

**Innovations in Counseling: Working With Minority Populations - Part 6  
Session 3: Couples Counseling With the LGBTQ Community**

**Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session with Dr. Yamonte Cooper.**

**Question from Hank Crofford**

Are there any journals/ongoing research that would further clarify the uses of these models in LGBTQ+ couples counseling?

**Answer from Presenter**

Allan, R., & Johnson, S.M. (2016). Conceptual and application issues: Emotionally focused therapy with gay male couples. *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy*.

Garanzini, S., Yee, A., Gottman, J., Gottman, J., Cole, C., Preciado, M., & Jасulca, C. (2017). Results of gottman method couples therapy with gay and lesbian couples. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 43(4), 674-684.

Gottman, J., Levenson, R., Gross, J., Frederickson, B., McCoy, K., Rosenthal, L., Ruef, A., & Yoshimoto, D. (2003). Correlates of gay and lesbian couples' relationship satisfaction and relationship dissolution. *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol. 45(1).

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**Question from Laurie Kozar**

Can you please discuss grief due to the loss of your partner in the LGBTQ community? Issues around differences in social acceptance of grief due to loss; How to help grieving LGBTQ individuals.

**Answer from Presenter**

There is "disenfranchisement grief" which can occur when a person in the LGBTQ community experiences a loss that is not, or cannot, be openly acknowledged, publicly mourned, or socially supported. As a result, the bereaved are not given full permission to grieve the loss publicly. They are denied the right to grieve, denied the social support essential to overcoming their loss, and deprived of the social validation in order to heal. The intense negative affect, exclusion from care and support for the dying, lack of social support, exclusion from funeral rituals, and practical and legal difficulties are all major contributors to complicated bereavement responses. In one study (Oram, et. al., 2004), the five top coping strategies included: 1) support of friends; 2) "time heals"; 3) spirituality; 4) accepting the loss, and; 5) support of a partner. The least commonly endorsed items included counseling and support groups. However, it is important to note that the least helpful interventions were considered 'moderately helpful', indicating that more formal therapeutic support can be somewhat helpful.

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# Minority Fellowship Program

The National Board for Certified Counselors

## **Question from Tayler Shannon**

Are these the main therapeutic modalities used for LGBTQ couples? Are they considered the most effective?

### Answer from Presenter

Utilizing an LGBTQ affirmative approach would be a priority. EFT, Gottman Method Couple Therapy, and Imago are the most common couple therapy models utilized. The modality that has the most research supporting it with the LGBTQ community at this time is Gottman Method Couple Therapy.

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## **Question from Angela Pencoske**

Do you have any statistics regarding domestic violence and LGBTQ couples?

### Answer from Presenter

Research indicates that domestic violence among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) couples occur at similar rates as domestic violence among straight identified couples.

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## **Question from Sara Pesic**

What do you see on LGBT couples in relation to infidelity issues? That seems to be one of the main issues that heterosexual couples are facing lately.

### Answer from Presenter

Affairs/infidelity are usually not about sex but about finding someone who offers friendship and affection. This is common among heterosexual and LGBT couples.

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## **Question from Teresa Barrios**

What books do you recommend to read for working with couples counseling?

### Answer from Presenter

Gottman, John; Silver, Nan (1999). *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*. Crown Publishers imprint (Three Rivers Press).

Johnson, S. M. (2004). *The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating connection*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

Wile, D. B. (2008). *After the Honeymoon: How Conflict Can Improve Your Relationship-Revised Edition*.

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# Minority Fellowship Program

The National Board for Certified Counselors

## **Question from April Milam**

Are there any online sex therapy certification programs that you would recommend for licensed counselors?

## **Answer from Presenter**

American Association of Sexuality, Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT) –

<https://www.aasect.org/>

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## **Question from Eva Mendes**

There is emerging research that states the correlation of autistic adults and LGBT. Do you see a lot of that overlap in your couples?

## **Answer from Presenter**

This is controversial as some research is potentially correlating autism and trans identified folks. Some of this information is considered transphobic and some of the individuals conducting this research are not allies of the trans community and are seen as exploitive. I have not seen any overlap of autism and LGBTQ identified clients.

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## **Question from Andrea Ramirez**

You mentioned a recommended sex therapy certification. Is there a certification on working with LGBTQ populations that you recommend?

## **Answer from Presenter**

Antioch University offers a certificate in LGBT Affirmative Psychology and Alliant International University offers a certificate in LGBT Human Services & Mental Health.

<http://aulacatalog.antioch.edu/certificateprograms/certificateinlesbiangaybisexualtransgenderlgbt/>

<https://www.alliant.edu/cspp/programs-degrees/graduate-certificate/lgbt-hum-svcs-mh/>

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