

# Community Education Series

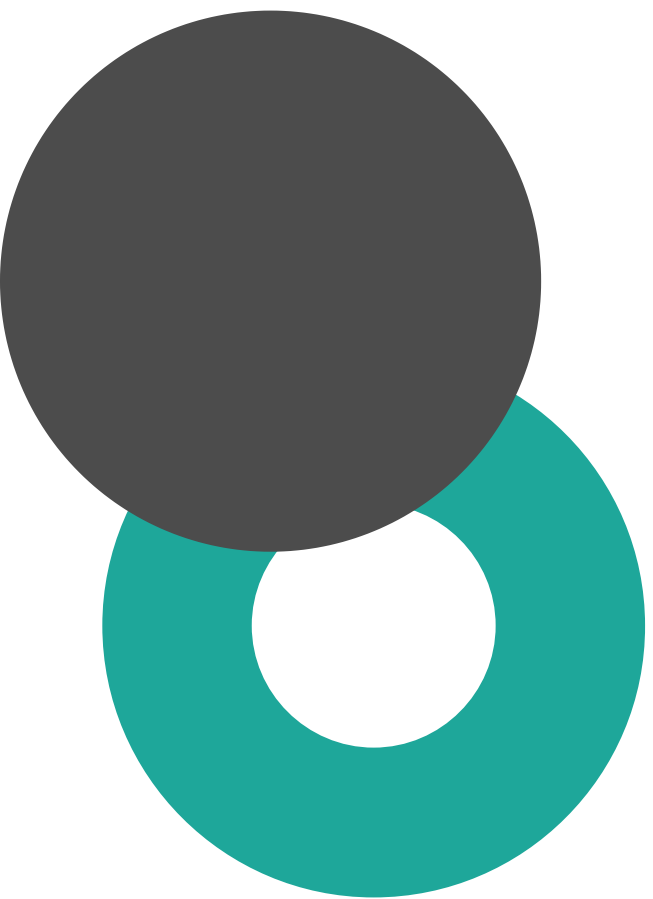
The Recovery Village and Advanced Recovery Systems





**Presentation Topic:**  
Stronger Together

**Speaker:**  
Genesis Games, LMHC




# About the Speaker:

Genesis Games,

LMHC, Healing Connections, LLC



- Trained in the Gottman Method and Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy
- Specializes in couples and relational issues
- Focused on attachment trauma
- Background in substance use treatment
- Provides services in FL and NJ, 100% online counseling



The quality of our lives is based on the quality of our relationships. To cultivate healthy relationships, we need to care for our mental wellness.

For this reason, mental health and relationships go hand in hand.





# Icebreaker

- Where are you joining from?
- Why did you choose to attend this workshop?



# All Of Our Identities Under One Roof

Creating healthy boundaries and transitions

# Prolonged stress and uncertainty can lead to resurfacing or worsening symptoms of:



- Post Traumatic Stress
- Alcohol & Substance Use
- Eating Disorders
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Grief



**The most traumatic aspects of  
all disasters involve the  
shattering of  
human connections.**

Bruce D. Perry





# Stress Reactions

- Present-Focused: Obsessed with the problem, constantly looking for solutions, and a need to feel in control.
- Future-Focused: Positive mindset with an optimistic view of the future. Makes long-term plans that can seem unrealistic. Avoids the problem.

# Communication Styles That Divide US

## It's Not Me, It's You

- We cannot tolerate feeling vulnerable in front of our partner
- Based on mutual criticism
- An aggressive dynamic, seeking a winner
- Loss of emotional safety
- Loss of fun and relaxation with our partner
- We begin to only notice the flaws

## The Protest

- Partner protests because they feel disconnected from the other
- The other partner creates distance and shuts down because they don't think they are capable of fulfilling their partner's needs
- The more protest, the more distance
- Creates a sense of hopelessness and loneliness


## Nothing Is Going On

- Rarely argue, lack critical tone
- High tension, no one speaks about
- Both are shut down and in denial of the state of the relationship
- Believing they cannot fulfill the needs of the other, they both gave up
- The consequence of the protest
- The couple lives parallel lives as friends



# How Do We Become Stronger Together

Cultivate emotional safety, the art of complaining, and giving yourself permission to feel pleasure



**Distressed partners may use different words  
but they are always asking the same basic  
questions, “Are you there for me? Do I matter to  
you? Will you come when I need you when I  
call?”**

Dr. Sue Johnson

# Emotional Safety

- This is a basic human need and the foundation for healthy relationships.
- We all crave to feel loved, accepted, respected, and cared for.
- We want to be able to express what we feel, desire, and think without fear of judgement.
- We create emotional safety when we stop criticising, being contemptuous, responding defensively, and shutting down.
- Repair connections by engaging vulnerably.

**The more I \_\_\_\_\_, the more you \_\_\_\_\_, and then the more I \_\_\_\_\_,  
and the cycle of disconnection continues.**

# The Art Of Complaining

- Complaining is a natural reaction to feeling disconnected and frustrated.
- We need to create space for all emotions, not just the comfortable ones.
- Complaining invites empathy .
- Complaining is cathartic.
- Allows us to discuss uncomfortable emotions indirectly.
- Can motivate change.
- We should complain about situations and behaviors, not others.
- Complain should come along with a request for change.
- After we've complained, we can then make space for gratitude and find meaning.

# Give Yourself Permission To Feel Pleasure

- Give yourself permission to celebrate, laugh, and enjoy.
- Utilize humor in difficult times.
- Reconnect with your imagination.
- Incorporate your five senses.
- We don't need equal amount of desire to initiate, desire can grow as we go along.
- Explore the following questions to connect with your pleasure:
  - What can I do to experience pleasure?
  - I allow myself to feel pleasure when?
  - What things do I do that decrease my pleasure?
  - I stop feeling pleasure when?
- Pleasure goes far beyond sex, but it brings us back to it.
- Sex is a way to connect emotionally and spiritually.



# Rituals For Connection

Staying connected is a daily task.



# 5:1 - The Magic Ratio

1. Show interest
2. Be affectionate
3. Show curiosity
4. Use sense of humor
5. Practice gratitude
6. Show admiration
7. Make their life easier



# 6 Hours A Week For A Healthier Relationship



- Goodbyes & Greetings
  - 2 mins per day
  - 5 days a week
- Physical Affection
  - Minimum 5 mins a day
- Appreciation & Admiration
  - 5 mins per day
- Conversation Regarding Outside Stressors
  - 20 mins per day
  - 3 days per week
- State of the Union
  - 1 hour per week
- Quality Time/ Dates
  - 2 hours per week



# Let's Stay Connected

**Speaker: Genesis Games**

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# QUESTIONS



**THANK YOU**

