Assessment of Couples and Depression

1. (Patient’s name), did you first experience depressive symptoms before or after the two of you met?
2. (Partner’s name), when did you first become aware of (patient’s name) having depression? How did you become aware of it?
3. What effects have depressive symptoms had on your relationship, in terms of daily life?
4. As people become depressed, couples can experience changes in roles and responsibilities around the house, at work, with children etc. As each of you see it, has this happened with you?
5. When people become depressed, they are often fatigued, lack motivation, don’t enjoy doing things they used to, etc. They may isolate themselves from others and aren’t as interested in participating in activities; their interest in sexuality also decreases. As each of you see it:
   1. How has depression impacted your leisure time together?
   2. How has depression impacted your social life outside your relationship?
   3. Do you feel like depression has changed your sex life in any way?
6. How do each of you think your life together might be different if (patient’s name) did not have difficulties with depression?
7. Is there anyone else (e.g., children) who is affected in any way by (patient’s name) having problems with depression? (If so, explore who and how.)
8. What have the two of you tended to do as a couple to cope with depression? How well has this worked?
9. When someone is depressed, their partner may feel like they need to be very careful around the depressed person and not upset them, so even if the partner is upset about something, they are hesitant to bring it up. Other partners will become frustrated, angry, and critical of the depressed person. Also, some couples talk about the depression a lot whereas others never mention it. As each of you see it:
   1. In what ways has depression changed your communication?
   2. When (patient’s name) either is talking about feeling down, isolating themselves, etc., does it ever lead to anger or arguments between the two of you? What does that look like?
   3. How often do you discuss depression and how it affects both of you, and what does your communication tend to be like at those times?
10. When a relationship is not going well, it is often one of the major factors which contribute to feeling depressed. At the same time, some people find that support from their partner really helps them when they are feeling depressed.
    1. In what ways might conflict or other aspects of your relationship contribute to the feeling of depression?
    2. How does your partner support you during this difficult time? Are there positives aspects of the relationship which help you cope?
11. In this treatment, we’ll be addressing (patient’s name)’s depression by working with both of you as a couple. Have you thought previously about working together as a couple to address depression? How do you feel about undergoing this treatment together?