



# **A Relational Psychoanalytic Approach to Couples Psychotherapy (Relational Perspectives Book Series)**

*Philip A. Ringstrom*

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**Winner of the 2014 Goethe Award for Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Scholarship!**

*A Relational Psychoanalytic Approach to Couples Psychotherapy* presents an original model of couples treatment integrating ideas from a host of authors in relational psychoanalysis. It also includes other psychoanalytic traditions as well as ideas from other social sciences. This book addresses a vacuum in contemporary psychoanalysis devoid of a comprehensively relational way to think about the practice of psychoanalytically oriented couples treatment.

In this book, **Philip Ringstrom** sets out a theory of practice that is based on three broad themes:

The actualization of self experience in an intimate relationship

The partners' capacity for mutual recognition versus mutual negation

The relationship having a mind of its own

Based on these three themes, Ringstrom's model of treatment is articulated in six non-linear, non-hierarchical steps that wed theory with practice - each powerfully illustrated with case material. These steps initially address the therapist's attunement to the partners' disparate subjectivities including the critical importance of each one's perspective on the "reality" they co-habit. Their perspectives are fleshed out through the exploration of their developmental histories with focus on factors of gender and culture and more. Out of this arises the examination of how conflictual pasts manifest in dissociated self-states, the illumination of which lends to the enrichment of self-actualization, the facilitation of mutual recognition, and the capacity to more genuinely renegotiate their relationship. The book concludes with a chapter that illustrates one couple treated through all six steps and a chapter on frequently asked questions ("FAQ's") derived from over thirty years of practice, teaching, supervision and presentations during the course of this book's development.

***A Relational Psychoanalytic Approach to Couples Psychotherapy* balances a great range of ways to work with couples, while also providing the means to authentically negotiate their differences in a way which is insightful and invaluable. This book is for practitioners of couples therapy and psychoanalytic practitioners. It is also aimed at undergraduate, graduates, and postgraduate students in the fields of psychiatry, psychology, marriage and family therapy, and social work.**

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