

# **Experimental Approaches to Assess and Treat Nine Types of Couples**

## **CHINESE PROVERB**

**“What I hear, I forget.**

**What I see, I remember.**

**What I do, I understand.”**

How we remember ...







**Was it words  
that we  
remembered?**





**Remembering all too well ...**

# JAWS







PSYCHO

# How do we learn?





© Getty Images





“I never said  
that  
you stole  
”

"I never said  
that  
you stole  
"

“I never said  
that  
you stole  
”

“I never said  
that  
you stole  
”

“I never said  
that  
you stole  
”

“I never said  
that  
you stole  
”

“I never said  
that  
you stole

”

“I never said  
that  
you stole  
”

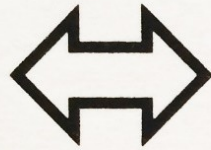




# Emotional Space

# Mapping

parental child



mom



dad



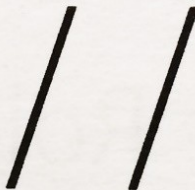
work



jealous  
sister

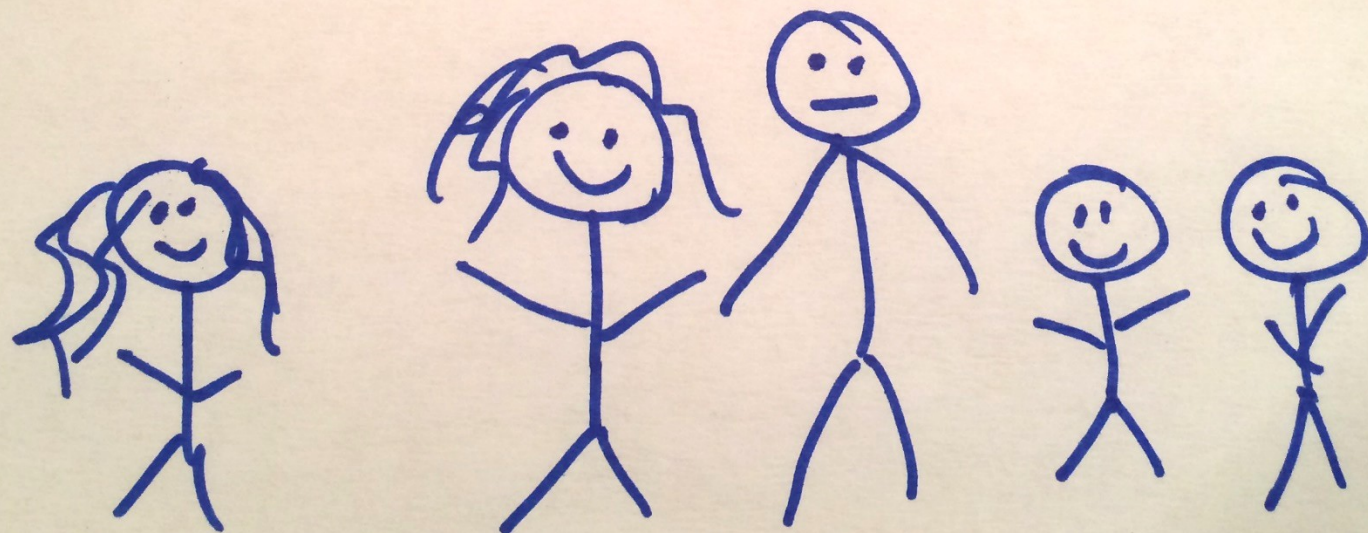
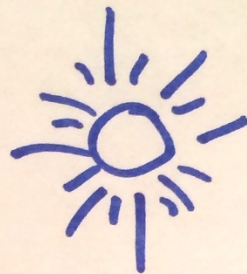


loyal  
daughter



confused, detached,  
angry son  
(identified patient)

# My Family





Kinetic Family Drawings

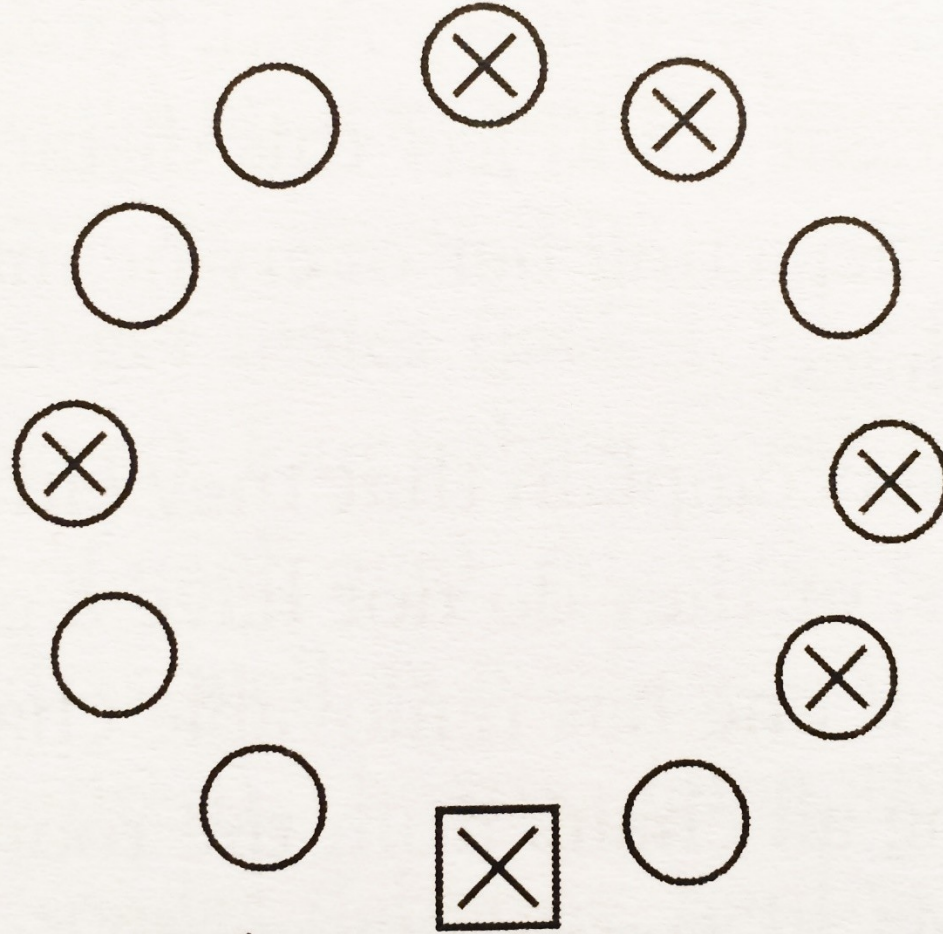


**Using Dollhouse Figures**

family

**Setting  
Extra  
Chairs**

**To See  
Emotional  
Distance**



therapist

# Clinical Case Example:

**“The Onset of  
Schizophrenia  
in a Teenager”**



**Clinical Case Example:**

**“Shrinking Away  
into Anorexia**

**Let's stand up for a moment.**

Let's stand up for a moment.  
Now move to where you feel  
*most* comfortable ...

Let's stand up for a moment.

Now move to where you feel

*most* comfortable ...

*Who* would you be closest to?

Let's stand up for a moment.

Now move to where you feel

*most* comfortable ...

*Who* would you be closest to?

Move to where you *want* to be.

# Helping the Invisible Become Visible

Strength of Relations

Conditions / Labels

Strong Emotions

Addictions

Distractions

Impacting Events

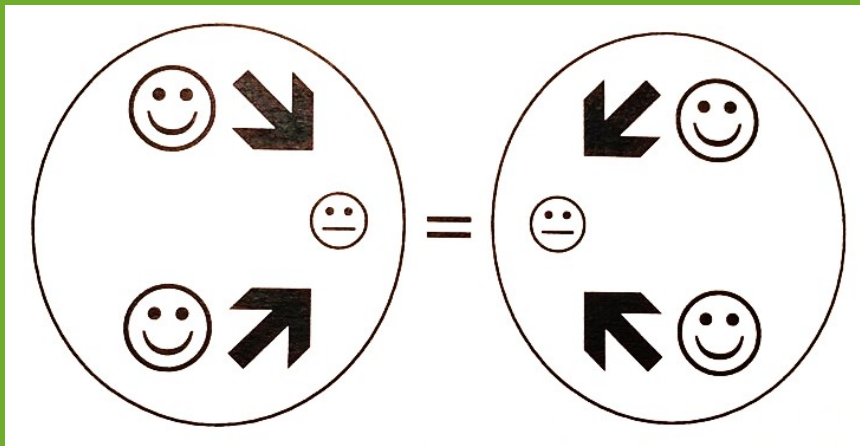
Strong Influences

Emotional Ages

# COUPLE #1: “The Family Feud”



# Couple #1



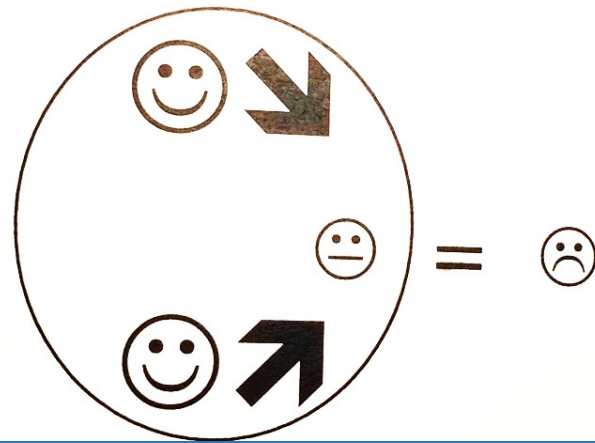
# The Family Feud



## Couple #2: “Odd Man Out” (Triangulation)



# Couple #2



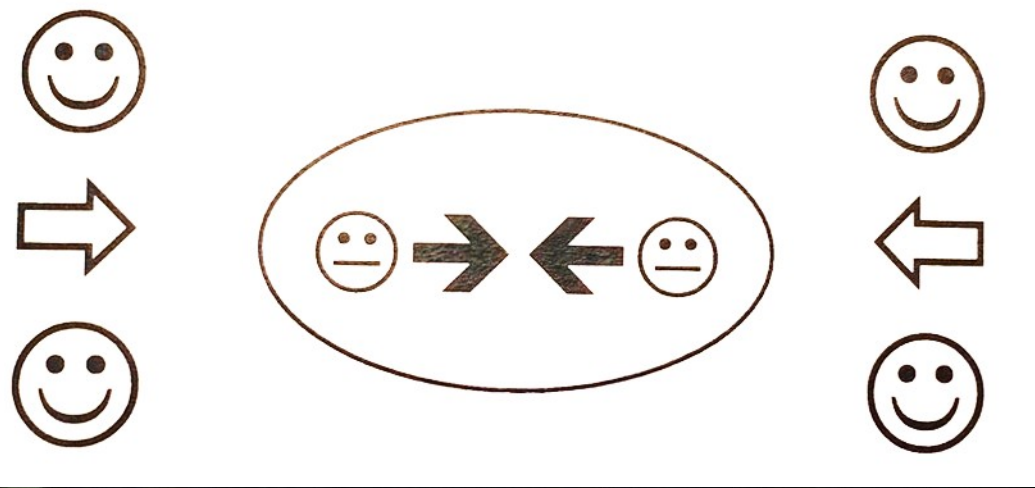
# Odd Man Out



## Couple #3: “I’m Right !” (Childhood Programming)



Couple #3



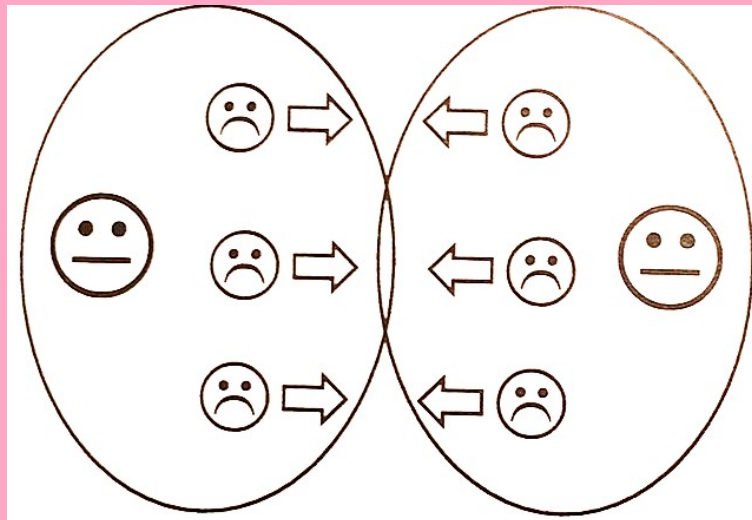
I'm Right



## Couple #4: “We’re Right !” (Blended Families)



# Couple #4



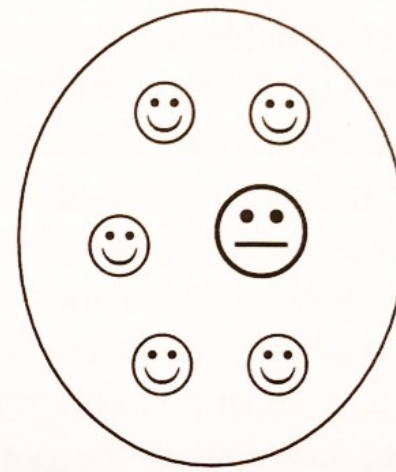
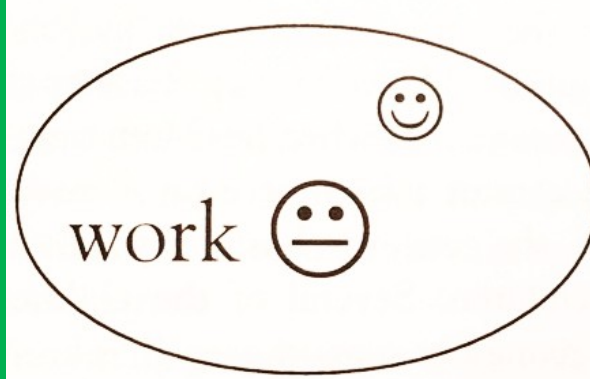
**We're Right**



## Couple #5: “No Glue” (Distance & Empty Nest)



# Couple #5



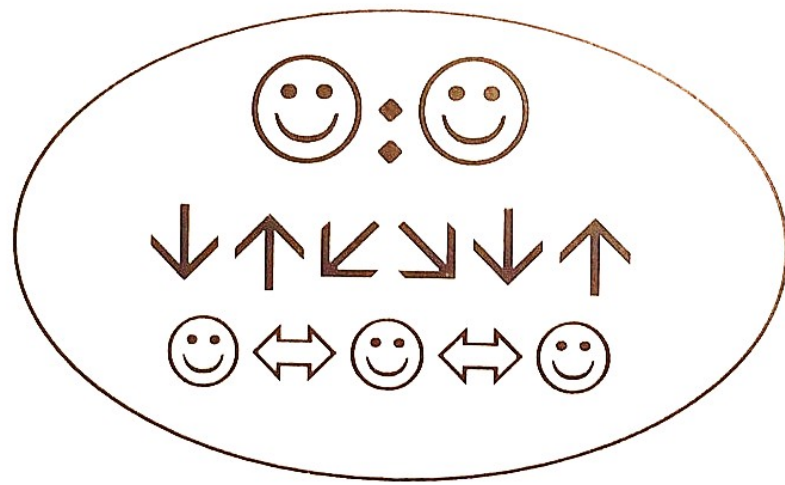
# No Glue



# Couple #6: “The Ideal Couple” (Incredible Balance)



# Couple #6



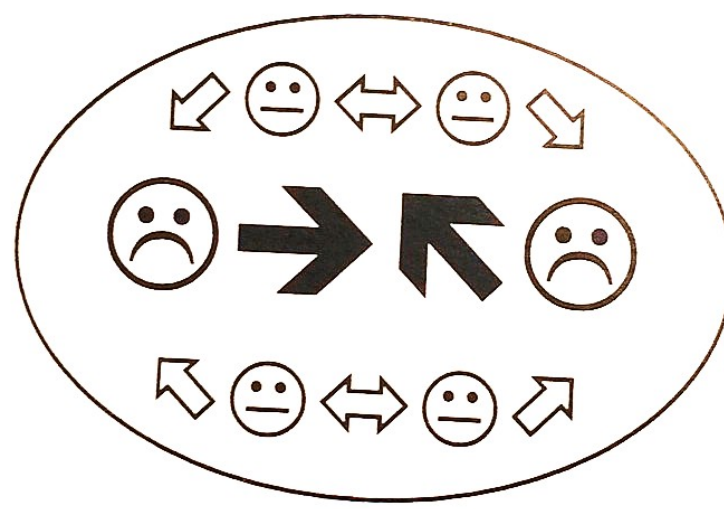
Ideal



## Couple #7: “Me First !” (Enmeshed, Immature)



# Couple #7



# Me First



# Couple #8: “Bad Glue” (Dysfunctional Balance)





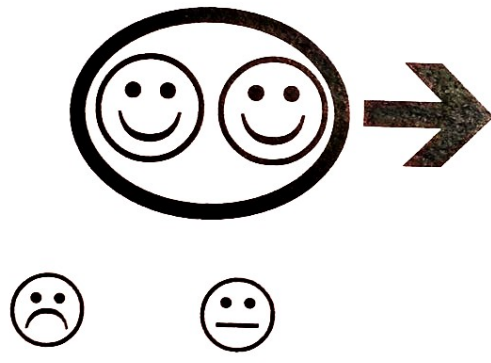
Couple #8

Bad  
Glue

## Couple #9: “Us First” (Symbiotic)



# Couple #9



Us First



# Emotional Age Exercise

Father	(age 42)	7, 11, 6, 8, 5	avg = 7
Mother	(age 36)	10, 12, 13, 15, 14	avg = 13
Richard	(age 16)	24, 21, 19, 22, 28	avg = 23
Susan	(age 13)	16, 15, 16, 18, 17	avg = 16
Billy	(age 8)	10, 9, 10, 8, 9	avg = 9

# **“The Family Zoo” Exercise**

<b>Father</b>	<b>Grizzly Bear, Lion, Gorilla, Tiger, German Shepherd</b>
<b>Mother</b>	<b>Lamb, Pony, Sheep, Kitten, Love Bird</b>
<b>Richard</b>	<b>Hawk, Rat, Doberman, Weasel, Cobra</b>
<b>Susan</b>	<b>Raccoon, Owl, Squirrel, Cat, Poodle</b>
<b>Billy</b>	<b>Bunny, Puppy, Kitty, Guinea Pig, Hamster</b>

# Metaphoric Imagery & Sculpting

1. Imagine for a moment that **your partner / other person** takes the form of either an animal, object, place, food item, or famous person. What image feels right to you?
2. Now imagine what image **you** would become in relation to the other person's image that you just imagined. What animal, object, place, food item, or famous person feels right for yourself?

# Metaphoric Imagery & Sculpting

How do these images **relate**?      Friendly? Oppositional?  
Intimate? Disconnected?

What kind of **action** is taking place?

Act these images out and see how they feel for each person.

How about trying some role reversals?

What image would you each become when **angry**?

During **intimacy**?      While **parenting** the kids?

When dealing with **money** and bills?

When visiting the **in-laws**?      Going with friends to the **bar**?

# What image would you each become when ...

---- on the **job** around co-workers?

---- on **vacation** with the family?

---- during **church**?

**What image did each of your parents typically become when dealing with each other?**

**See any similarities or repeating patterns?**

**\*\* Try this exercise with the whole family ...**