

Suzanne Pratt

Name: Suzanne Pratt.

Present Position: Private Practice, CloserCouples relationship counseling and psychotherapy practice for treating individuals. Salt Lake City, Utah.

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<https://www.closercouples.com>

[PTSD.Foundation](#)

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Primary areas of expertise/interest: Couples counseling with an emphasis on diplomacy, conflict resolution and healing damaged trust, and trauma treatment. Certified Gottman Method Couples' Therapist, with advanced training in Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing and in Emotionally Focused Therapies. Certified by Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Science and Research to provide MDMA-assisted psychotherapy for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Education

May 1994 – Master of Social Work Degree: New York University School of Social Work, New York, NY.

May 1986 – Bachelor of Arts: Classics Major, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

May 1986 – Bachelor of Arts: University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Summer 1984—Undergraduate Classical Studies: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

1982-1984—Undergraduate Classical Studies: College of Charleston, South Carolina

Professional Experience

Current Professional Activities:

- Private Practice, Owner and solo practitioner of CloserCouples, P.C., Salt Lake City, Utah. Psychotherapy with an emphasis on couples, trauma and chronic illness. February 2002--.
- Founded PTSD.Foundation for treating PTSD with MAPS protocol.

Previous Clinical Experiences:

- University of Utah Huntsman Cancer Institute, Patient and Family Support Team member, Intensive Care Unit Psychosocial Oncology Clinician, Salt Lake City, Utah. Provided crisis intervention to families, patients and staff including completion of POLSTs, Living Wills, and attended to staff's secondary trauma. 32 hours/week. September 2012-October 2014.
- University of Utah College of Social Work Instructor/Adjunct Faculty, Salt Lake City, Utah. Taught Advanced Practice I and II in Health: Clinical Approaches, Fall and Spring Semester 2012 and 2013.
- Center for Human Potential Counseling and Psychiatry Services, Clinician, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2010-2012

- University of Utah Neuropsychiatric Institute, Crisis Intake Social Worker, Salt Lake City, Utah. Responded to crisis calls, performed assessments for inpatient admission or referral. March 2001-September 2002.
- Living Well, LLC, Salt Lake City, Utah, Partner, co-owner, Salt Lake City, Utah. Provided services, including group psychotherapy and psychoeducational classes, executive coaching, consultation and staff retreats to non-profit agencies service people with chronic illnesses. Obtained contracts and designed group support model; provided group supervision and training to student and professional group facilitators. March 2004-October 2009.
- Cancer Wellness House, Program Director, Salt Lake City, Utah. Developed and implemented a program for people affected by a cancer diagnosis, serving as psychotherapy group facilitator, member of the professional advisory board, chair of program committee, recruiter and trainer of volunteer clinical and non-clinical staff. May 1998-January 2002.
- Columbia-St. Mark's Hospital, Medical Social Worker/Case Manager and Administrator-in-Training, Salt Lake City, Utah. Social work and case management, family intervention and discharge planning with a geriatric population on Transition Care Unit s/p surgery or rehabilitation. July 1997-May 1998.
- St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital, Outpatient Social Worker to the Samuels Clinic, New York, New York. Clinical individual social work and supportive case management with HIV+ patients, providing weekly group therapy and concrete services. Occasional in-patient and emergency social work coverage. October 1994-October 1996.

Previous Non-Clinical Experience:

- The Hudson Review, Editorial Assistant, Circulation Manager and Assistant Fiction Editor of a quarterly magazine of the arts, New York, NY, 1987-88. Archival Consultant, 1992-1996.

Internships:

- Astor Child Guidance, New York University School of Social Work second year placement. Bronx, New York. Clinical individual and group work with children referred for the treatment of emotional disorders. September 1993-May 1994.
- Federation Employment and Guidance Services, New York University School of Social Work first year placement. Brooklyn, New York. Supportive case management and group facilitation for people affected by persistent chronic mental illness.

Licenses, Certifications and Trainings:

- Licensed Clinical Social Worker, License no. 338243-3501, State of Utah, 1996-
- Licensed Independent Social Worker, License no. 11611, State of South Carolina, 2016-
- Certified Social Worker, License no. 97-338243-3502, State of New York, -1996
- Certified Gottman Method Couples' Therapist, (first in Utah to be certified) Drs. John and Julie Gottman, March 2009
- EMDR Basic Training, Gerald Puk, Ph.D., November 2014 and Deany Lalot, LICSW, April 2015
- Emotionally Focused Therapy Externship, Susan Johnson, Ed.D., January 2011
- Certified Gottman-Method Clinical Trainer (for Level 1 of Bridging the Couple Chasm, Gottman Institute), 2010
- Certified Gottman-Method Facilitator (for facilitating The Art and Science of Love Workshops for Couples), 2010.
- Certified by Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Science and Research to provide MDMA-assisted psychotherapy for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Board Associations and Program Committee Memberships:

- Archetypology of Everyday Life, <https://ael-project.com/>, Committee Member
- Program Committee Member, Clinical Advisory Board, Finance Committee, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Utah Chapter
- Advisory Board, Lupus Foundation of America, Utah Chapter

- Partnership to Improve End of Life Health Care in Utah

National/International Memberships: Gottman Relationship and Referral Network, International Centre for Excellence in Emotionally Focused Therapy, American Oncology Social Workers, American Group Psychotherapy, MAPS clinical trainee/certification holder

Local (Utah and SC) Memberships: Mediation Study Group of Utah (alliance of mediators, attorneys and couples therapists); Women in Private Practice of Utah; Utah Society of Social Work Leadership in Healthcare; Utah Institute for Psychotherapy; The Charleston (SC) Jung Society.

Awards:

- **National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Above and Beyond Award, 2007**
- **National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Professional of the Year Award, 2005**

Volunteer Positions:

- Lupus Foundation, Utah Chapter, Support Group Facilitator, Salt Lake City, Utah 2005
- Gilda's Club, Membership Co-Planner for Cancer Support Center, New York, New York, 1994-1996
- Gay Men's Health Crisis, Hotline Counselor, New York, New York, 1995

Practicums Taught:

- Gottman Method, Level One Training for clinicians, for the Patient and Family Support Team (Oncology Social Workers) at Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah Medical Center, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2014.
- The Art and Science of Love: A Workshop for Couples, Cofacilitated with Pamala Roskelley, CMHC, Gottman Certified Co-therapist, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2015.

Classes-Series Taught:

- Dreamwork: The Dreamer and The Dream, eight-week course, University of Utah Continuing Education and Community Engagement, Park City, Utah, 2003
- Stress Management, eight-week course, University of Utah Continuing Education and Community Engagement, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2004.

Patents/Trademarks:

- *CloserCouples*™ Reg. No. 4,028,103, US Patent and Trademark Office, September 2011.

Invited Talks:

- What Makes Relationships Work? The Children's Center, for parent-audience, Salt Lake City, Utah 2015
- Affair Proof Your Relationship, KUTV, Channel 2 News, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2006.
- Parenting Children Through Difficult Losses, and Helping Couples as they Confront a Child's Illness, Primary Children's Medical Center, for social work team, 2010

Professional/Interdisciplinary Presentations:

For physicians, clinicians

- Affair Repair: Effective Intervention, Women in Private Practice, Salt Lake City, 2012
- Surviving a Narcissistic Parent or Partner, Women in Private Practice, Salt Lake City, 2012
- Knowing When You're in Over Your Head: The value of an interdisciplinary approach, Huntsman Cancer Institute, Patient and Family Support, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2014
- End of Life Planning, cofacilitated with Maureen Henry, JD, PhD., Huntsman Cancer Institute, Patient and Family Support, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2014.
- Vicarious Trauma: Practicing Self Care, Huntsman Cancer Institute, Intensive Care Unit physician's retreat, 2014
- Decreasing Patient Distress, Utah Cancer Specialists physicians' practice, 2007
- Holotropic Breathwork cofacilitation, 2019

Tutorials Developed for NonProfits:

For people confronting medical illness & non-profit staff, 2004-2009

- Caregiving Family Fundamentals
- Chronic Illness and Marriage
- Clinical Group Manual and Training Presentation for Facilitators
- Developing Resilience in the Face of Illness
- Pacing & Fatigue: Saving Yourself for What Counts
- Managing Pain: Beyond Medication
- Managing Stress Manages Symptoms
- MS Group Evaluation Summary
- Emotion: The Essential Complement to Thinking
- Social Starvation: Why Our Bodies Need Friends
- If You're Not Sleeping Well...

Accumulated Hours and Future Trainings:

- For every 24 hours of clinical work I have had at least one hour of supervision. 55,080 clinical hours to date, 2253 hours of supervision, 1040 of which are mandated continuing education credits, augmented by at least another 936 hours of clinical study.

A Sample of Advanced or Pivotal Trainings Attended:

- The Marriage of EMDR and Ego State Theory in Couples Therapy, Barry Litt, Phoenix, AZ, 2016
- Our Daily Breach: Exploring Personal Myth through Herman Melville's Moby-Dick, Dennis Slattery, Ph.D., 2016
- New Frontiers in Trauma Treatment, Bessel A. van der Kolk, MD, Salt Lake City, UT 2015
- Integrating Somatic Psychotherapy with EMDR, Craig Penner, LMFT, Chicago, Illinois, 2015.
- "Dostoevsky: Always Guilty and Always Responsible:" Reading Dostoevsky's The Brothers Karamazov, Donna Orange, Ph.D., Psy.D. Salt Lake City, Utah, 2015
- The Masters of Trauma Treatment: Today's Most Effective Interventions for Deep Healing with Bessel van der Kolk, Peter Levine, Janina Fisher, Pat Ogden, Mary Jo Barrett, Bill O'Hanlon and Skip Rizzo, (virtual training), 2014
- Eros and the Shattering Gaze: Transcending Narcissism, Ken Kimmel, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2013
- The Suffering Stranger: Hermeneutics for Everyday Clinical Practice, Donna Orange, Ph.D., Salt Lake City, Utah, 2012
- The Siegel-Gottman Summit, Seattle, Washington, 2014
- Rediscovering the Sacred in the Healing Art: Jung, Numinosity and the Transformational Power of the Facilitated Affective Imagery, Noel Gardner, MD, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2014
- Trauma and the Soul, Donald Kalsched, PhD, MDiv, Salt Lake City, 2014
- The Red Book Series, Lance Owens, MD, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2011-2012.
- C.G. Jung's Warning About Faith: The Psychological Danger of Belief, Dr. David Miller, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2011
- The Red Book Series, Lance Owens, MD, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2011-2012
- MDMA-assisted treatment for PTSD, Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, 2018, Fort Collins, CO, Marcella Ot'alora, MA, LPC and Bruce Poulter, MPH

References

- Shelley White, LCSW
- Paula Deitz, Editor, The Hudson Review
- Noel Gardner, MD
- Lance Owens, MD
- Natalie Cox-Herndon
- Brent Pace, LCSW
- Robert Barth, LCSW



Professional Statement

Suzanne Pratt is a Certified Gottman Method Couples' Therapist and owner of CloserCouples.com.

I work primarily with couples. The work I do is two-fold:

- To move you away from destructive conflict and into productive, even enjoyable dialogue about the differences between you.*
- To increase the sense of bondedness between you.*

I work as a psychotherapist using process-oriented somatic interventions that connect with people's natural abilities to find a path toward resolution and completion. I utilize Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) with a strong focus on the body and nervous system to facilitate this work.

I invest more than is typical in my education and training because I am passionate about removing obstacles to compassion and understanding. Gottman certification helps me to intervene effectively in couples communication. Emotionally Focused Therapy for Couples helps me to dismantle entrenched attack/defend patterns and to increase awareness about the importance of the attachment bond. EMDR helps me to provide focused attention on traumas that get in the way of healing from past hurts and the ability to be present with one another.

I'm particularly interested in the impact of dropping defensiveness and moving into vulnerability. We are taught to be strong and to be right, and to a certain extent, this stance gets reinforced by external markers of success. But being strong and right can threaten connection. My work is driven by a desire to understand what leads to defensive positions in attachments and how best to dismantle them so that couples can enjoy the sense of belonging they know, at a deep level, is possible.

I have learned much about "trauma," in its subtle and more obvious forms. Whether it is single incident trauma like an accident, or the repeated chronic, low level traumatic exposure to criticism or neglect in childhood, it profoundly impacts our ability to choose a loving response over a defensive one. Sometimes defenses become so strong that people are diagnosed with disorders. Evidence is mounting that the best treatment for a mood disorder is couples counseling. This is because once a person feels securely attached, their traumatic responses dissipate.

Once obligations of life are shared with a partner it is inevitable that differences in preferences, values and sensibilities will naturally arise and create conflict. Responding with integrity in the face of a loved one's heightened emotion - authenticity in the face of duress - is universally challenging. Childhood and young adulthood have taught us to manage discomfort and anxiety in ways both useful and not so useful. Couples therapy is an opportunity to learn about yourself in the face of the other and evolve to become the most passionate, fully realized, least burdened and least resentful partner you can be.

Mission Statement

- 1. My spiritual purpose is to increase the number of peaceful and productive interactions in relationships by teaching diplomacy techniques and ways of letting go of defensive behaviors. For my clients/patients, there will be less suffering and an ability to pass down healthier means of communication to their children and support networks. Though I am one of millions in allied professions, together we evolve as a peace-loving people.*
- 2. I will do my work differently from others by keeping each couple I am working with central in my heart and mind while I am working with them, not worrying about increasing my profitability, but trusting that with each client I help, another one who needs the tools I can offer will find me somehow. I will seek not to use a belief system or technique or to become known as an “expert” in my field, but rather an “expert” with this or that specific couple. My allegiance is not to me or my trainers but rather to my patients. I will seek not to diagnose but to understand. I will seek not to cynically “treat” from a higher plane but to relieve suffering from a place of humility and compassion. In so doing, I will need to focus more on my own self-compassion and ability to listen to my own fears, needs and feelings. Higher power relates to humility.*
- 3. I want to serve anyone who is suffering and who is ready for self examination. The spiritual purpose is to increase capacity to love others and self. Perfect client/patient is one who forces me to learn new things, one who compels me to reach out to others for support, who, without necessarily knowing it, increases my capacity to love and grow.*
- 4. Always keeping in mind my desire to be a conduit of my higher power, I will interact with them in an exploratory, open-minded, accepting, respectful and hospitable way, never forgetting that as they are a suffering stranger to me, I am also a suffering stranger to those who help me. In doing this I hope to influence them to be more exploratory, open minded, accepting, respectful and hospitable to one another. Strength-focused.*