



# Love Relations: Normality and Pathology

By Otto Kernberg

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## Love Relations: Normality and Pathology By Otto Kernberg

Dr. Otto Kernberg, the internationally renowned psychoanalytic theorist and clinician, here examines the success and failure of sexual love in couples, from adolescence to old age.

Dr. Kernberg considers the two partners' conscious and unconscious emotional interactions and their unconsciously activated superego interactions. He also suggests that they establish a joint ego ideal as a couple, which plays an important role in the success of the relationship. And because the couple experiences love and sex in the context of the social environment, he studies the nature of relations between the couple and the group.

After describing the biological and psychological determinants and elements of the sexual experience, Dr. Kernberg traces the nature of that experience over time in the light of object relations theory. He shows how the activation of unconscious, internalized object relations from the past triggers the most troubling conflicts and is also responsible for the most exciting aspects of a couple's love life. Throughout, Dr. Kernberg considers both so-called normal and pathological relationships, including the role of narcissism, masochism, and aggression in each. The result is a book that expands the boundaries of our current understanding of love relations.

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