

An Adaptive Application of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy with Trans and Nonbinary Couples

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Abstract : Emotionally focused couple therapy (EFCT) is one of the most effective and evidence-based approaches to couple therapy. Yet, literature is scarce of its effective application with trans and non-binary couples. It is estimated that 1.4 million trans adults live in the United States, with about 40% of these individuals experiencing serious psychological distress within the past month. Trans and nonbinary adults are significantly likely to experience discrimination, harassment, family rejection, and relationship challenges throughout the course of their lives. As systemic therapists, applying an informed lens when working with trans and nonbinary couples can contribute to providing effective mental health care to these individuals. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive, intersectional, and culturally informed application of EFCT with trans and nonbinary couples. We will address the current literature on applications of EFCT with diverse couples, EFCT's strengths and limitations on cultural humility, and the gaps within current systems of care for trans and nonbinary couples. We will then provide an adaptive application of EFCT to help trans, and nonbinary couples recover from potential attachment injuries in their relationships, intersecting gender minority stressors, and achieve healing and restoration in their interpersonal dynamics.

Keywords : attachment, culturally informed care, emotionally focused couple therapy, trans and nonbinary couples

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