

Inter-Partner Touch in Couple Counselling: A Review of the Literature and Future Implications.

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As part of a larger research project on in-session inter-partner touch by Martin Rovers, PhD, Saint Paul University, the researchers Cassandra Petrella and Michael Machan, MA Candidates, conducted a literature review on the psychology and biology of touch. There is limited existing research on the use of touch to create emotional bonding and security in couple counselling sessions. The two researchers examined what is already known about the psychology and biology of touch. In the poster presentation, touch and inter-partner touch will be defined. Next, the motives and reasoning behind the need for human touch is explored, including a review of relevant theories and research study findings. The biology of touch is discussed. Then, a review of the recent research relating to touch in couple counselling is examined. Finally, the limitations of the current research and implications for future research are discussed. The findings which reveal the potential for many benefits of touch in creating bonding and connection between couples will be explored further as part of a future research project on the use of in-session inter-partner touch.