

AGENDA

The Heart of Couple Therapy: Clinical Strategies for Enabling Couples to Change **Ellen F. Wachtel, J.D., Ph.D.**

- 9:00-9:10 Welcome and Introduction
- 9:10- 10:30 **Choice Points:** Developing a heightened awareness of the moment to moment choices that can make each session productive
The First Session
- How to define the problem, reduce anxiety and instill hope
 - Troubleshooting difficulties therapists encounter in the first session
- 10:30-10:40 Morning Break
- 10:40-12:10 **Principles, Methods and Goals**
- What is a good relationship?
 - Fostering self-reflection instead of blame
 - Increasing motivation to change
 - Building on strengths
 - Using the “language of becoming”
- 12:10-12:50 Lunch
- 12:50-2:20 **Common Underlying Issues and How to Address Them**
- Obtaining a deeper understanding of each individual in therapy
 - Defining and identifying “legacy issues”
 - The genogram as a window into the psyche
 - Designing interventions that incorporate each person’s individual sensitivities, unarticulated longings, and individual differences
- 2:20-2:30 Afternoon Break
- 2:30-4:00 **Troubleshooting Common Challenges**
- Sessions lose focus and go from one topic to another
 - Difficulty stopping intense arguing in the session
 - Difficulty making progress when dealing with affairs
 - When the therapist is having trouble staying neutral
 - When sessions are getting repetitive and the therapist is feeling stuck