

What Do You Say **When...?**

Beyond Blame, Fighting, and Enmeshment:
Motivating Couples to *"Do the Work"*

Getting the Most from Today's **Webinar**



Sit back, relax, listen and pick up your slides at the end



You'll come away with a solid set of principles that you can use when clients put you on the spot.



Get Your Questions Answered by Ellyn and Pete



Pick up an extra Bonus Transcript when you stay until the very end: Ellyn works with a depressed sexual abuse survivor who doesn't want sex when her husband urgently does

In a survey we conducted, therapists reported feeling...



Flustered



*Put on
the spot*



*Pressured
to perform*



*A need to prove
themselves*

...When clients ask tough questions like:



We've been coming for months.
Are we getting anywhere?



Why aren't things better by now?
Should I leave or should I stay?



The homework you gave us made things
worse. Why did you think it would help?



Why do I need to change?
(He's the jerk. She's the nag.).

What makes these moments **hard**:



Questions have a covert demand for you to know all the answers.



There is an aggressive quality to how they are asked.



Partner asking is often low on self-accountability.

We also asked

“When you are working with couples, what situations or repetitive problems result in you feeling inadequate or very uncertain?”

Most **common** responses:

- ✓ Fighting **couples who compete** for who is right and who is wrong.
- ✓ **Intense** conflict.
- ✓ **Yelling** in sessions.
- ✓ Clients **who won't listen** to each other or me.
- ✓ **Blaming** with no accountability.
- ✓ **Betrayal trauma**.
- ✓ **Hypervigilance** and obsessing after infidelity.
- ✓ **Self-righteousness**, controlling partners or rigid belief systems.
- ✓ **Very slow progress**.
- ✓ **High degree** of enmeshment.

Please do a quick write in the chat

and answer these 2 questions:

1. What is a challenging question that was asked of you?

2. One word...
What did **you** feel?

What do these situations have in common?



Therapist has lost control of the session or the direction of therapy



Clients are functioning from self-protective defenses



You may also be in a self-protective state



Clients are operating from a high degree of passivity

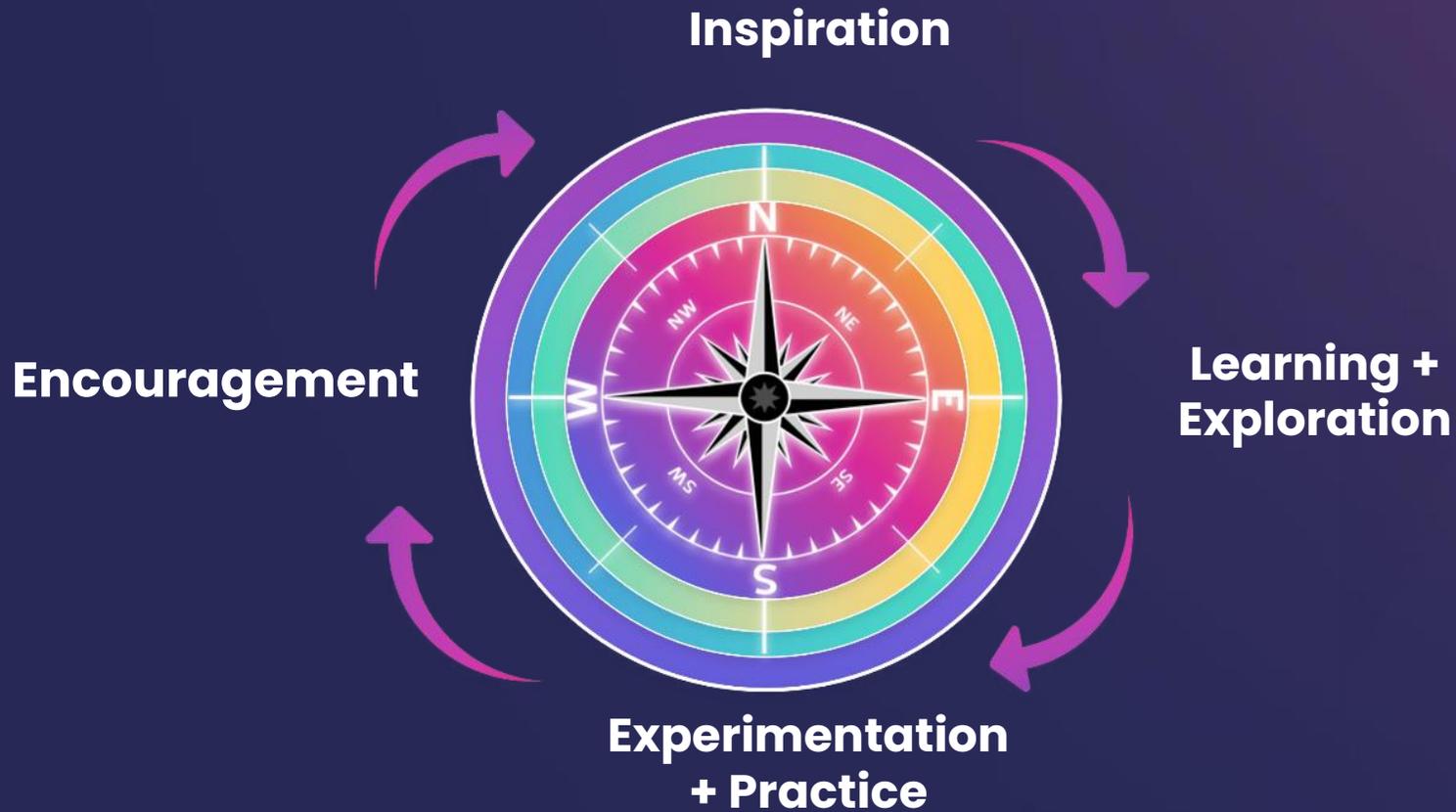


You feel a high degree of uncertainty where to go but enormous pressure to know

Pete and I will discuss and demonstrate principles that will **help you** in these tough moments



Every Journey needs a **good** **Compass**

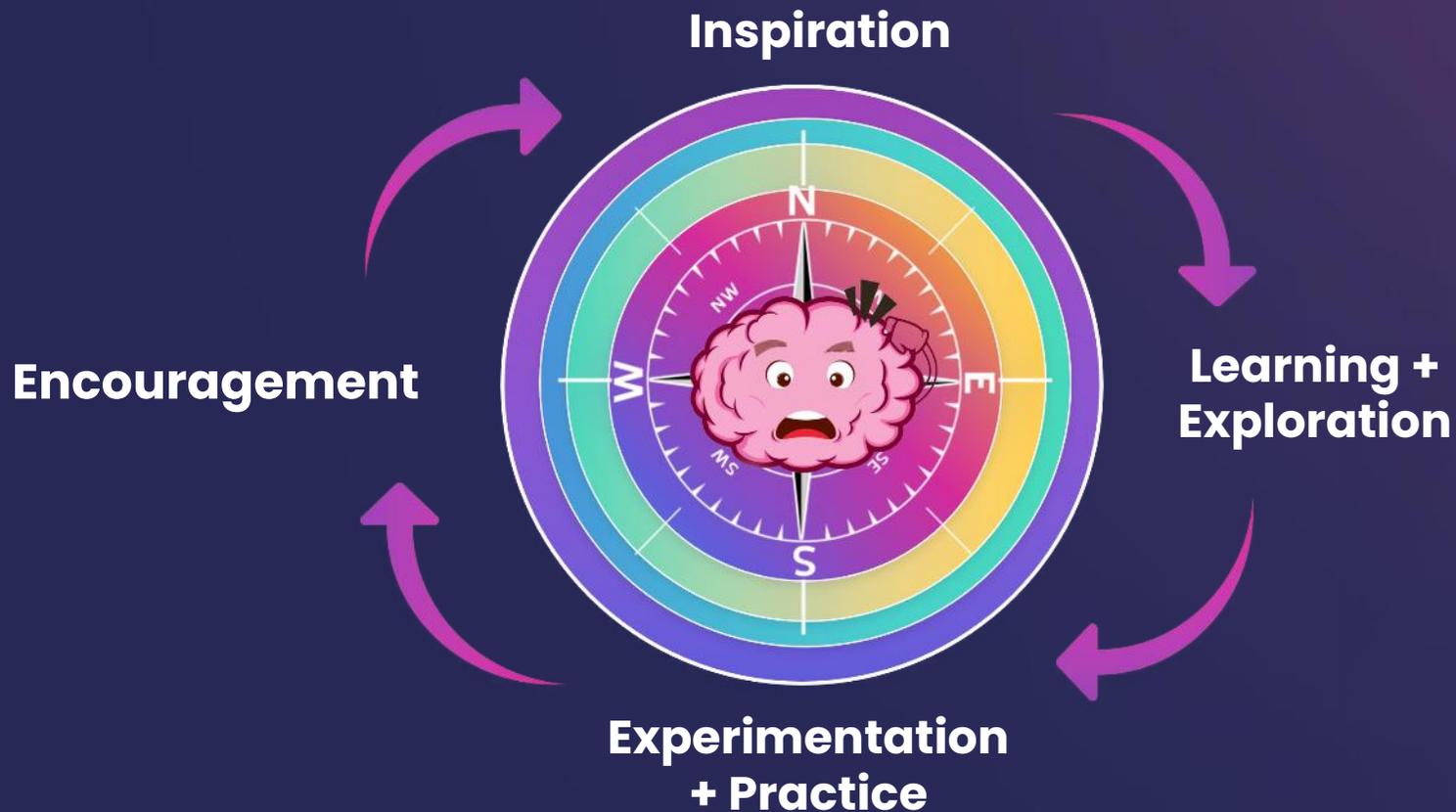


Predict
Protect
Preserve

Collectively called the P Brain



Every Journey needs a good Compass





Trauma of
all kinds



Learned coping
mechanisms
from the family
of origin

Factors that shape and mold the self-protective brain



Other life
experiences



Institutional,
systemic and
cultural prejudices

“You have to look deeper, way below the anger, the hurt, the hate, the jealousy, the self pity, way down deeper where the dreams lie...

Find your dream. It's the pursuit of the dream that heals you.

Billy Mills, member of the Oglala Lakota U.S. Olympic gold medalist in track and field



Blaming
Bossing
Criticizing



Capitulating
Retreating

How the self-protective brain treats the partner when threatened



Defending
Name-calling



Guilt-tripping
Shaming

**Self-Protections
Inhibit
Constructive Action**

Why should I have to?

Fear of risking being transparent

Fear of criticism

Fear of losing control

Fear of being a sucker for trusting

Fear of being judged negatively

Not brave enough

Fear of being rejected

Afraid my partner
won't understand
my pain

Afraid my partner
won't understand
my interests

Ambivalent about next steps

Fear of feeling unloved

Fear of being dependent

Afraid my partner will
not listen or respect my view

Not important enough to ask for help

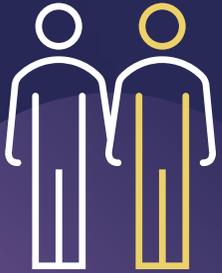
Fear of feeling unimportant

Fear of trying and failing



Should I go? Should I stay?

Highly Enmeshed Couple with Husband wanting to leave the Marriage



She would not go out alone or eat alone



Lived by rules



Did everything together

Experience what happens in Training Video condensed from a Live Training Session

What you will see with Liliana's case

- 1.** Ellyn teaching about enmeshment and conflict avoidance
- 2.** Role plays to disrupt the enmeshment.

They had arrived at **Oppressive Mediocrity**

It is the avoidance of discomfort and the passivity that makes it so hard to get and maintain a clear sense of direction with a **highly Enmeshed Couple**

There is no significant growth in any area of life without some discomfort

What makes it so hard to disrupt the **entrenched patterns** in these couples?



Clients want to hold onto young fantasies of a perfect relationship



They fight to maintain an external locus of control and deny accountability



Resistance to risking is high

Vagueness and Passivity Work Against Connection

Evasiveness hinders therapy.

Evasiveness is an entrenched self-protection and all the husband's relationship goals are in the service of keeping his self-protection intact.

"I'll talk to my individual therapist."

Getting Real

It is not about helping these couples connect by continuing to be pleasant and understanding and accepting of each other.

It is about being real which is what they will never identify as a goal.

Change comes from going through distress and discomfort to **authentically connect**.



Conflict Avoidant couples cannot learn to express their feelings with each other with an understanding individual therapist.

They need lots of practice in real time with a therapist who is not afraid of conflict.

A therapist who can structure them and hold them.



Changing this dynamic takes more risk than they would naturally tolerate.

—
*Are you persistent in pushing these
partners to self-disclose?*

Are you uncomfortable taking a stand?

Take Aways from Today

All significant growth is a step into the unknown

Risk can't be avoided

It takes courage to sustain the journey into the unknown



How the **Developmental Model** calms the chaos



A process for the **initial phone call** so clients come prepared to work



You get very **personalized support** as you practice your skills



How to **structure early sessions** so you know the triggers and can manage them



Your nonverbal language communicates you have the **confidence to help your clients**



The strength of **your leadership grows**



You get **concrete tools and handouts**

How the **Developmental Model** propels the middle stages of therapy



Go **beyond behavioral problem solving** to lasting change



You learn to do deeper **intrapsychic work with one partner in front of the other one**



Clients are grateful. They return because they want more.



You make an **enormous difference** in people's lives.



You have **satisfying sessions** that flow.



Your clients become **more motivated** and accountable.

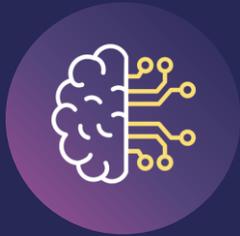
How the **Developmental Model** gives you a road map



When you know the stages, you have a **reassuring plan and know where to start**



Differentiation identifies **where partners break down** so you can target enduring change



Neuroscience made simple helps couples understand their patterns



You'll have direction, an anchor point to return to, and a way to **reestablish motivation**



Attachment theory helps you **stop the reactivity dance**



Compatible with other models

How the **Developmental Model** can change your life



"This has been an important year for my own growth. I'm showing up differently in my relationships and practicing what I preach!"
- Linda Lipshutz



"I find myself wishing I had been part of this group for years."
- Bobbye Crawford



"With tears I write that I see there is an openness and a shifting that I was not expecting in my own marriage!" - B.P.



"I am so grateful to learn about being a strong leader and about developing differentiation personally and professionally!"
-Ellen Lourie



"This has been a complete game changer in my ability to do couples therapy; as a therapist overall and in my own marriage!" - Christine Moore



"You've helped me in my own 25 year marriage, too!"
- Diana Benjamin

3 Major Moments when therapists rely on Developmental Model training community



The moments where you really need emotional support and peer interaction or mentorship. So you can sit back, relax, and be present when you are next in a session with that client.



The moments when you need quick answers.



The moments when you really need in depth knowledge—a new problem shows up and you don't know what to do

Some Favorite Lessons

Read in 45 minutes



Structuring
Treatment for
the Hostile
Angry Couple



Passive and
Passive
Aggressive
Partners



Affairs and
Infidelity



Fostering
Empathy and
Creating
Soothing
Moments



Narcissistic
Partners

Client Handouts Ready for You Now

Use them **immediately**



Self Assessment After
a Fight



Twenty Questions to
Ask Your Partner



How to Get the Most Out
of Couples Therapy



How To Be in
a Difficult Discussion



The Gift of Differentiation

Archived and Current Bonus Sessions

82
in all!



Stan Tatkin
on The
Avoidant Partner



Esther Perel
on Affairs
and Infidelity



Peter Pearson
on Rethinking
First Sessions



Joe Winn
on Queering the
Developmental Model

Here's what is coming soon

Watch, Listen, Explore



May 1



First training call- Pete expanding what he taught here how Developmental Model can help you create accountability

May 8



Your orientation call

Every Thursday



Get your questions answered and connect with other trainees in our small weekly drop-ins.

June 2



Clinical case training call

June 5 Clinical demonstration of a first session

June 9



Ellyn and Esther Perel

Developmental Model Training Program

Our CORE Program



12 Months of world-class mentoring and training



Live Monthly Training Sessions



24 Written Lessons



Submit **Individual Cases for Review**



8 Live Bonus Training Calls with other Couples Experts



33 Client Handouts



Supportive Therapist **Community**



Drop-In Training Sessions Every week

Your Bonuses when You Sign up by Friday at Midnight



Bonus

**PDF handout
bonus – 21 handouts**



Bonus

**Gift certificate
\$150 in shop**

Your Bonuses when You sign up by Friday at Midnight



Bonus

**Obsessing After
Infidelity webinar**



***What Do You
Say When...?***

Bonus

**WDYSW
printer-friendly PDF**

Decision Portal

The Developmental Model is the last relationship training you'll ever need. Are you ready to try it risk-free and transform your practice?

Difficult scenarios, combative couples, and uncharted territory will always be part of your growing practice. Do you want to keep guessing as you go, or become the calm, confident leader that controls the chaos?

Your couples need your guidance, and you want to rise above the noise and know you're making the right decisions.

We want that for you, too. That's why we're offering 30 days risk-free so you can start using the Developmental Model and see transformation begin NOW.

There are two ways to enroll, described in the boxes on the right.

Are you in?

[Yes, sign me up! →](#)

Monthly

\$189

Best option for new therapists

Annual

\$1997

Best option for saving money

- A \$271 savings when you pay for the year

**Sign Up
Now**

couplesinstitute.com/dm

