

The Classic, *Couple Skills* Is Now Out in a Second Edition

Originally published in 1994, *Couple Skills* quickly earned its reputation as a self-help classic. Now it's out in a second edition that includes a chapter on how the revolutionary acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) can be used to help struggling couples. "At the core of ACT is learning to feel what hurts, while doing the things you truly value. When we focus on trying not to feel pain (by being angry or attempting to force others to change), our lives spin out of control," say the authors. They go on to show readers how to apply five core steps drawn from ACT:

1. Taking an inventory of all your attempts to change your partner—or the relationship—that haven't worked.
2. Identifying your valued goals—for the relationship as well as others areas of your life.
3. Identifying blocks to those goals, including judgmental thoughts, painful feelings and avoidance patterns.
4. Learning to use skills such as mindfulness, defusion, and workability to overcome the blocks.
5. Committing to an action plan based not on fixing your relationship but living a valued life.

In addition readers learn the must-have skills for a successful relationship, including:

- Clean communication and negotiation;
- Reciprocal reinforcement; and
- Coping with anger and conflict.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Matthew McKay, Ph.D., is a professor at the Wright Institute in Berkeley, CA. He is author and coauthor of more than twenty-five books, including *The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook*, *Thoughts and Feelings*, *Messages*, *When Anger Hurts*, *Self-Esteem*, and *The Self-Esteem Guided Journal*.

Patrick Fanning is author of more than fifteen books, including *Messages*, *Self-Esteem*, *Thoughts and Feelings*, and *How to Stop Backing Down and Start Talking Back*.

Kim Paleg, Ph.D., is a practicing clinical psychologist specializing in couples and family therapy. She is author of *When Anger Hurts Your Relationship* and *When Anger Hurts Your Kids*.

NEXT: Suggested Interview Questions



**FOR AN INTERVIEW
REQUEST OR MORE
INFORMATION
CONTACT:**

Lorna Garano
510-652-0215 x107
lorna@newharbinger.com

Couple Skills, Second Edition
Matthew McKay, Ph.D.,
Patrick Fanning
Kim Paleg, Ph.D.

Published in December 2007
New Harbinger Publications
800-748-6273

www.newharbinger.com

\$16.95 trade paper
316 pages

ISBN 10: 1-57224-481-X

ISBN 13: 978-1-57224-481-8

Suggested Interview Questions for the Authors of *Couple Skills*, Second Edition

1. This new edition of *Couple Skills* includes a chapter based on acceptance and commitment therapy. What is this and how can it help struggling couples?
2. You say that "when there's no changing your partner, and you have good reason not to leave, the only path is acceptance." I would guess that a lot of couples have difficulty taking that advice. What do you say to them? Why not keep try to "fix" problems with a partner?
3. What the number one problem you see with couples?
4. What is reciprocal reinforcement and the spontaneity paradox?
5. If you had three things that you could tell every couple at the start of their relationship what would they be?
6. One of the chapters in *Couple Skills* is entitled, "Identifying Your Couples System." What is a couples system and what are a few typical ones?
7. You give readers the "ten commandments of clean communication," Can you give us three here and explain why they're important?
8. Chapter 6 is about negotiating with your partner. That's often not a term we associate with a personal relationship. Why do you need negotiation skills in a relationship and how does negotiation between a couple differ from negotiation in the business world?
9. You say that "therapists used to think that ventilating angry feelings was health and appropriate." Why is that no longer conventional wisdom and how should partners express anger if venting isn't healthy?
10. What are schemas?

**FOR AN INTERVIEW REQUEST OR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Lorna Garano 510-652-0215 x107 lorna@newharbinger.com**

**Couple Skills, Second Edition by Matthew McKay, Ph.D., Patrick Fanning, and Kim Paleg, Ph.D.,
Published in December 2006 by New Harbinger Publications
800-748-6273 www.newharbinger.com \$16.95, trade paper, 316 pages
ISBN 10: 1-57224-481-X, ISBN 13: 978-1-57224-481-8**