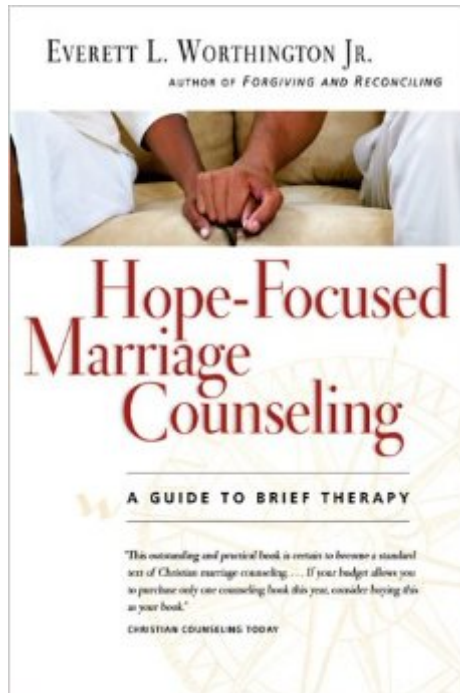


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# Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling: A Guide To Brief Therapy



## Synopsis

Everett L. Worthington, Jr. offers a comprehensive manual for assisting couples over common rough spots and through serious problems in a manner that is compassionate, effective and brief. His hope-focused (rather than problem-focused) approach enables couples to see that change is possible and gives them a new outlook on the future. Combining this with a brief approach that addresses the realities of managed care and tight budgets, Worthington shows how to be strategic in each counseling situation by including teaching, training, exercises, forgiveness, modeling and motivation. At the heart of the book are dozens of interventions and exercises, including drawing on central values promoting confession and forgiveness strengthening communication aiding conflict resolution changing patterns of thinking developing intimacy cementing commitment Backed by years of experience and substantial research, hope-focused marriage counseling offers hope to counselors that they can provide help to troubled couples quickly, compassionately and effectively. This paperback edition includes a new introduction, summarizing the latest findings and developments in marital counseling and applying hope-focused marriage counseling to today's cultural and clinical realities.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In my counseling program thus far, this is my favorite textbook. I appreciate the author's approach to counseling; her founding principles are very simple yet important. To inspire hope within the relationship, is to help create the desire in each member of the marriage to have a better

marriage. One of my favorite aspect of this book is that with each of the lessons that she places in this guide to couple's counseling are multiple interventions and how to use them in and outside of the counseling sessions. This is a very practical and easy to use guide to counseling. One of my classmates told me that he uses this in his practice and I plan on doing the same in my future counseling. This book could also be used as a self-help guide without a counselor, because it is that well developed.

First, I need to mention that I am writing this review as a seminary student. This was one of the textbooks for my marital counseling class. The book is written for professional counselors and pastors. It is perhaps more technical than most books pastors would use in marital counseling. Worthington proposes a brief therapy approach, with one long and thorough assessment followed by a five to eight intervention sessions. He sees assessment as absolutely necessary and expects change to continue after sessions are ended. He sees homework as very important. Worthington sees all marriage problems caused by lack of forgiveness, lack of hope, lack of faith and lack of love. His approach to counseling is based on a positive, hope-based alliance with the couple. His strategy is applying faith working through love. He defines love as a willingness to value and avoid devaluing people that springs from a caring, other-focused heart. The areas of change are: central values and beliefs core vision of the marriage confession and forgiveness communication conflict resolution cognition about the marriage closeness (intimacy, coercion, distance) complicating problems (abuse, substance dependence, mental health problems) commitment (including contentment with the marriage and compounding investments in the marriage compared with investments in alternatives to the marriage such as other relationships, jobs, children, hobbies, friends) The last two thirds of the book lists numerous interventions that can be used to address the above areas of change. I think the book is a very good resource for someone who already has experience counseling couples or as a main resource in a class. It may be too technical as a stand alone resource for someone new to counseling.[...]

In this work, Worthington provides a brief couples model that can be executed in five to nine sessions. As most insurances will not cover couples therapy, usually this is an "out-of-pocket" expense for most client systems. So anything "brief" is greatly appreciated! Even though couples can spend up to \$20,000 (or more) on the wedding, it is sad they won't fork-up \$800-\$1,000 for counseling to keep the marriage going. Actually, attorneys will cost much more than this and there's no such thing as a "pain-free" divorce or partnership dissolution. "Returns" work for clothes, not

people. In our agency, we have a three phase model based on Boyd-Franklin & Bry (2000): 1) entire family, 2) the "IP" (identified patient), and 3) the entire family again. As a family problem may start as an "adolescent problem," we have to work with the teenager in phase two initially. However, it isn't uncommon that the IP is really a buffer for the couple sub-system and their failed interactions. So then we need to switch to working on the couple or else the teenager will be trapped in "acting out" behaviors. This is where Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling (HFMC) comes in. As we've already spent some time with the teenager, we don't have 12-16 sessions for Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) - we need something quicker! Enter HFMC, stage left! So HFMC has a lot of good uses. Also, Worthington and fellow supporters (such as myself) are conducting efficacy research on this approach to establish it as an "EBT" (evidence-based treatment). So look for HFMC to be nuanced and tweaked in light of this work. However, it would be better to get a copy and join us in this endeavor! Also, I have heard from reliable sources HFMC is going to be coming out with training materials, live demonstrations on a DVD, and certification in Spring 2008. Stay tuned!

This is a terrific book! Great book discussing the ins and outs of marriage counseling. Discusses counseling techniques and practical tools to use as a counselor. Also great to learn effective communication skills to boost your own relationship. Personally I highly recommend this book. This book can also be used in coordination with Family Therapy Basics (Marital, Couple, & Family Counseling)

A great book on marriage counseling. There may be more than one way to do it, but the author gave clear cut theory and steps on how to go about it. templates are given on almost every step that he mentioned. There are not many 'take and go' manuals on such practical subject as Christian counseling. This is one. You won't regret it. Ten times worth your every penny. For that matter, anyone who wants to work out and improve on your marriage will want a copy. Yan

A refreshingly different approach to marriage counseling that focuses upon restoring hope in the marriage rather than tackling problems. Excellent examples of interventions based upon what Worthington identifies as the nine areas of marriage. Easy to understand and even more easy to use. Outstanding work!

This book gave a very hands on practice kind of view of brief marital counseling. The great part of this book is Worthington (2005) the writer integrates a lot of the theories from our secular world. I

have used this theory and has worked very well in my Masters Practicum.

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