

Can counseling save my marriage/relationship?

Yes, counseling can help save a marriage or relationship - when both people have the intention and willingness to learn and grow. People in relationships often find that, after a period of happiness and love, “issues” show up, causing pain and disappointment. When a couple is able to “lean in” to these issues, exploring and learning about them together, there is potential for increased intimacy and growth. However, all too often, a couple reacts to this challenge by pushing each other away, either through anger and blame (I’ll teach him/her...), or by giving in (It’s not worth it...), or by other controlling behaviors. All of these behaviors are unconscious attempts to protect ourselves, to avoid the pain of the real issues. Sometimes, since the pain seems to go away for awhile, we latch on to these behaviors; they can actually become the primary dynamic in our relationship - replacing love, connection, fun and intimacy with anger, bitterness, hurt and pain. Often, this is what brings a couple to counseling – they feel like the relationship is in trouble; no matter what they do or how hard they try, they are getting farther apart. When both people are willing, counseling can be very helpful, by identifying the dynamic that is tearing the relationship apart and by exploring ways to learn, heal and grow together. If only one person is willing to work on the relationship, there is still hope, although the work will primarily benefit the one who is open and learning.

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