



ONE-YEAR COUPLES THERAPY FELLOWSHIP FOR LICENSED THERAPISTS (2026)

The Couples Clinic is offering an opportunity for licensed therapists to spend a year receiving intensive training and supervision in couples therapy. The Fellowships are designed to produce highly trained and competent therapists who specialize in helping couples improve their relationships.

Have you ever had the experience of trying to help a couple while feeling more like a referee at a mud-wrestling contest than a therapist?

Have you found it frustrating to be a "jack of all trades but master of none?" With so many kinds of problems and modalities of treatment, it can be overwhelming. Wouldn't it be really nice to buckle down and become really good at *something*?

Shouldn't that *something* be helping couples? Couples therapy is hard, and few therapists are really good at it. You could be one of them.

In our One-Year Couples Therapy fellowship, you will...

- Receive intensive training and supervision in Pragmatic/Experiential Therapy for Couples (PET-C), a powerful approach that translates new findings from neurobiology and relationship science into practical methods for improving relationships. from Dr. Brent Atkinson and other senior Couples Clinic Supervisors.
- Set yourself on track to become a permanent part of a team whose innovative couples therapy methods are known and used around the world.

This One-Year Couples Therapy Fellowship is Ideal for Licensed Therapists Who:

- are interested in becoming an expert in Couples Therapy.
- are living in the Chicago area (or who are willing to move to the Chicago area) and interested in working full time at the Couples Clinic as they complete the year-long fellowship, and
- are interested in a post-fellowship career working at the Couples Clinic and Research Institute, earning up to 100K each year.



Description of the Fellowship Site

- The Couples Clinic and Research Institute in Geneva, Illinois is the home of an innovative team of therapists and researchers who have generated methods that are known and used by couples therapists around the world (thecouplesclinic.com/our-story). Each year, therapists come to Geneva to learn Pragmatic/Experiential Therapy for Couples. They work hard while also enjoying all that Geneva has to offer (Geneva is rated by World Atlas as one of the [15 most beautiful towns](#) in America.)

Fellowship Candidate Selection Philosophy

- We believe that your personal qualities are more important than your experience. We are looking for licensed therapists (LMFT, LCPC or LCSW) who have a passion for couples therapy and have a strong enough personality to hold the therapy room with distressed couples. We are also looking for individuals who aren't afraid to say things that clients might not want (but need) to hear and have the ability to say them in a way that goes down easy.

Model of Couples Therapy

- We are the creators of Pragmatic/Experiential Therapy for Couples (PET-C). Detailed in our books, *Emotional Intelligence in Couples Therapy: Advances from Neurobiology and the Science of Intimate Relationships*, and *Developing Habits for Relationship Success*, our approach has been described by Oprah as "completely counterintuitive and wonderfully effective," and the editor of the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* called it "a tour-de-force of scientific wisdom and sophistication." Step-by-step, you will become masterful in implementing this highly integrative and comprehensive treatment model for couples.

Training and Supervision

- Supervision is most intensive in the beginning, then gradually tapers off as you become more experienced with couples.
- In the first 6 months, you'll receive 4 ¼ hours of individual supervision and 2 ½ hours of group supervision each week.
- In months 7-12, you'll receive 3 ¼ hours of individual supervision each week, and 2 ½ hours of group supervision (1 hour during the summer months).
- Throughout the Fellowship, your supervisor will:
 - Listen to audio-recordings of your sessions, giving you moment-by-moment suggestions about how you can increase your effectiveness.



- Guide you through (and give you feedback on) training exercises that help you...
 - Identify key choice points in sessions, when moving one direction vs. another can make a big difference.
 - Help you learn to use words and phrases that get your clients attention and help them realize concrete changes they need to make.
 - Develop the ability to give clients critical feedback without them feeling criticized.
 - Examine the automatic reactions you have during sessions, understand where these automatic tendencies come from, and engage in practices that can re-wire them when needed.
 - Understand the highly integrative nature of PET-C, and how it is similar and different to other couples therapy approaches.
- Teach you how to become adept at helping partners...
 - Become willing to drop the upper hand and put themselves on a level playing field with their mates.
 - Understand and assume responsibility for their mutual contributions to the depleted condition of their relationship.
 - Experience genuine regret and remorse for the pain that they have caused each other.
 - Come to grips with their perpetual differences, cut their losses, and get on the same page with a game plan for how to manage these differences more successfully in the future.
 - Rewire the way their nervous systems react in emotionally charged situations.
 - Navigate spontaneous disagreements better – replacing criticism, defensiveness, and dismissiveness with more effective ways of getting their needs met.
 - Avoid rabbit holes that lead to repetitive arguments.
 - Create relational safety, allowing partners to open their hearts to each other, enabling feelings of warmth, tenderness, affection, playfulness, sexual interest and the desire for loving connection to emerge.
- Help you become skilled and efficient with the electronic medical records system and the fee monitoring and collection process,
- Help you learn how and when to use our vast collection of tools, exercises, protocols and audio recordings clients can use between sessions to increase the impact of your interventions.
- You will have continuous online access to the full collection of Dr. Atkinson's teaching videos that give step-by-step guidance on how to facilitate every single aspect of the therapy process. Your supervisor will point you to the right video at the right time.



Expectations of Fellows

- Fellows are expected to conduct an average of 44 sessions per month during the first six months of the Fellowship, and a minimum of 40 sessions per month during months 7-12 (40 sessions per month is the *minimum* during months 7-12. Fellows are encouraged to conduct an average of 80 sessions per month).
- Fellows are expected to conduct therapy sessions during “prime time” hours: 4-10 PM weekdays; 8AM – 6 PM Saturdays and Sundays (unless some of these hours can be scheduled with clients who are available during daytime weekday hours).
- Fellows are expected to attend all training and supervision sessions as detailed in the **Training and Supervision** section above.
- Fellows are expected to record their counseling sessions for review during supervision.
- Fellows are expected to engage in role plays facilitated by the clinical supervisors.
- Fellows are expected to be open to understanding their own relational tendencies and the etiology of those tendencies.
- Fellows are expected to read and be proficient with assigned materials prior to the beginning of, and during, the Fellowship.

Fellow Pay and Benefits

- The One-Year Fellowship is a full-time, paid position.
- In the first six months, you will be classified as an *independent contractor*, and you will be paid a monthly stipend based on a 40K annual rate (3333/month). You won't be expected to carry a full-time caseload. Rather, you'll be expected to average 44 sessions per month across the first 6 months. If you conduct more than the required number of sessions, you'll get a bonus of \$42 per session. If you conduct less than the required number of sessions, you'll receive a deduction of \$42 per session.
- At month 7, you will convert from an *independent contractor* to a Couples Clinic *employee* and receive Couples Clinic benefits during the remainder of your fellowship (The Clinic will pay $\frac{1}{2}$ of your Social Security and Medicare taxes and you'll be eligible to enroll in an optional 401(k) plan in which the Couples Clinic matches up to 4%. You will also have the option of enrolling in the Couples Clinic health insurance plan). You'll also shift from receiving a set stipend each month to getting paid a per-session rate which increases the more sessions you conduct. Full-time fellows who average 80 sessions per month during months 7-12 (20 sessions per week) receive a monthly pay of about \$4135.
- In addition to pay for sessions conducted, the Fellowship training, supervision and benefits package is estimated to be worth \$47,806 during the fellowship year. See the PDF titled, [“2026 Fellowship Compensation Package](#) for more detail.
- Throughout the fellowship, the Couples Clinic provides liability and malpractice insurance.
- If you perform well during the 1-year fellowship, you'll receive an invitation to join the Couples Clinic permanent team of therapists. You'll earn approximately \$70 per session. Depending on how hard you are willing to work, Full-time Couples Clinic Therapists can



earn over \$100,000 per year.)

Qualifications of Applicants

Minimum Qualifications:

- Full licensure as a Marriage & Family Therapist, Social Worker, or Professional Counselor.
- Completion of Levels 1 and 2 of the [Online Training Program in Pragmatic/Experiential Therapy for Couples](#) prior to beginning the Fellowship.
- Interest in working for the Couples Clinic after completing the fellowship.
- An honest and sincere respect for relationships and a commitment to providing the best care possible.

Additional Preferred Qualifications (not mandatory)

- Knowledge of the major models of couples therapy
- Sex therapy training
- Sex therapy education
- Knowledge of specific trauma models
- Experience with trauma therapies

The Application Process

Visit <https://thecouplesclinic.com/one-year-couples-therapy-fellowships/> for application instructions.

3. The Application Timeline

- Applications are currently being reviewed. We will continue accepting applications until all fellowship positions are filled.

Offers will be contingent upon the applicant completing of Levels 1 and 2 of the [Online Training Program in Pragmatic/Experiential Therapy for Couples](#) before beginning the fellowship (Applicants who receive and accept fellowship offers will be reimbursed for the online trainings).