

# Carole Kirby, LMSW

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Free Workshops...

2009 Winter/Spring Highlights

For several years I have given FREE workshops at Crazy Wisdom Bookstore in Ann Arbor. I like giving the workshops and providing specific information that is interesting and complementary to one's growth journey.

## Free Workshops

Crazy Wisdom Bookstore  
114 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor

### A New Way to Love

Intro to  
Imago Relationship Therapy

Sun. Feb. 1 ~ 2 - 4:30 pm



### A Deeper Understanding of Anger

Pros and Cons

Sun. March 1 ~ 2 - 4:30 pm



### Amends Making and Forgiveness

Why It's So Important

Sun. April 26 ~ 2 - 4:30 pm



### The Significance of Personal Boundaries

How to Create & Maintain  
Healthy Boundaries

Sun. May 17 ~ 2 - 4:30 pm

presenter: Carole Kirby, lmsw

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## Hold Me Tight! Do You Feel Deeply Loved?

by Sue Johnson, *Psychology Today*, February 2009

article reviewed by Carole Kirby

Sue Johnson, a clinical psychologist and author from Ottawa, Canada, believes she understands what love is. She believes **love is the continual search for a basic, secure connection with someone else**. Through this bond, partners in love become emotionally dependent upon each other for nurturing, soothing, and protection.

It's now commonly accepted that we have a wired-in need for emotional contact and responsiveness from significant others. It's a survival response, the driving force of the bond of security a baby seeks with its mother. Sue Johnson believes that this survival response is at the heart of **attachment theory**. There is a great deal of evidence that indicates that the need for secure attachment never disappears. It evolves into the adult need for a secure emotional bond with a partner.

Unfortunately, our culture has framed dependency as a bad thing, a weakness. Sue emphatically states in this article that dependency is not a bad thing. In fact, being attached to someone particular provides our greatest sense of security and safety. It means depending on a partner to respond when you call, to know that you matter to him or her, that you are cherished, and that he/she will respond to your emotional needs.

Sue mentions that touch is the most basic way of connecting with another human being. It's a tangible sign of their desire for connection and thus the title of the article being reviewed.

**Most fights are really protests over emotional disconnection. Underneath the distress, partners are desperate to know: ARE YOU THERE FOR ME?**

The most basic tenet of attachment theory is that isolation – not just physical isolation but emotional isolation (being left alone, ignored, unsupervised, etc.) is traumatizing for human beings. The brain actually codes it as danger. Sue discusses what happens when we lose our connection with someone really significant to us and how that jeopardizes our sense of security.

See the full reprint of this article on my web site – [www.therapy4couples.com](http://www.therapy4couples.com)

## Discover a New Way to Love

### Weekend Workshop Retreat for Couples

based on the book *Getting the Love You Want* by Dr. Harville Hendrix

**March 27-29 or May 1-3 ~ Ann Arbor ~ for all couples**

This weekend will give you new tools & understanding that can help you co-create a closer, stronger coupleship.

## Supporting Our Children ~ A Workshop for Parents

based on *Giving the Love That Heals* by Dr. Harville Hendrix

**Feb 21 ~ 8:30am - 7:30pm** presenter: **Marcia Ferstenfeld, MA**

Raising emotionally healthy children is one of the most important things we do in life. *Supporting Our Children* is a day-long workshop for parents and others involved in nurturing children.

## Discovering the Healthy Self

**Sat., March 14 ~ 9 am - 4 pm** Presenter: **Eleanor Payson, LMSW**

This educational seminar will offer participants the opportunity to learn the basics of a "healthy self" and healthy relationships.

**Professionals & non-professionals welcome.**

**Check out [www.therapy4couples.com](http://www.therapy4couples.com) for more details.** (over)

# Ideas for Having an Affair with your own spouse/partner

*Is your relationship suffering from boredom, stagnation, or just a case of the blahs? Do you feel like you have fallen out of love with your spouse or life partner?*

Dawn Liphthrott, an Imago therapist workshop presenter from Florida, prepared a list of **60 Starter Ideas to have an affair—with your own spouse/partner**. I selected 10 from her list of 60 in order to jump start fun and romance in your relationship. You can check her web site for more ideas, but most of all, I offer these to inspire you to be more creative with your own ideas.

## Some Ideas for Re-romanticizing Your Relationship

1. When you come home, find your partner and just hold him/her close for a moment (a prolonged hug) – no words necessary. Before you break away, be sure to look deeply into their eyes.
2. When you walk by your partner at home, touch him/her, or give a hug, or caress.
3. Wake up to the day as if it was 'the first time' you were alone with your partner. Greet him/her enthusiastically. Sit and just look lovingly at him/her for a few moments. No words necessary, but if any, make them lovingly positive.
4. Leave a few lines from your favorite romantic song (could be from when you first dated or not) on your partner's voice mail.
5. Plan a secret rendezvous in your own town or in the city where your partner is on business.
6. Tell your partner before you go to bed or before you leave in the morning, one of the things you love most about him/her (could be a quality, physical characteristic, or behavior).
7. Bring home balloons (or hide them and put them out at night after your partner goes to bed) with a note or sign with something like **"I celebrate YOU!" "You are wonderful!"** or something similar.
8. Surprise your partner by taking him/her some place they have said they wanted to go – a sporting event, a concert, a restaurant, a computer show, dog show, the mall, etc. Do it even if it isn't something you like. Enjoy your partner enjoying it and do it simply for love.
9. Do what you would do for an anniversary on a regular day – just because.
10. Plan a picnic in the park or your own yard, or living room.

***Tending to your partner and your relationship needs to be a daily occurrence.***

Source: **Dawn Liphthrott**  
**[www.relationshipjourney.com](http://www.relationshipjourney.com)**

# Gottman's Relationship Tips 101

Since 1973, Dr. John Gottman, a therapist and researcher from Seattle, has studied what he calls the **"masters and disasters" of marriage**. He studied ordinary people from the general public who took part in long-term studies. Dr. Gottman learned what makes marriages fail, what makes them succeed, and what can make marriages a source of great meaning. Here are some of his top suggestions for how to keep your marriage strong.

**Seek help early.** The average couple waits 6 years before seeking help for marital problems. Keep in mind, half of all marriages that end do so in the first 7 years. This means the average couple lives with unhappiness for far too long.

**Edit yourself.** Couples who avoid saying every angry thought when discussing touchy topics are the happiest.

**Soften your "start up."** Arguments first "start up" because one partner sometimes escalates the conflict from the get-go by making a critical or contemptuous remark in a confrontational tone.

*You can be right or be in relationship!*

**Accept influence.** A marriage succeeds to the extent that the husband can accept influence from his wife. A husband's ability to be persuaded by his wife (rather than vice-versa) is so crucial because, research shows women are already well practiced at accepting influence from men, and a true partnership only occurs when a husband is able to do so as well. [While this research applies to heterosexual couples, we can generalize that whichever partner in a same gendered relationship has the most difficulty accepting influence needs to learn to accept influence in order to have a true partnership.]

**Have high standards.** Happy couples have high standards for each other even as new partners. The most successful couples are those who refused to accept hurtful behavior from one another. The lower the level of tolerance for bad behavior in the beginning of a relationship, the happier the couple is down the road.

**Learn to repair and exit the argument.** Successful couples know how to exit an argument. Happy couples know how to repair the situation before an argument gets completely out of control. Successful repair attempts include: changing the topic to something completely unrelated; using humor; stroking your partner with a caring remark; making it clear you're on common ground; backing down in marriage, as in the martial art Aikido, you have to yield to win. If an argument gets too heated, take a **20-minute break** as it takes at least 20 minutes to restore calm if you have had a stress response in the body. Agree to approach the topic again when you are both calm.

**Focus on the bright side.** In a happy marriage, couples make at least **5 times** as many positive statements to and about each other and their relationship *"We laugh a lot"* as opposed to negative ones *"We never have fun"*. A good marriage must have a rich climate of positivity. Make deposits in your emotional bank account.