

## News from X plus Y – Resources For Couples Who Want The Best. Spring 2012



### Colm visits The Gottman Institute.

In October I took the opportunity to visit 'The Gottman Institute' in Seattle while attending a family wedding. The Institute is world famous for its research and practice in marriage and relationships and for its training of therapists to work with couples. I had a meeting with Etana Kunovsky the Executive Director to hear about new developments and to share about my own work in the Highlands of Scotland. ([www.gottman.com](http://www.gottman.com))

### Alness Breast-Feeding Support Network – 'Let's Stick Together' Training November 2011

5 mums came together for the morning to be trained to use 'Let's Stick Together' – a resource for new parents. There was great discussion, much laughter and a real willingness to talk about the highs and lows of becoming a new parent, how it alters the balance of your relationship with your partner and what practical steps you can take to help each other. Further group training sessions with the NHS Highland Breast-Feeding Supporters are scheduled for the Spring. The following are the comments from those who attended.

- I intend using this material in my role as a peer-supporter with other mums and I can see how it will also benefit my own relationship with my partner.
- I will use this information to encourage conversations with mothers to help them open up.
- I really would like to use Let's Stick Together with Dads, in the support we offer.
- I intend to use it when relationship issues come up.
- Through helping referrals via the breast-feeding support work I would hope to be able to offer support if people have difficulties adjusting to being a new mum and partner.

'X plus Y' can be followed on facebook:  
X plus Y – Relationship Resources.  
And on twitter: @columblack

"I thought I would be coming in here to a real shouting match but it has not been like that at all. Thank you for meeting with us Colm. It has been a real blessing to us as a couple."

### Future Developments.

'Positive Parenting'- later this Spring I will be adding Parenting to my portfolio of courses on offer. Positive Parenting will enable me to deliver courses covering: *Early Years, Juniors, Teenagers, Time Out For Dads and support for parents with children who have special needs.* [www.positiveparenting.org.uk](http://www.positiveparenting.org.uk)

### 6<sup>th</sup> National Relationship Education Conference. London Thursday Feb 9<sup>th</sup>

I am delighted to be attending this one day conference in London to keep abreast of the latest research and best practice in relationship education. Topics include: Why relationships matter. Building resilient relationships. Measuring our impact. *Speakers include: Scott Stanley, Centre For Marital & Family Studies, University of Denver. Kathy Jones, Head of Training, The Fatherhood Institute. Katharine Hill, Director of Family Policy, Care For The Family.* For more information: [www.relationshipsfoundation.org](http://www.relationshipsfoundation.org)

**aLive Festival. June 16** 'X plus Y' will be the main sponsor and deliver 2 seminars at 'Equip' – a day conference on supporting families in the community. [www.alivefestival.co.uk](http://www.alivefestival.co.uk)

'The Not-So-Great-Escape' & 'Playing Catch-Up'  
2 new blogs from Colm on  
[www.colm-blackmail.blogspot.com](http://www.colm-blackmail.blogspot.com)

### More Work. Less Talk.

More than a third of parents rarely talk to their children due to increasing pressure at work, according to new research. The survey of 2000 parents by the charity 'I CAN' found that austerity measures and low pay are forcing parents to work longer hours and spend less time with their children. Kate Freeman of 'I CAN' says, "We are concerned about the knock-on effect of these findings on young children who need verbal interaction to build their own speaking and understanding skills, especially in the early years."

Within the next 6 months 'X plus Y' will be applying for Charitable Status through OSCR

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