Gottman couples therapy (Rambo, West, Schooley, & Boyd, 2012) involves increasing the couple’s knowledge of each other and teaching skills that allow them to mitigate and manage conflict. It also teaches skills that improve the couple’s ultimate affection for each other. In the anecdotal account given by Rambo et al (2012), the feedback session of the therapy seems to often give so much information that it may overwhelm them. As such the therapist in this review often gives them handouts about Gottman’s therapy in the first session in order to mitigate the overload.

Gottman has conducted multiple studies on marriage satisfaction (Gottman, Coan, Carrer, & Swanson, 1998; Gottman & Levenson, 2000; Gottman, 1993). In one study focusing on divorce, Gottman (1993) spent four years studying the behavior of couples to compare marital satisfaction. To acquire data he had participating couples engage in a fifteen minute sample conversation. He found that couples that were hostile and/or distant from each other had very poor problem solving abilities. These couples also did not score well on the ability to listen to their partners. He also found that couples that communicated negatively with each other were significantly more likely to get a divorce when compared to couples that communicated positively with each other. In another study (Gottman et al, 1998) they found that escalation of negative emotions, husband rejecting his wife’s influence, and negative start-up also positively predicted likelihood of divorce. The accuracy of this divorce/stability prediction was 83%.

The therapy does seem to focus on causes for divorce supported by the academic literature. Researchers, though, have yet to publish any studies that compare this therapy with another form of therapy. While the therapy does seem to have some flaws such as information overload, the therapists can easily work around them without significantly changing the therapy.

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