

Intimacy and Relationships by Tera S. Jones, PhD

Cancer and Couples

“To have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer in sickness and in health while we both shall live.”

Commitment ceremonies often include vows to stay together even during times of tremendous adversity, but the real power of these words may not be fully appreciated until a traumatic event, like cancer, brings a deeper meaning to these vows and challenges a couple's relationship. Cancer is a couple's disease. It affects the psychological well-being of each person, requires both partners to utilize communication and coping strategies, and can affect the dynamic relationship between partners.

This presentation will discuss how cancer may affect relationship dynamics and provide suggestions for communication, emotional connection, and sexual intimacy. Dr. Tera Jones is a psychology faculty member, licensed psychologist, and certified sex therapist. As faculty, she has taught various undergraduate and graduate psychology and counseling courses for over 15 years. In clinical practice, she works with individuals and couples on body image, sexuality and gender issues, intimacy, relationships, and life transitions. Her expertise is in relationships--not just relationships with other people, but also one's relationship with self, body, and life experiences. Dr. Jones is trained as a relational and psychodynamic therapist, and has specialization in issues of intimacy, sexuality, sexual dysfunction, desire discrepancy, monogamy and fidelity, affair recovery, and compulsive sexual behavior. She also has extensive experience treating disordered eating patterns, body image concerns, and eating disorders. Throughout the years, she has provided presentations and lectures topics relating to personal growth, body image, relationship dynamics and communication, sex therapy, maintaining desire in long-term relationships, sexual dysfunction, and eating disorders.