” are further defined for the purpose of this research in this chapter.

Many theorists and psychotherapists say that marriage is about healing wounds of the past. From the fantasy of rescuer to the role of caretaker, couples present for therapy everyday, finding themselves constricted by the ties that bind, as truly defined by the term “institution” of marriage. Traditionally our culture defines the ‘feminine’ as passive, subservient, emotional, the ‘masculine’ as action- oriented and aggressive. However, in current times, woman and man find themselves in non-traditional roles, exchanging their business suits for roles as stay at home dads, and their “homemaker” stations in life, for their places next to the traditional male as colleagues in business and politics.



Gone are the days of suffragettes and burning of bras, significant to the fight for women's rights, yet the status and equal rights for woman continue to evade many in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today still, women are put to task by the media and society as shown by the recent news headliner on the NBC Today show, "Who is better, Men or Women?" The current films and books raise the question of gender based power differentials, as the picket lines protest "The Da Vinci Code" (Brown 2003). Why do women continue to find themselves facing the age old question of power differential between man and woman? In my private practice, both individuals and couples often present in therapy with issues involving these dynamics of gender specific roles, expectations and power differentials, engendering both cultural and societal marital dynamics.

In response to this, we must look at how this unmapped territory is transforming relationship and our lives. The rules for "catching and keeping a mate" were simple back in the 1950s, and directed at women. Most women today have neither the inclination nor the time or energy to participate in such painstaking manipulation of boyfriends or husbands. Coontz writes, "As the roles of men and women become more equal, people have grown impatient with such games." However for many, the games must go on. Whether based on power and control, money or self-viewed victimization in relationship, there are those that haven't been able to obtain clarity for why their marriages or relationships are not working. There is no little purple pill that will "fix" relationship. Couples today do still have to "work" in order to nurture their marriages, keeping them both healthy and mutually fulfilling. With this in mind, a marriage that survives and thrives in today's world of choices is likely to be far more satisfying, fair and effective for partners than in the past (Coontz 2005).

## Enduring Love and Desire

Helen Fischer states “that when Darwin used the term “Survival of the Fittest” he was not referring to your good looks or your bank account; he was counting your children.” If you raise babies that have babies, you are what nature calls fit. You have passed your genes to the next generation and in terms of survival you have won. So the sexes are locked in a mating dance, endlessly adjusting their moves to complement those of each other. Only in tandem can either men or women reproduce and pass on the beat of human life. Thus, Fischer maintains, “in this process of the mating dance our basic human "reproductive strategy" began a long time ago, when the world was young and our primordial ancestors evolved into two sexes” (Fisher 2001).

Research considers how marital conflicts may be affected by interactional behaviors and contextual events. Also contributing to conflict is whether or not the couple shows levels of respect for each other. On the contrary, another predominant concern in these studies reflects that contempt and disdain are major contributors to marital distress. Inevitably, interpersonal and marital conflicts reflect differences in partner’s perspectives. Within intense conflicts and distressed relationships, these differences may be especially pronounced (Sillars et. al. 2000). Furthermore, in interpersonal and marital conflicts, individuals often interpret interaction in an incongruous manner, and when they do so, they do so dramatically. It is imperative to look toward strategies for change that aim to resolve differences shaped by beliefs. This change may involve individual or marital perception, beliefs and/or behaviors.

## CHAPTER IV.

## NEUROSCIENCE AND PSYCHO-BIOLOGY:

Why and Whom We Choose to Love

To fully comprehend this concept, one must understand the chemical nature of this condition called romantic love. Fisher (2004) reveals that the Tuareg Muslims of Nigeria call romantic passion “Tamazi”; “an illness of the heart and soul.” Supporting this theorem, many American psychologists regard romantic love as an addiction. Fisher agrees with this. For instance, she suspects that unrequited love drives up levels of dopamine and/or norepinephrine in the brain to a point where these natural stimulants actually produce the anxiety and despair that rejected lovers feel. What about mystical charms and love potions, can we make someone fall in love with us, with items and concoctions that have been employed to catch or keep a lover? No, Fisher claims that none will ever work. From her standpoint the feeling of romantic attraction is a chemical experience, this passion she writes “flares only when the time is right and you find someone who fits within your love map.” None of us falls in love randomly she insists.

A significant study was done at the University of Miami, where 64 per cent of women said they were in love, while only 46 percent of men reported being in love. Comparatively, among students surveyed in Russia and Japan, slightly more women than men reported that they were in love. These findings appear to report that women are somewhat more inclined to indulge this passion. With this in mind, unfortunately more people will marry because they are passionately in love, and more will divorce when the romance dies. However, the good news is, more men and women will look for love again and again, in adolescence, midlife, and their senior years.

### Love Maps: Ties That Bind

According to Fisher, timing, mystery, even differences in the immune system and undoubtedly many other biological factors coalesce to trigger brain circuits when that special someone smiles at you from across a crowded room. However, it is one's childhood that she considers the most important element in igniting that blaze of interest. For instance, your mother's artistic talent, your father's strong character and war hero status; what your friends, siblings admire or find distasteful build our belief systems, interests and values over the years. Ultimately, by early adulthood, we each have within us a laundry list of characteristics we are looking for in a mate.

Sexologist John Money calls this unconscious mental template a "love map." He believes that children begin to develop these maps between ages five and eight and that the maps solidify at puberty (1986). From the standpoint of Fischer the actual physical feelings you have as you experience this attraction is chemical. It is she says, "Built into the human brain." Further still, she writes "that one of the outstanding social trends of the coming century, I believe, will be the revival and celebration of romantic love."

## **PART II.**

### **CHAPTER V**

#### **MODEL DEVELOPMENT**

The purpose of this research was to contribute to the comprehension of the systemic workings of relationship. The questionnaire was planned with a self administered design, to make an initial assessment of the factors associated with marital discord, and to observe if these variables were able to project the outcome of psychotherapeutic intervention in couple's therapy. This framework was complemented with cognitive-behavioral techniques in the context of the therapeutic environment with the therapist. A systemic epistemology formed the basis in which to apply the theoretical aspects taken into account in the proposed intervention.

To date, sexologists have had difficulty measuring this construct. Previous measurement of relationship distress offered at least token acknowledgement of the possible contributing factors of each individual in the relationship and broader socioecological factors, but they did not emphasize relationship issues as a whole. By contrast, in couple-based assessment as the unit of analysis, the focal point is dedicated to the relationship processes with the individual processes as seen as necessary but second order components.

### The Researchers Theoretical Perspective

In my psychotherapy practice which focuses solely on relationship therapy with individuals and couples, I have found a pattern of interactions and sequences of behavior that are most often presented in therapy. The complaints most often voiced are generally organized around a particular expectation or 'rule of relationship' within their belief system that has been violated in some form or manner by the respective spouse/partner.

Many of the self-reported items of relational difficulties are as follows:

1. Disappointment with the marriage
2. Betrayal in the eyes of the respective spouse or partner
3. Differences in subjective views on marriage
4. Personal beliefs that lend themselves to set "rules"
5. Decrease in libido and/or sex with partner
6. Anger and resentment toward partner
7. Sense of entitlement from spouse based on gender bias
8. Religious and Cultural beliefs being imposed on spouse
9. Lack of communication of basic assumptions of marriage

Many of these constructs, and the research this project encompasses, support the hypothesis which this model presents.

### The Proposed Model

The proposed model offers a conceptual framework for a couple-based assessment strategy (the couple is the unit of analysis) grounded in empirical findings linking couple distress to a broad range of both individual and relationship characteristics. Guided by this framework, empirically supported assessment strategies and techniques emphasizing relationship functioning across diverse methods are proposed, including the clinical interview, and the self-report measure of the Krieger Compatibility Inventory. Couple assessment is distinguished from individual assessment by its emphasis on relationship processes that not only interact with but transcend one's individual characteristics. In contrast to most individual assessment strategies which offer at least partial acknowledgement of the potential contributing role of relationship and broader sociological factors, they do not emphasize relationship issues. In couple-based assessment, relationship processes are the initial focal point of conceptualization and measurement strategies, with the individual and external/social systemic processes integrated as critical but secondary elements of the relationship

The Krieger Compatibility Inventory (KCI) is a 49-item questionnaire designed to identify relationship differentials and measure compatibility in 7 relationship areas: Respect, Forgiveness, Compassion, Trust, Commitment, Charitability, and Intimacy & Sexuality. The model is comprised of a 7 item scale with 7 sub-scales assigned to each category of questions. The questionnaire is designed to evidence these predictive variables, of couple compatibility, commitment and concern for one another. These

elements are developed as seven main variables reflected in the context of the questionnaire, with seven questions reflecting each of the seven variables. It is proposed that the need for adequately measuring such important variables is needed to advance our knowledge base of assessing couples at the onset of the therapeutic process.

Descriptions of the scales used in this study follows:

Respect: This scale is concerned with the individuals' feelings and attitudes toward one another in the context of their marriage/relationship. Items reflect shared and individual perceptions of sharing and receiving emotional and cognitive validation from the partner. Validation is evident through skills such as attentive listening and expressing value in partner's perspective or point of view.

Forgiveness: This scale measures one's ability to reconcile their feelings and let go of contempt and grudges against another. Items reflect individual and shared perceptions of ability to transcend past old feelings of anger, resentment, and disrespect. This model identifies forgiveness in the framework of a reaction to a traumatic interpersonal event.

Note: Forgiveness is an issue that recently has received increasing attention in the psychological literature, yet little empirical research has been conducted on this topic. The individuals comprising the two groups (husband & wife/partner's) based upon their scores on this measure will be reporting expected levels of global forgiveness, relationship power and closeness, and assumptions about themselves and their partners

Compassion: This scale allows for the measurement of the individual's feelings toward others, in the context of marriage as well as relationships with other unrelated persons. Has to do with what kind of person you are and how you relate to the rest of the world. These items reflect both individual and comparative perceptions of the couple as a whole in the ability to extend empathy, and caring. This involves ability to praise and comfort one's partner.

Trust: This scale is concerned with the individual's perceptions of bonds of trust, comprised of items concerning faith, safety, and individual and shared perceptions of love and quality of the relationship. Items reflect reliability, keeping one's word, including the degree of comfort one feels with their partner, both emotionally and physically.



Commitment: This scale is measured in terms of either commitment or intention to the institution of marriage, relationship. This includes the constructs of dedication (interpersonal commitment) and constraint, i.e a sense of couple identity, or a “we” that perceives how they view themselves in relationship and approach life together. The couple also is likely to have a strong desire for a future together, or long term plans. Dedication is characterized by placing the needs of the partner and relationship at a higher priority as well as a willingness to sacrifice for one another.

Note: Commitment has not typically been included as a variable in past research examining marital functioning and it has been viewed by earlier researchers that few conceptually derived indicators of marital commitment actually exist.

Charitability: This scale is measured in terms of the construct of being capable of appreciating and fulfilling a purposeful life. Items reflect the ability to show empathy or caring for one’s fellow man, goodwill, benevolent feelings or action toward those in need. Also measured here are nurturance of self and others, healthy boundaries, gratitude, living life creatively with a spiritual connection. Note: This variable has not been known to be included as a variable in current research examining marital functioning.

Intimacy/Sexuality: This sub- scale involves the love and affection expressed toward one’s partner, along with aspects of relationship, including notions of romance, affection, sexual chemistry and companionship. Healthy pleasures promoting well-being such as touch, play, laughter, sexuality and experiencing beauty leading to contentment and peace are measured here.

SCORING: Approximately 150 couples will complete the self-report questionnaires about their involvement in and perceptions regarding their relationships and/or marriages. These variables will directly reflect an integration of behavioral, personality, and marital characteristics associated with levels of marital adjustment, perceived benefits from marriage, marital conflict, verbal collaboration and use of verbal aggression in verbal communication and relatedness for both wives and husbands (partners). The proximal measures will evidence unique differential variance to specific aspects of marital functioning after controlling identified demographic factors and variables in a discriminant analysis. The subscales of the question equal the score and the higher the score of the subscales per category, the more pronounced that particular item is.

## CHAPTER VI

### METHODOLOGY

On the basis of this preliminary proposal and literature review of research to date, the intended method of research to be used is a Discriminate Analysis, a statistical method that is used to discriminate between two groups of individuals or objects on the basis of several properties of those individuals or objects. Therefore, methods of research will include an empirical assessment, along with an observation of the couple's interactions. Assessment is both a hypothesis-generating and hypothesis-testing enterprise. Because partners frequently present for treatment together, clinicians have the rare opportunity to assess the couple's reciprocal behaviors within the therapeutic setting.

This will be both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of the data measuring along certain kinds of dimensions. The intent of the model is to predict relationship outcome, looking at what factors affect outcome. This will include the development of a series of items, utilizing a Pseudo-interval 5 point Likert scale with approximately 49 items on the questionnaire. The more questions, the larger the sample size must be. In selecting the sample (approximately 150 couples) some demographic items, (e.g. cultural, socioeconomic) will be implemented.

This methodology is a "discriminant analysis" determining the inter-correlation in relationship between items as a test for the hypothesis. The researcher will look for the best predictors while attempting to determine outcome differences between the multivariate techniques. In looking at what factors differentiate, a 'Stepwise discriminant

analysis' will be used, e.g. a questionnaire with 49 questions in which the researcher will be looking not only for which items distinguish the two groups (husbands and wives), but for differences that might have an impact on the relationship. A classification matrix will be implemented at the end of analysis to be able to differentiate between the two groups. In looking at what factors separate, and show some discord, the key is in measuring a person's perceptions. This method is selected to determine if there is 'Discriminant Analysis'; therefore we are asking what are the items that allow us to determine the predictive differences that occur between husband and wife?

It is fairly apparent that the decades of attention to research on marital adjustment, satisfaction and quality have obscured the importance of the need to develop measures of other concepts, such as utilized in the KCI model. It is believed they are integrally linked to marital dynamics and stability. The attention to these constructs is tenuous at best in the current review of literature. To continue to overlook these proposed measures will only serve to limit our understanding of the phenomena that we, as researchers and clinicians, are so interested in understanding. All limitations of these proposed findings are to be identified and both clinical and research implications will be discussed at time of the pilot study and actual implementation of this proposed model.

## CHAPTER VII PROPOSED RESULTS

### Summary and Conclusion

An extraordinary amount of attention has been devoted to the study of marital quality. Despite this attention, marital researchers and clinicians still continue to be left without an adequate self-report methodology for assessing marital quality. It is the contention here that the variables observed in thinking about marital quality will have an affect on what is done at the empirical level. Thus, for example, perceiving the variable of forgiveness as a component of marital quality, rather than a relative but not implicit construct, is more likely to result in empirical examination of the relationship between forgiveness and marital quality.

It is noted that the present hypothesis and analysis focuses on only certain elements thought to be integral to the assessment of relationship and marital quality. The intention of this work is not to provide a final resolution of the items associated with the conceptualization and measurement of marital quality. Nor is it to offer a “theory” of marital quality alone. Instead, a conceptualization and model for measuring marital quality and predictive marital therapy outcome was outlined, and distinctions were drawn that are believed to contribute to the clarification of some basic unanswered questions in this field. Finally, this present model and underlying hypothesis is based on the view that a greater understanding and richer view of the problems in this domain will lead to refinements and ultimately advances in social change in this arena.

## DISCUSSION

There is no definitive essence that can be pinned down for the “perfect” relationship or marriage. As one couple puts it “love and marriage is not a story book romance.” Instead, it is found that enduring marriage and relationship comes from “a lot of hard work.” Nevertheless, we cannot study relationship without considering its links with other concepts and processes such as love, satisfaction, intimacy, sexuality, well-being, compassion, commitment and passion. It appears that specific bonds seem to develop over time in relationship, resulting in the “magic potion” if you will, for staying together. A safeness and security develops in the bonds and lays the groundwork for a sense of hope for the future, a long-term commitment to the relationship. Therefore, this process of the development of partners in relationship, how they integrate their friendship, team alliance, intimacy, and sense of sacred bonds of togetherness, ultimately influences how the marital transition will unfold.

Considering the literature review and proposed findings of this study, future research is recommended that focuses on this “richer context” of how couples interact and develop their sense of relationship early in the life of the marriage. Implementation of assessment tools such as the KCI at the onset of couple’s therapy would yield important information about these bonds of marriage. In looking to these standardized variables the couples could be studied in order to determine the unique and universal aspects of partnership and marriage. Further, an understanding of how the experiences of joy in their marriage, being faithful loving and kind to each other, may endure for some but not for others.

Clearly, this notion of “marital quality” has dominated the attention of marriage researchers over the past twenty-five years or more. Spanier and Lewis (1980) reported in their ten-year review of the literature that this dependent variable was embedded in 150 journal articles and 182 doctoral dissertations. They argued that “one of the more significant developments in marital research in the seventies has been the implicit recognition that the quality of marriage involves multidimensional phenomena.” This study for its time was revolutionary in that it contends “that the subtleties entailed in the operationalization of marital quality as a dependent variable, however, are critical.” Thus, the demand for an evaluative index that does not ignore or overlook potentially salient independent variables is of import. Finally, foreseeable limitations should be mentioned. First, this data will be vulnerable to the negative consequences of self-report data. With this in mind, it may be skewed by response styles, social desirability, and inaccurate perceptions. To date, no researcher has resolved successfully all the problems relating to self-report data. The attention here is directed to the measures of concepts linked directly to marital stability, including measures of commitment, perception, relationship alternatives and potential for staying together. The chapters included maintain a specific focus on the variables of compatibility by considering these other relationship phenomena primarily in the context of their links with relationship. Furthering our advancement of knowledge about how one may enhance marital and relationship quality can provide significantly needed information for a large population of both single and married in this 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Appendix (A)**KRIEGER COMPATIBILITY INVENTORY

Never or Almost never	Occasionally	Fairly Often	Very Often	Always almost always
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>

1. Are there defined boundaries in your relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you believe you deserve this relationship or marriage? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Have the bonds of faith, trust and honesty been violated in your relationship or marriage? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you experience any shame, embarrassment & heartache? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you experience emotional or physical pain in your Relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Is your relationship healthy and loving? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Is your Relationship with your partner satisfying? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Is there compromise and sacrifice in your Relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are you able to love unconditionally and without judgment? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Is there something lacking in your relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Are your arguments repetitive? \_\_\_\_\_

Never or Almost never	Occasionally	Fairly Often	Very Often	Always almost always
1	2	3	4	5

12. Do you find yourself angry or annoyed in your relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Are your expectations for yourself and your partner shared? \_\_\_\_\_
14. My need for companionship with my partner is strong. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Life has a sense of meaning with my partner. \_\_\_\_\_
16. I feel confident we will stay together in the years to come. \_\_\_\_\_
17. My partner belittles my opinions, feelings or desires. \_\_\_\_\_
18. Are your needs satisfied in this Relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
19. Do you feel connection, compassion, and empathy  
for one another? \_\_\_\_\_
20. Is your partner asking too much from you? \_\_\_\_\_
21. Are you willing to compromise your wants and needs? \_\_\_\_\_
22. Do you love certain qualities about your partner? \_\_\_\_\_
23. Are you happy in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
24. Do you feel that you could be happier? \_\_\_\_\_
25. Do you remember your partner's birthday? \_\_\_\_\_
26. Do you give to your partner from a place of abundance rather  
than neediness? \_\_\_\_\_
- 27 My partner is a control freak. \_\_\_\_\_
28. My partner and I have disagreements about money. \_\_\_\_\_



Never or Almost never	Occasionally	Fairly Often	Very Often	Always almost always
1	2	3	4	5

29. Do you honor the aspects of pleasure, desire, passion and emotion with one another? \_\_\_\_\_
30. I am able to communicate my feelings, fears and desires. \_\_\_\_\_
31. I admire my partner for his/her character and view of the world. \_\_\_\_\_
32. My partner has given me positive feedback. \_\_\_\_\_
33. My partner has forgiven me quickly after we have had arguments. \_\_\_\_\_
34. My partner has sensed my feelings and emotions. \_\_\_\_\_
35. Are you able to expand your normal assumptions of one another? \_\_\_\_\_
36. My partner has shown interest in my views and ideas. \_\_\_\_\_
37. My partner has found fault with me. \_\_\_\_\_
38. My partner has communicated his/her sexual desires to me. \_\_\_\_\_
39. I am able to touch, play, and laugh with my partner. \_\_\_\_\_
40. My partner has shown commitment to our relationship. \_\_\_\_\_
41. My partner has allowed me to feel that I can tell him/her anything. \_\_\_\_\_
42. My partner has been uninterested in sex. \_\_\_\_\_
43. My partner makes me feel inadequate when I try to initiate lovemaking. \_\_\_\_\_
44. I like to think about our future together. \_\_\_\_\_
45. I am usually tuned in to my partner's feelings. \_\_\_\_\_
46. I am able to embrace change & experience contentment and peace in this relationship. \_\_\_\_\_
47. Are you receiving what you need from this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
48. Do you respect your partner's treatment of others? \_\_\_\_\_
49. My partner shows selfless love, spontaneity & romantic gestures. \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix (B)****COMPATIBILITY MODEL SCORE SHEET**

Category 1: Respect

2 6 17 28 32 16 22

Category 2: Forgiveness

11 23 33 24 8 12 9

Category 3: Compassion

18 19 21 25 34 45 9

Category 4: Trust

1 3 27 37 41 5 38

Category 5: Commitment

7 10 13 14 15 44 40

Category 6: Charitability

20 31 36 48 49 26 20

Category 7: Intimacy/Sexuality

29 30 35 42 46 43 39

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