



# Dr. Tracy's Counseling Services

20 years of experience

**Q:** When is it time to give up on your marriage?

We have been to a marriage counselor and things always revert back to the fighting and lack of intimacy.

**A:** First, commit to being in this together and to working it out, no matter what it takes. While you may have tried marriage counseling, and are understandably discouraged, you have to commit to counseling where your troubled interactions can be analyzed. Superficial interventions always lead to superficial results.

Second, be humble, open and willing. If one side is resistant, the counseling process is never going to work. You have to be willing to look at your own heart and motives. Often, if one side is willing to be vulnerable and honest, the other person's heart will soften.

Third, speak from your most vulnerable self. Most couples become accustomed to speaking to each other from their angry, hurt selves. They are protective and secretive, defensive and accusatory. Learning to speak from your unguarded self will allow you to make real contact with each other.

Fourth, be compassionate and reconciling with each other. Being committed to solving problems and seeing the other as wounded and hurt, will allow you to generate compassion for each other.

Fifth, sometimes a small change can make a radical difference. Just when couples think there is no hope, practicing some fairly simple tools can cut the tension, increase the connection and bring monumental hope. It is important to understand you are both on the same team and are working together as partners in the marriage.

Finally, seek to fully understand your mate. For example, if a man has a self-righteous attitude and apologizes for his arrogance, a woman will begin to feel safe in drawing close to him again. If both seek to understand each other, both learn how to work together to solve problems and create intimacy.

I work with many couples who are able to let go of their hostility and learn to risk being vulnerable with each other. Being open to learning about healthy boundaries, compassionate understanding and developing effective problem-solving will change your relationship dramatically.

***Specializing in the treatment of:***

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***Trauma and Grief ~ General Coping Issues***

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