

Chapter Eight – Consolidating secure bonds in Stage 3 of EFT (Steps 8-9)

In Chapter 8 I give an overview of Stage 3 consolidation, where the therapist guides couples through integrating and consolidating the changes they have made so that they can continue to shape and grow their love relationship. I use the same format as the previous four chapters to describe Steps 8 and 9, discussing what EFT therapists see and hear during these steps, what therapists and partners do in Steps 8 and 9, and the manner in which these steps are taken.

Stage 3 is a time of celebration, satisfaction, and happiness. I describe how in Step 8, therapists support partners to collaborate in solving pragmatic problems, now that differences are no longer triggers of attachment threat, and in Step 9, encourage partners to create ways to keep their secure bond of love alive

What a therapist sees and hears in Steps 8 & 9

Stage 3 is a time of celebration, satisfaction, and happiness. Signs of a couple's emerging readiness to terminate therapy include: A new bonding cycle, that broadens and builds and nurtures continuing positive views and expectancies of self and other. There is obvious joy and celebration at the experience of this new bond. Readiness to finish therapy may be mixed with fears of moving on without the therapist.

What therapist and clients do in Steps 8 & 9

Step 8: Focus on ways partners are finding to exit the cycle, and to solve problems that were previously attachment threats and triggers for the negative cycle.

Validate courage and new risks.

Building on the secure connection, revisit ongoing issues that used to trigger the negative cycle.

Partners discuss differences and solve problems together.

Step 9: With the therapist's help, partners create stories of how they moved from distress to repair, stories of hope for their love relationship in the future, and form connecting rituals.

How a therapist does Steps 8 & 9

I portray how an EFT therapist remains actively and emotionally engaged, attuning to the emotional tone between partners—particularly joy and fears—and to his/her own felt sense, while at the same time supporting and validating partners' capacity to be increasingly in charge of the process.