

Gottman Method - Marital Assessment and Therapy Strategies Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. What does the 11-18% figure represent in Gottman's research findings?**
 - A. The portion of treated couples who experience any improvement.**
 - B. The proportion of treated couples who maintain clinically significant gains.**
 - C. The share of couples who divorce after treatment.**
 - D. The percentage of couples who respond to anger management alone.**

- 2. What is the first step in Gottman's individual sessions for marital assessment?**
 - A. Determine financial status**
 - B. Identify personality disorders**
 - C. Assess compatibility with in-laws**
 - D. Assess commitment to marriage**

- 3. Which of the following is one of the seven questions of investigation?**
 - A. The frequency of arguments**
 - B. Job satisfaction**
 - C. The nature of sentiment override**
 - D. Sleep quality**

- 4. What is the purpose of creating shared symbolic meaning in a marriage?**
 - A. It helps in meshing individual life dreams and narratives, preventing marital gridlock.**
 - B. It is primarily about agreeing on household chores.**
 - C. It has no effect on how couples handle differences.**
 - D. It is only relevant for long-distance marriages.**

- 5. What does the 11-18% figure represent?**
- A. The portion of treated couples who experience any improvement.**
 - B. The proportion of treated couples who maintain clinically significant gains.**
 - C. The share of couples who divorce after treatment.**
 - D. The percentage of couples who respond to anger management alone.**
- 6. What are Love Maps in Gottman's research?**
- A. Love Maps refer to the knowledge partners have about each other's inner worlds, which is vital for relationship success.**
 - B. Love Maps are maps of couples' geographic travel routes.**
 - C. Love Maps describe the routines used during conflicts.**
 - D. Love Maps focus on financial planning for shared goals.**
- 7. Which best describes how rituals for initiating or declining sex affect a couple's relationship?**
- A. They create confusion.**
 - B. They build clarity and comfort around sexual intimacy.**
 - C. They eliminate the need for consent.**
 - D. They replace direct communication about desires.**
- 8. What does a softened startup do in conflict resolution?**
- A. Initiates conflict aggressively**
 - B. Escalates defensiveness**
 - C. Diminishes the value of repairing attempts**
 - D. Helps de-escalate conflicts and promotes healthier discussions**
- 9. What is the goal of diminishing negative affect during conflict?**
- A. To manage complaints, deal with perpetual problems, and repair fights**
 - B. To eliminate all conflicts**
 - C. To suppress emotions**
 - D. To escalate conflicts**

- 10. Which statement best captures the effect of rituals around initiating or refusing sex?**
- A. They increase nagging.**
 - B. They replace communication.**
 - C. They create clarity and comfort around sexual intimacy.**
 - D. They encourage avoidance of talk.**

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Answers

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1. B
2. D
3. C
4. A
5. B
6. A
7. B
8. D
9. A
10. C

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Explanations

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1. What does the 11-18% figure represent in Gottman's research findings?
 - A. The portion of treated couples who experience any improvement.
 - B. The proportion of treated couples who maintain clinically significant gains.**
 - C. The share of couples who divorce after treatment.
 - D. The percentage of couples who respond to anger management alone.

This figure focuses on how durable the treatment effects are. In Gottman's research, only a small portion of treated couples—about 11 to 18 percent—keep gains that are clinically meaningful over time. In other words, they continue to function at a level that meets a defined threshold of real, sustained improvement after the therapy has ended. This isn't about how many couples show any initial improvement, nor about divorce rates, nor about responses to anger management alone. It specifically reflects the proportion who maintain clinically significant improvements in the long term, highlighting the challenge of preserving change without ongoing maintenance or practice.

2. What is the first step in Gottman's individual sessions for marital assessment?
 - A. Determine financial status
 - B. Identify personality disorders
 - C. Assess compatibility with in-laws
 - D. Assess commitment to marriage**

The main idea here is that readiness and willingness to invest in the relationship comes first. In Gottman's approach to individual sessions for marital assessment, the therapist begins by assessing each partner's commitment to the marriage. This matters because commitment signals motivation to engage in therapy, tolerate difficult conversations, and work on change. If a partner isn't truly committed, the chances of constructive progress drop, and the plan for assessment and intervention needs to be adjusted accordingly. Establishing commitment also helps the therapist gauge how to frame goals, determine the appropriate next steps, and decide how best to proceed with joint or separate work. Other issues like financial status, personality concerns, or in-law dynamics may be explored later, but they're not the foundational step that sets the therapy in motion.

3. Which of the following is one of the seven questions of investigation?

- A. The frequency of arguments**
- B. Job satisfaction**
- C. The nature of sentiment override**
- D. Sleep quality**

In the Gottman Method, the seven questions of investigation are designed to uncover how partners experience each other and their relationship at an emotional level, including how mood and past experiences color current perceptions. The option about the nature of sentiment override fits this focus because sentiment override refers to how positive or negative feelings toward one partner influence interpretations of the other's behavior. Understanding whether partners view each other through an affectionate lens or a critical lens helps explain communication patterns, conflict triggers, and the likelihood of repairing after disagreements. The other areas—how often arguments occur, overall job satisfaction, or sleep quality—relate to external life conditions or frequency of conflicts, not to the specific construct the investigation aims to assess about emotional perception and relationship climate.

4. What is the purpose of creating shared symbolic meaning in a marriage?

- A. It helps in meshing individual life dreams and narratives, preventing marital gridlock.**
- B. It is primarily about agreeing on household chores.**
- C. It has no effect on how couples handle differences.**
- D. It is only relevant for long-distance marriages.**

Shared symbolic meaning involves building a couple's own language of values, rituals, and stories that give life to the relationship. When partners create that shared meaning, they fuse their individual life dreams and personal narratives into a single, coherent couple story. This shared frame provides a compass for decisions and goals, and it helps them approach differences as matters to be integrated into their life together rather than as threats to personal autonomy. By doing so, it reduces gridlock because couples have a shared purpose guiding how they handle conflicts and divergent dreams. It's about more than daily chores or distance; it's about cultivating a joint meaning that strengthens connection and resilience.

5. What does the 11-18% figure represent?

- A. The portion of treated couples who experience any improvement.
- B. The proportion of treated couples who maintain clinically significant gains.**
- C. The share of couples who divorce after treatment.
- D. The percentage of couples who respond to anger management alone.

Durability of treatment effects in Gottman therapy—that is, how many couples sustain clinically meaningful improvements after completing treatment. The 11-18% figure represents the proportion of treated couples who maintain gains that are large enough to be considered clinically significant at follow-up. This emphasizes long-term outcomes, not just initial response. It means a subset of couples continue to function with meaningful improvement over time, while others may regress or need additional support. This is not about the portion who experience any improvement, nor about the overall divorce rate after treatment, nor about those who respond to anger management alone. It specifically targets those who keep up meaningful, lasting changes beyond the therapy period.

6. What are Love Maps in Gottman's research?

- A. Love Maps refer to the knowledge partners have about each other's inner worlds, which is vital for relationship success.**
- B. Love Maps are maps of couples' geographic travel routes.
- C. Love Maps describe the routines used during conflicts.
- D. Love Maps focus on financial planning for shared goals.

Love Maps are about how well you know your partner's inner life—their likes, dislikes, fears, dreams, history, daily stresses, and what matters most to them. In Gottman's work, these detailed, up-to-date understandings form the foundation for emotional connection: they help you notice small shifts in mood, tailor your responses with empathy, and support your partner in meaningful ways. Building strong Love Maps involves asking open, curious questions, truly listening, and updating what you know as life changes—new jobs, new worries, new goals—so you can respond in a way that resonates with them. The idea isn't about geography or how you handle fights or finances, but about cultivating a deep, nuanced picture of your partner's inner world so you can stay connected and responsive during everyday moments and conflicts alike.

7. Which best describes how rituals for initiating or declining sex affect a couple's relationship?

- A. They create confusion.**
- B. They build clarity and comfort around sexual intimacy.**
- C. They eliminate the need for consent.**
- D. They replace direct communication about desires.**

Rituals for initiating or declining sex create predictable, respectful signals that reduce ambiguity and anxiety around sexual opportunities. This clarity helps each partner understand the other's desires and boundaries, fostering a sense of safety and mutual responsiveness that strengthens trust and intimacy. In practice, such rituals support ongoing consent and open dialogue by setting the stage for a feeling of agreement, even if a direct conversation follows. They also lower defensiveness in the moment and make mutual comfort more likely. The other options miss the key effect: rituals don't create confusion; they reduce it. They don't eliminate the need for consent; consent remains ongoing. And they don't replace direct communication; rituals complement honest talk rather than substitute it.

8. What does a softened startup do in conflict resolution?

- A. Initiates conflict aggressively**
- B. Escalates defensiveness**
- C. Diminishes the value of repairing attempts**
- D. Helps de-escalate conflicts and promotes healthier discussions**

Softened startup is about beginning a difficult conversation in a gentle, non-threatening way that invites collaboration instead of triggering a fight. It uses calm language, focuses on a specific behavior and its impact, and often ends with a question or request for partnership. For example, you might say, "I feel stressed when the kitchen is left cluttered because it makes my evening hard to unwind. Could we come up with a simple cleanup routine together?" This approach signals safety and partnership, which lowers the other person's defensiveness and makes it easier to move into problem solving. That's why it's the best answer: it directly reduces defensiveness and sets the stage for a constructive, repair-oriented discussion. In contrast, starting with aggression, or letting defensiveness escalate, or dismissing repair attempts tend to push the other person away from cooperation and make resolving the issue harder.

9. What is the goal of diminishing negative affect during conflict?

- A. To manage complaints, deal with perpetual problems, and repair fights**
- B. To eliminate all conflicts**
- C. To suppress emotions**
- D. To escalate conflicts**

Diminishing negative affect during conflict means lowering the emotional heat so partners can address issues constructively. This approach focuses on three interrelated goals: handling complaints in a way that surfaces specific needs rather than blaming the other, recognizing that many conflicts are ongoing and require calm, sustained negotiation, and making timely repair attempts after a dispute to restore closeness. By reducing anger, sarcasm, and contempt, couples can problem-solve more effectively, keep the relationship from spiraling into defensiveness, and prevent long-term resentment. It's not about eliminating conflicts or suppressing emotions; it's about managing the emotional climate to support healthy discussion and repair.

10. Which statement best captures the effect of rituals around initiating or refusing sex?

- A. They increase nagging.**
- B. They replace communication.**
- C. They create clarity and comfort around sexual intimacy.**
- D. They encourage avoidance of talk.**

Rituals around initiating or refusing sex provide a predictable, emotionally safe pattern for how intimacy is pursued or paused. This predictability helps partners understand when and how to express desire or set boundaries, reducing ambiguity and orbiting anxiety. With clear signals and practiced responses, both people feel more comfortable communicating their needs, which strengthens emotional safety and, in turn, sexual intimacy. These rituals aren't about nagging or avoiding talk; they complement ongoing dialogue by offering a reliable way to bring up intimacy and respond to a partner's bids.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://gottmanmaritalassmttherapystrats.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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