

The Couple Stroking Bank in the Therapy Room.



Since calling and creating my custom-made Couple Stroking Bank – picture above – it has become a regular part of my practice for some years now with my couples.

It's designed for you when considering your relationship, especially when asking how happy you both are. Are you looking toward making changes, to reach the loving relationship you want – to love and be loved?

It's a creative activity that you may choose to use as a visual aid, as the opening point in your couple counselling journey, to find a clearer sense of direction – giving you both confidence and hope.

I will place it on the therapy room table, to offer you a simple and brief explanation of the transactional analysis (TA) concept of positive interactions – “strokes” – that you give one another. I invite you, of your own choosing, when the mood takes you, to approach The Couple Stroking Bank, pick up a heart of your choosing and place it into The Couple Stroking Bank: thus symbolically funding your relationship with each other's experiences and memories of each other's positive interactions – or, “strokes” – as received and accepted from one other; the small golden, silver and red hearts are meant to be representing your memories of those small moments – of positive interactions.

Just as you can make deposits and withdrawals from your traditional bank account, you can make deposits and withdrawals from your Couple Stroking Bank. And, just as the balance in your traditional bank account affects how financially safe or insecure you feel, the balance in your Couple Stroking Bank affects how safe or insecure you feel emotionally in your relationship.

Using this tool illustrates how you can build up savings that, like money in your bank account, can serve as a cushion when times get tough.

This activity is an opportunity for you both to express and show to the other your playfulness, creativity and spontaneity, assessing and touching the different coloured and crafted hearts.

Of course, you can go on, as clients have, to create your own Couple Stroking Bank for use in your everyday life – suited to both your needs and lifestyles.

In a future Blog, I offer you another creative activity – Loving Cards – that have become a regular part of my couple counselling practice. Again, in couple counselling with me, this may provide you with a simple and effective tool to use to recognise the particular ways of relating that you both want from one another.