

**ESALEN INSTITUTE CONTINUING EDUCATION**  
**MFT/LCSW/LPCC**

**Leader Name/s:** Sam Jinich, PhD & Michille Gannon, PhD

**Workshop Title:** Hold Me Tight Workshop for Couples

**Workshop Description:**

The Hold Me Tight Workshop for Couples is based on practices drawn from Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT), attachment theory, and Sue Johnson's best-selling book, Hold Me Tight. The work will be designed around seven conversations that have been shown to be essential to successful relationships. Relationships can be a cause of stress and pain or a source of comfort and joy. Couples will learn how to understand and improve their relationships via presentations, private exercises, conversations with relationship partners, and by watching video demonstrations. By utilizing exercises drawn from EFT, Sam Jinich and Michelle Gannon help couples learn how to deal with their feelings together, reach towards each other, be responsive in more loving and positive ways, and move from isolation and frustration to security, emotional safety, and lasting relationship satisfaction. The Hold Me Tight Workshop welcomes all couples.

Recommended reading: Johnson, Hold Me Tight; Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love and Love Sense: The Revolutionary New Science of Romantic Relationships.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Objective #1: Participants will be able to distinguish between Secure, Anxious, Avoidant and Disorganized Attachment Styles.
Objective #2: Participants will be able to discuss how relationship conflict is viewed through an Attachment lens.
Objective #3: Participants will be able to distinguish between Pursuers and Withdrawers in the context of a Negative Cycle.
Objective #4: Participants will be able to distinguish between vulnerable and reactive emotions.
Objective #5: Participants will be able to define the three "Demon Dialogues" (Find the Bad Guy, Freeze & Flee and Protest Polka).
Objective #6: Participants will be able to identify what "Raw Spots" are and how they fuel/trigger Negative Cycles.
Objective #7: Participants will be able to identify their own Raw Spots and to distinguish between their reactive, immediate, impulsive, emotions and behaviors and their underlying often unspoken vulnerable feelings.
Objective #8: Participants will be able to explain how partners are responsible for eliciting or triggering an unwanted response from their partner.

Objective #9: Participants will describe the steps necessary to revisit a "Rocky Moment."
Objective #10: Participants will be able to describe what is meant by "the survival of the most nurtured"
Objective #11: Participants will be able to describe what is meant by "A.R.E."
Objective #12: Participants will be able to discuss the importance of attachment repair and forgiveness in healthy relationships and describe the six-step model of forgiveness.
Objective #13: Participants will be able to demonstrate knowledge of and engage in a Hold Me Tight conversation with their partner including the expression of vulnerable emotions and attachment-related needs.
Objective #14: Participants will be able to discuss the importance of touch, intimacy and sex in the building of a secure connection with a partner.
Objective #15: Participants will be able to engage in a conversation with their partners about their intimate life.
Objective #16: Participants will describe the difference between connected sex and disconnected sex.
Objective 17: Participants will understand the importance of appreciation and celebrating moments of connection
Objective 18: Participants will understand how meeting and separation are key attachment moments, offer examples of rituals of connection and explain why establishing rituals of meeting and separation foster ongoing connection.

## COURSE OUTLINE

**Session 1. SUNDAY: 8:30pm - 10:00 pm** - (1.5 Class Hours) – Introduction to Attachment Theory. Course objectives are presented and discussed.

### MONDAY

**Session 2. MONDAY Morning: 9:30am. - 12:45 pm** (3 Class Hours)

Introductions and completion of the A.R.E. Questionnaire

The participants learn about Cycles of Interaction (Demon Dialogues) and then have Conversation #1 with their partner about their own cycles and typical patterns of interaction. The participants learn about the importance of Vulnerability.

**Session 3. MONDAY Afternoon: 4:00 -6:30 pm** (2.5 Class Hours)

The participants learn about the Importance of Empathy. The participants complete the Couples Attachment Interviews with their partners. The participants learn about the importance of positivity and gratitude in successful relationships and engage in a Gratitude Exercise with their partner.

**Session 4. TUESDAY Morning: 9:30- 12:45 pm** (3 Class Hours)

The participants learn about the importance of linking the past to the present. The participants learn about the triggers that lead to conflicts and identify their reactive and underlying emotions. With their partner, they complete Conversation #2: Raw Spots.

**Session 5. TUESDAY Afternoon: 4:00- 6:30 pm (2.5 Class Hours)**

The participants learn about the steps of revisiting a rocky moment in order to pause and understand their conflicts and disconnections. With their partner, they complete Conversation #3: Revisiting a Rocky Moment. Participants engage in Mindfulness Exercise and Partner Yoga.

**Session 6. WEDNESDAY Morning: 9:30- 12:45 pm (3 Class Hours)**

The participants learn about the Importance of Forgiveness and the six steps of the Attachment Injury Repair Model (A.I.R.M.) as adapted for the Hold Me Tight Workshop. With their partner, they complete Conversation #4: Forgiving Injuries.

**Session 7. WEDNESDAY Afternoon: 4:00 -6:30 pm (2.5 Class Hours)**

The participants learn about the importance of identifying and sharing fears and needs in relationships. With their partner, they complete Conversation #5: Hold Me Tight Conversation.

**Session 8. THURSDAY Morning: 9:30 – 12:45 pm (3 Class Hours)**

The participants learn about the Importance of Physical Affection, Sensuality and Sexuality in relationships. With their partner, they begin Conversation #6: Affection, Touch and Sexuality

**Session 9. THURSDAY Afternoon: 4:00 – 6:30 pm (2.5 Class Hours)**

The participants continue their Conversation #6 about Affection, Touch and Sexuality with their partner. Participants engage in Partner Massage.

**Session 10: FRIDAY Morning: 10:00 – 12:00 pm (2 Class Hours)**

This course meets the qualifications for 26 hours of continuing education credit for: LMFTs, LCSWs, LPCCs, and/or LEPs as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. Esalen is an approved provider of continuing education by the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists. Esalen Institute maintains responsibility for programs and their content.

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