

Emotion-focused Therapy for Couples September 14 – 17, 2026 Copenhagen, Denmark

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Updating Model & Defining Change Processes

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Two Phases of EFT-C

Phase I:
Couple/
Interactional
Processes

- Stage 1: Validation and Alliance Formation
- Stage 2: Negative Cycle De-escalation
- Stage 3: Accessing Underlying Feelings
- Stage 4: Restructure the Interaction and the Bond
- Stage 5: Consolidation and Integration

Phase II:
Individual
Processes

- Self-Soothing
- Self-Criticism
- Self-interruption
- Unfinished Business

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3 ways to Change Through Eft C

- Reveal underlying, vulnerable feelings which evokes change in the others perception and interactional response. **Phase I**
- Partners develop the capacity to soothe each other's and their own emotions.
- By revealing inner vulnerability, partners have a corrective emotional experience. If partners can respond compassionately, it can be corrective by disconfirming the most painful maladaptive feelings about ourselves – such as a “I feel fundamentally unlovable” or “worthless.” **Phase II**

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Individual Processes within CT

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Chair work for dialogue
with significant other
(useful in trauma)



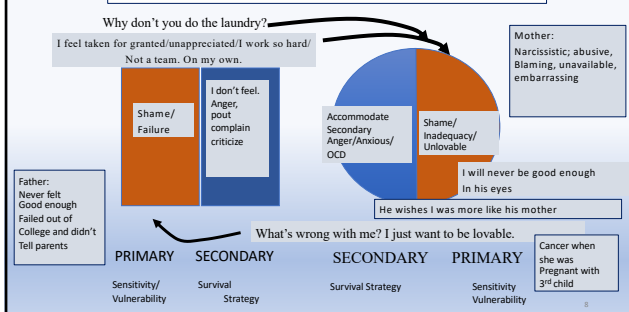
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Resolving Unfinished Business



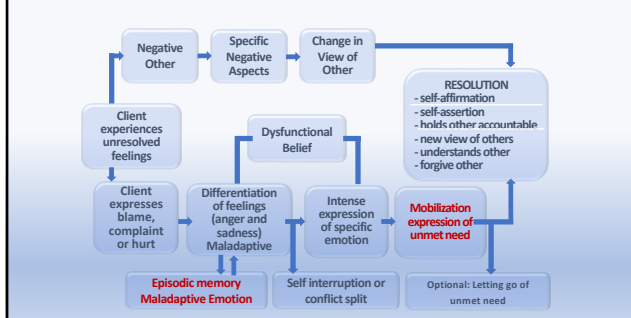
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INVALIDATION INTERACTIONAL CYCLE



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Resolution of Unfinished Business



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HISTORICAL ORIGINS: CHAOS, UNPREDICTABILITY
AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Her mom witnessed her own father kill her own mother.

Mother verbally abusive and father was drunk.

No room for emotions, especially negative ones. Needs did not matter.

'You have nothing to be sad about' and if she was, she would 'give her something to be sad about.'

. Whack her on the head and call her terrible names such as 'whore.'

Once she got off the wrong bus stop, so mom dumped a bucket of dirty water on her head.

Mom was too scared to go anywhere on her own so took S with her.

In adulthood: "You are a bad daughter," and puts her down making it very difficult for her or any siblings to take care of her.

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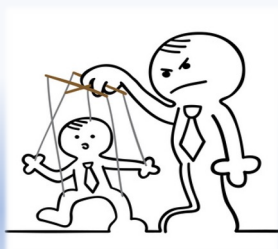
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Splits and Two Chair Dialogues: Critical

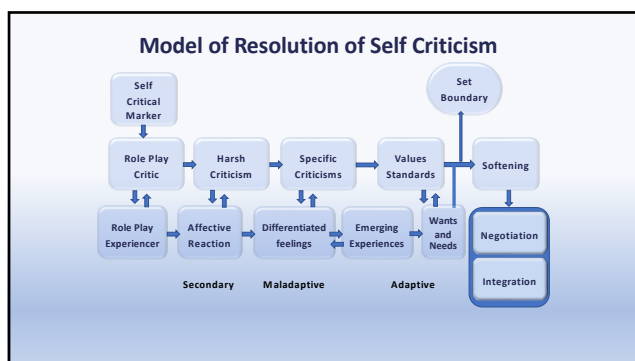


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Splits and Two Chair Dialogues: Control



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Individual vs. couples sessions

- Circumstances when you see the couple together for session 1, then individually for sessions 2 and 3, and back together for session 4:
 - When one of the three A's is present
 - Emotional injuries
 - Severe dysfunction, past abuse
- Other circumstances throughout therapy where the therapist may meet with each partner separately:
 - Difficulty in establishing an alliance
 - To help break impasses
 - Symptoms of depression or anxiety unrelated to relationship
 - Unfinished business, extreme self-criticism
 - Inability to symbolize or regulate emotion
 - One partner being unreceptive

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