

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page viii</i>
1 Knowing and not knowing are central to intimacy	1
What are knowing and not knowing in intimate relationships?	2
Why intimate knowing and not knowing are so important	6
Knowing the other well does not guarantee an easy relationship	9
Trust as foundation for knowing	9
The cultural context of this work	12
How we did the research	14
2 How couples build knowledge of one another	29
Trying to know the other	29
Getting to know one another at the start of the relationship	30
Practical reasons for knowing and being known in ongoing couples	39
Knowing and being known as intimacy	42
Curiosity, being nosy, prying, snooping	43
Wanting to be known	46
Truth as a value	48
Spending considerable time together	50
Confrontation	51
Being able to see behind the façade	52
Feeling safe	53
Good listening	54
Getting to higher levels of knowing and being known	55
Conclusion	57
3 How well do you know each other? about 90%	58
Not much is held back	58
The 10% that is not known	59
Experts on each other	61
Doubts and limits in knowing	63
How do you know how well you know the other?	67
Conclusion	73

vi	<i>Contents</i>	
4	Concerns about the other's potential reaction to something not yet revealed	74
	Concerns when the relationship is relatively new	76
	Concerns with partner knowing about one's past relationships	77
	Concerns about money	81
	Concerns about the other's reactions to one's health issues	82
	Concerns about disagreeing	83
	Concerns about the other's reactions to one's failures	84
	Concerns about the other's reaction to one's emotional pain	85
	Concerns about hurting the partner's feelings	88
	Concerns about the partner having contact with one's family	89
	Concerns about causing family (not just couple) conflict	90
	Overcoming concerns about the partner knowing something	90
	Making sense of people's concerns about disclosing to a partner	91
5	What people cannot or would rather not know	93
	There is too much to know	93
	Curiosity limits	94
	Inability to grasp partner realities	96
	Not always wanting to know the truth	100
	Information exchange when a relationship is not doing well	102
	Conclusion	104
6	Processes in being a judicious nondiscloser	106
	"Need to know" decision process	106
	Selectivity processes	110
	Following cultural rules about what to tell and not tell	115
	Summary	117
7	Discovery of lies and secrets	118
	Discovery processes	119
	After discovery of a big secret or lie, then what?	123
	Big lies and secrets that are not discovered may also have costs	127
	Good lies and secrets	128
	Is the truth as clear as it seems in many of the interviews?	131
8	Gender differences in intimate knowing	133
	Women conceptualizing men	133
	The intimacy dance	139
	Do women know men better than men know women or themselves?	141
	He's okay	143
	Making sense of the apparent gender differences	146
9	Family of origin	152
	Openness versus closedness in family of origin	153

	<i>Contents</i>	vii
	But it's not that simple	156
	Family of origin abuse may show up in the couple relationship	158
	Conclusion	160
10	Is it good to know and be known extremely well?	161
	Sometimes knowing and being known too well might be a problem	161
	Often knowing and being known well seems valuable	165
	Interviewees generally vote for knowing and being known well	170
	For people who want advice about their own intimate relationship	171
11	Phenomenology of knowing and not knowing, being known and not known	173
	What a phenomenological approach adds	173
	Essence of lived experience concerning knowing and not knowing	173
	Nature of knowing and not knowing, being known and not known	176
	Knowing, not knowing, and relationship quality	179
	A systems view of knowing and not knowing	179
	Knowing, not knowing, and relationship survival	181
	Knowing and not knowing are linked to other aspects of intimacy	183
	Knowing, not knowing, and culture	183
	<i>Appendix – Interview guide</i>	185
	<i>References</i>	189
	<i>Index</i>	196