

Brief

**Behavioral Marital
Therapy**

presented by Tom Moore, MA, M.MFT

Red River Institute

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Red River Institute

Preliminary Thoughts & Definitions

Brief Therapy:

**Each intervention designed
to resolve presenting
problem.**

Preliminary Thoughts & Definitions

Brief Therapy:

- **Strategic**
- **Collaborative**
- **Resource-based**

Preliminary Thoughts & Definitions

Marital Therapy:

Goal of therapy to preserve, restore, and/or enhance the quality of the marital relationship.

Preliminary Thoughts & Definitions

Marital Therapy:

- **The marriage is the “client”**
- **Focus on what is happening between husband & wife**
- **Process “dyadic”**

Preliminary Thoughts & Definitions

Marital Therapy:

"It is the primary task of the therapist to suspend the couple's disbelief in their ability to change."

--Chloe Madanes

Preliminary Thoughts & Definitions

Marital Therapy:

**Requires a particular posture of
heart & spirit . . .**

Preliminary Thoughts & Definitions

Marital Therapy:

- **Passion**
- **Compassion**
- **Creativity**

Behavioral Marital Therapy:

**Based in two theoretical
orientations:**

Behavioral Theory

Social Learning Theory

Behavioral Marital Therapy:

**“Helping Couples Change:
A Social Learning Approach
to Marital Therapy”
by Richard B. Stuart, DSW**

Behavioral Marital Therapy:

Problems are formed when:

**The occurrence of mutually
pleasing behaviors in the marital
relationship falls below
“critical mass.”**

Behavioral Marital Therapy:

Problems are resolved when:

The occurrence of mutually pleasing behaviors increases to level at or above "critical mass."

Behavioral Marital Therapy:

**The quality of the marital
dyad improves as the occurrence
of **mutual pleasing behaviors**
increases in frequency &
regularity . . .**

Behavioral Marital Therapy:

- **Increase in problem solving effectiveness**
- **Increase in report of positive emotionality**
- **Decrease in conflict**

Complicating Variables:

"Unhealed" emotional/psychological injury resulting in:

- Anger**
- Fear**
- Low or no trust . . . or**
- Competing "agenda"**

Mutually Pleasing Behaviors:

- **Behaviors that can be described observed, & reported in the dyad.**
- **Behaviors that require the least expenditure of resources.**
- **Behaviors that elicit measureable level of emotional response.**

Caring Deeds List

I feel 'cared for' when my mate ...

- a. Small things
- b. Things I can point to
- c. Positive things

1. Massages my feet.
2. Spends time with the children.
3. Plans a family vacation.
4. Talks about her day with me.
5. Goes grocery shopping with me without complaining.
6. Buys me a souvenir when he goes on a trip.