

FIRST SESSION: STAGE ONE
DE-ESCALATION

How did you come to the decision to come for counseling?
How did you end up here?

How long have you been together for?
Describe a time when things were going well...
Describe significant times of closeness...
When did it change?
What kept you together

Create safety – VALIDATION
REPEAT
SLOW DOWN

Bring up sexuality, ask about cuddling
Take note of conflict issues and how these are related to core issues

“ and then what happens...”

THERAPIST TASKS:

- Create a collaborative therapeutic alliance
- Explore agendas for – relationship and therapy
- Present therapeutic contract

ASSESS RELATIONSHIP STATUS:

- Brief relationship history/ key events
- Perception of problems and strengths
- Cycles – negative and positive
- Brief attachment history
- Observe interaction
- Check for violence/ abuse

Attachment style
Cycle
Secondary & primary emotions
Strengths

ASSESS PROGNOSTIC INDICATORS:

- Degree of reactivity
- Strength of attachment
- Openness – response to therapist
- Note trust/ faith of female partner

CYCLE HAS 4 LEVELS:
Action – do
Perception – how see the other
Secondary emotion
Primary emotion

Option: Hold me tight

Summarize the session: highlight one thing each has said

