

About our Collaboration:

Our collaboration began from an understanding of the 'risk factors' couples experience in cross-cultural relationships.

By pooling our knowledge and resources and our desire to raise awareness of the potential significance and subsequent impact of cross-cultural influences on couples relationships by offering an insight into prevention and early intervention marriage and relationship support, we can deliver a shared vision in service provision which delivers the best outcomes for individuals dealing with the negative effects of religious and cultural influences on their marriage, relationship and family life.

About our investment in Marriage and Relationship Education:

RelateWell and PRONIA have been delivering support services targeting cross-cultural couples since 2012.

Providing individuals with the skills and understanding of how they can best manage their marriage and relationship as it develops is a long-term investment in preventing marriage and relationship breakdown and divorce and its associated emotional costs on families and extended families (ie: grandparents, etc).



Contact Us

RelateWell (Family Relationships Institute Inc.)

Suite 102, 398 Sydney Road, Coburg Vic 3058

T 03 9354 8854 E relate@relatewell.org.au

www.relatewell.org.au

Keep in touch with us on [facebook/Family Relationships Institute Inc.](#) or subscribe to our newsletter

PRONIA (formerly AGWS)

7 Union Street Brunswick Vic 3056

T 03 9388 9998 E info@pronia.com.au

www.agws.com.au

Keep in touch with AGWS on [facebook/Australian Greek Welfare Society](#)



PRONIA

Understanding Cross-Cultural Relationships



Two Cultures - One Relationship: How does your culture impact your relationship?

RelateWell (Family Relationships Institute Inc.) and PRONIA (formerly AGWS) are not-for-profit community organisations providing services and support to people at significant life stages. This initiative is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) via the Family and Relationship Services Stream.

A collaboration between RelateWell and PRONIA

What are Cross-Cultural Differences

When two people marry from different cultural backgrounds and opposing beliefs and philosophies, it is these beliefs that are pushed to the forefront, overpowering the individual emotions couples have for one another, thus making them vulnerable to relationship breakdown. Issues which are not dealt with before marriage are further compounded when children come into the picture. Conflicts over differences of fundamental beliefs, in parenting styles, unsupportive families and their influence on their children, come to the fore.

These differences often need to be negotiated in order to coexist in harmony so that each person feels respected and appreciated. This experience can be difficult enough for a couple but when they have cultural and religious differences to negotiate as well, the difficulties may seem overwhelming and some professional assistance is often beneficial.

The manner in which people learn to communicate, express anger, resolve conflict and show affection, is the defining factor of cross-cultural influence on a relationship. Patterns of negative behaviour can include:

- Withdrawing
- Pursuing
- Criticising
- Attacking
- Passive-aggressive behaviour
- Passiveness
- Avoidance
- Emotional abandonment
- Emotional encroachment
- Keeping harmful boundaries
- Internalising
- Externalising
- Taking too much responsibility for the other person, etc.



Some issues experienced by couples:

- Not being accepted by his/her family
- Not living up to expectations and feeling inadequate or judged
- Conflict about religious ceremonies
- Pressure to convert to or follow a particular religion
- Naming children
- Baptising children
- Gender roles and expectations
- Over involved in-laws / parents
- Isolation and feeling like an 'outsider'
- Being cut-off
- Parenting / grandparenting issues
- Standing up for yourself without offending
- Resolving conflict
- Language barriers
- Different values
- Being disrespected or mocked because of cultural differences

The benefits of attending a seminar and/or counselling:

Whether you are engaged, married, living together and/or have children, chances are there will be times in your relationship where you need to negotiate cultural and religious differences and for many people this can be a time of feeling isolated, disrespected and confused. Situations arise where a decision needs to be made and a clash of cultural wills may prevent logic and common sense to prevail.

Attending a seminar and/or counselling will provide couples with the skills and knowledge to understand the family of origin processes which are deeply embedded in their attitudes and behaviours. Being aware of which patterns are the source of an issue in a relationship will allow greater opportunity to work through those patterns which will then lead to a healthier relationship between partners.

Seminar Times and Dates:

Seminar Time: 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm followed by Q & A

Venue: RelateWell Centre, Suite 102 (level 1),
398 Sydney Road Coburg 3058

Cost: \$20 per couple

Please tick date: [] Monday 29 August 2016
[] Monday 24 October 2016
[] Monday 12 December 2016
[] Monday 27 February 2017
[] Monday 24 April 2017
[] Monday 26 June 2017

Counselling Appointments:

Counselling appointments can be made with either Pronia (formerly AGWS) or at RelateWell.; Monday to Friday. To discuss further, contact:

- Family Counsellor at Pronia on 03 9388 9998 at 7 Union Street Brunswick 3056. After hour appointments can be arranged if necessary.
- RelateWell on 03 9354 8854 or email relate@relatewell.org.au. After hour appointments available.