

Marriage for gay couples is now an option in Illinois.

This commitment requires serious thought and discussion. While sharing many of the same needs as other married couples, gay men have *unique* challenges that deserve special attention and time, such as:

- navigating various stages of being out and the levels of acceptance between families
- deciding if, how, and when to have children
- challenging dismissive attitudes about long-term gay relationships
- managing the stress of the ever-changing political and legal landscapes
- reviewing and renewing levels of commitment for established couples



Ron Pajak is an LCSW who has extensive experience providing counseling to LGBT populations. He has years of experience with diverse populations regarding age, ethnicity, gender, orientation and socio-economic status. He works with individuals, couples, families and groups.



RON PAJAK, LCSW
5115 N Ravenswood, 2nd Fl.
Chicago, IL 60640
(312) 925-7800
ron@ronpajaklcsw.com

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"This is my husband."

Explore what this means to you.

Premarital
Counseling for
Gay Couples





The goal of this 6-week experience is to:

- facilitate communication
- develop a concrete understanding of each other's goals as individuals and your future dreams as a couple
- explore potential challenges as you enter into your life together

At the conclusion of these conversations, you will be able to:

- define what marriage means to you
- articulate your mate's individual needs
- articulate the goals for your life together
- communicate in a way that supports and validates the expression of feelings directly to each other
- develop conflict-management skills
- develop a shared understanding of what your new family system means to each other, your families, friends and community



Before we begin

There is the option of a free 20-minute meet and greet session that would allow for you to determine the fit. During this time, we can discuss the areas of interest of particular importance to you, scheduling options, and address any other questions.

Perhaps it's time to revisit topics that may have already been addressed. If some don't apply to you, there is room to explore areas that may be particular to your relationship.

Over the course of our work, we will talk about and attempt to answer the following questions:

- What does it mean to be married during a time when it is not recognized by a majority of the states? Does it involve "coming-out" all over again, this time as a married man with a husband?
- How do you want to formalize the marriage? What does the ritual involve for you?
- What is your conflict-management style and approach?
- What are your attitudes and values about sex? What is your shared understanding about how it fits into your life now and as you age together?
- Will there be children in your future? If so, how and when? How will they be raised?
- **Money** can be a very thorny issue. Getting married can involve greater financial obligation. What are your individual values and goals regarding money?
- How will your families of origin fit into your new family system? For example, how will holiday and social obligations be met?
- How will the household be run? What is the understanding regarding various duties and obligations?
- Are there religious or spiritual practices that need to be discussed and integrated into the couple?



FAQs

Is there a religious component to the work?

No, the foundation for this work is based on emotionally-focused couples therapy. Though there is room to discuss any topic pertinent to the couple, this is not a faith-based practice.

What about cost?

There is a flat fee per session. Using insurance may be an option. Sliding scale available for those who qualify.

What about scheduling?

Each session is 50-55 minutes. Ideally we would carve out a regular time to meet weekly. However, flexibility is always accommodated. There is a 48-hour cancellation policy, barring an emergency.

Learn more about each other

Call (312) 925-7800 or email ron@ronpajaklcs.com