Emotionally Focused Therapy for Japanese Couples: Development and Empirical Investigation of a Culturally-Sensitive EFT Model

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Summary

In this doctoral thesis, a culturally-sensitive couple therapy model was developed and empirically investigated. In particular, a Western-based couple therapy, Emotionally-Focused Couple Therapy (EFT), was modified to enhance the cultural relevancy of this model to the Japanese population. An extensive literature review was conducted to examine the status of psychotherapy and couple research in Japan, and cultural differences between Western and Japanese couples, with a particular emphasis on important couple variables, including emotional expression, communication, conflict resolution, and attachment. Study objectives included an empirical investigation into cultural differences on key relationship variables of trust, attachment, communication, and conflict resolution, and the use of these findings to guide adaptations of EFT to enhance cultural relevance, and an exploration of the adapted EFT model with three Japanese couples. This study is significant in that it is the first to empirically evaluate the cross-cultural validity of EFT.

This dissertation consists of two studies that have been combined in one article for the purpose of publishing the document in a Japanese journal. Both studies were combined in one article for various reasons. First, study one findings are integral to the development of the culturally-sensitive EFT model that is empirically investigated in the second study. Second, the article included in this dissertation will be translated and prepared for publication in a Japanese journal. Including both studies in one article is important given the lack of familiarity in the Japanese research community about key relationship variables, and particularly their applicability to a couple therapy system (i.e., EFT), and their use to measure change in a couple therapy outcome study.

In Study 1, Japanese and Canadian male and female relationship partners were found to differ on the basis of trust, attachment, communication, except for conflict resolution. These differences mirrored some of the common differences found in the literature about Western versus Japanese couples. These findings were used to develop the culturally-sensitive EFT model. The second study involved both outcome and process methods to explore the efficacy of the adapted model. In the outcome part of the study, the culturally-sensitive EFT model was applied to three couples, and the intervention was found to increase partner trust in both self and other, diminish attachment anxiety and avoidance, and create greater ease in dealing with negative feelings and emotions in the relationship. Consistent with the client change process in EFT, couple partners were found to deepen their experiential involvement in therapy from baseline to 'best' sessions.

This article suggests that Western-based therapy models can be applied to the Japanese population with some culturally-sensitive recommendations to ensure cultural relevancy. Empirical support for the applicability of EFT with Japanese couples is provided. In EFT, strengthening attachment bonds by enhancing partners' emotional accessibility and responsiveness is most significant to the clinical process of working with distressed couples. The model is predicated on the notion of attachment as a universal process. The universality of attachment and the importance of emotional accessibility and responsiveness in strengthening adult bonds are validated by the findings of this study. The implications of this research in terms of future EFT research are also outlined.

General Introduction

Over the past forty years, there has been a trend toward increasing divorce rates in Japan. The traditional Japanese marriage, which has been built on values of life time loyalty and commitment, appears to be undergoing a rapid transformation as increasing numbers of Japanese couples are terminating their unions. In 2002, the divorce rate was at an all-time high of 2.3 individuals per 1,000 (Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, 2004). Although there was a slight decline for the following six years, divorce rates began to rise again and was at a rate of 1.99 individuals per 1,000 in 2010 (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, 2010). This represents a threefold increase since the 1963 divorce rate of 0.74 per 1000 (Asai & Olson, 2004; Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, 2004). According to Iwai (2001), in 1965, one in every 10 couples' first marriage ended in divorce; however, by 1990, the probability of divorce has increased twofold to 1 in every 5 couples. Retherford, Ogawa, and Matsukura (2001) point to some factors that have contributed to these trends. They cite increases in premarital sex, increasing discontent in women's traditional role in the younger generation, increasing women's individual resources, and a complete shift from arranged marriages to love marriages as possible reasons for the increasing divorce rate.

Nevertheless, the rising divorce rate suggests that many Japanese couples are currently experiencing marital distress in the face of several transformations to the social fabric of Japanese life. Given these unfortunate trends, Japanese couples may require increased access to couple therapy.

Despite the high levels of relationship distress in Japan, for the most part, there are few options for couples seeking therapy in Japan. In Japan, Western-based psychotherapy has not yet been fully accepted Japanese society (Kameguchi & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2001). EFT is one of

the world's most empirically supported couple therapies (Baucom, Shoham, Mueser, Daiuto, & Stickle, 1998; Johnson, 2004; Johnson, Hunsley, Greenberg, & Schlindler, 1999). Thirty years of research and clinical practice have supported the applicability of EFT to a wide variety of populations (i.e., different cultures and social classes) (Denton, Burleson, Clarke, Rodriguez, & Hobbs, 2000), which suggests it may be adaptable to a Japanese population. The basic text of EFT (Johnson, 2004) has already been translated into two other East Asian languages (i.e., Chinese and Korean), and Latin American Spanish, and EFT practitioners are currently using this therapeutic approach across the globe (Greenman, Young, & Johnson, 2009).

EFT is predicated on the notion that working with partners' underlying emotional experience to solidify the attachment bond is central to the change process. Japan's cultural context, however, may influence how couple partners express 'self' and relate to 'other' within the context of the attachment bond. In collectivist cultures, such as Japan, there is an emphasis on the interdependence of the 'self' with the 'other' whereas Western cultures emphasize independence between the two. This will likely have an effect on the Japanese couple in two important ways that are relevant to EFT. First, research has shown Japanese tend to refrain from directly expressing their emotional needs out of the motive to maintain social harmony (Safdar et al., 2009). Second, the Japanese cultural tendency to focus on the needs of the 'other' is likely the cause of the relatively high prevalence of preoccupied attachment in the Japanese population (Schmitt et al., 2004). These are important considerations given the centrality of emotional expression and attachment to EFT.

To evaluate the likelihood of EFT being applicable to a Japanese context, it is important to examine cultural factors that might interfere with its efficacy. For example, EFT for couples identifies change events, such as withdrawer re-engagement and blamer softening, which require

partners to experience and express emotion and differentiate self needs and concerns; partner responsiveness is promoted in order to enhance attachment security and consolidate the attachment bond (Johnson, 2004). EFT works closely with emotional experience and expression and partner responsiveness, in order to enhance attachment security. Hence the important question is 'will cultural differences in Japan hinder the processes involved in the elicitation of change in EFT?' In this context, it is important to explore whether any adaptations may be required prior to importing a Western-based couple's therapy to a Japanese context.

The first article will look into up-to-date cultural differences between the Japanese population and a Western population, in this case Canadian. Key couple variables will be measured to determine if and to what extent they differ between the two populations. These variables include trust of self and other, adult romantic attachment tendencies, couple communication, and couple conflict resolution. These constructs were investigated on the basis of their centrality to EFT. Thus, if any cultural differences exist on these measures, it is critical to detect them so that culture-sensitive recommendations for EFT can be made to optimize its efficacy within the Japanese population.

Results will be analyzed using 2X2 factorial ANOVAs, comparing the Japanese and Canadian sample means while exploring gender differences. Discussion will focus on what culturally-sensitive recommendations may be offered to EFT practitioners working with Japanese couples. The second article, an exploratory study, will examine the applicability of the revised EFT protocol for Japanese couples. To test pre- to post- EFT treatment changes in couple-related measures, paired Fisher Student's *t*-test analyses were performed.

The present study is the first to closely look into the applicability of EFT for couple treatment to a Japanese population. It is also the first to use empirical evidence to inform the application of EFT with an Eastern population.

In this general introduction, a review of attachment theory and research is first presented followed by Japanese-specific key couple concepts that highlight areas of differences with Western couples that have been supported by years of cross-cultural research.

Attachment as a Universal Process

Attachment theory suggests that attachment to a caregiver is a universal, biological imperative that ensures an infant's survival by promoting physical and emotional proximity to the attachment figure during moments of need to restore internal security (Bowlby, 1982, 1988). In the presence of internal or external threats to security, an innate attachment behavioural system is activated to organize emotional expressions and behaviours in order to solicit proximity to a caregiver (also called an attachment figure). As such, all infants regardless of culture and race are hard-wired to engage in emotional and behavioural expressions to facilitate bonding with an attachment figure. These expressions and behaviours serve as clear signals, called attachment cues or expressions, and alert the caregiver that a child is in need of caregiving responses, such as attention, emotional attunement, and contact-comfort for the purpose of restoring internal equilibrium and a sense of safety.

Caregivers differ, however, in their accessibility and responsiveness to infants. The quality of these interactions will play a significant role in a child's ability to use the caregiver as a secure base from which to explore the world and a safe haven to return to, for comfort and soothing when distressed (Ainsworth, 1967; Ainsworth, Bell, & Statyton, 1974; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). Different attachment strategies based on models of self and other

evolve based on these caregiving experiences. Ainsworth et al. (1974) empirically substantiated different attachment patterns based on these caregiver-infant interactions. Using the Strange Situation Test, a test that enables the researcher to measure a child's reaction to separation anxiety, three attachment patterns were identified: anxious-resistant, anxious-avoidant, and secure. Her findings suggested that secure infants used their caregivers as a safe haven from which they could explore their surroundings. They were upset upon separation and appeased upon reunion with a caregiver. These infants' caregivers were observed as sensitive and responsive to their infant's signs. Anxious-resistant infants were noted to require physical contact with their caregiver upon reunion; however, they were angry and more difficult to comfort after the physical contact was made than secure infants. The caregivers were observed to be unpredictable, intrusive, and inconsistent in regard of their infant's cues. Anxious-avoidant infants ignored their caregivers and avoided interaction with caregivers who were rebuffing and rejecting.

Ainsworth's attachment patterns were further extended to classify adult attachment patterns. In the late 1980s, Hazan and Shaver (1987) began to apply attachment theory to adult romantic love. In their seminal research, they demonstrated that Ainsworth's attachment patterns, anxious-resistant, anxious-avoidant, and secure, could also be found in adults (Shaver, Hazan, & Bradshaw, 1988). They reclassified the adult categories to anxious-ambivalent (anxious-resistant), avoidant (anxious-avoidant) and maintained the secure classification. Bartholomew (1990) extended Hazan and Shaver's (1987) classification scheme and created a new scheme based on positive and negative models of self and other. In this scheme, the anxious-ambivalent category was renamed preoccupied (negative model of self as unworthy and unlovable and positive model of other as trustworthy, dependable, and reliable). The avoidant pattern was

broken down into a dismissive (positive model of self, negative model of other) and fearful category (negative model of self and other).

Since Hazan and Shaver's (1987) seminal work in the development of an adult attachment measure, other conceptualizations and measures of attachment patterns in adults have been constructed. Brennan, Clark, and Shaver's (1998) Experiences in Close Relationships Inventory is a thirty-six-item self-report measure that evaluates attachment on the basis of a two-dimensional scale of avoidance (i.e., avoiding intimacy) and anxiety (i.e., fearing abandonment) in the relationship. Respondents are instructed to imagine their closest relationships and, based on the associated feelings, respond to inventory items.

The universality of attachment principle states that child-caregiver bonds will be formed regardless of child-rearing practice or culture. However, as van Ijzendoorn and Kroonenberg (1988) point out, the attachment style that is normative and most adaptive may vary from culture to culture. In terms of the populations of interest to the present study, a meta-analysis study by van Ijzendoorn and Kroonenberg (1988) found that the anxious-resistant pattern was found more frequently in Japan whereas the avoidant pattern was found more frequently in Western European countries. The cultural requirement to suppress negative emotions in Japan may account for these differences, as infants may develop anxious-resistant patterns adaptively to satisfy this demand.

Specific Japanese child rearing practices may also be responsible for the relatively high prevalence of the anxious-resistant attachment pattern in its population. In Japan, there is a cultural expectation placed on the parent to read and satisfy the child's attachment cues and needs before they are expressed. Likewise, children are discouraged from expressing their needs directly (Rothbaum, Pott, Azuma, & Weisz, 2000). Under this arrangement, it is not uncommon for parents' to misinterpret the child's attachment cues, and despite their best efforts, the child's

needs are only met intermittently. This parent-child interaction pattern may cultivate an anxious-resistant attachment style in the child.

Emotionally-Focused Therapy

Johnson's EFT synthesizes experiential, systemic, and attachment theory to provide a framework to understand how couple clients change (Johnson, 2004). Attachment theory provides an overall map of the landscape of adult love; couple distress is viewed as flowing from attachment insecurity marked by partner inaccessibility and non-responsiveness. Emotional disconnection creates a lack of emotional safety and attachment insecurity. Experiential and systemic approaches are integrated to support partners to change rigid interaction patterns and emotional responses that have blocked emotional engagement and contributed to attachment insecurity.

From an experiential perspective, partners are viewed as constricted in their emotional responses when they are habitually processing self-protective secondary emotional experiences that are reactions to more vulnerable and adaptive primary emotions and attachment needs. Accessing primary emotions allows couple partners to access attachment needs for contact comfort and support. From an attachment perspective, reciprocal emotional engagement involving primary emotion and attachment needs fosters more secure bonding (Johnson, 2008).

Secondary emotional expressions are emotional reactions to more primary, adaptive emotions. These expressions are at the root of rigid, negative interaction patterns. For example, Sara feels angry while discussing her relationship with Mark, but underneath the anger is primary sadness as she is longing and yearning for more closeness with him. She responds by either anxiously pursuing the other for closeness (the angry, critical pursuer) or avoidantly withdrawing (the numbing, detaching withdrawer). These habitual patterns block emotional engagement and

increase attachment fears as a result of inaccessibility and non-responsiveness. EFT aims to restructure these interactions by facilitating partners to access primary emotions and needs underlying these self-protective responses and thus creating new cycles of engagement.

Johnson has outlined three change phases in EFT: cycle de-escalation, withdrawer re-engagement, and blamer softening (Johnson, 1996, 2004). In Stage 1, the negative rigid interaction cycle is de-escalated. Partners begin to understand how their pattern of interactions has blocked engagement in the relationship. The pursuer and withdrawer learn how their responses have reciprocally contributed to emotional disconnection and the distress they are currently experiencing. The primary emotions underlying these positions are experienced, expressed, and used to change rigid interaction patterns as new emotional experiences and signals shape new interactional responses. In Stage 2, withdrawer re-engagement and blamer softening occur. The withdrawer and blamer begin to access and express softer, primary emotions and needs underlying secondary emotional responses. Emotional accessibility and responsiveness are restored. In the last stage, the therapist continues to support couple partners to engage in an emotionally accessible and responsive manner in order to help the couple consolidate these changes.

Culture represents a unique challenge for the EFT practitioner. A number of clinicians have provided written accounts of their experience applying EFT to non-Western couples. The take-home message from these accounts is that EFT seems to be suitable for couples from a range of, if not all, cultural backgrounds, but the therapist must be keenly aware of the normative ways in which people from different cultures express their attachment needs. This has been the overarching theme found in a number of case studies where EFT was applied to couples from a number of cultural backgrounds, such as First Nations (Berg, 2009), Latino (Parra-Cardona,

Cordova, Holthrop, Escobar-Chew, & Horsford, 2009), and intercultural North American-Middle Eastern (Greenman et al., 2009).

To date, however, there has been no research into the efficacy of EFT for Japanese couples. The EFT model may be nevertheless well suited for cultural adaptations as at its core. EFT is a collaborative model that permits cultural sensitivity. In other words, all EFT therapists allow clients to teach them about the client's "culture" (Johnson, 2004).

Japanese Couple Relationships: Research and Clinical Trends

There is a paucity of research on Japanese couple relationships overall. The lack of research in this area may be related to the emphasis on the parent-child relationship within the culture, which receives significantly more scholarly attention. The paucity of research may also be attributed to a lack of valid and reliable Japanese language measures to assess these relationships. The PREPARE / ENRICH survey of marital satisfaction (Olson & Olson, 1997) and the Marital Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) are two of the most currently used scales at present (Kamo, 1993).

In terms of developments within the clinical field, Western-based psychotherapy has not fully permeated Japanese society (Kameguchi & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2001). Although psychotherapy is gaining in popularity, the idea of psychotherapy is not fully accepted in a culture that values the medical model (i.e., prescriptions) or seeking support from elders in the community (Ono et al*.,* 2011). Many stigmas are still very present in Japanese society that prevent a more efficient use of psychotherapy; psychological or behavioural deviances are viewed as a lack of will-power or self-control (Hwang, 2006; Tamura & Lau, 1992). Several Western approaches, however, have made in-roads in Japan. Mental health facilities that address couple's issues have begun to consider Cognitive Behavioural and Psychodynamic Therapy in

the treatment of couples, but these treatment modalities have not been fully embraced (Okado, 1998). While there is an increasing interest in EFT for couples due to its empirical support, there has been limited training of therapists in Japan (personal communication with Dr. S. Wooley).

Japanese Cultural Context and the Couple

Japanese culture will influence the couple dynamic in a number of ways. It is important for the EFT therapist not to mistakenly pathologize couple interaction patterns that could be attributed to culture differences.

In Japan, couple and family organization are influenced by longstanding traditions that can be traced back to the Samurai feudal era. In some regions of Japan, traditional notions of family prevail. Three generational families with one married couple from each generation and their unmarried children may reside in the same household (McGill, 1987). Within the familial hierarchy, gender and seniority clearly define the role each individual plays within the family. The oldest male figure resides at the top of the hierarchy, followed by his son and his son's first son. Wives always take a complementary role and are never to criticize their male counterparts (Tamura & Lau, 1992). These principles take foundation from the Confucian teaching (obey your father in childhood, your husband in adulthood, and son in later life) and are still very present and influential in the lives of Japanese couples (Kamo, 1994; Lebra, 1984).

With the 'westernization' of Japanese culture, Japanese youth's conception of marital life is now more egalitarian and individually-oriented (Inoguchi & Fujii, 2009). The youth, however, are still taught the old ways of couple relationships by the elder generation. These circumstances create continuous stress in couples as the partners want to fulfill their own goals as well as meet the standard passed on by the elders to attain harmony that is so important in Japanese society (Tamura & Lau, 1992). These factors suggest that female-male couple dynamics will be

influenced by these types of values. For example, a Japanese female may be less likely to express negative emotion and assert her needs when socio-cultural experiences do not entitle her to such expressions.

Japanese Marital Relations

Romance in Marriage

Japanese couple relationships differ from those of Westerners in various ways. For example, in Japan, a close relationship is based on values of harmony and mutual dependence (Farrer, Tasuchiya, & Bagrowicz, 2008). This value is created in relationships by an absence of argument, reciprocal accommodation, and continuing faithfulness. Westerners, on the other hand, sustain romance-based relationships (i.e., verbal intimacy and sexuality) (Norimatsu, 1995; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994). Another striking difference is that romantic relationships are understood differently in Japan. While in both the United States and Asian cultures, romance is expected before marriage (Bando, 1992), in the United States it is assumed that romance will continue after marriage and having children (DeVos, 1985; K. K. Dion & K. L. Dion, 1993; Iwao, 1993). American marital partners prolong the romantic aspects of their relationship, stressing ongoing intimacy, eroticism, and physical attraction (DeVos, 1985; Hendry, 1995; Iwao, 1993). In contrast, Asian partners (including Japanese) will develop marital relations that are closer to friendships (K. L. Dion & K. K. Dion, 1993).

Marital Expectations

Although Japan is one of the most modern, industrialized countries in the world, its marital views and expectations are still very traditional. Even now, many Japanese husbands have difficulties participating in domestic labour as these tasks are viewed as a wife's responsibility (Raymo & Lim, 2011). Interestingly, research has found that the more housework males are

required to do, the more likely they are to be dissatisfied with their marriage (Kamo, 1993), while at the same time, the husband's participation in the housework is associated with greater satisfaction for Japanese wives (Suemori & Ishihara, 1998).

Few studies have been done to compare Japanese marital expectations to American ones. Unlike American couples, Japanese spouses seldom marry because of a romantic attraction, even in these modern times (Bell & Bell, 2000). Marriages are more likely a convenient way to ensure the economic stability of the wife and the continuity of the family bloodline (Bell & Bell, 2000). Male partners are often chosen based on what Japanese women refer to as the three 'highs': height, high income, and high education (Kamo, 1993; Rohner, Uddin, Shamsunnaher, & Khaleque, 2008). These selection criteria are reflected in the marital expectations since spouses are referred more as fathers and mothers than husbands and wives. They are not expected to spend leisure time together as would American couples (i.e., go out for dinner without the children) and when they do, they seldom show any kind of intimate interactions (Kamo, 1993). The marriage is then more like a business partnership between spouses in order to raise children than to fulfill partners' psychological needs (Bell & Bell, 2000).

The "Self" and "Other": Emotional Expressions, Intimacy, Conflict, and Communication

Cultural factors may also influence how Japanese partners define the 'self' and 'other,' which may affect partner expressions of emotion and intimacy, communication, and conflict. These circumstances may raise significant issues in the application of a Western-based therapy to this population, which tend to focus on cognition, emotion, and behaviours of the self. Since the distinctions between self and other in Japan are different, clinical processes with Japanese clients may be impacted.

Asian cultures tend to promote a different view of 'self' than found in Western cultures. In the West, the self is viewed as independent. Awareness of one's self in terms of one's thoughts, feelings, emotions, needs, and pursuing one's self goals is considered the norm and viewed as an important aspect of psychological health. Infrequently, the 'self' defers to the 'other.' The independent view of the 'self' emphasizes self-reliance and personal achievement to distinguish oneself from the 'other.' Conversely, in Asian cultures the emphasis is on an interdependent sense of 'self.' This involves attending to and fitting in or blending with the 'other' for the purpose of creating harmonious interdependence (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). It has been suggested that these different views of the self can systematically change the cognitive, emotional, and motivational aspects of therapy (Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997; Mesquita & Karasawa, 2002).

Emotional Expressions

As a result of this interdependent perspective on self, both the expression and the experience of emotions and motives may be significantly shaped and governed by a consideration for the reactions of others (Hwang, 2006; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). For example, some emotions, specifically anger, tend to be expressed in Western cultures to defend the 'self,' which is independent of the 'other.' This emotion is less prevalent among those with interdependent selves as a sense of being separate from the other is not possible. Moreover, self-serving motives are usually replaced by what appears as other-serving motives (Markus & Kitayama, 2001).

In addition, a recent study demonstrated that Japanese place high value on emotions that are low on the arousal spectrum, such as calmness, serenity, tranquility (Ruby, Falk, Heine, Villa, & Silberstein, 2012), and similarly discourage "powerful" emotions, such as anger, contempt, and disgust (Safdar et al., 2009). Japanese individuals may thus minimize negative self-

expressions to their partners in an effort to preserve social harmony. This presents a unique challenge to the therapist working with the traditional EFT model, as authentic self-expression (i.e., want and needs) is an essential step towards creating a strong connection.

Finally, Japanese tend to have some differences in emotional experience. In a relatively recent study, cultural differences in the emotional experiences of students from various ethnic backgrounds (European American, Asian American, Japanese, Indian, and Hispanic) were examined (Scollon, Diener, Oishi, & Biswas-Diener, 2004). Japanese students were found to experience more negative (i.e., worry, guilt, and irritation) than positive emotion (i.e., happiness, joy, and affection) compared to Western participants.

Intimacy

Intimacy differs greatly between Japanese partners and American partners. While Japanese partners tend to form longer commitments to their partners, they tend to communicate less about their relationship and their interdependency (Ting-Toomey, 1991). In Japan, a person who feels intimacy toward another is less verbal; the Japanese believe that if feelings are deep, you do not need to put them into words (Iwao, 1993). Verbal expressions of intimacy are less important in long-term relationships than the feeling of assurance of the partner's readiness to meet the other partner's needs. While married, it is more important to show relationship commitment and loyalty and ensure that dependency needs are met (Rothbaum, Pott, et al., 2000).

Also, Japanese individuals tend to have more same-gender, emotionally intimate relationships than Americans (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1986; Iwao, 1993; Rohner et al., 2008; Vogel, 1996). As a result, they rely less on their marital partners to satisfy these needs. Less reliance on a partner as the sole source of intimacy may make it easier for the couple to achieve

relationship harmony as they are more likely to have their relational needs met by others (Vogel, 1996).

Conflict

Given that preserving social harmony is a primary concern for Japanese, conflict is far more common in Western marital relationships. Americans are more apt to express anger and argue than Japanese partners (Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000). A majority of Japanese couples (90%) report arguing with partners less than once a month (Long, 1996). In Japan, direct communication is avoided because it tends to be seen as inviting conflict, which is viewed as unhealthy (Hsu, Tseng, Ashton, McDermott, & Char, 1987; Rothbaum, Pott, et al., 2000). For example, in Japan, an individual never says “no” in direct response to the other’s opinion or suggestions. To do so would be viewed as antagonistic. Instead, to avoid conflict, a response will be phrased as a positive sentence or a polite “yes.” The listener is then expected to determine if the answer is a definite agreement or simply a polite “no.” In East Asia, indirect and possibly rather ambiguous communication is more appropriate in order to maintain group cohesiveness and harmony (Hsu et al., 1987).

Communication

The orientation of an interdependent ‘self’ found in Japanese culture also has an impact on the approach to communication. In Japanese culture, an indirect communication style is more common because the other’s needs are attended to first (Lebra, 1984). In Japan, creating symbiotic harmony is critical to any social or familial dialogue (Moore, 2009). Individuals in this culture, therefore, try to anticipate the others’ needs to create harmonious relations as opposed to direct confrontation which is avoided at all costs and deemed to create embarrassment (Ingersoll-Dayton, Campbell, & Mattson, 1998). A couple partner’s response will, therefore, be affected by

their goal to create social harmony in communication. Although the Japanese communication style developed to avoid confrontation and enhance harmony as a group (Moriizumi & Takai, 2010), from a Western perspective, this style is often interpreted as elusive and unclear (Gudykunst et al., 1996). However, it is based on complex cultural and social norms that are not easily changed (Kozuki & Kennedy, 2004).

In contrast to the Japanese communication style, Western cultures have developed a more direct communication style (Ingersoll-Dayton, Campbell, & Mattson, 2004). Individuals are more likely to assert one's need first and then attempt to negotiate both the 'self' and the 'other's' need to find a mutually rewarding outcome. Direct communication is associated with personal empowerment and indirect communication is deemed as submissive, weak, or manipulative (Tannen, 1994). In Japan, in a close relationship, if one partner directly criticizes, the other partner is likely to interpret this as the end of the relationship (Zane, Sue, Hu, & Kwon, 1991). However, even in a Japanese context, a certain level of enhanced communication is needed to establish trust (Ito, Ikeda, & Kawamura, 1999) and to ensure that decision-making is shared by both partners (Yamagishi, Cook, & Watabe, 1998).

Attachment in Japan: From Infancy to Adulthood

The cultural context influences attachment processes from childhood through adulthood. As a collectivist culture, focus on the other's needs is important to create social harmony. Caregiving practices in this context will be geared to orient one's attention to the other's needs and goals. As such, there are marked differences between Japanese and American cultures that affect caregiving practices in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. These different practices have an impact on attachment patterns (Rothbaum,Weisz, Pott, Miyake, & Morelli, 2000).

In the early years of a child's development, Japanese and American mothers differ in terms of their understanding of their infant's needs. Japanese mothers expend great effort trying to anticipate their infant's needs before they are expressed (Kagitcibasi, 1994). By doing so, they are blurring the self-other distinction. They are unknowingly conveying the message that they are one and share the same mind with the child (Kagitcibasi, 1994). Japanese mothers encourage dependency and are inclined to be overly protective well beyond the infant's actual need for support (Azuma, 1986; Doi, 1973). Furthermore, according to Rothbaum, Pott, et al. (2000), Japanese mothers have a tendency to strive to minimize their infants' negative emotions or actions to avoid criticism from husbands, as well as, the wider community. North American mothers see their infant as a separate entity from birth (Chen & Miyake, 1986; Roland, 1988). They also meet the infant's needs, but try to synchronize care-giving based on the expression of the infant's need as it is warranted. This practice is believed to promote the child's orientation to the outside world and encourage autonomy (Ainsworth & Marvin, 1995), self-expression, and exploration of the world outside the mother's reach (Bornstein, Azuma, Tamis-LeMonda, & Ogino, 1990). These differences in caregiving practices will in turn affect emotional regulation. Learning to tolerate separateness in a Western context, will allow the child to develop self-regulatory capacities (i.e., affect regulation skills) (Bornstein et al., 1990).

Alternatively, Japanese children remain very much united to their mother and continue to rely heavily on the caregiver to be comforted and calmed (Barratt, Negayama, & Minami, 1993). In a study of attachment patterns in Japanese babies, a larger percentage of Japanese babies were found to be C-type, anxious resistant, (i.e., overdependent insecure) in comparison to American babies (Takahashi, 1986). Japanese infants also displayed more resistance to separation when experiencing stressful events involving separation anxiety from an attachment figure (Dickstein,

Thompson, Estes, Malkin, & Lamb, 1984; Miyake, Chen, & Compos, 1985). They cried more, tried to maintain contact with the mother longer, and explored less than American babies. This suggests that Japanese babies may experience greater attachment anxiety as a result of their increased reliance on the mother for self-soothing and calming as they rarely experience being left alone with others, including babysitter's care (Imamura, 1987) or alternate providers (Fogel, Stevenson, & Messinger, 1992).

In adolescence, Japanese caregiving practices differ from American practices in a way that further affects attachment models of self and other. Japanese caregivers emphasize concerns about, cooperation, empathy, and recognition of the other's needs. They are prepared to surrender self-needs and concerns to create harmony with 'other,' resulting in an increased valuation of the 'other' (Rothbaum, Pott, et al., 2000). The Japanese adolescent learns to rely and depend on the other to understand his or her preferences and needs, but not to express them. In American contexts, parents will focus on their children's increasing self autonomy, individual preferences, and their capacity to express and negotiate their preferences and needs with others (Roland, 1988; Rothbaum, Pott, et al., 2000). This is deemed to be an important relational skill that needs to be learned through practice (Kuczynski & Kochanska, 1990; Lebra, 1994). North American children directly assert their preferences with their parents and parents may oppose their children's will or negotiate these preferences which support their individuality (Lebra, 1994; Lewis, 1996). The Western child learns to value the 'self' as separate and negotiate with the 'other' as a separate entity.

Finally, Japanese adolescents are more devoted to preserving relationships with parents (DeVos, 1996; Kodansha, 1983; Rohlen, 1983) and symbiotic harmony (Hendry, 1995; Lebra, 1994; White, 1993; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994) continues to be emphasized. Americans, on

the other hand, support their adolescents to develop peer relations, which is an important developmental task for American youth (Rothbaum, Pott, et al., 2000). In terms of couple relationships, American parents will support their adolescents in learning how to separate and engage in romantic relationships as well. They will learn to value the 'self' and learn skills to relate to others; whereas, Japanese youth will be discouraged from engaging in adolescent romantic love relations (Rothbaum, Pott, et al., 2000).

In adulthood, a continuing emphasis on social harmony and the interdependence of self and other continues to be evident in love relationships (Averill, 1985; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994). These practices may be at the root of the continuity, stability, and preponderance of anxious attachment patterns from infancy to adulthood (Lebra, 1994; Marshall, 2012; Schmitt et al., 2004; Shapiro, Ho, & Fernald, 1997; Zhahn-Waxler, Friedman, Cole, Mizuta, & Hiruma, 1996). Westerners, on the other hand, will strive to express and negotiate their needs and risk interpersonal conflict (Rothbaum, Pott, et al., 2000), which may be cause for higher levels of insecurity and avoidance (Schmitt et al., 2004). Cultural processes and cultural influences on attachment contexts from infancy to adulthood may be the reasons why the Japanese population has a higher proportion of preoccupied romantic attachment compared to Canadian and Worldwide populations (Schmitt et al., 2004).

In Japan, preoccupied adult attachment may be the norm based on cultural processes that emphasize symbiotic harmony and an interdependent sense of self and other (Rothbaum, Pott, et al., 2000). In fact, research exists suggesting a preoccupied attachment style may actually be adaptive in Japanese romantic relationships. For instance a recent study by Marshall (2012) suggests that with respect to Japanese couples, individuals with a preoccupied attachment style are more likely to perceive greater relationship quality. Likewise, Kanemasa (2006) revealed a

positive relationship between preoccupied attachment and perceived exclusivity among adolescent Japanese couples.

Implications of Cross-Cultural Differences on Emotion and Attachment in Couples

From this review, it is apparent that Japanese and Western couples will relate differently to one another, primarily on the basis of the impact of the cultural context on various factors of significance to couple relationships. Most importantly, for understanding these differences in the context of EFT, Japanese partners will be less likely to share self experience in terms of their emotions and needs. They are less likely to be comfortable with direct and assertive communication involving intimate and emotionally-driven self-disclosures. Building trust on the basis of sharing and responding to emotional experience and needs presents a challenge in these circumstances for an emotionally-based therapy like EFT. Emotions and associated attachment needs for caregiving and support may not be as easily accessed, expressed, and responded to within the context of the relationship. These different patterns of self-expression involve more negative models of self and more positive models of other. A negative view of self will block the likelihood of owning emotional experiences and needs within the self and its expression to the other. Taken together, these issues call into question the efficacy of applying Western-based therapies without any modification.

General Objectives

The overall purpose of this investigation was to differentiate between Japanese and Canadians on key couple variables, such as trust in self and other, romantic attachment styles, and couple communication and conflict resolution; develop a culturally-sensitive EFT model informed by these differences between Japanese and Canadians on key couple variables; and to

subsequently explore the efficacy of the culturally-sensitive model using a pre-test post-test experimental design.

This research study is significant in that it contributes to the field of international psychology by evaluating whether a Western-based psychotherapy has applicability in an Eastern-based context. EFT targets attachment, a universal process, and as such, can possibly benefit couples in Japan facing relationship distress and attachment issues. This study further addresses the generalizability of EFT and refinement of EFT by exploring and strengthening its cross-cultural applicability. Finally, this research contributes to EFT clinical practice and training as a result of the possible specification of culturally-sensitive alterations required for EFT implementation in Japan.

Emotionally Focused Therapy for Japanese Couples: Development and Empirical Investigation of a Culturally-Sensitive EFT Model

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Abstract

The need for culturally relevant interventions is well-established in the field of psychotherapy (Hall, 2001). In this article, EFT, an attachment-based couple therapy model, is adapted for use with Japanese couples. Two studies were conducted to support development and evaluation of the cross-cultural applicability of this model. In the initial study, differences between 200 Japanese and Canadian male and female relationship partners were assessed using cross-culturally validated and reliable relationship measures of trust, romantic attachment, communication, and conflict resolution. Japanese men and women were less likely to trust self and more likely to trust other, were more anxious in their attachment, and less likely to communicate negative feelings or emotions in their relationships. Culture-sensitive recommendations to complement EFT intervention strategies were made to account for these differences prior to EFT implementation in this population. In a second exploratory study, an outcome and process study employing culturally-sensitive EFT interventions was conducted using three Japanese couples. Using measures from the initial study and the MDAS (Nakagawa, Teti, & Lamb, 1992), couple partners were found to have increased their level of trust, experienced diminished attachment anxiety and avoidance, greater ease dealing with negative feelings and emotions in their relationship, and less marital distress. Consistent with the client change process in EFT, using the Experiencing scale (Klein, Mathieu-Coughland, & Kiesler, 1986), couple partners were found to deepen their experiential involvement in therapy from baseline to ‘best’ sessions.

Keywords: Emotionally Focused Therapy, Japanese couples, attachment, emotion

Emotionally Focused Therapy for Japanese couples: Development and empirical investigation of a culturally-sensitive EFT model

Applying Western-based psychotherapy to an Eastern context presents complex challenges for mental health practitioners. Various mental health settings, such as hospitals, community centers, and private clinics employ a variety of Western-based approaches, such as cognitive-behavioral and psychodynamic therapy; however, the efficacy of Western-based clinical models in the treatment of various psychological issues in the Japanese population is mostly unknown (Isomura-Motoki & Mimura, 2010). In terms of clinical work related to couple therapy, couple-based research and the development and empirical investigation of couple therapy models for use in a Japanese population is in its infancy. The present research is the first study to evaluate the effectiveness of a Western clinical couple model, Emotionally-Focused Therapy for Couples (EFT), within the Japanese population using either process or outcome research.

The EFT model has not been empirically investigated in a cross-cultural context previously. The cross-cultural applicability of this model requires further investigation prior to its implementation in the Japanese population. The importance of the cultural generalizability of Western-based models has been of concern within the field of clinical psychology. Research into Japanese couples suggests that there may be significant differences between Westerners and Japanese couples on the basis of various relevant factors (Kamo, 1994), which suggests that culture-sensitive recommendations to complement EFT may be beneficial. Empirical investigation of these differences is important as such research findings may inform possible culture-sensitive recommendations to complement traditional EFT interventions. Cross-culturally sensitive and relevant interventions are more likely to precipitate client change, particularly when

grounded in empirical evidence about differences in Japanese and Canadian individuals. The present article describes two empirical studies. The objective of Study 1 was to investigate cultural differences in relationship factors and consider culturally-sensitive recommendations to complement EFT intervention strategies for the Japanese population. The objective of Study 2 was to explore the efficacy of the culturally-sensitive EFT model and client process of change working with Japanese couples.

What is EFT?

EFT is an empirically-supported Western-based couple therapy model that employs attachment theory as a frame to understand couple distress. When distressed, couple partners are become stuck in rigid, negative interaction patterns (i.e., pursue-withdraw) that constrict their emotional responses and awareness of attachment needs. Rigid interaction patterns are fueled by secondary emotional responses, reactions to more primary, emotional responses. The typical negative interaction pattern demonstrated is the pursue-withdraw combination; however, other combinations, such as pursue-pursue and withdraw-withdraw, are still observed but with much less frequency. The partner who is pursuing is fuelled by anger at the lack of the other partner's availability. This anger protest moves them to address their primary attachment fears about the other's inaccessibility and unresponsiveness by increasing their efforts to solicit caregiver contact. The withdrawer is often overwhelmed and numb in his or her responses. His or her emotional avoidance protects the self from painful, rejecting engagement, and momentarily de-escalates attachment threats. These negative, rigid interaction patterns block safe emotional engagement and create greater emotional distance. Negative interaction cycles, such as pursue-withdraw, are reinforcing and perpetuate the sense that the other is unavailable and inaccessible

as a potential source of safety, comfort, and soothing, which thereby further increase isolation and create greater distress (Johnson, 2004).

Attachment theory provides a map for the landscape of adult romantic love (Bowlby, 1988). Attachment is viewed as a universal process in which human-beings innately seek out sensitive, accessible responsive attachment figures for contact and comfort during moments of distress. In EFT, attachment insecurity is viewed as the root of marital distress (Johnson, 2004). When attachment bonds are insecure, partners are unresponsive to the key signals of emotional distress associated with attachment needs and concern of the other. Enhancing partner accessibility and responsiveness to core signals of the primary, attachment-related emotions and needs that underlie secondary emotional responses is the cornerstone of secure attachment (Johnson, 2004). With EFT, emotional responses are expanded to access disowned attachment concerns and needs at the root of a partner's distress (Johnson, 2004). Partner accessibility and responsiveness to these expressions of emotion and needs are key moments of change and conjectured to foster greater security.

The process of change in EFT has been outlined in three stages and nine treatment steps (see Table A1). In Stage 1, the negative, rigid interaction cycle is de-escalated. Partners become increasingly aware of the habitual manner of engagement that has blocked access and expression of attachment-related emotions and needs. In Stage 2, key change events (i.e., withdrawer re-engagement and blamer softening) are enacted. New couple interactions are structured to create new bonding experiences. A previously withdrawn partner and a critical, blaming anger partner are increasingly more accessible and responsive to more vulnerable expressions of emotions and needs. In Stage 3, couple partners are supported to continue to engage on this basis and to solve practical problems together as a team.

The Applicability of EFT to Japanese Couples

Implementation of EFT in a Japanese population must consider various empirically substantiated cultural differences given their potential impact on the client change process and emotional processing. Consistent with attachment theory, the EFT model suggests that accessibility and responsiveness to a partner's self-expression of emotions and needs fosters more secure bonding in couples (Johnson, 2004). Accessing and expanding emotional responses and accessibility to these expressions are key clinical moments that precipitate client change. In Japan, these expressions are less likely as the pre-dominant collectivist culture diminishes these types of expressions.

EFT is also predicated on the view that couple distress is associated with attachment insecurity and that security is fostered through deepening the emotional connection between partners. Japanese couples may differ from their Western counterparts. There is a strong pressure to preserve social harmony in Japanese society (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). This societal pressure likely underlies many important differences between Japanese and Westerners, such as the greater preponderance of attachment anxiety in Japan compared with the West (Rothbaum, Pott, et al., 2000; Schmitt et al., 2004). In addition, the social harmony motive has had a strong influence on defining culturally appropriate emotional expression in Japan. Anger, for example, is not culturally acceptable, as it involves assertion of needs and is confrontational. In Japan, it is customary to respond to moments of anger in an intellectual manner, rather than with emotional expression, as a way to maintain social harmony with the other (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Anger is under-expressed as the others' reactions and needs are anticipated in the self's responses. The over-emphasis on the other's mind alters anger expressions on the outside, though they will still be experienced internally. Therapists must be sensitive to these differences.

Japanese partners may also be more likely to experience sadness and guilt instead of anger (Hayamizu, Kino, & Takagi, 2007) when the partner is deemed unavailable, as sadness does not pose a threat to social harmony.

Investigating the Efficacy of EFT in a Japanese Population

To develop and empirically investigate the use of EFT in the Japanese population, two studies were undertaken. The first study set out to evaluate key differences on relationship variables between Japanese men and women and Canadian men and women in committed romantic relationships. These findings were to be used as data to render possible culture-sensitive recommendations to complement traditional EFT. The second study was established to empirically examine the process of change and the efficacy of the culturally-sensitive EFT model with Japanese couples.

Study 1: Cross-Cultural Differences on Key Marital Variables in Couple Therapy

The first study was developed to examine any key differences between Japanese and Canadian partners on the relationship variables of trust, romantic attachment, communication/disclosure, and conflict resolution. Given the factors reviewed above, it was hypothesized that, compared with their Canadian counterparts, both Japanese men and women would: a) be less likely to trust self, as indicated by lower scores on the JIWMS “Trust Self” subscale; b) be more likely to trust other, as indicated by higher scores on the JIWMS “Trust Other” subscale; c) experience greater attachment anxiety, as indicated by higher scores on the ECR anxiety subscale; d) experience less attachment avoidance, as indicated by lower scores on the ECR avoidance subscale; e) be less likely to disclose emotions and needs, as indicated by lower scores on the ENRICH communication subscale; and f) more likely to avoid conflict, as

indicated by lower scores on the ENRICH conflict subscale. Gender differences will be evaluated in an exploratory manner.

Method

Participants

Participants in Japan were recruited from Fukuoka University, Kyushyu University and Hokkaido University. Participants in Canada were recruited from the University of Ottawa and Carleton University. Participants were recruited with advertisement flyers posted in common areas throughout university campuses, and with announcements in undergraduate psychology classes. Participants in this study were 200 individuals (50 each of native Japanese-speaking males and females who were born and residing in Japan, and 50 each of native English-speaking males and females who were born and residing in Canada) who had been in a heterosexual monogamous relationship for at least two years. The age ranges and relationship lengths of participants were as follows: Japanese men (M_{age} = 27.02 years, *SD* = 6.41, age range: 21—56 years; length of relationship: *M* = 4.38 years, *SD* = 3.65, range: 2—26 years), Japanese women (M_{age} = 29.8 years, *SD* = 8.74, age range: 20—55 years; length of relationship: *M* = 6.02 years, *SD* = 6.30, range: 2—35 years), Canadian men (M_{age} = 27.16 years, *SD* = 6.99, age range: 21—53 years; length of relationship: *M* = 3.74 years, *SD* = 2.37, range: 2—10 years) and Canadian women (M_{age} = 29.08 years, *SD* = 9.51, age range: 21—52 years; length of relationship: *M* = 3.86 years, *SD* = 3.15, range: 2—15 years). The participants were of various socio-economic backgrounds with an average income for Japanese males of 4,327,667 JPY (CDN$46,470), for Japanese women of 3,065,520 JPY (CDN$32,917), for Canadian males of CDN$40,773, and for Canadian females of CDN$26,870. The number of children as reported by Japanese males was an average of 0.42 (*SD* = .57, range: 0—2), for Japanese females of 0.76 (*SD* = .94, range: 0—3), for

Canadian males of 0.46 (*SD* = .54, range: 0—2) and Canadian females of 0.70 (*SD* = .86, range: 0—2).

Measures

Key relationship measures used for this study included: marital trust (Japanese Internal Working Model Scale [JIWMS]; Sakai, 2002), romantic attachment (Experiences in Close Relationships questionnaire [ECR]; Brennan, Clark & Shaver, 1998; Nakao & Kato, 2004), communication (disclosure) and conflict resolution (ENRICH; Olsen, Fournier, & Druckman, 1998). The measures were selected based on their relevance to the EFT model. All measures used for this study were available in both English and Japanese and had been previously studied for their psychometric soundness (i.e., reliability and validity) in both Japanese and Canadian samples. All Japanese and English versions of the questionnaire consisted of similar test items, except for the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998; Nakao & Kato, 2004). On the basis of previous validity research, the Japanese version of the ECR contained 10 fewer items than the English version (Nakao & Kato, 2004).

Marital trust: Japanese Internal Working Model Scale (JIWMS; Sakai, 2002). The JIWMS (Sakai, 2002) is an 8-item test used to measure marital trust. The measure was developed based on Griffin and Bartholomew's (1994) Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ). The JIWMS is comprised to two subscales: trust self and trust other. Trust self measures the extent that the individual views the self as worthy of love and support from his or her partner. Trust other measures the individual's view of the other as trustworthy, supportive and reliable. Items are rated on a 5-point likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5. Some items are reverse scored. Mean item ratings were used as subscale total scores. Higher scores indicate greater trust. With a Japanese

student sample the JIWMS showed Cronbach alphas coefficients of .73 for trust other and .79 for trust self , and a test-retest reliability coefficient of .79 (Sakai, 2001).

Attachment: Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR; Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; Nakao & Kato, 2004). The 26-item Japanese (Nakao & Kato, 2004) and 36-item English version of the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998), a measure of romantic attachment on the basis of two dimensions (i.e., avoidance and anxiety), was used in this study. Ten items from the English version were excluded from the Japanese version since they detracted from the scale's psychometric properties. That is, the proportion of overall variance explained in the anxiety and avoidance factors was higher when the 10 items were omitted. The author's also concluded these items did not assess common manifestations of anxiety and avoidance in Japanese culture.

The anxiety subscale measures an individual's rejection and abandonment fears, need for approval, and distress on the basis of attachment figure unavailability. The avoidant subscale captures dependency and intimacy fears, excessive self-reliance needs, and disclosure fears (Brennan et al., 1998).

Items in both measures are rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 7. Some items are reverse scored. Mean item ratings were used as total scores for the two subscales. Higher scores reflect greater avoidance and anxious attachment tendencies. Both the Japanese and English versions of the ECR have shown good test-retest reliability in previous studies — .82 (anxiety) and .81 (avoidance) for the Japanese scale (Nakao & Kato, 2004) and .86 (anxiety) and .87 (avoidance) for the English scale (Sibley & Liu, 2004). The Japanese version achieved an alpha coefficient of .88 for the anxiety and .91 for the avoidance subscale (Nakao & Kato, 2004), while the English version achieved an alpha coefficient of .95 for the anxiety and .94 for the avoidance subscale. The Japanese Version of ECR has been validated in relation to the Self-

Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) (i.e., correlation between self-esteem and anxiety, $r = -.40$ [$p<.01$]).

Communication and Conflict Resolution: ENRICH Marital Inventory (ENRICH; Olson, Fournier, & Druckman; 1989). The ENRICH Marital Inventory consists of 165 items and 20 subscales designed to assess couple relationship functioning. All items are rated on a 5-point likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5. Mean items ratings are used as total scores for each subscale. For the purpose of this study, two subscales were chosen: Communication and Conflict Resolution. The Communication subscale consists of ten items that capture the openness and frequency of communication in the relationship. Higher scores on the on this scale reflect more open and frequent communication. The Conflict Resolution consists of 10 items which capture the couple's partners' ability to discuss and resolve differences. Scores on the conflict resolution subscale may range from 5 to 50. Higher scores indicate that partners perceive greater ease in discussing and resolving differences. Both English and Japanese versions of the ENRICH Marital Inventory have demonstrated good psychometric properties. For the English version, Olson & Olson (1997) reported Cronbach alpha coefficients of .78 and .81 for the communication and conflict resolution subscales, respectively. In the same study Cronbach alpha coefficients of .71 and .70 were reported for the Japanese versions of the same subscales. Fowers and Olson (1989) reported a test-retest reliability coefficient of .9 for the both the communication and conflict resolution subscales. Test-retest reliability of the Japanese version of the ENRICH scale has yet to have been established.

Procedures

Japanese-speaking participants who were born and reside in Japan, and Canadian English-speaking participants who were born and reside in Canada, were recruited to complete

questionnaires on a secure online internet site. Participants were able to access the survey via the worldwide web.

Respondents were pre-screened prior to completing surveys on the basis of participant inclusion criteria (i.e., Japanese born, Japanese speaking, residing in Japan male or female, Canadian born, English speaking, residing in Canada male or female in a relationship for at least two years and over 20 years of age). Informed consent had to be reviewed and completed. Data was stored on an external drive to ensure privacy. The first 50 each of Japanese male and female and Canadian male and female respondents who submitted their completed surveys to the researcher were included in the study. A detection system was employed to minimize multiple responses from the same respondent. A cookie was installed on the participant's computer, with their knowledge, preventing him or her to get access more than once to the questionnaires once they were completed.

Results

All study variables were normally distributed and variances were homogenous. Internal consistency reliability estimates were calculated for each scale for both Canadian and Japanese respondents. All scales were found to have good internal consistency (>.80). For the JIWMS, Canadian and Japanese respondents achieved an internal coefficient alpha of .83 and .85 respectively on both the Trust Self and Trust Other subscale. ECR subscales were found to be reliable for Canadian (i.e., avoidant [.96] and anxiety [.93]), and Japanese (i.e., avoidant [.93] and anxious [.90]). Finally, the ENRICH subscales were also found to be reliable with an internal reliability coefficient of .84 and .82 for Canadian respondents on the Communication and Conflict Resolution subscales, respectively. Japanese participants achieved an internal reliability coefficient of .82 for the Communication and .89 for the Conflict Resolution subscales.

To evaluate hypotheses in terms of differences in key couple variables between Canadian and Japanese respondents, and to explore gender differences, 2X2 factorial ANOVAs were conducted. Table A2 provides an overview of the means, standard deviations, and ANOVA results.

For the JIWMS, hypotheses related to differences between Canadians and Japanese in terms of Trust Self and Trust Other were supported. Japanese relationship partners tend to have significantly less Trust Self, $F(3,196) = 119.33$, $p < .001$, and more Trust Other , $F(3,196) = 27.27$, $p < .001$, than Canadian partners. Gender differences were also evaluated. Female partners demonstrated greater Trust Other scores, $F(3,196) = 3.92$, $p = .049$ than male partners. An interaction between cultural groups and gender was significant, $F(3,196) = 4.67$, $p = .032$. Further comparisons were conducted using Tukey post hoc tests. Results showed that Canadian men were less likely to Trust Other than all other groups ($p = .032$).

Hypotheses related to the ECR were confirmed in terms of expected differences between Canadians and Japanese on the anxiety subscale. Japanese partners had higher levels of attachment anxiety, $F(3,196) = 42.21$, $p < .001$, than Canadian partners. No differences were found on the basis of gender. For the avoidant subscale, Canadian partners reported higher levels of attachment avoidance, $F(3, 196) = 17.60$, $p < .001$. Male partners demonstrated greater levels of attachment avoidance compared to female partners, $F(3,196) = 16.37$, $p < .001$.

Contrary to predictions, hypotheses about both the ENRICH Communication and Conflict Resolution subscales were not supported. Only gender differences were found to be significant with both Canadian and Japanese female partners reporting more positive feelings and attitudes about communication in the relationship than male partners, $F(3,196) = 4.16$, $p = .043$. No

significant differences were found for the Conflict Resolution subscale. Effect size and power coefficients for all group comparisons are provided in Table A3.

As this is a preliminary and exploratory study, item analysis of the Communication and Conflict Resolution subscales were conducted to determine whether any significant differences existed in response items that would be relevant to an understanding of cultural differences in couples. Exploration of subscale items suggest that Japanese partners differed in their responses to specific items about communication and conflict resolution. Specifically, Japanese seemed to report greater difficulty communicating negative emotions, as they scored significantly higher than Canadians on the item: “It is difficult for me to share negative feelings with my partner,” $F(1,198) = 10.653$, $p < .001$, and lower than Canadians on the item: “My partner sometimes makes comments that put me downm” $F(1,198) = 14.995$, $p < .001$. Japanese also scored significantly higher on items that seemed to capture conflict avoidance tendencies, which stated: “To end an argument, I tend to give in too quickly,” $F(1,198) = 4.647$, $p = .032$, “I go out of my way to avoid conflict with my partner,” $F(1,198) = 8.100$, $p = .005$, and “To avoid hurting my partner’s feelings during an argument I tend to say nothing,” $F(1,198) = 9.753$, $p = .002$.

Discussion

Study findings suggest that Japanese and Canadian samples differ with respect to key variables associated with couple relationships, including trust, romantic attachment, and communication of negative feelings with their partner. As predicted, the JIWMS findings suggest that Japanese partners tend to be less trusting that they are being supportive of their partners in relationships (i.e., negative view of self), but trust that their partners are supportive (i.e., positive model of other). A negative view of self and positive model of others is generally associated with attachment anxiety (Griffing & Bartholomew, 1994), and particularly in the Japanese population

(Rothbaum, Kakinuma, Nagaoka, & Azuma, 2007; Schmitt et al., 2004). Significant differences in attachment security were also found. ECR results further affirm previous attachment related research about the greater preponderance of attachment anxiety in Japanese populations. Japanese partners in this study reported higher levels of attachment anxiety, and thus generally experience greater fears about rejection and abandonment and greater preoccupation with the accessibility and availability of their relationship partners. Further, Japanese partners reported significantly less attachment avoidance. This is also consistent with previous cross-cultural attachment research (Schmitt et al., 2004). Differences in communication were only found in terms of gender and thus do not indicate differences as a result of nationality.

However, an item analysis suggests that nationality was significant in terms of difficulties in the communication of negative emotions, which is frowned upon culturally and seen as antithetical to social harmony (Parkinson, Fischer, & Manstead, 2005). Similarly, cultural differences in conflict resolution were also found on an item-by-item basis, such that Japanese scored significantly higher on items measuring conflict avoidance. These item-level differences provide information about Japanese relational patterns that is relevant to EFT processes.

Implications for Culturally-Sensitive EFT

Building trust and fostering secure bonds is the cornerstone of EFT (Johnson, 2004). On the basis of the literature reviewed and analyses of key relationship variables, culturally-sensitive recommendations can be rendered to complement the traditional EFT model and ensure its relevancy to Japanese couples. The EFT therapist must consider the likelihood of finding a more negative view of self, greater attachment anxiety, and greater difficulties processing negative emotional experiences. Although EFT already consists of interventions that would address these issues, it may be important to consider minor alterations on the basis of these findings.

The differences in emotional processing between Japanese and Canadian marital partners have implications for the EFT change process, particularly in terms identifying the marital partners' negative interaction cycle at the beginning of therapy. In Japanese couples the typical pursue-withdraw cycle may appear more like a withdraw-withdraw cycle, as Japanese are less likely to express negative emotion. For example, in therapy with a Japanese couple, an anxiously attached partner yearning for connection may appear withdrawn for the purpose of maintaining social harmony, while harboring deep attachment fears, hurts, and anger inside. Angry protest, therefore, can appear different given the Japanese cultural imperative to suppress such responses in the presence of the other. This effort to maintain harmony must be understood as an organizing principle in Japanese couple systems and at the root of the withdrawn stance. The EFT therapist must, therefore, be able to attune to how the anxiously attached partner may be suppressing emotional cues due to his or her oversensitivity to the other due to the imperative of social harmony. As a result of this cultural process, on the surface level, the couple appears as a withdraw-withdraw couple, but the underlying primary emotional responses and needs consistent with anxious or avoidant strategies persist.

Furthermore, secondary emotional expressions are varied, and more susceptible to cultural context and influence. These circumstances have an impact on the de-escalation phase in EFT. The de-escalation phase of EFT, must therefore, consider the social harmony imperative and how it affects secondary emotional responses. For example, an anxiously attached female's withdrawn response to her partner is motivated by social harmony, but her primary emotional responses of fear and sadness associated with partner unavailability persists.

A very important point to address is, given its normative status, whether the anxious-preoccupied attachment style is actually adaptive in Japanese culture. Indeed, the answer to this

question will surely influence the EFT practitioner's treatment goals while working with Japanese couples. Unfortunately there is limited literature informing this issue, so some speculation is called for.

At the societal level, it is quite possible that the anxious-preoccupied attachment style in Japan is most adaptive simply by virtue of being the norm. That is, relational patterns associated with the anxious-preoccupied style, such as attempting to meet the other's attachment needs before they are expressed, have become somewhat of a 'code of conduct' in Japan. Deviating from these patterns may ultimately lead to some degree social isolation. For example, asserting one's wants and needs, as a secure individual would, is often perceived as selfish or aggressive behaviour in Japan, and is typically met with rejection.

At the couple level, there is some research indicating positive outcomes associated with the anxious-preoccupied attachment style in the Japanese population. For instance, the anxious-preoccupied attachment style has been linked to greater perceived relationship quality (Marshall, 2012) and exclusivity (Kanemasa, 2006; Kanemasa & Daibo, 2003) among Japanese romantic couples. Thus, there is certainly good reason to suspect that the anxious-preoccupied attachment style is, at the very least, more adaptive in Japan compared with Western cultures.

Indeed, what is adaptive is defined by the surrounding environment. The EFT practitioner must keep this in mind when considering therapeutic goals. While it is not certain whether the anxious-preoccupied attachment style is the most adaptive in Japanese culture, it would certainly seem to be associated with at least some positive outcomes. In light of this, the EFT practitioner must be careful not to be influenced by Western ideals regarding attachment and adjustment. Some degree of anxious-preoccupied attachment is likely adaptive in Japanese culture. EFT practitioners might be well-advised to integrate this likelihood into their treatment goals. As a

result of these differences, during the de-escalation stage in EFT, it may be important to slowly unpack this withdrawn state to find the attachment anxiety and desire for recognition. The withdrawn state has also been constructed to protect the other from the shameful experience of having failed to read the self's experience and needs. It is important for the EFT therapist to reflect upon this process in the negative cycle without deeply engaging in internal emotional experience. As a result, the pursuer is withdrawn and is motivated to lessen the other's experience of shame and guilt for having not been able to read or empathize with the self. The EFT therapist subtly acknowledges the discomfort and the anxiously attached partner's effort to protect the other from shame and guilt. Research affirms that deepening emotional experience and accessing primary emotional experience will be difficult given the Japanese individuals tendency to be less expressive and to undervalue these expressions.

Finally, important change events, such as withdrawer re-engagement and blamer softening, may require greater sensitivity on the therapist's part, particularly during moments of direct need assertion. The Japanese individual's tendency to communicate indirectly may create challenges in terms of the EFT change process. Direct expression of needs can be construed as confrontational and disruptive to harmony, as well as deep sources of shame and guilt given that such expressions are frowned upon. The EFT therapist must also slowly process these primary attachment yearnings and expressions as outward expression is resisted given the self's orientation in a collectivist culture. EFT practitioners may benefit by providing individual sessions for Japanese partners to access and express emotion and need in the presence of the therapist first to gain comfort with these expressions. The EFT therapist must slow down the pace of enactments during these change events to diminish the likelihood of the Japanese client entering into a withdrawn stance. It may be necessary then to create greater safety in therapy by

adopting a slower pace to facilitate disclosure, soothe the anxiously attached client, and modify the withdrawal patterns. More in session reflections and validation may be necessary under these circumstances.

These findings, therefore, suggest that the EFT therapist must consider how to integrate emotionally-focused interventions in a manner that keeps the partners engaged in the process. Demonstrating sensitivity to the social harmony is imperative and the protection of the other from experiencing shame and guilt in interactions will enhance the therapist-client alliance and establish greater emotional safety in-session. Validation of the cultural reality in which negative emotional and need expression is difficult is important to normalize the discomfort of sharing emotional experience. Japanese partners may also benefit from psycho-education to support partners in their understanding of the importance of emotions in creating more connection and security. Psycho-education about emotion, attachment, and impact of a couple’s negative rigid, interaction cycles is important to support clients to understand that they are being asked to access and explore these feelings in order to create a more secure relationship.

Other recommendations also relate to Stage 1. For example, providing more time for partners to understand the role of the cycle in couple distress will allow partners to externalize their current emotional distress. Supporting partners to understand that negative emotions are not a direct expression to the others self, but the by-product of a negative interaction system will facilitate expression of negative feelings. The negative emotion is expressed at the system, but not the partner. For example, the client is urged to express their negative emotions about the cycle in-session. A partner’s protest will, however, continue to be less obvious.

Limitations and Future Directions

Due to the limited number of cross-culturally, psychometrically sound instruments, only few variables of key couple differences could be explored. As such, other factors related to couple intimacy, emotion expression, and sexuality could not be used for the purpose of this study. There is a clear need for more psychometrically validated measures for couple research with the Japanese population. This represents an opportunity for future research.

Internet research has various potential liabilities, including not being able to fully control whether individuals have completed multiple questionnaires. A detection system for multiple responses from any respondent was employed, but no effort to respond multiple times was identified. Also, given that all participants were in a romantic relationship, it is possible that a number of couples may have participated in the study together (unbeknownst to the researcher). If separate questionnaires were completed by partners belonging to the same couple, then the data would not be independent. However, since random sampling was used, it is assumed the number of couples in the sample is minimal.

Internet driven research can only generate data from individuals who have sufficient computer and internet interests and skills. This circumstance may diminish the external validity of these findings. Also, this study included only heterosexual couples and thus is not generalizable to same-sex couples.

Gender differences were evaluated in an exploratory manner. Differences between males and females emerged on a number of key relationship variables, such as trust of other, avoidant attachment tendencies, and communication. However, adhering strictly to the objectives of this research, these gender differences were not taken into account when developing the culturally-sensitive recommendations for EFT in Study 2. It is nonetheless important to understand how

these gender differences might influence the efficacy of EFT for men and women respectively as Japan is still a male dominant society. This presents yet another opportunity for future research.

Study 2: An Outcome and Process Study of a Culturally-Sensitive EFT Model

In a second study, a culturally-sensitive EFT model was developed on the basis of the minor alterations to the EFT therapist's clinical strategies with clients suggested above (i.e., psycho-education about emotion and attachment, a different understanding of the presentation of initial couple maladaptive system on the basis of social harmony as an organizing principle of the system, greater sensitivity to address shame-guilt responses for emotion or need expression, and the slower therapy pace required to allow access to client emotion) (See Table A4). These changes were informed by important differences between Japanese and Western populations identified in Study 1. These findings were consistent with previous literature comparing cultural differences between Japan and the West. Other relevant cultural differences identified in previous literature were incorporated into the culturally-sensitive EFT model as well. Namely, the non-normative status of psychotherapy in Japan, and the collectivist Japanese culture, and pressure to preserve social harmony in Japan were all taken into account.

Previous research has demonstrated EFT's efficacy across cultures (Berg, 2009; Greenman et al., 2009; Johnson, 2004; Parra-Cardona et al., 2009). Provided EFT is an attachment-based therapy, and attachment is a universal process (e.g., Bowlby, 1982; Hazen & Shaver, 1994; Jin, Jacobvitz, Hazen, & Jung, 2012), it is expected that EFT will effect positive change in the present sample of Japanese couples. Further, a number of EFT practitioners have followed various culturally-sensitive applications of EFT and have reported successful outcomes (Berg, 2009; Greenman et al., 2009; Parra-Cardona et al., 2009). This provides grounds for developing a culturally-sensitive application of EFT for Japanese couple. In addition, it is

significant to note that this is the first process and outcome study to quantitatively evaluate the efficacy of EFT in a non-Western sample.

It was hypothesized that male and female Japanese partners who received EFT treatment would report a) greater trust of self, as measured by the JIWMS Trust Self subscale (Sakai, 2002); b) greater trust of other, as measured by the JIWMS Trust Other subscale (Sakai, 2002); c) less attachment anxiety, as measured by the ECR anxiety subscale (Brennan et al., 1998; Nakao & Kato, 2004); d) less attachment avoidance, as measured by ECR avoidance subscale (Brennan et al., 1998; Nakao & Kato, 2004); e) greater openness and frequency of communication, as measured by the ENRICH Communication Subscale (Asai & Olson, 2004; Olson et al., 1989); increased conflict resolution behaviours, as measured by the ENRICH Conflict Resolution Subscale (Asai & Olson, 2004; Olson et al., 1989); f) and lower levels of marital distress, as measured by the Marital Dyadic Adjustment Scale (MDAS-Nakgawa, Teti, & Lamb, 1992). These variables were included on the basis of their central to the EFT change process. Previous research has demonstrated that EFT effects positive change on these key relationship variables (Johnson, 2004). Gender differences will be evaluated in an exploratory manner.

A process investigation was also conducted to measure critical shifts in client's manner of experiential involvement in therapy. In EFT, the process of change involves increasing emotional involvement in therapy as clients access more primary emotional experience and associated attachment needs. It was expected that in 'best sessions,' defined by clients and therapists, clients would demonstrate higher levels of experiencing (Level 4 or greater) on the Experiencing Scale (Klein et al., 1986). Higher levels of experiencing are associated with positive treatment outcomes in EFT research.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited using online classified advertising. Participants were three heterosexual and monogamous Japanese couples living in Canada for, at the most, 5 years (M_{years} = 2.75 years, *SD* = 1.48 years). It was decided Japanese couples living outside of Japan for more than 5 years may have been too affected by acculturation and were hence excluded from the present study. Therefore, three Japanese men (M_{age} = 34.97, *SD* = 9.65, age range: 23─51 years) and three Japanese Women (M_{age} = 32.69, *SD* = 8.95, age range: 23─47 years) were studied. The participants had been married for 5 to 20 years (*M* = 10.6, *SD* = 6.65). Familial annual income ranged from $46.000 to $90,000 (*M* = 68, *SD* = 22). Two couples had one child each.

Process Measures

The Experiencing Scale (ES) was used to measure the shift in client's experiential involvement in therapy from the first to 'best' session. The ES (Klien et al., 1986) is a 7-point rating scale used to assess in-session therapy talk turns to ascertain client in-session level of experiencing. As scores increase, clients go from an impersonal, superficial externally referenced construction of experience to a more self-referential manner to synthesizing new emerging feelings and meanings. At the lowest levels, clients engage in a detached manner. Levels 1 and 2 are marked by impersonal and superficial content. Level 3 marks the beginning of internal self-referencing when personal reactions related to an event are integrated into the client's discourse but remain unexplored. Level 4 involves greater internal experiential descriptions. Level 5 consists of propositions about the self (i.e., feelings and emotions). Levels 6 and 7 suggest in-depth exploration of inner experience to direct the self. Peak scores, the highest rating achieved on each transcript of a component, are used for this study. ES validity has been established

through correlations with, introspection and cognitive complexity, and found to predict client change (Orlinsky & Howard, 1986). Inter-rater reliability coefficients are reported as ranging from .76 to .91 (Klein et al., 1986).

Self-Report Measures

Outcome measures used to evaluate the efficacy of EFT included: Marital trust (JIWMS; Sakai, 2002), romantic attachment (ECR; Brennan et al., 1998; Nakao & Kato, 2004), communication (disclosure) and conflict resolution (ENRICH; Asai & Olson, 2004; Olson et al., 1998) (see study 1 methods section for psychometric properties). The Marital Dyadic Adjust Scale (Nakagawa et al., 1992) and the Post-Session Resolution Questionnaire (PSRQ; Orlinsky & Howard, 1975) were also administered.

Marital Dyadic Adjustment Scale (MDAS; Nakagawa, Teti, & Lamb, 1992). The Marital Dyadic Adjustment Scale is a measure of marital distress that has been adapted from Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and Locke and Wallace's (1959) Marital Harmony Scale (MHS) for use in the Japanese population (Hirayama & Kashiwagi, 2005). The scale includes items related to marital happiness and harmony, family finances, recreation, sexual relations, customs and values, religion, goals, decision-making, leisure time interests, and activities. For the purpose of this study, the overall MDAS score was used to capture couple partner's general level of marital distress. Both original scales are reported by their respected authors to differentiate between happily married couples and distressed ones (Hirayama & Kawagishi, 2005). A large community sample yielded a mean score of 111.85 (*SD* = 31.31). Scores may range of 45 to 162 (Kazui, 1997). Kazui (1997) reported a Cronbach alpha of .87 and a test-retest reliability coefficient of .79 for the overall scale.

Post-Session Resolution Questionnaire (PSRQ; Orlinsky & Howard, 1975). The PSRQ, a measure that captures the client's assessment of the in-session change experienced (Orlinsky & Howard, 1975), was employed to identify 'best sessions' for process research purposes. The measure has also been adapted for use by therapists for similar purposes. Utilizing three 5-point and one 7-point session evaluation, individual partners report on the level of resolution they felt in regards to specific issues raised in the session. Unfortunately, the internal consistency of the PSRQ have not yet been evaluated. The measure only has face validity and has been used in previous EFT outcome research (Greenberg & Foerster, 1996; Greenberg, Ford, Alden, & Johnson, 1993; Greenberg & Webster, 1982; Makinen & Johnson, 2006).

Procedures

Outcome Study

Couples who were recruited from posters and pamphlets in local Japanese and Asian community venues, were screened for study eligibility on the basis of the inclusion criteria (heterosexual Japanese couples over the age of 18 years, in Canada for less than 5 years, married more than 2 years, no history of sexual or substance abuse, no active suicidal or self-injurious thoughts or behaviours, no domestic violence, no current treatment for Axis I or Axis II disorders by other mental health professionals, mild to moderate range of distress on the MDAS-score of 71-103) by telephone. The first three couples to meet criteria were accepted and in an initial meeting, informed consent and demographic data were acquired, and study measures were completed (i.e., pre-treatment measures, including the JIWMS, ECR, ENRICH, and MDAS). The researcher, who is from Japan, provided 15 EFT therapy sessions to the three couples in Japanese. PSRQ measures were completed after each session, and at completion of sessions,

couples completed study measures once more (i.e., post-treatment measures, including the JIWMS, ECR, ENRICH, and MDAS).

Process Study: Transcripts and Ratings for Psychotherapy Process Research

All therapy sessions were audiotaped. The middle 20 minutes of the first session and best session, as identified by the PSRQ and therapist, were transcribed for the purpose of process rating. An independent translator translated the Japanese transcript into the English language to facilitate ratings by English-speaking raters. Talk turns were segmented according to unitizing rules set out in manuals for each measure. Transcribed segments were given to independent process measure raters in random order for rating. Two individuals with Ph.D. degrees in Clinical Psychology who were familiar with the use of the ES process measure (Klein et al., 1986) were solicited as raters. Raters achieved satisfactory reliability (i.e., intra-class correlation coefficient ≥ 0.80 for ES) prior to rating transcript segments.

Implementation Check

To ensure that EFT therapy was provided to participants, the researcher was provided with supervision by an EFT certified supervisor at the Centre for Excellence in Emotionally Focused Therapy. Various aspects of the Japanese sensitive model discussed earlier in this article were integrated. Implementation of the adapted EFT model for Japanese couples was verified through discussions in supervision because therapy was conducted in the Japanese language.

Results

To test hypotheses related to significant changes in couple-related measures, paired Fisher Student's *t*-test analyses were conducted on each dependent variable (i.e., trust for other and self, romantic attachment, couple communication, conflict resolution, and dyadic adjustment). Table A5 summarizes all paired *t*-tests conducted with each dependent variable.

As expected, from pre-test (M_{pre}= 12.5, SD_{pre}= 0) to post-test (M_{post}= 17, SD_{post}= .5), Japanese couples receiving EFT treatment were found to be more trusting of self, $t(2)$= 15.59, p = .004 and other (M_{pre}= 13.83, SD_{pre}= .76; M_{post}= 17.5, SD_{post}= .5), $t(2)$= 5.50, p = .032, as measured by the JIWMS (Sakai, 2002). These couples were also found to be less anxious (M_{pre}= 5.28, SD_{pre}= .21; M_{post}= 2.84, SD_{post}= .28), $t(2)$=19.91, p = 003; and avoidant (M_{pre}= 3.19, SD_{pre}= .26; M_{post}= 2.04, SD_{post}= .41), $t(2)$= 12.778, p = .006, as measured by the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998; Nakao & Kato, 2004).

Study couples also reported more positive attitudes about communication (M_{pre}= 30.67, SD_{pre}= .2.75; M_{post}= 36.67, SD_{post}= 2.02), $t(2)$= 2.71, p = .016, and less difficulties in conflict resolution (M_{pre}= 30.67, SD_{pre}= .3.21; M_{post}= 37.17, SD_{post}= .1.76), $t(2)$= 4.91, p = .039, on the ENRICH (Olson et al., 1989). Finally, couples indicated that they were experiencing lower levels of marital distress (M_{pre}= 89, SD_{pre}= 8.67; M_{post}= 120.17 SD_{post}= 3.55), $t(2)$= 5.47, p = .032, as measured by the MDAS (Nakagawa et al., 1992) from pre-test to post-test. Effect size and power coefficients for all group comparisons are provided in Table A6.

Test of clinical significance were also conducted using methods described in Jacobson and Truax (1991). The cut-off point for determining for clinical significance was estimated using the two standard deviation solution. This means any post-test scores that improved beyond two standard deviations from pre-test scores were considered clinically significant. Using this criterion, clinically significant changes were observed in all subjects on all dependent variables. Reliable Change (RC) scores were also calculated for each subject. These scores are presented in Table A7. All RC scores above 1.96 represent a reliable change in the subject (Jacobson & Truax, 1991). As illustrated in Table A7, reliable change was observed in all subjects on all dependent variables.

Subjects were also placed into clinical significance categories based on the methods outlined Jacobson and Truax (1991). The categories are as follows: deteriorated, unchanged, improved, or recovered. In the present sample, each subject was classified as recovered based on the following observed conditions: first, each subject's pre-test scores fell below the clinical significance cut-off point, and each subject's post-test score subsequently fell above the clinical significance cut-off point; and second, each subject's RC score was greater than 1.96.

As supplementary analysis, additional tests of statistical significance were conducted using Wilcoxon Signed-ranks tests. Results revealed significant differences on all dependent measures from pre to post treatment.

An intraclass correlation coefficient of 0.89 was achieved for the ES, which is well above minimal acceptable standards (e.g., Fleiss & Cohen, 1973). To test the hypotheses related to the deepening of experiencing in EFT from initial to best session, change in the level of experiencing was assessed using a Student's paired *t*-test for correlated data. Mean ratings on the ES for each couple and partner is set out in Table A8. As expected, all six couple partners were found to have deepened their level of experiencing from initial to best session. Here are three of the best examples that illustrate the deepening level of experiencing taken from each couple. In couple 1, in an initial session, an anxious female partner described her experience in the relationship as follows, "You are on top of Mount Fuji and I am at the bottom. You're talking to me from the top of the mountain." By the best session, she began to speak in an internal manner and accessed deeper feelings about her relationship. According to this client, "I've been feeling alone, sad. We were too apart. Now I feel we're walking on the same field again. I can see you and we're holding hands together. And I trust you won't let go. Trust me that I won't let you go." In couple 2, an avoidant male partner expressed himself in a superficial manner in an initial session when

he described his relationship, “We’re as normal as we can be. I don’t want to look at the negative things. It does not help us.” In a best session, he began to reflect on his experience in a more emotionally involved manner when he expressed, “I was scared to let you know my negative feelings inside. I am lonely. I was scared that you would reject me if I told you. I thought you would think I’m small and weak.” In couple 3, in the initial sessions the avoidant male would often dismiss his partner’s claims that he is never there when she needs him. In one instance, he responded “I think you should know by now that I am here for you, I do a lot of stuff for you.” By the best session, he was far more attuned and responsive to his partner’s emotional needs. This was evident when he stated, for example, “I want to be there for you. Sometime I may get scared to show my true feelings. But I want you to know that I will be there for you no matter what.”

Discussion

EFT couple therapy is predicated on increasing couples level of trust by creating greater emotional safety between partners with the end goal of fostering more secure bonds in couples. In this small, exploratory study applying EFT to Japanese couples, study findings suggest that relationship partners were able to become more trusting of self and other as measured on the JIWMS. These findings are consistent with recent EFT studies that reported increased levels of trust in couples (Makinen & Johnson, 2006). In terms of fostering greater attachment security through EFT implementation, the couples in this study moved toward less attachment anxiety and avoidance as measured by the ECR. Both male and female partners’ levels of anxiety and avoidance were diminished, although they remained anxious or preoccupied in their attachment overall. Perhaps, a shift from attachment anxiety to security may be more difficult to achieve given how an anxious strategy is engrained and maintained in a Japanese cultural context. Similar

to previous EFT research studies (Lebow, Chambers, Christensen, & Johnson, in press; Makinen & Johnson, 2006), study couples experienced a reduction in their overall level of marital distress as measured by the MDAS. Finally, improvements in communication in terms of self-disclosures, assertion, and the ability to engage in conflict were also found.

Process research findings also affirm the significance of working with emotional processes with Japanese couples. Consistent with previous findings that suggest a deepening of experiencing as an effective ingredient in the EFT change process (Makinen & Johnson, 2006; Zuccarini, Johnson, Dalgleish, & Makinen, 2012), couple partners in this study were found to deepen their experiential involvement in therapy from baseline to ‘best’ sessions. Interestingly, the older couple seemed to have responded better to EFT than their younger counterparts. However, this finding is likely inherent to this study and not generalizable, as Johnson and Talitman (1997) have found that age does not impact the efficacy of EFT treatment. Findings from this study suggest that improved communication and conflict resolution capacities, which include the ability to assert, self-disclose, and deal with negative feelings, were improved as a result of EFT implementation. As a result of culturally sensitive EFT interventions, couple partners were more expressive and more willing to risk exploration and engagement with difficult feelings. This is contrary to the typical style of engagement in Japanese partners as indicated in study 1 in regards to dealing with negative emotions, and other literature that suggests that negative emotional disclosures are not culturally acceptable (Huang, Tang, Helmeste, Shioiri, & Someya, 2001). Nevertheless, in the context of EFT, they were possible and useful.

This study is significant in that research findings suggest that a Western-based therapy may be successfully applied to individuals from other cultural contexts. Particularly, an attachment-based emotion focused model was successfully adapted to the Japanese context and

applied to Japanese couples. Few clinical investigations of the cross-cultural applicability of Western clinical models for particular treatments and populations have been conducted. This is the first empirical study to evaluate the cross-cultural validity of EFT. This study also addresses the lack of clinical research into psychological treatments in Japan, specifically for couples, in which no research has been conducted to date. The current study opens the door for further and larger clinical studies that employ EFT therapy as a psychological treatment for couples in Japan. In future EFT manual revisions, it would be fruitful to include the recommendations contained in this dissertation as suggestions for treatment modifications for Japanese couples.

On a broader theoretical level, the study confirms the view that attachment is a universal process and that emotional accessibility and responsiveness is the cornerstone of creating more secure bonding in couples (Jin et al., 2012; Rothbaum, Morelli, & Rusk, 2011; van Ijzendoorn & Sagi, 1999; van Ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz, 2008). The studies of caregiver-infant attachment from different regions of the world suggest that regardless of social experience, all human beings search and yearn to connect with an attachment figure (Bowlby, 1982; Hazen & Shaver, 1994; Hazan & Zeifman, 1994; Shaver, Mikulincer, Alonso-Arbiol, & Lavy, 2010). This study also confirms that EFT implementation addresses a specific process underlying attachment in different cultures. These bonds, regardless of social and cultural identity, are emotional in nature, and thus, intervention into the manner of couple emotional processing is the primary route in which attachment security is achieved (Johnson, 2004). The outcome and process research study findings confirm that EFT may have universal applicability in transforming how couples create emotional connections in a non-Western context. Also worth noting is the lasting effects that EFT will be expected to have on the couples. Studies by Cloutier, Manion, Walker, & Johnson (2002)

and Halchuk, Makinen, & Johnson (2010) indicate that EFT's therapeutic effects are maintained for many years after treatment.

This study, however, also suggests that a cross-cultural lens must be considered in the application of a Western-based couple therapy in Japan. Even though attachment is universal, emotional expressions are subject to influence by socio-cultural contexts. Cultural context colors emotional expressions in a manner that may necessitate some culture-sensitive recommendations to complement EFT. This article suggests key culture-sensitive recommendations for providing EFT to Japanese couples. These recommendations may have some impact on how the EFT manual will be revised, and how training in EFT will be conducted in Japan in the future.

Limitations and Future Directions

The second study is primarily limited by its small sample size and its lack of control. With a limited sample size, one must be cautious about the generalizability of the study results. Moreover, the small sample size precluded the use of a control group, so the efficacy of traditional EFT could not be compared with the efficacy of the culturally sensitive EFT. Further research studies involving a greater number of couples and a control group would be required to make any definitive statement about whether traditional EFT works in a Japanese population, and whether culture-sensitive recommendations are called for. Additionally, average SES was relatively high in present sample. As such, the current findings may not be applicable to Japanese couples of lower SES.

Another issue with the sample was that couple partners in this study had on average 33 months of direct exposure to Western culture, and although inclusion criteria were invoked to deal with acculturation, the impact of acculturation on the present sample could neither be measured nor controlled. Follow up studies to more thoroughly evaluate the research questions

posed in the present study should ideally be conducted using a Japanese sample residing in Japan. If this is not possible, the effects of acculturation should be assessed, integrated into the treatment goals, and accounted for when judging the study's external validity.

The present study measured the participants' degree of emotional experience during therapy sessions with the experiencing scale, a measure that has not been validated for use with the Japanese population. While emotions themselves are universal, their expression is culturally dependant. It is noted here that Japanese are less likely to explicitly express their emotions, and thus, may receive scores on the ES that underestimate their true emotional experience.

Last, many tests of statistical significance were conducted, but the alpha level was not adjusted to account for a "family-wise error rate." The decision to forgo the practice of alpha adjustment is supported by arguments presented in Gelman, Hill, & Yajima (2012).

General Discussion

Backed up by 20 years of empirical research, EFT is recognized as one of the most effective approaches to couple therapy (Bradley, 2012; Johnson, et al., 1999; Johnson, 2004). EFT is grounded in attachment theory. According to EFT, attachment insecurity is the most important factor in marital distress (Johnson, 1996). The approach, then, is to facilitate the couples' relationship-specific attachment security by identifying and changing negative interaction cycles.

Theory and research indicate that attachment needs are universal (Bowlby, 1988; Schmitt et al., 2004). Thus, the principles of EFT should also apply cross-culturally. Indeed, one of the benefits of EFT is its capacity to accommodate cultural information into its theory of couple distress without deviating from its fundamental framework (Greenman et al., 2009). However, research supporting the efficacy of EFT across cultures to date has been limited to a handful of

qualitative case studies (i.e., Berg, 2009; Greenman et al., 2009; Parra-Cardona et al., 2009). Importantly, though, these studies indicate that the applicability of EFT to different cultures can be improved with greater awareness of culturally-sensitive relationship patterns.

The overall purpose of this research was to develop and validate a culturally-sensitive EFT model for use with the Japanese population. In Study 1, key differences were identified between Japanese and Canadian couples, which informed culture-sensitive recommendations to complement EFT. In Study 2, three Japanese couples received EFT treatment using the culturally-sensitive EFT model, and the efficacy of the model was evaluated with both outcome and process measures.

Compared with Canadians, Japanese showed higher levels of partner trust and anxious attachment, and lower levels of self trust and avoidant attachment. Further, while no differences were found in terms of overall quality of communication, results of an item analysis showed Japanese tend to have less negative communication and greater conflict avoidance. Overall, these differences can likely be attributed to the collectivist pressure in Japan to preserve social harmony. Given these results, one should expect that Japanese in romantic relationships will appear dependent, and will experience more fear of rejection and abandonment as well as more preoccupation with the availability and responsiveness of their relationship partners. Despite this, the results suggest Japanese may be more reluctant to directly express their needs to their relationship partners, as being forthright about one’s wants and needs is typically frowned upon in Japanese culture. The typical Japanese couple, then, is quite different from their Western counterpart.

Based on these differences, a number of culture-sensitive recommendations to complement EFT were deemed appropriate to ensure its relevancy with Japanese couples. Both step specific and general recommendations can be found in Table A4.

EFT was provided to three Japanese couples with the abovementioned recommendations incorporated. The key relationship variables were assessed in all three couples before and after treatment. In addition, one process measure (i.e., the Experiencing Scale) was administered to measure the change in client's experiential engagement in therapy from the initial to 'best' session. Consistent with the hypotheses, results showed that from pre to post treatment, participants were more trusting of self and other, shifted toward greater romantic attachment security ─ as indicated by lower anxiety and avoidance, endorsed more positive feelings about communication and conflict resolution, and experienced less overall marital distress. Finally, all participants were found to have enhanced their level of experiencing from first to best session. Therefore, positive change was observed on each measure administered.

Overall, the results suggest that it is advisable for the EFT practitioner to view marital distress through a cross-cultural lens when working with Japanese couples. While the source of martial distress (i.e., attachment injury) may very well be universal, the expression of attachment needs is very much influenced by culture. Thus, it is essential the EFT practitioner is sensitive to these cultural differences, in order to facilitate the important process by which partners' access, acknowledge, and express their attachment needs.

This study is important in that the results indicate EFT, a Western-based couple therapy, is effective with Japanese couples, particularly when culturally-sensitive information is taken into account. This research represents a step forward toward addressing the paucity of clinical research on effective psychological treatments in Japan. Likewise, this research also represents

one out of only a handful of clinical studies examining the cross-cultural validity of a Western-based psychological therapy, and the first to examine the cross-cultural validity of EFT.

General Conclusion

Attachment and couple researchers have suggested that the yearning for a meaningful connection with others is from the cradle to the grave (Ainsworth, Bell, & Stayton, 1974; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978), and also extends beyond the boundaries of culture and race. This study suggests that an attachment-based couple therapy, Emotionally-Focused Couple Therapy, when applied to relationships involving Japanese partners, can bring about significant positive changes to their relationships. This study opens the door to the development of an international psychotherapy initiative in expanding a successful Western-based couple therapy into the Eastern world. It affirms that the basis of loving bonds is a secure emotional connection involving emotional accessibility and responsiveness. Although these expressions are colored by cultural context, enhancing emotional communication and restoring emotional safety is paramount to mitigating distress in couples worldwide.

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Appendix A

Tables

Table A1

EFT Stages and Steps

Stage		Step	Description
1	De-escalation	1	Create an alliance and assess the relationship
		2	Identify the negative interaction cycle
		3	Access unacknowledged feelings and attachment needs
		4	Reframe problem in terms of underlying emotions and needs
2	Re-structuring	5	Promote identification with disowned needs and aspects of self
		6	Promote acceptance of partner's experience
		7	Facilitate the expression of unmet needs and wants
3	Consolidation	8	Facilitate the emergence of new solutions
		9	Consolidate new positions

Note. Adapted from "*The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating connection*" by S.M. Johnson, 2004, New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge. Copyright 2004 by Taylor and Francis Books, Inc. Adapted with permission.

Table A2

Comparison of Japanese Versus Canadians on Trust, Attachment, Conflict, and Communication

	M (SD)						
	Total		Japanese		Canadian		*F*
JIWMS Trust Other							
Gender							3.923*
Male	15.79	(2.94)	17.02	(1.97)	14.56	(3.23)	
Female	16.45	(2.04)	16.96	(1.85)	15.94	(2.10)	
Total	16.12	(2.54)	16.99	(1.90)	15.25	(2.80)	
Country							27.270***
Country x Gender							4.669*
JIWMS Trust Self							
Gender							2.435
Male	16.22	(2.10)	15.14	(1.70)	17.30	(1.91)	
Female	16.58	(2.03)	15.14	(1.20)	18.02	(1.63)	
Total	16.40	(2.07)	15.14	(1.46)	17.66	(1.80)	
Country							119.332***
Country x Gender							2.435
ECR Anxious							
Gender							1.677
Male	3.41	(1.21)	4.03	(1.04)	2.79	(1.04)	
Female	3.61	(1.33)	4.06	(1.48)	3.18	(1.01)	
Total	3.51	(1.28)	4.05	(1.27)	2.98	(1.04)	
Country							42.211***
Country x Gender							1.193
ECR Avoidant							
Gender							16.373***
Male	3.55	(1.24)	3.09	(1.00)	4.01	(1.31)	
Female	2.88	(1.20)	2.64	(0.87)	3.12	(1.43)	
Total	3.22	(1.26)	2.87	(0.96)	3.56	(1.43)	
Country							17.597***
Country x Gender							1.785

(continued)

	M (SD)			
	Total	Japanese	Canadian	*F*
ENRICH Communication				
Gender				4.161*
Male	34.97 (4.80)	35.72 (3.25)	34.22 (5.91)	
Female	36.29 (4.36)	35.98 (3.39)	36.60 (5.17)	
Total	35.63 (4.62)	35.85 (3.30)	35.41 (5.66)	
Country				0.462
Country x Gender				2.683
ENRICH Conflict Resolution				
Gender				0.080
Male	35.25 (4.33)	35.56 (5.05)	34.94 (3.49)	
Female	35.42 (4.20)	35.94 (3.64)	34.90 (4.67)	
Total	35.34 (4.25)	35.75 (4.38)	34.92 (4.10)	
Country				1.895
Country x Gender				0.121

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table A3

Effect Size and Power Coefficient for the Japanese Internal Working Model Scale, the Experiences in Close Relationships, and ENRICH Measures for Study 1

Measure	M_{diff}	S_p	d	power
JIWMS Trust Other				
Males	2.46	2.6	.94	0.99
Females	1.02	1.975	.51	0.95
Total	1.74	2.35	.74	0.99
JIWMS Trust Self				
Males	2.16	1.805	1.2	0.99
Females	2.88	1.415	2	0.99
Total	2.52	1.63	1.54	0.99
ECR Anxious				
Males	1.24	1.04	1.19	0.99
Females	.88	1.245	.71	0.99
Total	1.07	1.155	.93	0.99
ECR Avoidant				
Males	.92	1.155	.80	0.99
Females	.48	1.15	.42	0.84
Total	.69	1.195	.58	0.99
ENRICH Communication				
Males	1.5	4.58	.33	0.63
Females	.62	4.28	.15	0.17
Total	.44	4.48	.10	0.17
ENRICH Conflict Resolution				
Males	.62	4.27	.15	0.17
Females	1.04	4.155	.25	0.4
Couples	.83	4.24	.20	0.52

Table A4

Culturally-sensitive EFT Stages and Steps for Japanese Couples

Stage		Step	Description	Recommendation (step specific)	General recommendations
1	De-escalation	1	Create an alliance and assess the relationship		Go slow throughout/slice it thinner Reframing should be gradual.
		2	Identify the negative interaction cycle	2. Pursuers may look like withdrawers	Make frequent references to the negative interaction cycle. Use couple interaction map (See Figure B1)
		3	Access unacknowledged feelings and attachment needs	3, 4, 5 & 7. Expect resistance-psychoeducation to normalize needs/validate experience/emphasis on group benefits rather than personal.	Look for non-verbal, covert cues of self-expression
		4	Reframe problem in terms of underlying emotions and needs		
2	Re-structuring	5	Promote identification with disowned needs and aspects of self		
		6	Promote acceptance of partner's experience		
		7	Facilitate the expression of unmet needs and wants		
3	Consolidation	8	Facilitate the emergence of new solutions		
		9	Consolidate new positions		

Note. The data in columns 1 and 2 are from "*The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating connection*" by S.M. Johnson, 2004, New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge. Copyright 2004 by Taylor and Francis Books, Inc. Adapted with permission.

Table A5

Mean Pre-Post Test Differences in Dyadic Adjustment, Communication, Conflict Resolution, Trust, and Attachment

	Pre-treatment		Post-treatment			
Measure	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
JIWMS Trust Other						
Male	14.00	1.00	17.67	.58	5.50	.032*
Female	13.67	.58	17.33	.58	5.50	.032*
Couple	13.83	.76	17.50	.50	5.50	.032*
JIWMS Trust Self						
Male	12.67	.58	16.67	.58	6.93	.020*
Female	12.33	.57	17.33	.57	10.61	.001**
Couple	12.50	.00	17	.5	16	.004**
ECR Anxious						
Male	5.03	.23	2.19	.72	9.94	.010*
Female	5.52	.17	3.49	.64	4.61	.044*
Couple	5.28	.21	2.84	.28	19.91	.003**
ECR Avoidant						
Male	3.65	.39	2.53	.61	5.85	.028*
Female	2.72	.32	1.53	.21	9.53	.011*
Couple	3.19	.26	2.04	.41	12.78	.006**
ENRICH Communication						
Male	30.33	3.06	36.67	3.51	4.36	.049*
Female	31.00	2.65	36.67	0.58	4.72	.042*
Couple	30.67	2.75	36.67	2.02	7.856	.016*
ENRICH Conflict Resolution						
Male	31.00	4.36	37.33	3.05	5.27	.034*
Female	30.33	2.08	37.00	1.00	4.59	.044*
Couple	30.67	3.21	37.17	1.76	4.91	.039*
MDAS						
Male	87.00	8.00	118.33	3.51	5.42	.032*
Female	91.00	9.64	122.00	3.61	5.37	.033*
Couple	89.00	8.67	120.17	3.55	5.47	.032*

Note: For all tests, n = 3. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table A6

Effect Size and Power Coefficient for the Japanese Internal Working Model Scale, the Experiences in Close Relationships, ENRICH, the Marital Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Experiencing Scale Measures for Study 2

Measure	M_{diff}	S_p	d	power
JIWMS Trust Other				
Males	3.67	1.15	3.19	.99
Females	3.67	1.15	3.19	.99
Couples	3.67	1.15	3.19	.99
JIWMS Trust Self				
Males	4	1	4	.99
Females	5	undefined	undefined	undefined
Couples	4.5	.5	9	.99
ECR Anxious				
Males	2.84	.50	5.68	.99
Females	2.03	.76	2.67	.99
Couples	2.44	.22	11.1	.99
ECR Avoidant				
Males	1.11	.33	3.36	.99
Females	1.19	.22	5.41	.99
Couples	1.15	.16	7.19	.99
ENRICH Communication				
Males	6.33	2.52	2.51	.99
Females	5.67	2.08	2.73	.99
Couples	6	1.32	4.55	.99
ENRICH Conflict Resolution				
Males	6.33	2.08	3.04	.99
Females	6.67	2.52	2.65	.99
Couples	6.5	2.29	2.84	.99
MDAS				
Males	31.33	10.02	3.13	.99
Females	31	10	3.1	.99
Couples	31.17	9.88	3.15	.99
ES				
Males	2	.5	4	.99
Females	2.67	.29	9.2	.99
Couples	2.33	.29	8.03	.99

Table A7

Individual Couple Scores and Change Status on the Japanese Internal Working Model Scale, Experiences in Close Relationships scale, ENRICH, and Marital Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Subject	Pretest	Posttest	Reliable Change Score	Improved but not recovered	Recovered
JIWMS Trust Other					
Male					
1	15.00	18.00	5.48	N	Y
2	14.00	17.00	5.48	N	Y
3	13.00	18.00	9.13	N	Y
Mean	14.00	17.33		N	Y
Female					
1	14.00	17.00	9.44	N	Y
2	14.00	17.00	9.44	N	Y
3	13.00	18.00	15.74	N	Y
Mean	13.67	17.33		N	Y
Couples	13.84	17.33			
JIWMS Trust Self					
Male					
1	12.00	17.00	15.74	N	Y
2	13.00	16.00	9.44	N	Y
3	13.00	17.00	12.59	N	Y
Mean	12.67	16.67		N	Y
Female					
1	13.00	18.00	15.74	N	Y
2	12.00	17.00	15.74	N	Y
3	12.00	17.00	15.74	N	Y
Mean	12.33	17.33		N	Y
Couples	12.50	17.00		N	Y
ECR Anxious					
Male					
1	5.22	2.87	7.78	N	Y
2	4.77	1.43	11.06	N	Y
3	5.11	2.28	9.37	N	Y
Mean	5.03	2.19		N	Y
Female					
1	5.67	2.76	22.1	N	Y
2	5.33	3.73	12.15	N	Y
3	5.56	3.98	11.1	N	Y
Mean	5.52	3.49		N	Y
Couples	5.29	2.84		N	Y

(Continued)

Subject	Pretest	Posttest	Reliable Change Score	Improved but not recovered	Recovered
ECR Avoidant					
Male					
1	3.59	2.12	4.87	N	Y
2	3.29	2.24	3.48	N	Y
3	4.06	3.24	2.71	N	Y
Mean	3.65	2.53		N	Y
Female					
1	2.35	1.34	2.07	N	Y
2	2.94	1.51	5.77	N	Y
3	2.88	1.75	3.74	N	Y
Mean	2.72	1.53		N	Y
Couple	3.19	2.03		N	Y
ENRICH Communication					
Male					
1	27.00	33.00	4.38	N	Y
2	33.00	37.00	2.92	N	Y
3	31.00	40.00	6.58	N	Y
Mean	30.33	36.67		N	Y
Female					
1	28.00	36.00	6.75	N	Y
2	32.00	37.00	4.47	N	Y
3	33.00	37.00	3.38	N	Y
Mean	31.00	36.67		N	Y
Couple	30.67	36.67		N	Y
ENRICH Conflict Resolution					
Male					
1	26.00	34.00	4.1	N	Y
2	33.00	40.00	3.59	N	Y
3	34.00	38.00	2.05	N	Y
Mean	31.00	37.33		N	Y
Female					
1	28.00	37.00	9.68	N	Y
2	31.00	38.00	7.53	N	Y
3	32.00	36.00	4.3	N	Y
Mean	30.33	37.00		N	Y
Couple	30.67	37.17		N	Y

(Continued)

Subject	Pretest	Posttest	Reliable Change Score	Improved but not recovered	Recovered
MDAS					
Male					
1	95.00	115.00	4.9	N	Y
2	87.00	122.00	8.58	N	Y
3	79.00	118.00	9.56	N	Y
Mean	87.00	118.33		N	Y
Female					
1	98.00	119.00	4.27	N	Y
2	95.00	126.00	6.31	N	Y
3	80.00	121.00	8.34	N	Y
Mean	91.00	122.00		N	Y
Couple	89.00	120.17		N	Y

Note. Y = yes; N = No

Table A8

Differences in Experiencing From Initial to 'Best' Session

	Initial Session		"Best" Session			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Male	2.33	.29	4.33	.58	6.93	.020*
Female	2.50	.50	5.17	.17	16.00	.004**
Couple	2.42	.38	4.75	.43	14.00	.005**

Note. *$p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Appendix B

Figures

Figure B1: Couple Interaction Map

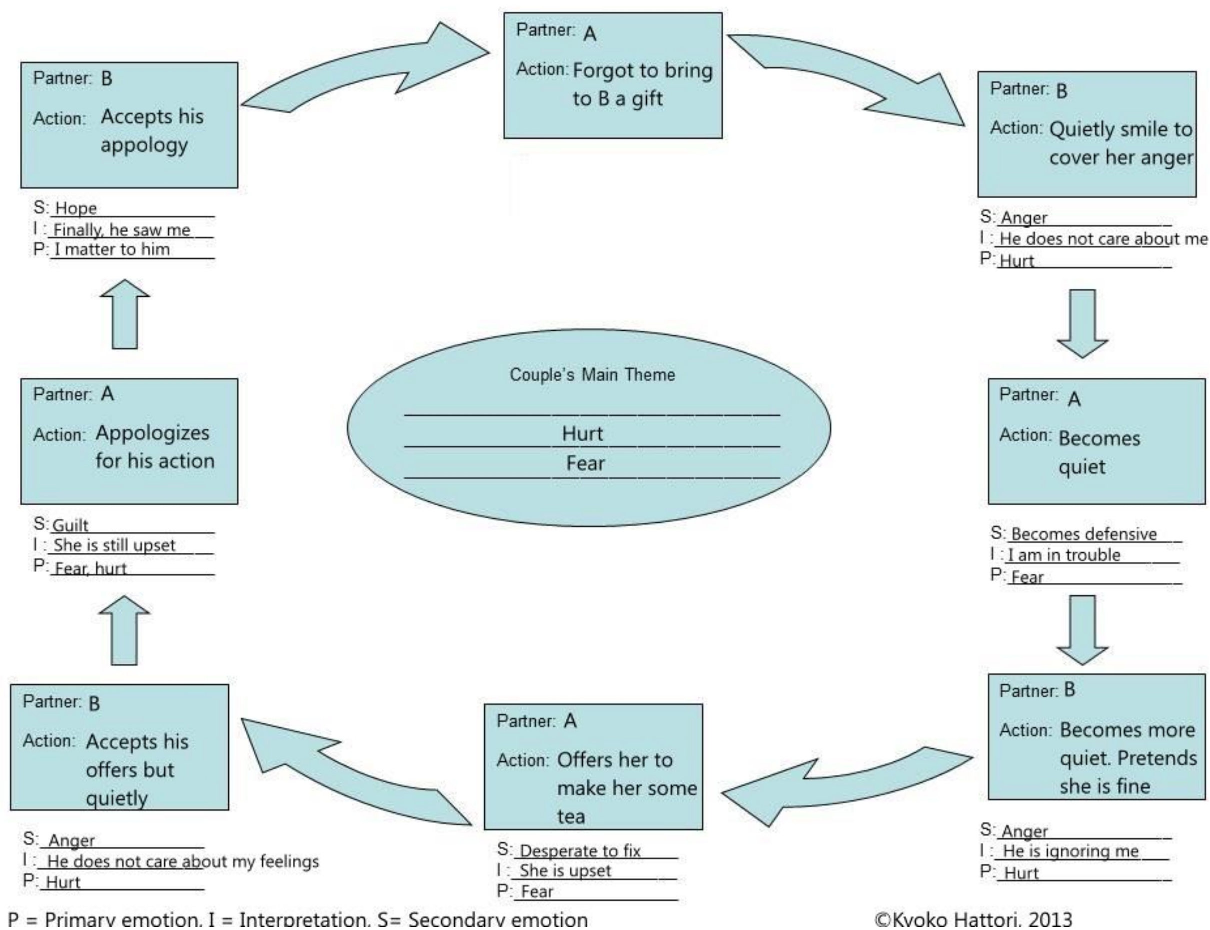

Figure B1: Couple Interaction Map handout used in study 2 to delineate the negative interactional cycle. P = Primary emotion; I = Interpretation; S = Secondary emotion. Copyright 2013 by Kyoko Hattori.