



# **Couples in Collusion: Short-Term, Assessment-Based Strategies for Helping Couples Disarm Their Defenses (Family Therapy and Counseling)**

By Dennis A. Bagarozzi

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When a couple enters therapy, both partners have either explicit or implicit understandings of what can?and, more importantly, cannot?be discussed in therapy. Even when empirically tested assessments are used to help pinpoint areas of concern and conflict, couples may choose to identify only those areas that are relatively safe and do not seriously threaten each partner's sense of integrity and vulnerability. How is a therapist supposed to proceed when a couple comes in for a tune-up, not realizing that their entire transmission needs to be serviced? Therapists know that some relationships, like some transmissions, can continue to function on some level even without proper care?sometimes even for years?before the couple seeks therapy. If, when they come in, the therapist can help the couples to repair and regain their lost equilibrium, they'll be more likely to seek help when the transmission next begins to slip.

In its clear, precise prose, insightful case studies, and thought-provoking discussion questions, *Couples in Collusion* lays out guidelines for identifying, understanding, and, dealing with the unspoken agreements and collusive systems that couples build up over time. Clinicians will find each chapter replete with concrete strategies they can use in practice as well as thorough explanations of the assessment tools, suggestions on how to use them, and even advice on how to build the tools' costs into clinicians' limited budgets.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

**"Dennis Bagarozzi's enlightening book makes it clear that couple therapists who disregard unconscious processes in their clients' relationships do so at their own peril and to their clients' detriment. *Couples in Collusion* is a masterful demonstration of how it is possible to do genuinely 'deep' work with couples even in a brief-therapy format. This is the best clinical writing on the topic I have seen in many years."** - Alan S. Gurman, PhD, clinical professor of psychology, the Family Institute at Northwestern University

**"*Couples in Collusion* is a significant contribution to the literature on couple therapy. The author's discussion of the collusive pacts of partners with borderline and narcissistic pathology is amazingly insightful and useful. Clinicians will find that the study questions in each chapter personalize and integrate all they have learned in this marvelous book."** - Len Sperry, MD, PhD, lead author of *Couples Therapy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, and coeditor of *Recovering Intimacy in Love Relationships*

**"In its many case examples, *Couples in Collusion* integrates different theoretical systems and makes extensive use of assessment approaches. It's a valuable addition to any clinician's library and a good source for basic information about conducting couple therapy."** - S. Richard Sauber, PhD, ABPP, editor of the *American Journal of Family Therapy*

**"This integrative approach to marital counseling will be of interest to marital therapists regardless of theoretical orientation. Bagarozzi combines personal experience with multiple theoretical traditions to create a consumer-friendly roadmap to the hidden agreements and understandings couples bring to therapy."** - Steven R. H. Beach, PhD, Distinguished Research Professor at the University of Georgia

#### About the Author

**Dennis A. Bagarozzi**, PhD, MSW, is a psychologist, family therapist, and an AAMFT-approved supervisor and fellow. He has authored 7 books and more than 70 articles and book chapters. He is also editor of the "Family Measurement Techniques" section of the *American Journal of Family Therapy*.

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daughters, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors nowadays always try to improve their expertise in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write to the book. One of them is this Couples in Collusion: Short-Term, Assessment-Based Strategies for Helping Couples Disarm Their Defenses (Family Therapy and Counseling).

### **Lidia Hill:**

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