



## **Becoming Us™ Level I: Foundation Toolbox**

### **– Tilling the Soil and Planting the Seeds**

#### **Session 1: Loving**

We'll start with a brief theory attachment and why the perinatal period is ripe for **creating a stronger bond between partners**. We'll also look at relationship dynamics and how they change during the perinatal period (the new 'us' for couples). You'll learn the three stages of a long-term relationship and how you can use them with your clients.

#### **Session 2: Learning**

You'll learn why the term "the transition into parenthood" is such a huge understatement! Afterwards, you may **discover new ways to work with your clients or expand your services**. You'll learn "the way we work" (and you thought you knew!) We'll also look at stress and coping and how you can support both yourself and your clients to do less of the first and more of the second.

#### **Session 3: Growing**

You'll discover new research into neuroplasticity and learning to prepare couples for the parenthood adventure. You'll learn the stages of growing and how they apply to your clients. You'll also learn about emotional growth and you'll come away with your guide for **planting the right growth seeds** for your clients. In this session, you'll also be introduced to the topic of Perinatal Mood Disorders and how you can use this information with your clients, whether you work with them during pregnancy or beyond.

#### **Session 4: Relating**

You'll learn (and get to try out) the skills of intimate communication, a style of relating that can **change relationship DNA**. You'll learn a model of conflict resolution, an approach that won't just improve the situation, but your client's whole relationship.

## **Becoming Us™ Level II: The Becoming Us™ Model of the Parenthood Adventure**

### **Session Five: Step 1 - Prepare Prenatally (Pack Carefully!)**

We call it "expecting" but **expecting is a huge waste of time** and a lost opportunity. We should call it "preparing". Discover the big issues to prepare your clients for and how to do this. Learn ways to open the lines of communication and reduce risks for the Perinatal Mood Disorders.

### **Session Six: Step 2 - Build a Nest**

Couples often prepare a birth plan, but **birth is just the beginning**. The postpartum period, the fourth trimester, is pivotal for all members of a new family. Learn ways to help your clients set themselves up for the best start.

### **Session Seven: Step 3 - Adjust Expectations**

30% of mothers say unmet and sometimes unrealistic expectations of life and love post-baby contributed to their Postnatal/Postpartum Depression. You'll learn why and how to gently tease out and **adjust expectations to support coping**.

### **Session Eight: Step 4 - Set Up Base Camp**

This stage prepares couples for the challenges that unfold over the first few months of parenthood. Learn what mothers, fathers and partners need so they can best meet the needs of their baby. **These coping skills can last a lifetime**.

### **Session Nine: Step 5 - Embracing Emotions**

Parenthood is a time of increased emotional vulnerability. Embrace this and you can support your clients' mental and emotional health (and your own!). **Create beautiful relationship bonds** through emotional connection and empathy.

### **Session Ten: Step 6 - Welcoming Parent Selves**

Most parents expect aspects of life to change after baby but most don't expect aspects of themselves to. Mothers can be blindsided by identity shifts and lowered self-esteem. Support your clients to **embrace the changes** and use parenthood as a time of self-discovery, self-acceptance and reinvention.

### **Session Eleven: Step 7 - Growing Together through Differences**

A whopping 92% of couples report increased conflict in the first year after baby. You'll learn why and the big issues that can bring most new families undone. You'll know how **managing these issues can bring your couples closer**, instead of sending them apart.

### **Session Twelve: Step 8 - Connecting and Reconnecting**

67% of couples report declined relationship satisfaction in the first three years of family. In the final step of the Becoming Us model, you'll learn how to **keep couples connected** - mentally, emotionally, sensually and sexually - through all the stages!

## **Becoming Us™ Level III: Extra Support for the Extra Hard Stuff**

### **Session Thirteen: Reducing Risks for Affairs, Addiction and Abuse**

It's a tragic fact that pregnancy and early parenthood can be a time of increased risk for affairs, addiction and abuse. You'll know why and how to reduce the risk for your clients. And for those who have experienced it, there is hope. You'll **bring more awareness, understanding, empathy and appreciation** for your clients - and them for each other.

### **Session Fourteen: Reducing Risks for Birth Trauma, Grief, Depression and Anxiety**

New research is confirming that trauma and emotional distress such as grief, anxiety or depression are related to couple bonding. You'll know the signs and symptoms for both mothers and fathers, how to reduce the risks and promote coping for your clients. You'll know how **couples can grow closer through these challenges**.

