



# Enhanced Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Couples: A Contextual Approach

*Norman B. Epstein, Donald H. Baucom*

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Enhanced Cognitive–Behavioral Therapy for Couples expands the boundaries of cognitive behavioral therapy with a framework that goes beyond partners' moment-to-moment interactions and takes into account the personal characteristics of the two individuals, their dyadic interactions, and influences of the couple's interpersonal and physical environment.

The authors emphasize what each partner brings to the relationship, including each person's past relationship experiences, current motives or needs, personality style, and psychopathology. Furthermore, they consider how the couple's environment influences relationship functioning, including such factors as the couple's family systems, community and cultural influences, and other life-circumstances such as job loss or a death in the family.

The authors also focus on ways to intervene when the couple struggles with developmental changes experienced by either partner or the couple, such as new challenges when children move into adolescence. This contextual approach helps couples understand their healthy individual differences, any unresolved personal issues and possible psychopathology, and individual and familial needs.

This groundbreaking text moves beyond a focus on dysfunctional aspects of relationships to provide an equal emphasis on the contributions that positive behavior, cognitions, and emotions play in couples' relationships. In addition, individuals' discrete behavioral, cognitive, and affective responses are viewed within the context of broader relationship patterns and themes such as boundaries, distribution of power, and investment of oneself in the relationship.

Chapters explore interventions for modifying behavior, cognitions, and deficits or excesses in emotional responses, ways to address individual psychopathology, strategies for assisting couples in coping with environmental demands, and approaches for enhancing relationship strengths.

The authors provide a unique integration of theory, research, and practical suggestions that will be appealing to students, scholars, and practitioners. They have integrated work from a variety of theoretical perspectives, and the book will be appealing to couple specialists across disciplines and theoretical orientations. They continue their commitment to empirical findings and demonstrate how these findings can be used sensitively in clinical settings, while considering each couple's uniqueness.

The book is easy to read and filled with clinical examples that bring their ideas to life. Whether working with couples or with individual clients experiencing relationship challenges, therapists and counselors will find this book to be indispensable.

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