



# The Science of Trust: Emotional Attunement for Couples

*John M. Gottman*

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An eminent therapist explains what makes couples compatible and how to sustain a happy marriage.

For the past thirty-five years, John Gottman's research has been internationally recognized for its unprecedented ability to precisely measure interactive processes in couples and to predict the long-term success or failure of relationships. In this groundbreaking book, he presents a new approach to understanding and changing couples: a fundamental social skill called "emotional attunement," which describes a couple's ability to fully process and move on from negative emotional events, ultimately creating a stronger relationship.

Gottman draws from this longitudinal research and theory to show how emotional attunement can downregulate negative affect, help couples focus on positive traits and memories, and even help prevent domestic violence. He offers a detailed intervention devised to cultivate attunement, thereby helping couples connect, respect, and show affection. Emotional attunement is extended to tackle the subjects of flooding, the story we tell ourselves about our relationship, conflict, personality, changing relationships, and gender. Gottman also explains how to create emotional attunement when it is missing, to lay a foundation that will carry the relationship through difficult times.

Gottman encourages couples to cultivate attunement through awareness, tolerance, understanding, non-defensive listening, and empathy. These qualities, he argues, inspire confidence in couples, and the sense that despite the inevitable struggles, the relationship is enduring and resilient.

This book, an essential follow-up to his 1999 *The Marriage Clinic*, offers therapists, students, and researchers detailed intervention for working with couples, and offers couples a roadmap to a stronger future together.



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