



# COUPLE THERAPY: DOES IT WORK?

*The Modum Bad Family Unit Study shows promising results*

Terje Tilden

The title of the study:

The course and outcome of dyadic adjustment and individual distress during and after residential therapy.

I: Tilden, T. (2008). Integrative Practice: Presentation of an Inpatient Family Therapy Program. *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, 19 (4), 379-403.

*This article presents the context and treatment program of the Family unit, following a case vignette. The treatment model is suggested as "integrative practice".*

II: Tilden, T., Hoffart, A., Sexton, H., Finset, A., & Gude, T. (accepted). The role of specific and common process variables in residential couple therapy. *Journal of Couple and Relationship Therapy*.

*We found that learning specific skills in communication and conflict management predicted unspecific process variables: hope/optimism, empathy, trust/safety, and insight.*

III: Tilden, T., Gude, T., & Hoffart, A. (2010). The course of dyadic adjustment and depressive symptoms during and after couples therapy. A prospective follow-up study of inpatient treatment. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 36, 43-58.

*We found significant improvement on all measures during the treatment period that was maintained at one-year follow-up with one exception; a relapse on Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Could this be due to increased, though adaptive, couple disagreement?*

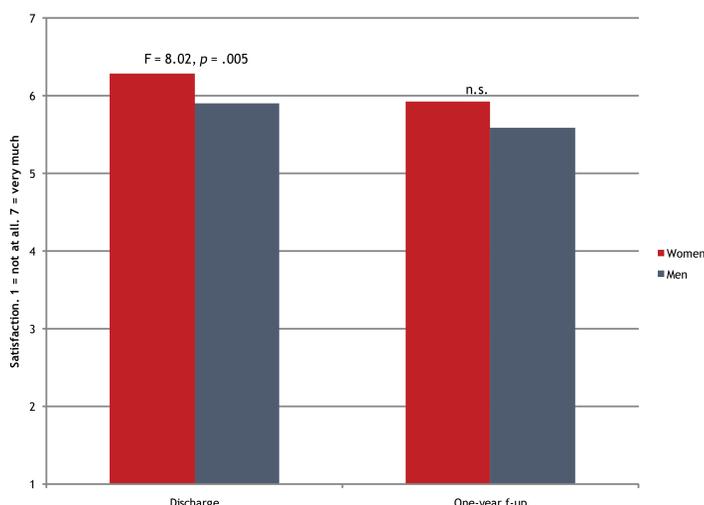
## Study overview:

Terje Tilden has studied a three-year cohort of 220 adult couple therapy patients (2001-2003) attending a residential family therapy program at the Family unit. The study aims were twofold:

- Program-evaluation
- Exploring relationships between (a) individual symptoms and relational distress, and (b) different process variables

## STUDY I:

Satisfaction for women (n= 89) and men (n = 86) at discharge and one-year follow-up

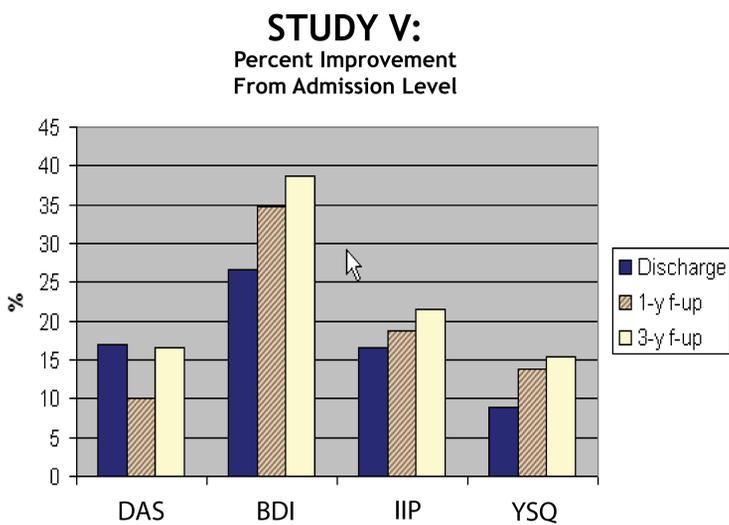


IV: Tilden, T., Gude, T., Sexton, H., Finset, A., & Hoffart, A. (2010). The associations between intensive residential couple therapy and change in a three-year follow-up period. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 32, 69-85.

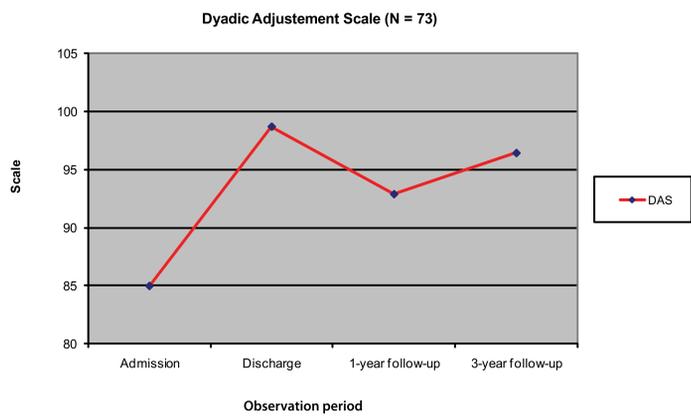
*The findings indicate that improvement achieved during therapy was maintained at three-year's follow-up. Program evaluation: Three-year's improvement levels may be related to treatment.*

## STUDY V:

Dyadic Adjustment Scale (N= 73)



**DAS:** Dyadic Adjustment Scale  
**BDI:** Beck Depression Inventory  
**IIP:** Inventory of Interpersonal Problems  
**YSQ:** Young's Schema Questionnaire



V: Tilden, T., Gude, T., Hoffart, A., & Sexton, H. (2010). Individual distress and dyadic adjustment over a three-year follow-up period in couple therapy: A bi-directional relationship? *Journal of Family Therapy*, 32, 119-141.

*Variations in BDI predicted variations in DAS at each subsequent time point. Level of dyadic adjustment at discharge predicted change in depressive symptoms at follow-up. Therefore, clinical implications suggest an emphasis on reducing depressive symptoms during couple therapy.*



**TERJE TILDEN** is a clinical social worker/family therapist defending his PhD in 2010.