

## My Story

Amy Jay, MA, LMFT

Growing up as a child of divorce in the 1970s, I was privy to the life of single parenthood, the dating scene, and relationships going awry – from the child's point of view.

Though I had more exposure to these trials and tribulations of the human journey than is recommended for children in their formative years, the experience contributed to what has become my life purpose – cultivating healthy relationships.

What I saw modeled in both of my parents' dating, which relentlessly filled my childhood, was a mixture of the continued desire to find a partner along with repeated disappointments and frustrations in relationship.

In addition, there was the management of my weekly visits with my father, and the feelings that that generated – excitement, loss, disappointment, pressure, to name a few.

I was introduced early on to the complexities of human relationship, not the least of which is the inner conflict between longing for togetherness and the need for separateness.

I vowed back then then to have a very different experience as an adult, and to give my future children a loving, close, intact family structure. I not only wanted it for them, but I longed to experience it for myself – as a parent if I couldn't have it as a child.

As soon as age fourteen hit, I set about my task of finding The One, and I entered my own carousel ride of repeated relationship disappointments and frustrations that lasted for many years.

I knew early on that a big part of my life journey was about love and relationships – and figuring it all out. What I didn't know until I finally chose a career (after years of avoiding an inner felt sense of a calling to become a therapist) and entered graduate school at age thirty-one, was that I had become officially fascinated by the realm of human relationships, what makes them work, what makes them not work, and what can be done to help people get along and be happy together.

Since then, I have never turned back. I embraced the Family Systems approach to counseling that was taught in my graduate program. In addition, my interest was piqued when Imago Relationship Therapy and The Gottman Method were introduced. This led to my post-graduate training to become certified in Imago, to train with the Gottmans, and to my dedication to work with couples and relationships.

Over the years, I have applied all that I have learned in my own relationship journey, as well as with clients. I practice what I preach. I got married, and fourteen years later, divorced, and we Dialogued throughout. Not every relationship is meant to last forever, but de-coupling can be done consciously.

I am now re-partnered, and my partner and I use the same tools to create depth of connection and emotional safety as we explore creating a life together. Through the conflicts and the passion, we protect the bond as we grow it.

I have come to see that working with human relationships is the mother ship of all personal growth work. We get all the information we need about where our specific personal development gaps are when we look at what is happening in our relationships, and what is needed. It is quite revealing, in the most profoundly helpful way.

My work has developed into a structured path that I guide my clients through - one that heals old hurts, equips them with tools to navigate the challenges of human interactions, creates connection in the present, and moves them toward a future of open-hearted self-mastery.

I am dedicated to the opportunity we all have in this life to attain peace, love and fulfillment. Working with relationships provides the door; the tools I teach provide the key.