

Discernment Counseling:

Couples can, unfortunately, find themselves having mixed agendas. Typically, partners in mixed agenda couples are one of two types:

The spouse who isn't sure that they want to stay married or in the relationship: called the *leaning-out partner*.

Or

The spouse who is interested in therapy: called the *leaning-in partner*.

If this is the case where one partner does not know if they want to stay married and doubts that counseling will help, Discernment Counseling is the way to go.

The goal of Discernment Counseling is to help couples arrive at greater clarity and confidence in their decision-making about the future of their marriage. It is typically brief and could last anywhere between 1 to 5 sessions. The counselor will have time dedicated to one-on-one work with each partner, ensuring that the emotional needs of both the leaning in and leaning out partners are met.

Discernment counseling is different from typical marriage counseling. The goal is not to solve your problems but to help you decide which path you would like to choose whether to try to solve your problems or choose a different path. It's not about immediate change in your relationship but seeing what changes each of you might need to make in the future if you decide to work on yourselves and your marriage.

Please bear in mind that couples in Discernment Counseling should not come into the process unwillingly, as that would not be an effective way to try and receive counseling. If one partner feels forced into counseling, that doesn't create an environment that would be helpful to any party.

Additionally, Discernment Counseling should in no way be seen to "break the news" to your partner about wanting to get a divorce. If that is what one partner wants, they should then discuss divorce mediation or closure counseling.

If you and your partner think that Discernment Counseling would be helpful to you both in deciding which path you would like to choose, please call our office at 605-299-9100 or email us at info@rapidcitycounselors.com to set up two *separate 15-minute* phone interviews to help clarify whether this type of counseling would be a good investment to your relationship.