



Solving the Mystery of  
Intimate Sex and Relationship

# Coming Together

Annette Baulch & Graeme Sudholz

# Testimonials

*We were close to divorce, and in a last ditch effort to save our marriage. Our communication was almost non-existent (except when we were fighting). Graeme and Annette didn't give us solutions: they gave us something better. They helped us understand ourselves, and showed us how to be vulnerable again with open hearts. In doing so, they reminded us what love truly was.*

**Grant, QLD**

*After researching possibilities around the world, we discovered Annette and Graeme. We came to their retreat seeking to enhance the foundation of our loving and devoted relationship. We found an even deeper love; and on the last day, we shared a dream of ours in the most beautiful commitment ceremony we could ever imagine, which manifested in only a few short hours.*

**Derek and Susan, United States**

*I was attracted by a piece Annette wrote about sexual shame that resonated totally with my experience. It was a crack in the deep, foreboding dark I'd always felt in this area. Some light got in, and I can still feel the relief in discovering that I wasn't alone and that there was a way to change. I discovered a pride in the truth of my innate sexuality and sensuality.*

**Lizzie, QLD**

*I was holding myself back from a deeper, loving sexual connection with my husband. I discovered a wonderful freedom: learning to switch off from the outside world, connect in the moment and have Tantric-type experiences. I appreciate Annette and Graeme's honesty, compassion, understanding, professionalism, knowledge and experience. I also appreciated the wonderful practices they teach, and their commitment to this sacred work.*

**Marie, WA**

*I felt ashamed and embarrassed to ask for help on such a personal issue. The fear that I might be stuck forever in this space and lose my wife became so overwhelming that I chose to act. It's been a process untangling the web, but I now feel more alive and I have a greater sense of myself. With our three children now grown up, we've sold our home and are traveling around the world for 18 months. I believe we're able to do this because meaningful intimacy is now back at the centre of our relationship.*

**Greg, NSW**

*We'd been together for 40 years since we were 14. At 17, the pain, loss and anger of the enforced adoption of our first daughter caused us both a bitterness that we couldn't seem to shake off. It was scary putting our real selves and hurt out there, but we learned to reconnect as the young lovers we had once been; and our open communication has enhanced our relationships with our three beautiful children.*

**S & T, QLD**

*After 20 years and three children together, I felt I no longer loved my husband. We'd tried mainstream counselling, which didn't help, and I was desperate. Annette and Graeme were very 'real' people, which made it easy for each of us to work with them. Now, ten years later, my relationship with my husband is stronger than ever, as is my relationship with myself. We've learned the benefits of being vulnerable with each other, which opens our hearts and leads to blissful lovemaking.*

**Bernadette, NSW**

*My partner had just moved to Jakarta for work, and we were trying to find a way to keep connected whilst apart. My concern, believing everything significant must be subject to scientific analysis, was that this seemed far too New Age-y for my tastes. However, we took your New Age teachings; and with them have consistently achieved intimacy despite the distance. Therefore, as applied to us, the woo-woo works!*

**KG and DW, Indonesia**

*After 14 years of marriage, all of our issues had risen, putting us into crisis. We took a leap of faith by investing in ourselves, and we're very glad that we did. Writing down our priorities in the relationship is something we still revisit regularly, over two years later. We have so many fond memories of our time with Annette and Graeme, but deeper than that is the memory that we actually did it – we prioritised our relationship enough to take that step.*

**M & L, Australia**

*Our 20-year relationship was strained to near breaking point due to differences in libido and attitudes to sex. It took an enormous amount of courage for my husband and I to enrol in work we thought would be extremely alternative. The benefits we've gained have been beyond our greatest expectations, resulting in a deepening and strengthening of our relationship from the sexual right through to the spiritual.*

**Robyn, NSW**

*We both felt a bit stuck and didn't know how to get out of our rut. I have now truly come to appreciate how much my wife means to me, and how much more I could have been doing to help our relationship. I have had quite a few lightbulb moments, not only in my relationship but also as a man who wants to look after his family, contribute to society, and so much more. Annette and Graeme have played a huge role in that.*

**Lee, SA**

*We had fallen apart on every level; and sadly, it had been years since we had actually been 'making love'. After attempting to do everything I could to 'fix' the marriage myself, I was asking for a divorce. At this point, my husband finally agreed to get some outside help. Annette and Graeme's wholistic approach felt like the best fit for us. They are incredibly authentic humans who showed me that the real relationship lies with 'me' and 'me'.*

**Carmen, NSW**

For all those who feel the longing...

# Acknowledgements

## **Our clients have helped to make this book a reality**

We're extremely grateful to our clients, who've opened themselves to exploring intimate relationship in unique and vulnerable ways that have left us awed and humble. Without them, this book wouldn't be possible.

Getting real with each other is about the scariest thing we can do as human beings, yet time after time our clients have gone to their depths and come through into greater love and understanding.

## **We're grateful to ourselves as well**

In this book, Graeme and I have thrown our relationship under the microscope and explored all areas of ourselves in order to learn the art of relationship and make it relevant to everyday reality. We want to recognise ourselves for having the courage, naivety and willingness to choose and stay on our path.

For, just like our clients, we have moments when we want to pull our heads under the covers and take all the possible theories about relationship and stuff them where the sun don't shine. Yet after retreating, we always seem to find a way to come back into ourselves and into each other.

# Coming Together

Solving the Mystery of  
Intimate Sex and Relationship

Annette Baulch & Graeme Sudholz

Coming Together: Solving the mystery of intimate sex and relationship  
Author – Annette Baulch and Graeme Sudholz

Copyright © Oztantra 2018

[www.oztantra.com](http://www.oztantra.com)  
[info@oztantra.com](mailto:info@oztantra.com)

This book is sold with the understanding that the authors are not offering specific personal advice to the reader. For professional advice, seek the services of a suitable, qualified practitioner. The author disclaims any responsibility for liability, loss or risk, personal or otherwise, that happens as a consequence of the use and application of any of the contents of this book.

The client stories we mention are composite stories of real-life people in order to maintain their confidentiality and our integrity. Our own stories are definitely ours!

All rights reserved. This book may not be reproduced in whole or part, stored, posted on the internet, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or other, without permission from the authors of this book.

Editing and design by [AuthorSupportServices.com](http://AuthorSupportServices.com)

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication  
Authors: Annette Baulch & Graeme Sudholz  
Title: Coming Together  
Edition: First  
ISBN: 978-0-6481146-0-4

# Foreword

Relationships have the capacity to take us to the heights of ecstasy to the depths of despair, they can break us down and they can open us up, they can lead us to pain or be a catalyst for growth. For such an important aspect of life it is amazing that we don't receive any formal training at school.

I am blessed to have had the opportunity to discover, explore and teach the wonders of heart-centred relationships in my 26 years conducting Emotional Intelligence Trainings, coaching couples around Australia, and the world, and in my 20 years journeying with my beautiful wife Susan which is as passionate, connected and loving as ever, today.

It is inspiring to see two of my students go on to demonstrate such commitment to heart centred relationships as Annette and Graeme. I have had the privilege of watching them translate their own healing journey into a passionate way of living and service to others. And I have witnessed their great courage and commitment to be willing to show up and engage with each other in a climate of honesty, curiosity and kindness to themselves and each other. They have demonstrated not just a strong devotion to their truth, and each other, but also to love.

Annette and Graeme are the real deal. Having grown up in the country, they are down to earth and straightforward. They demonstrate great integrity by living what they teach. They teach a down to earth, practical and inspiring approach to creating and maintaining passionate, loving relationships. They are a bright beacon in a world where much sexual exploration gets lost in self-indulgence and fantasy that ultimately strands us in a quicksand of delusion, disappointment and separation.

Humans are social animals. We have evolved in relationships personal and social. We all long for the experience of comfort, connection, companionship and fulfilment that deep abiding love promises. And yet so many people struggle to realise this possibility.

There probably has never been a tougher time in history than now to create and sustain a passionate, loving relationship.

Nothing kills love like stress. Stress and anxiety levels are at an all time high. We live in a world of increasing demands and expectations where everything is speeding up and we are under mounting pressure to perform and achieve.

As well as the pressures of modern life we have countless demands our attention. The Internet, emails, digital TV, work and social demands are constantly pulling us out of relationship.

All these demands on us draw us out of relationship, not just with our partner, but also with our self. It is too easy to go on autopilot and begin to live as a machine, just going through the motions, not really connecting to others and not really feeling what is happening within us.

As well as this, we live in a world of increasing independence. With women's liberation came the freedom for women from the dependence on men for a stable income. Now women can generate their own livelihood. Women no longer need men to provide for them. This has created a shift in the balance of power in a relationship to equal. People now question: "How do I relate to my partner now, as an independent being?", "How do we get on the same page and form a team without compromising my independence or losing my self in the relationship?"

Plus our culture has an increasing 'disposable' attitude. Whereas a chest of drawers, or a desk would be passed down through generations, now we see piles of broken cheaply built furniture on the sidewalk heading for the tip. This short-term view of things has resulted in the tendency to dump a relationship if it starts to struggle, rather than working on restoring it.

It is not surprising that our intimate relationships are under strain. It seems that our relationships are the easiest to put on hold while we try to cope with the avalanche of demands on us. But putting our relationships on hold could lead to an even bigger catastrophe – the loss of those we love. The breakdown of the very reason why we work so hard and strive for the good life: to enjoy quality time with our beloved family.

More and more there is a gap opening up, not just in our relationships but also within us. In our haste to get things done we are losing touch with the tender, vulnerable, sensitive part of our self. Many people are feeling a kind of emptiness, soullessness that is being expressed as a loss of meaning and passion in life. 80% of people do not feel passionate about the work they do. Relationships are coming apart all over the place. Couples with young families are struggling to keep their relationship with each other alive, professional couples are drawn out of intimacy by corporate demands. Too often empty nesters look at each other as strangers and wonder where the love went.

We all long for and fear that state of intimacy in which we dissolve into one. So we open up and then close down, we come in close and then run away. Each time we do we weaken the foundation on which loving relationships are built: our commitment to each other. As the commitment weakens we withdraw more quickly when painful and difficult situations arise. This leaves us creating more and more unresolved hurt and more and more caution and armouring.

What we lack are the skills and understanding and self-awareness to be our self fully, to connect deeply, to heal hurt, to unite sex and intimacy and to celebrate love.

Thank goodness Annette and Graeme have written this lovely book. In it you will find a clear and straightforward path for traversing the landscape of relationships and coming home to love.

The first step on this path is coming into relationship with our self. The depth of any relationship is dependant on the depth of relationship we

have with our self. How can you connect more deeply to someone else (and they to you) if you are not present and connected to yourself first? The exciting new relationship paradigm not only allows us to be our self, it actually depends on us showing up in our authenticity. To have a rich and fulfilling relationship that blossoms with time we need to be able to recognise our fears, angers and grief, and manage and express these feelings with responsibility and vulnerability. Equally important is to learn to feel and express our pleasure, passion and vitality in our relationships. If we do all this, our experience becomes the way to creating deep connection and aliveness in our relationship. This book outlines a simple and reliable A, B, C three step process for tuning in to where we are and what is going on for us.

The next step on the journey is into intimacy with another. We like to think of intimacy as: In-to-me-see. Intimacy is dependant on our self-awareness and our willingness to risk really showing up and revealing our tender inner world to another. To do this takes a great sense of safety and trust in our partner. They too must have the skills and abilities to be present with us, receive, respond and validate what we are feeling in a way that encourages us to continue to go to depth and not shuts us down. In a clear and simple way Annette and Graeme lay out the ground rules for engaging deeply in relationships.

Having built a foundation of intimate loving connection Annette and Graeme focus on celebrating loving relationships through our sexuality. They guide us with gentleness, humour and sensitivity through what has been for many a painful landmine of shame and broken dreams. They articulate the differences that men and women experience in their approach to and experience of sexuality. This helps us to deepen our understanding of our self and have greater patience and tolerance to support and nurture our partner. They give clear and simple instructions on exercises for sexual healing.

This book is a guide for us to return our sexuality to its natural innocence, beauty and proper expression of love in intimacy. Many of the potholes

## Foreword

on the path to spiritual lovemaking are identified and solutions presented in ways that are gentle, non-shaming and encouraging.

Unlike many books on Love and Sexuality Annette and Graeme share in detail their own struggles and triumphs this helps us to feel more OK about our own personal challenges in our relationships. The wisdom shared here has come from Annette and Graeme's own personal experiences of sexual union in a committed relationship. Committed relationships offer us the container to go to depth because they provide the safety to take the risk of showing up in honesty, passion and vulnerability. To be able to work through difficult, awkward and even hurtful feelings until a place of harmony and reconnection is established.

I honour their desire to make the world a more open hearted and loving place. This book will help you to open your heart and live your life fully. Enjoy.

Kind Regards,  
Nicholas de Castella  
Director, Institute of Heart Intelligence  
W: [www.eq.net.au](http://www.eq.net.au)



# Preface

In a world where less and less is held sacred, Annette Baulch & Graeme Sudholz have a passion for awakening the world to the full potential of committed intimate relationships.

They've developed a framework for exploring relationship, intimacy and sexuality at a multi-dimensional level in a way that's profound, yet straightforward. Their work is clear, non-judgmental, real and inspiring – kind of like themselves. Because of the depth of their own journey, Annette and Graeme aren't afraid to be upfront about subjects that have most of us cringing in our seats. And their matter-of-factness then allows us to become more comfortable in our own skins.

Their own relationship began in 2001 at an emotional intelligence workshop where both of them were trying to learn why their former marriages had ended. Annette (then a nurse) says that meeting Graeme (then a farmer) was like, “stepping into a hurricane,” because he “lives his life at a level of intensity that both challenges and excites me”. Meanwhile, Graeme says that Annette has “taught me – and continues to teach me – who a woman is and what she's really capable of”.

Many personal development workshops later, the couple somehow discovered Tantra: an ancient eastern philosophy about living life (including sex) as an art that they've explored and adapted to their own learnings. Making the shift from a traditional rural life of farming and nursing to being world-class relationship counsellors and workshop facilitators has been a huge one, as you can imagine (or maybe you can't). It has also taught them the skills they bring to you here.

## Some words from Annette

This book has ultimately come about through a little ‘feeling magic’ of my own. One day, I found myself feeling overwhelmingly depressed at how badly my relationship of 20 years was going. How could it be this hard when both of us were giving it everything we knew? Maybe we didn’t really love each other? I knew this wasn’t true, but love just didn’t seem to be enough, even *with* a couple of counsellors helping to fix our problems.

That relationship eventually ended, and seeking to learn from my mistakes, I was lucky enough to find some great teachers. Gradually, learning stopped being about ‘fixing’ myself, and instead became a process of self-love and healthy exploration of life, relationship and feeling. I learnt about the place in me where love, trust, courage, empathy, compassion, gratitude and many other qualities necessary for real relationship (and life) arise. After so many years of suffering, it felt like magic.

During this time I tentatively moved into a new relationship with my current partner Graeme, and was *that* ever a whole new world! But amazingly, many of the exact same struggles started arising as in my previous relationship. I slowly learnt the truth of what was happening – that a relationship (of any kind) is ultimately about how I’m being in my relationship with myself. In other words, I needed to ‘do relationship’ from inside me.

Along the way I discovered a fascination with sex (because this also lives inside me), and its mysterious power. It took me many years to learn just how powerful sexual feelings are, and how they can either be the biggest gift or the biggest hurt in any intimate relationship.

This is the basis of my story. Magic, sex and discovering my sense of self have led me into my life’s work. Alongside Graeme, I now support couples and individuals in finding their own unique relationship roadmap for a relationship first with *themselves* and then with their significant other.

## Some words from Graeme

I remember standing in front of the workshop of my successful farm in late 1996, looking around at all I'd achieved, yet feeling empty and bitterly disappointed. I'd lost my direction. I was a father and husband, but totally clueless in understanding myself, let alone knowing how to be in relationship.

Because of this, my marriage ended, which was the catalyst that exploded me out of my complacency. The months following my separation were a very dark and scary time. I was lucky to have caring friends who supported and 'pushed' me into the personal development workshop where I first met Annette.

Here the lid came off everything I'd bottled up my whole life, and I realised I had some serious work to do on myself. My greatest fear was "Take the farm out of the boy, and who am I?" I measured my self-worth in material achievements, attaching very little – if any – value to self-awareness. It wasn't until eventual bankruptcy and total financial annihilation hit me that the penny finally dropped.

In my relationship with Annette, we both chose to go full-on into this work. We did every workshop we could find, sharing our lives and our passion together. I soon realised the importance of healthy sexuality, and how I'd limited mine as a result of early childhood experiences. I also really began to understand and appreciate the gift of being in a committed relationship where personal growth is encouraged and supported, especially in developing happy, healthy intimate longevity.

Along the way, I've met many people who've all had one thing in common: emotional stuff. And I discovered that what makes the difference in successful relationships is choosing to do something about that emotional stuff. It's a choice that we all have.

This book is Annette's 'baby', and during her process of writing it, I've stopped and taken stock of exactly what I've achieved for myself. Getting to know myself better since that time of desolation feels like a worthwhile

achievement, and one I share with others who are challenged by life – even if there’s no tractor or paddock in sight any more. (Although I do still indulge my fetish for driving ‘big yellow Tonka toys.’)

## **How to get the most out of this book**

This book contains lots of information about a very personal and intense subject. (The 4 years it’s taken to write it has felt like doing our own personal Phd). Our suggestion is to take in as much as you need at any one time, then keep coming back to it when you’re ready for more. There are some parts that may take more than one reading, for what they’re appealing to lies beyond your ordinary thinking mind. Use it as a resource for when you want some affirmation, inspiration or answers to a challenge. You can delve as lightly or as deeply as you desire for there is enough on offer here to last you a lifetime!

## **This book is about doing**

Knowledge and understanding are very helpful tools, but they’re NOT the lived experience. As Mahatma Gandhi said, “Knowledge gained through experience is far superior and many times more useful than bookish knowledge.” Because of this, we offer a minimal amount of scientific data in this book (though we do refer to people who do offer it). Instead, we focus on your experience (and reflecting on these experiences). So become your own experimenters and find your own solutions to your unique relationship challenges. We support you by offering a range of different activities so you can find your own combination.

To bring in something new and break old habits, you need to take action. Give yourself permission to get it wrong: even if you make mistakes, you’ll always learn something – and this is much, much better than doing nothing. Simply reading this book won’t help your relationship like doing something about it will! So, read the book and then practice, practice, practice, learning something new each time.

## A couple of final words about this book

This book is a unique document covering some of what Graeme and I have learned about relationship (the bits that are suitable for printing!) As we've said, much of it is based on our own personal experience, our clients' experiences, reading hundreds of books and learning from other professionals.

Because we started out as two very mainstream folk the people who've been attracted to our work have mostly been of a similar ilk (although we've met many and varied other people along the way). This means that we most often talk from a male/female relationship dynamic – it's where our experience is based. It *doesn't* mean that we don't accept or value people and relationships of all types, be they cis-gender, transgender, gay, lesbian, queer, asexual or questioning. Nor does it mean that this book won't be able to help people outside of male/female relationships: much of what we cover is just about being human.

And because this book includes sexuality we need to talk about genitals, which brings us a dilemma. People are very different in how they relate to this part of their bodies, including the names they give them. As we can get into trouble whichever way we choose to describe genitals – whether in functional, poetic or common slang terms so we've chosen to use the words which are most familiar to us. We invite you to substitute your own.

Additionally, it's important to mention that Graeme and I wrote this book together. But then, when we got it to the editing stage, we realised that if we only ever used the word 'we' to talk about ourselves, it quickly got confusing for you as a reader. It became ambiguous as to whether any given 'we' meant us specifically, or human beings in general.

Because of this, you'll often see us use the words 'Graeme and I'. That's just for clarity, and doesn't mean Graeme was any less involved in writing the book than Annette was.



# Contents

Foreword.....	ix
Preface.....	xv
How to get the most out of this book .....	xviii
Introduction.....	1
Coming Together is a roadmap.....	2
Setting the Stage for Intimacy .....	5
1.1 Finding the value in an intimate relationship.....	5
1.2 Understanding the Relationship Landscape.....	9
1.3 What Actually IS Intimacy? .....	22
1.4 Learning to Feel (and Yes, There’s a Reason for It).....	25
1.5 Vulnerability: The Blessing and Curse of Intimacy .....	32
Surrender and Freedom.....	39
2.1 The ABC of Coming Together .....	39
2.2 Developing Feeling Intelligence.....	46
2.3 The Nature of Mind and the Games that it Plays .....	58
2.4 The Longest, Most Worthwhile Journey from the Head to the Heart.....	68
Connection, Separation and Control.....	77
3.1 Me, You and Us: The Dance Of Intimacy .....	77
3.2 Using your ABC as a relationship tool.....	86
3.3 Dealing with Emotional Triggers.....	91

3.4	Ending The Power Play.....	100
-----	----------------------------	-----

## **Self, Self and Self .....** 105

4.1	Know Thyself First: Acceptance is the Key.....	105
-----	--	-----

4.2	Your Relationship Begins with You.....	108
-----	--	-----

4.3	Trust Your Essence .....	109
-----	--------------------------	-----

4.4	Yes, You are Fascinating: Your Beliefs, Values, Needs and Desires .....	111
-----	--	-----

4.5	The Importance of Inter-Generational Boundaries.....	135
-----	--	-----

## **The Fine Art of Communication .....** 141

5.1	Otherwise known as the finer art of the shit fight .....	141
-----	--	-----

5.2	Finding the Passion .....	157
-----	---------------------------	-----

5.3	Men and Woman are Different.....	165
-----	----------------------------------	-----

5.4	So, Let's Talk About Sex, Baby! .....	172
-----	---------------------------------------	-----

## **Stuckness and State Change.....** 181

6.1	Activities to Shift Your State When You Get Stuck.....	181
-----	--	-----

6.2	Dealing With the Great Debilitator – Shame.....	185
-----	---	-----

6.3	The Ultimate Art of State Change: Dissolving Your Ego .....	191
-----	---	-----

## **Sexeptance .....** 205

7.1	Acknowledging What Lies at Our Core.....	205
-----	--	-----

7.2	Sex - What's in it For Me as a Woman? (by Annette) .....	209
-----	--	-----

7.3	Actually, Men DON'T Want Just Sex (by Graeme).....	235
-----	--	-----

## **Sexploration.....** 259

8.1	When Two Become One.....	259
-----	--------------------------	-----

8.2	Mmmm... Turn Your Volkswagen Into A Ferrari!.....	288
-----	---	-----

8.3	Identifying Your Unique Blocks to Pleasure.....	295
-----	---	-----

The Shadow and the Spy.....	319
9.1 Embracing The Shadow .....	319
9.2 Doing Jigsaws: How To See The Unseen .....	333
Managing The Other .....	341
10.1 Porn vs Romance.....	341
10.2 How to Turn Jealousy Into a Gift.....	345
10.3 When Your Partner's Had an Affair.....	350
10.4 Monogamy, Screwing Around, Open Relationships and Polyamory .....	354
What About Love? .....	361
11.1 The Universal and Personal Heart.....	361
11.2 The Differences between Men and Women in Love.....	366
11.3 The Hidden Person Inside of Us Worthy of Our Love .....	371
11.4 Letting Love In.....	373
Shine and Sustain.....	383
12.1 Creating a Solid Relationship Framework .....	383
12.2 Trust the Process.....	391
12.3 When is it Time For a Relationship to End? .....	402
12.4 Signs You're Creating a Sacred, Intimate Relationship.....	405
Annette, Graeme and Oztantra.....	413
Suggested Reading.....	415



# Introduction

**Welcome.**

**Come in, sit down and make yourself comfortable.**

It's great to have you here. Welcome to the world of intimate relationships.

From here on, when Graeme and I refer to 'relationship' we're referring to an intimate relationship. An intimate and sexual relationship that exists between two adults who share a commitment to being together, married or not, living together or not.

We know it's your deeply instinctual longing for a satisfying, intimate, sexual and loving connection that's brought you here. You want to love and be loved. To desire and be desired. It's what *all* of us want more of. According to researcher Helen Fisher, the need for romantic love and sex is as much a part of our survival system as thirst or hunger.

It's a longing that attracts and terrifies us in almost equal measure.

The good news is that there's a reason for this apparent conundrum. We'll show you how it's all part of being simple-yet-incredibly-complex human beings. We'll also show you how to navigate your way through the minefields of intimate relating. Whether you're looking to fix a troubled relationship or build an extraordinary one, the tools are the same.

Once you've made this commitment to your significant other, how do you continue to feel satisfyingly close to them? How do you feel seen, valued, loved and desired after the initial magic has gone? Is there really magic to love, or is this just an old-fashioned fantasy?

We believe magic IS possible when you address your relationship in a holistic way. Relationships, like life, are an experience lived on many levels: mental, physical, emotional, sexual, heart and soul. This book is a roadmap for relationships at all of these levels (even if you don't believe in souls).

## Coming Together is a roadmap

This book is a roadmap that turns your struggles into *pathways* to what you seek, rather than the immovable obstacles they often seem. Not pathways to a Hollywood happy-ever-after, but instead to something real, tangible and lasting.

### **Most couples try (as we did) things that either don't work or make things worse**

- They think 'if my partner would just... everything would be ok'
- They focus on their children, or on things outside the home like family, friends, work, sport, sex or hobbies to reduce their suffering, at the expense of each other
- They shut down emotionally to avoid hurt
- They mask their fears and frustration by performing in the bedroom rather than co-creating pleasure and connection
- They do the same things and hope for different results.

But Graeme and I have identified that you benefit from connecting *with yourself first*, rather than overly focussing on your partner or the relationship.



*This is because you can only be in a relationship with another person to the extent you're in a relationship with yourself.*



If this sounds selfish, it's actually the opposite – as you'll find out.

We've developed a simple self-connection process that takes you beyond selfishness, which we call **The ABC of Coming Together**. The ABC stands for Attention, Breath and Connection – a mindful connection with yourself – and this one core teaching underpins each of the learnings we've identified in **12 Key Areas of Intimate Relationship**. We've found that the desire for a healthy connection and relationship with another person springs automatically from this deeper connection with the self.

## **You'll start to turn the light on**

If you want satisfying intimacy and sex, you need to be prepared to look not only at your relationship but also inside yourself. You won't find what you most want in the outside world; instead, you'll find it begins within you. You can either look inside together or begin alone, hopefully inspiring your partner to get on board along the way.

## **You'll find that you're 'normal'**

We've found that the only normal thing in relationships is the setting on the washing machine! No matter what you might think, you, your relationship and your sex life (no matter how crazy they all might seem at times) are unique, rather than abnormal.

People (especially 'experts') don't often share what really goes on inside their intimate relationships. But we can tell you from experience that what happens on the inside can look very different to what you might see on the surface of relationships at the restaurant, school or office. It seems that all really is fair in love and war.

We've learnt, though, that successful relationships aren't about trying to be perfect because perfection doesn't actually exist. It's about having the courage to be real – to be yourself and trust in the love that brought you together, without letting it wilt away under the pressures of domesticity (or at least not to stay there). If you can get comfortable with your

## Coming Together

relationship being messy, uncomfortable and uncertain at times, you'll find the most amazing gifts within it.

So as you journey through the pages of this book with us, Graeme and I invite you to give yourself permission to get a bit messy. Trust us: the results will be worth it.



# Setting the Stage for Intimacy

## 1.1 Finding the value in an intimate relationship

If you're like most of us, you've entered into your intimate relationship in a state of openness and desire. You have a heady feeling that despite the odds, you've somehow found something uniquely special that will last, and see a lifetime of blissful togetherness stretching ahead of you.

Unfortunately, relationships too often descend over time into a source of hurt, fear and frustration that feels like a betrayal of the happy-ever-after you were somehow 'promised'. Even if your relationship is relatively happy, you can still be left with the feeling that there's 'more' you're missing out on.

It can seem easier to say "this is not for me" and walk away, or suffer on in silence.

Intimacy is about so much more than ending our aloneness. If 'not being alone' was *all* we needed, there would be no suffering in relationships. We'd just get together and be happy. The reality is so often different, yet

we continue to seek relationships in some form or other despite their difficulties. The modern challenge is to find new meaning and purpose within our intimate relationships. It's to find the 'more' we all suspect is there.

Graeme and I believe that it *is* possible to have it 'all' in relationship, but that this 'all' looks different to what most people think. It's not about getting everything you want. Instead, it's about a greater uncovering of your authentic selves: your multi-layered 'whole selves' (some would even say soul selves). These are the selves that you can enjoy discovering through each other, over the years it takes them to emerge.

What do we mean by your authentic self? You're being authentic when your external self reflects your internal self: when what you say and how you act matches how you feel and what you believe inside you. We've found that greater authenticity offers greater happiness, love and meaning in intimate relationship. It's the adventure of a lifetime!

## **Human beings are built to heal**

In my 30-odd years as a registered nurse, I (Annette) learnt how our amazing human bodies are built to heal. Our psyches (who we think we are) are built the same way. Through intimate love and sex, our psyches seek opportunities to rejuvenate the parts of ourselves that have become unavailable due to emotional wounding, or that have simply lacked an opportunity to blossom.

Our intimate relationships are our psyches' unconscious attempts to heal unresolved hurts from our past and realise our potential. Relationships are *unconsciously designed* to trigger us into our deepest places in order to heal or awaken them. Think of them as being like lancing a wound to remove the pus, or providing a warm spot in the sun for a flower to open. If we handle it correctly, bumping up against our partners in the challenge of intimacy removes both the rough edges of our hurts and our unseen limitations. This then reveals more of our diamond selves shining

## 1: Setting the Stage for Intimacy

within. It's how we need each other in the deepest of ways that lie beyond the obvious.

We get a taste of this healing and awakening when we first fall in love, as two of the most powerful natural forces in the world – love and sex – unite. We somehow feel bigger, brighter, smarter, more capable and even omnipotent because we love this person, and they love us.

This is the inherent (and awesome) magic that lives within each relationship, and within each of us as individuals. It's magic that, at some level, we all still want to believe in. Our task then is to see the true nature of this magic, to cultivate its 'bigness' and minimise the moments that dim its glow.



*Relationships make sense when we see them this way: as an intimate system for awakening and healing ourselves, for sharing the gifts of who we are. And for supporting our partner to do the same.*



### **We're shown what love can be**

Even more than this, when we look up from earning our next dollar, accumulating our next possession or getting our next need met, our intimate relationships remind us of the existence of love in the world.

Relationships are like life: not just a concept of our minds but an experience to be lived. Whilst we live our lives alone in the stories of our minds, baffled by our own bullshit, it's easy to consider ourselves completely self-sufficient, independent and fair-minded beings. Having someone move into our cave, see us right up close and tell us where to clean up our act puts our beliefs about who we think we are to the ultimate test.

When we experience the gritty, everyday face of intimacy as an opportunity for growth, we really *get* life at a profound level. We understand the vastness of real love. Love that shows us moments in our humanity so precious that we're blown away by their divinity. Without being able to explain it, we see that 'falling in love' is just the first step, and there's so much more to it.

## **We're also shown the true potential of sex**

Part of relationship magic is taking ownership of our sexuality and the gifts it offers beyond mere procreation and itch scratching. In its fullest potential, sex is about allowing ourselves to be fully vulnerable, seen, loved and loving. In it we open ourselves up to heart-connected, healing and life-sustaining pleasure. We get glimpses of total freedom, expansion and ecstasy.

In this way sexual pleasure and connection are much more than a self-indulgent act. They're a pathway for healing – a place to safely open in places where we've been contracted, sometimes for a lifetime. It offers us unlimited experiences of our inner mysteries and life-force energy. It's where the magic and longevity of intimacy for the long run lives. That's worth being alive for.

## **It's the work of a lifetime**

It takes time to get all these layers – a lifetime, in fact. That's why Graeme and I believe in the value of committed, long-term intimate relationships for offering unlimited potential in achieving love, connection, pleasure and meaning in life to those who seek them. When you take charge of yourself in your relationship and sexuality in this way, you move a long way toward becoming all you can be in life. This is how a long-term relationship becomes a never-ending exploration of what's possible, maintaining its spark long after its point of ignition.

## 1.2 Understanding the Relationship Landscape

No matter how intimate it might seem, your relationship isn't just about you sitting across from your partner at dinner, sharing a smile, feeling desire and perhaps wondering who's going to pick the kids up from school tomorrow. It's influenced by the many generations that have gone before you, and the current world you live in.

Stephanie Cootz, author of *Marriage, A History: How Love Conquered Marriage*, says that couples originally got together to propagate the survival of the species, and then to build family alliances and strategic property ownership. It's only in the last 250 years that relationships have become about individual romantic love, and only in the last 50 that they've involved any sort of equal partnership.

We're all now freer to create our own relationship styles and we're as influenced by our peers and the world around us as we once were by our parents, our cultural and traditional family values.

Like it or not, relationships have entered the age of 'me', with a belief in our specialness and our right to happiness. We now enter relationships with higher expectations than ever before. We want our spouses to be partners, lovers, soulmates, friends, providers, nurturers, buddies, therapists, mind readers, financial planners and a place to belong. And we need them to be all these things with less support from our traditional support networks, and for longer as our average life expectancy increases.

*"In the modern industrialised Western world where I come from, the person whom you choose to marry is perhaps the single most vivid representation of your own personality"*

Committed, Elizabeth Gilbert

## Coming Together

As we've made great strides in creating physical safety, social and financial security for ourselves we're now less likely to seek it from our romantic relationships. Instead, our focus is on our more personal, intangible, but equally important, internal reality. We expect our intimate relationships to provide seemingly paradoxical qualities like:

- Security/Support/Comfort/Belonging
- Familiarity/Identity/Fidelity/Longevity
- Fun/Pleasure/Adventure/Excitement
- Intimacy/Connectedness/Freedom/Autonomy
- Love/Sex/Mystery/Meaning/Happiness.

We no longer seek to disappear into the comfort of coupledness. Instead, we want to remain ourselves *as well as* having all the benefits of being in a relationship. And in the age of unlimited choice, we not only want it all, we want it *now*.

As a result, we're at much more immediate risk of suffering from emotional wounding to our ego than we are from global warming or international terrorism. And the answers to the painful paradoxes in the things we desire can only be found inside us. So how do we go about finding these answers?

## Gaining the required knowledge and skills

*“Most of the time, we fall in love but can't remain there. The world then calls this state we were in delusion or infatuation. But we were not deluded. We were not just infatuated. We merely lacked, or someone else lacked, the emotional skills to hold onto the magic when the morning came”*

Enchanted Love, Marianne Williamson

## 1: Setting the Stage for Intimacy

As relationships become more complex, most of us still receive very little (if any) training for them, even though they're the potentially most important and fulfilling parts of our lives. Let's face it: if we were offered an extremely exciting yet challenging job that required multiple skillsets we didn't have, very few of us would be willing to sign on without negotiating some training and ongoing support. This is particularly true if our income was to be based on the quality of our daily performance, as our relationship happiness often is.

So why do we do *exactly* this with our relationships?

It's largely because almost everyone around us does exactly the same, including our parents, whom we learn the most about relationships from. This lack is what creates the dreaded 'loss of spark' in a relationship, leaving us thinking that we've fallen 'out of love'.



*Getting the training you need to address the challenges in your relationship allows you to choose understanding over suffering.*



Relationship training helps you to see your partner as a person just like you: someone who dearly wants connection, and who is probably trying just as hard, and hurting just as much as you, rather than your enemy. It helps you to give them a warm hug rather than a cold shoulder.

### **Letting go of the fairy tale**

Your first relationship skill is to challenge the many myths we've been sold about relationship. Myths like the happy ever after. Despite how modern we've become (unless we've grown fashionably cynical), most of us still carry the old-fashioned idea of the perfect fairy-tale relationship in the back of our minds. This happy-ever-after looks unique for each of us, but it usually has a common flavour of effortlessness. We come to a relationship believing that if we start with the right person, claim

ownership of them, then set up house and have a family, we'll somehow effortlessly grow old together into our twilight years... all the way to a shared burial plot.

Holding onto this fantasy makes us lazy. We take our relationship, our partners and even love itself for granted, making them our last priority instead of our first. It's like we believe that once we're in a relationship, everything will magically be OK because we love each other. We do the same with our sex lives, believing they should just happen spontaneously.

Yearning for this impossible mental picture drains our energy and attraction for what's real, causing us to – either consciously or unconsciously – devalue what we have or look around for something better. But real-life relationships don't have to be less than perfect. They can actually be better than we've ever imagined – literally beyond our wildest dreams!

Having an ideal fantasy makes the future seem safe and comforting, because we assume it's certain. Yet it's as if we're saying to life, "I know what's coming, I know what to do and I don't need any help." That means we close ourselves off to the vast potential of life that's so much more than our minds could plan. We keep trusting in the fantasy, rather than in ourselves and in love. Yet falling in love with not knowing opens us up to the magic of what lies beyond us.

What do Graeme and I mean by magic? We don't mean anything woo woo, just things that happen mysteriously and are impossible to explain or understand. This magic could be newness, surprise, chance, serendipity or merely coincidence, but it adds interest and even enchantment into our relationships. Believing in magic means we don't need the safety of knowing the end result, we can trust what lies on the other side of fear and certainty. It means we trust that each step is creating the next step, and that each step also creates our future.



### **Letting Go of the Fairy Tale**

Recognise and be willing to grieve the loss of your idealised fantasy relationship. For your relationship to last, your childlike ideals must die in the face of reality to allow what's genuine, authentic and magical to grow. Take a breath and relax. Nothing is wrong here.

1. Together or separately, write all your dreams of perfection down on a piece of paper. The more you come up, with the better. Depending on how attached you've been to your fantasy, this might bring up some fear and sadness. Know that this is healthy, and let yourself have a good cry if you need to.
2. Light a candle in a safe place and burn your paper.
3. See yourself leaving these limitations safely behind you and visualise a fresh new page for you to create on.

Once you've done this, you'll open up to the unknown possibilities of your real-life relationship and get excited about them. And if your relationship isn't all you've dreamed of, you'll be motivated to take some of the actions in this book to help it become so!

## **Other Relationship myths**

These myths can become sacred cows that aren't open to question, but we need to question them if they aren't working for us. For example:

- I'll be in one relationship for my whole life. *This is statistically not as likely as it used to be.*
- My relationship needs to involve someone of my 'opposite' gender plus children. *Look around you, there are gender diverse relationships everywhere.*
- I have a 'twin flame', and all I have to do to live happily ever after is find them. *This can be true, but much time is wasted in wishing for it to happen.*

## Coming Together

- My partner will complete me, and I'll never be alone again. *Loneliness still happens in relationships, and another person can never complete you the way you can complete yourself.*
- If someone truly loves me, they'll automatically know what I need and want without me having to ask. *Your partner is not your parent, and you are no longer an infant.*
- It's wrong to hurt my partner's feelings, so I should avoid being honest. *Avoiding honesty hurts more in the long run, because it builds walls and denies your partner the real 'you' to be in relationship with. If most of us are really honest, we do this more to protect ourselves from being seen than to protect our partners.*
- I must hold onto my relationship no matter what. *Being willing to let a relationship go means you're willing to take a risk on what's real rather than hold on to a fairy tale.*
- My relationship shouldn't be like my parents' relationship. *Sometimes it will, and sometimes it won't.*
- A good relationship is about denying myself to make my partner happy. *As you become more strongly based in your ego self, this one-sided approach simply doesn't cut it.*
- If I can't love my partner enough, there's something wrong with me. *Your partner needs to love themselves first, just like you do.*
- Habits and routines are the death of a relationship. *It's normal to create habits, our brains teach us to do this, as it would be terrifying to have to continually start everything from scratch. The important thing is to create habits and routines that work for you.*
- Disagreeing with my partner means something is wrong with the relationship. *It just means something more is being revealed, if you know how to look.*
- Good relationships are about 50/50 compromises. *In fact, continual compromise creates resentment. Try each giving 100/100 and notice your results.*

## 1: Setting the Stage for Intimacy

- Having a break will bring me closer to my partner. *This is true only if you make time to look at the challenges in your relationship whilst you're taking the break. Otherwise, it's statistically the beginning of the end.*
- An affair means my relationship is over. *If you're willing to sort it out, your chances of survival – and even having a better relationship than before – are excellent.*
- Once I'm in relationship I will/should not feel attracted to anyone else. *You're human, so that's not how you're made. It's what you do with the attraction that counts.*
- I should never let the sun go down on my anger. *Sometimes getting a good night's sleep can help you resolve things more easily the next day.*
- Having counselling for my relationship means that it's over. *The right relationship counsellor can mean that the good bit is just about to begin.*



### **Exploring Your Beliefs About Relationship**

Bringing your own beliefs to light will help you to decide which ones are serving you.

1. Without censoring them, write a list of as many of your beliefs about relationships as you can, leaving a gap between each belief.
2. Ask yourself where each one came from. Is it a myth or is it true for you? If so, write down the evidence you base this on.
3. Taking each belief one at a time, imagine how would your life would be if you dropped it. How would you feel? What would be different?
4. Rewrite your list with only the beliefs that you now find relevant. Notice how you feel about yourself and relationships afterwards. Freer? Safer? Clearer? Challenged?

The important thing here is to become aware of the beliefs you're operating from, and that the ones you choose support – rather than limit – you.

## Relationships are usually NOT the problem

Most people who struggle in a relationship believe that their relationship is the problem. Graeme and I see that relationships merely become battlegrounds for what is actually going on within themselves. That's why trying to fix a relationship will never fully do the job. Of course it's less challenging because the focus is outside of you and on your relationship, but it won't bring you the results you're looking for. As we've said, people unconsciously choose to be in relationships with those whose personalities challenge whatever is unresolved or unseen within them. This is *real* togetherness! So when things 'go wrong' it's not a relationship problem. It's actually a flag for people to look *inside themselves* to see what's being invited to grow. It's like the airlines say... we all need to fit our own oxygen masks before helping others.



*Rather than blame our partner or our relationship,  
we need to take the opportunity to learn something  
about ourselves: most of our 'stuff' in our relationships  
began even before we met each other.*



When we become more comfortable in ourselves we get more authentic and available for love, life and our relationship with our significant other. Note: this doesn't mean living in denial of our partner's behaviour. Rather, it means getting clear in our own, so we can deal with theirs more effectively.

## Building relationship glue

It's easy to pay lip service to the idea that relationships take work to be successful. Unfortunately, most of us leave doing that work until things go really wrong – perhaps even until our partner is about to walk out (or

has walked out) the door. Working on our relationships is much more pleasurable and successful when we start before we're struggling.

It allows us to build a 'glue' that will keep us together when normal relationship challenges arise. Instead of sorting out problems with the dreaded 'We need to talk...' conversations, we choose to communicate in ways that invite each other into our respective worlds and create a safe space for relating. It's vulnerable, but it works.

Research by John M. Gottman, Ph.D has shown that couples who make the effort to connect with and truly know each other have consistently better relationships than those who don't. This effort gives us a sense of being on the same team before we get into opposing corners. And the more connected we're with ourselves, the more we have to share – and the more we see the value in learning about our partner.

## Doing' relationship from the *inside* ...

We all long to feel close and connected to another person. But it feels even better – and it's more powerful – when we can experience this through connection with ourselves as well. In fact, connection with ourselves is vital to good relationship.



*We can only be connected to another person to  
the degree we are connected with ourselves.*



Being in connection with ourselves means becoming more actively aware of our thoughts, feelings and physical bodies. It means being at home inside ourselves, living from our authentic centre. From our centre, we waste minimal energy creating suffering or pain, and blaming our partner or ourselves for it. Instead, we create a greater abundance of love, understanding, support, respect, fun, creativity, pleasure and all the things that make a relationship work.

## Another aspect of ‘doing relationship’ from the inside

A young couple comes to see us. They’re both disconnected and hurting. She’s fed up with his insensitive attempts at sex and wants something more intimate. He’s bored with being told he’s ‘doing it wrong’ and is about ready to give up, yet can’t because he loves her. She’s feeling hurt and frustrated and he’s feeling rejected, shamed and lost.

### ***Do Men = Sex, Women = Love?***

What these two are acting out is a very common relationship scenario that’s driven by the idea that men bring sex into a relationship and women bring love.

Graeme and I see this belief as another myth, and believe that challenging it transforms the potential for intimacy between men and women. It brings the walls of separation tumbling down and forms a part of the foundation we work from.

The stereotypical belief that men want sex and women want love works fine in the early days of relationship when both sex and love are abundant. But as the effortlessness of a new relationship fades, this view becomes at least a limitation and at worst a power-driven nightmare. This is because it puts the power within your relationship *outside* of you, and *into* the other.

As a man, you’re left seeking what your woman controls – sex, for she has the ultimate veto rights. And as a woman, you’re left seeking what you most desire from your man – his intimacy and his love, which has fallen away. This leaves both of you open to the deepest wounds of relationship: emotional abandonment and rejection. This dynamic can and does, of course, happen the other way around, but the underlying premise is the same – that what we most want lies outside our control. It’s a very painful place to live.

## 1: Setting the Stage for Intimacy

What you might not realise in this equation is that when a man shuts down sexually from too much sexual rejection, he also shuts down emotionally, and you'll understand why shortly. His partner then chastises him for wanting sex whilst not being emotionally available.

The other side of this equation that is a woman who closes her heart from a lack of intimacy (both in sex and outside of it) shuts her sexuality down. Again, you'll understand why soon. Her partner then invalidates her for not being sexually available.

As a result, both partners try to micro-manage the other to get their needs met, playing out the old saying that 'women fake orgasms and men fake relationships'. Each person is left needing what the other has and feeling incomplete without it, like two halves seeking each other to make one whole. Or if you're playing out the opposite dynamic where men have the low interest in sex and women the high you might both be faking relationship and orgasms.

This is because each person is playing from their weaknesses. They're socially conditioned to believe that men's strengths are sex and women's strengths are love. This conditioning makes it easier to judge each other – seeing men as unfeeling, selfish masochists and women as cold-hearted, complaining withholders – than to create loving connection.

We find challenging this belief moves our clients from suffering to healing, bringing each person into a loving, juicy, authentic connection with both themselves and with each other.

### **Men = Love, Women = Sex**

Instead of looking to their partner (whom they can't control) each person needs look *inside of themselves* for what's missing (which they can). In doing so, they become more whole in themselves. The irony is that when our clients do this, they find to their surprise and joy that their partner is automatically more attracted to them, and will often fall over themselves to offer them what they long for.

## What do you look inside yourself for?

### ***Men: Your sexual-heart connection***

When you feel and own the power of your heart, and you're unafraid to connect it to your sex, you become empowered in yourself. You're no longer driven by your sexual desires; instead, they become a conscious choice. You step out of shame and make love rather than just 'get off'. You no longer feel the need to 'play the game' to get your desires met, so you can be your authentic self.

Sexual rejection becomes less painful because you remain connected to yourself – and meanwhile, rejection paradoxically becomes less likely. Your heart exudes a love that has power far beyond ego, romance or anything commonly seen as love in our current superficial society. You go fearlessly and deep into feeling and lovemaking, focussing on heart-opening pleasure rather than on performance.

Your depth, passion and safety draws your woman close. It may also piss her off at times, as you'll be less manipulated by her agenda, and less likely to tolerate her being anything less than who she's capable of being. You'll have greater ability to take life head on, no matter what it brings.

### ***Women: Your heart-sexual connection***

When you own the power of your sexuality and are unafraid to connect it to your heart, you become empowered in yourself. You're no longer driven by a need for intimacy outside of yourself, because you find it within. You can step out of neediness, and embrace pleasure and connection, rather than being controlled by them.

You no longer feel the need to give yourself away in order to get your needs met: instead, you can be your authentic self. Emotional abandonment is less painful because you don't abandon yourself in your vulnerability. Paradoxically, abandonment becomes less likely. You know how to go willingly and joyously into pleasure, focussing on opening your heart to yourself rather than on getting love from your lover.

Your radiance, juiciness and surrender will draw your man close. It may also piss him off, as you'll no longer tolerate anything less than his full presence. You can express yourself clearly and nurture others from a place of inner abundance, rather than need. You too will have an ability to stand up in life and be who you are, no matter what.

## Heart-sexual connection brings you home



*We see it over and over in our work with couples.*



When we talk about heart-sexual connection, we're not talking about the specific actions of love and sex. Instead, we're talking about how you're being inside yourself in that place where love and sex arise from. What you then do with that way of being is up to you.

We're aware that these ideas have stereotypes and limitations of their own, and that each relationship will have their own version of this dynamic. That's why we believe it's worth exploring to find your own core of truth within it. Much is being said these days, due to an oft-repeated quote from the Dalai Lama, about the power of Western women to save the world. We think the world is too complex for the answer to be that simple and believe it will take open-hearted men as well as empowered women. We reveal how in the following pages.



### **Men = Sex / Women = Love Myth Review**

- Take some time to review your response to these ideas. Was your immediate response that it was true for your spouse, but not for you? But if it is true for one, surely it is true for both?
- Ask yourself what is it that you most want from your partner? And ask them what is it they most want from you?

# Annette, Graeme and Oztantra

Annette Baulch and Graeme Sudholz are specialist couples counsellors. Since 2006, they've facilitated Oztantra couples sessions, weekend workshops, Ultimate Couples Getaways and Ecstasy & Intimacy retreats for couples seeking more intimate and heart-connected relationships in Australia and overseas. They're known for changing lives through changing relationships. They're quietly achieving an enviable success rate in helping couples to stay happily together (the remainder have invariably left it too late before seeking assistance).

A couple themselves since 2002 they've created a depth of connection, intimacy, trust, honesty, pleasure, passion and purpose beyond their wildest dreams. Even better, it thrives in the face of the many challenges of harsh reality.

Annette and Graeme teach about relationship and sex in a personal, open-hearted and knowledgeable way that allows their clients to feel both heard and met. Their career choice was initially very confronting for a quite traditional couple, yet the rewards for both them and their clients have been profound. They're happy to meet couples wherever they're at – from simply wanting to spice up their sex life to illuminating love in their darkest corners.

You can visit Annette and Graeme at [www.comingtogetherbook.com.au](http://www.comingtogetherbook.com.au) and [www.oztantra.com](http://www.oztantra.com) or look out for them in magazine articles, radio and TV appearances, or their industry's annual Australasian conferences. They both have Diplomas in Counselling, and they're grateful to

## Coming Together

have trained with some of the world's best practitioners of emotional intelligence, Tantra and relationships: Dr Jo Horwood, Nicholas De Castella, Charles & Caroline Muir, Oceana & Icarus, Bodhi Avinasha Deborah Anapol, PhD, and have been influenced by hundreds of others through the works that line their bookshelves. They've been invited to happy clients' weddings and anniversary celebrations that would not have happened without their support.

Annette and Graeme know all too well that many couples out there wonder behind closed doors if it's all worth it. They don't have all the answers (even though they're both approaching their 60s and should know better), but they're willing to take the journey with you to find them.

**Coming Together** is a definitive, no apologies roadmap for a successful intimate relationship. Learn to create a deeply satisfying bond that lasts long after the honeymoon spark. This book normalises any struggles you might be going through without blame and offers solid and lasting tools to take you into increasing clarity and sustainable love.

Using our roadmap:

- You'll find insight and suggestions to help you both fall in love with and desire your partner over and over again
- Making love will become a place of safety, connection and life sustaining pleasure
- Our simple ABC practice will become your go-to tool during times of challenge, helping you grow together rather than apart

*This is a book for those who want success in their relationships. Having known Annette and Graeme over the long journey of self-discovery which has culminated in this roadmap, I'm in awe at the clarity, tenderness, inspiration and hope contained in here.*

**Dr Andrew Horwood, Melbourne, Australia**



Annette Baulch & Graeme Sudholz have been relationship counsellors, sex therapists and retreat facilitators with a tantric flavour since 2006. Their inclusive approach is known for changing lives through changing relationships, as couples learn to open their hearts and come home to love.

