

COMPASSIONATE RESILIENCE IN FAMILIES

Sponsored by:
Council on Aging
Forum on Aging
Annual Meeting

Presented by:
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Agenda

- ▣ 8:30 - 9:30 Three Theoretical Approaches:
Bowen, Schwartz and Levine
- ▣ 9:30-10:30 Learned Roles, Rules, Boundaries,
Triangulation, Adaptation and Compassion
- ▣ 10:30 - 10:45 Break
- ▣ 10:45 - 11:30 Stabilizing Techniques to
Reestablish Family System Resilient
Connections
- ▣ Q/A, Evaluations



Family Systems Theory

1950s Dr. Murry Bowen introduced a transformational theory, Family Systems Theory .



What does it mean to say a family is a system?

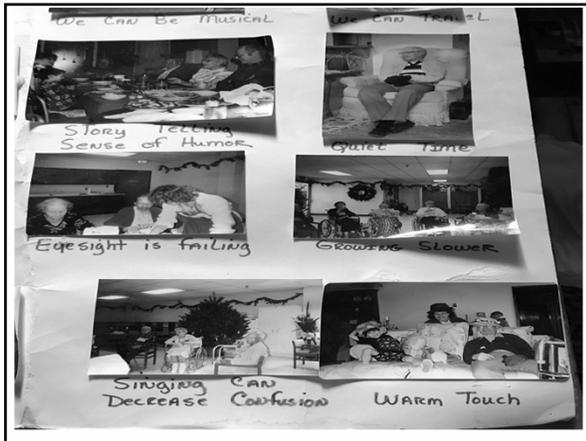
A family is greater than the sum of its parts.

- ▣ As members of a family system every member is interconnected.
- ▣ A mobile. When one piece moves, the whole mobile moves. Movements of one affect the whole system. Pets, Healthcare workers, Neighbors.



Family Systems Theory

- ▣ Within family systems theory the focus is on how we relate to one another. We build a collection of interactions called a system. The system can be a family or a workgroup or a collection of friends.
- ▣ **Focus is on the system rather than just on individuals.** With the system there are qualitatively different elements that help determine what we are and what we can become .



Interconnected



Family Systems Theory

- ▣ Families are **SYSTEMS** : interconnected and interdependent individuals.
- ▣ To understand the individual, we must understand the family system of that individual. People cannot be understood in isolation from one another.

Together We Can Do Anything



Internal Family Systems

Richard Schwartz, PhD 1990

Parts

- ▣ **Managers** ▣ Interact with External World
- ▣ **Exiles** ▣ Young Parts, Hurt, Shame, Fear, Trauma
- ▣ **Firefighters** ▣ Distract attention from Hurt, Shame
- ▣ Prevent hurtful behavior

Healthy Internal Family System

SELF

- Leadership
- Confidence
- Compassion
- Acceptance

Internal Family Systems



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D...>

Resilient Factors

- ▣ Roles
- ▣ Rules
- ▣ Boundaries
- ▣ Triangles
- ▣ Adaptation

Family System Roles

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| ▣ Hero | Protectors |
| ▣ Clown | ▣ Managers |
| ▣ Scapegoat | ▣ Fire Fighters |
| ▣ Protector | |
| ▣ Victim | Protected Parts |
| ▣ Survivor | ▣ Exiles |

Family System Negative Self Talk

- ▣ The Worrier: Promotes unnecessary anxiety in already anxiety ridden work. Use reframing catastrophic thoughts. No more what ifs, instead view working with difficult members as effortless, more simple and harmonious.
- ▣ The Critic: Tells themselves or others things like: I (you are) am so stupid. I can't do this because I have not ever learned how to...Childhood messages or traumatic relationships. Take things in small steps, manageable for member changes.

Family System Negative Self Talk

- ▣ The Victim: feels helpless/hopeless about no end to their helping. If view yourself long enough fosters depression. May think that there is something inherently wrong with them. Suggest that they find out if there is a medical/psychological reason they are stuck, remedy and move forward. Teach about triangulation. Compliments with doable assignments and deadlines.

Family System Negative Self Talk

- ▣ The Perfectionist: Similar self view as the critic. They become frozen in anxiety. Hard-driving/intolerant of mistakes/ driven to exhaustion. Leads to procrastinating and burnout where their own helping goals are rarely achieved. Teach tool. "What is the worst thing that could happen?"

SUDS outcome 1-----10.

Family System Rules

- ▣ Determined by the Role each plays
- ▣ Respect
- ▣ Shame
- ▣ Protection
- ▣ Code of Silence
- ▣ Should Disease
- ▣ Who can talk to who

Who Can Talk to Who Shame



Rules Depend on Core Beliefs

- ▣ Family of Origin, Culture
- ▣ Traumatic Interruptions
- ▣ Personality
- ▣ Physical, Mental Health
- ▣ Economic Status
- ▣ Environment is it stagnant or ever changing
- ▣ Support Mechanism
- ▣ Spirituality
- ▣ Nutrition Awareness and Food Security
- ▣ Education Opportunity

Closed Family System

- ☐ Alcoholic/Drug Abuse
- ☐ Unresolved Grief
- ☐ Chronic Health Issues
- ☐ Hoarding
- ☐ Abuse
- ☐ Neglect
- ☐ Shop alcoholic
- ☐ Work alcoholic
- ☐ ****Secrets
- ☐ Poor communication skills



Open Flexible Families

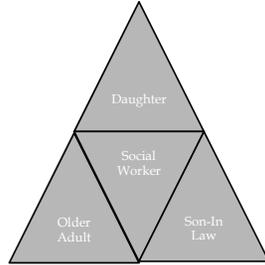


Family System Boundaries

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Teach Managers The Allowing of Exiles Voice and Firefighters Access to Self Care ☐ Teach Exiles Self Soothing Techniques, Trust, Safety, Little Doses ☐ Teach Firefighters to stop, addictions, abuse, impulsivity, acting out | <p>SELF-Led Person</p> <p>Open to Roles</p> <p>Empathic</p> <p>Confident</p> <p>Accepting Rules</p> <p>Intimate</p> <p>Safe to have Voice</p> <p>Give Compassion</p> <p>Accept Compassion</p> |
|---|---|

Triangles

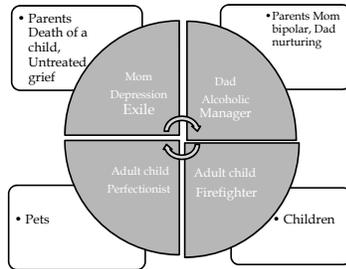
- ☐ 3 Sided: One in Conflict and Two in Harmony
- ☐ Can cause Differentiation of Self Problems
- ☐ Extreme Need for Acceptance



Alternative to Triangulation

- Mental Health
- Physical Health
- Chemical Dependency
- Treatment
- Schema
- Culture
- Spiritual Belief

Get them talking!



Thoughts Are Passed Down Within A Family System

- ☐ All or Nothing Thinking: only 2 categories
- ☐ Overgeneralization: View of a negative event as never ending pattern of defeat
- ☐ Mental Filter: Dwelling on negatives/ignoring positives
- ☐ Discounting the Positives: Ignore your accomplishments/ + qualities don't count
- ☐ Jump to Conclusions: Things are bad without evidence
 - A. Mind reading
 - B. Fortune Telling
- ☐ Magnification/ Minimization: Blow things out of proportion or shrink importance
- ☐ Emotional Reasoning: I feel stupid, so I must be.
- ☐ Should statements: Criticize yourself or others with absolute directives
- ☐ Labeling: Name calling instead of saying, "I made a mistake."
- ☐ Blame: Blame yourself or others without consideration of what else contributed to the problem

Getting to Know a Part

- ▣ Purpose: To help you have a small experience of IFS.
- ▣ Directions:
- ▣ Pick a part you would like to get to know better.
- ▣ It could be a thought pattern, emotion, sensation, inner voice.
- ▣ Focus on it and find it in your body.
- ▣ Notice how you fell toward it.
- ▣ If you feel anything other than curiosity or compassion, then find the parts giving you those other feelings and ask them to step back.
- ▣ If they will not step back, just spend the time learning what they are afraid of.
- ▣ If they will and you do feel at least curious, then get to know what the part wants you to know about itself.

Peter Levine PHD

- ▣ Somatic Psychology Techniques
- ▣ Hate, anger, love, and hope are not psychological states/parts existing in some mental vacuum.
- ▣ They are somatic states that exist in our entire living system. To change these habits we need to change the state or internal part.
- ▣ Become Calm
- ▣ Become Direct
- ▣ Give attention to the body
- ▣ Bottom up techniques

Built In Self-Regulation System

- ▣ Vagus Nerve: 80% of fibers run from body into brain
- ▣ VOO
- ▣ Movement Mirror
- ▣ Yoga
- ▣ Tai Chi
- ▣ Massage

Co Regulation

What your
body needs
and what the
world asks are
often different



Be Present



Ground Your Feet and Breathe



Neurobiology Changes

- ▣ Methylation: amount of how many methyl groups present on serotonin transporter DNA
- ▣ Saliva test
- ▣ Trauma maybe passed down through genes: Epigenetics
- ▣ Living in a Chronically chaotic home?
- ▣ Amount of serotonin transported to amygdala changes DNA
- ▣ Changes in the internal/external family system

Listen



What Does A Compassionate Resilient Family Look Like

- ▣ Calm
- ▣ Curious
- ▣ Confident
- ▣ Courageous
- ▣ Clear
- ▣ Creative
- ▣ Connected
- ▣ Compassionate

Take an Intergenerational Walk



Curious



Be Courageous



Compassion



Connected



Creative Grief

- ☐ Traumatic Events
- ☐ System Ability to Reboot
- ☐ Support
- ☐ Previous Practice
- ☐ Ability to Hope
- ☐ System Adaptation
- ☐ Normative Life Cycle



Questions To Ask Your Clients

- ☐ Do the Manager, Exiles, Firefighters work together = RESILIENT SELF?
- ☐ What types of Negative Self Talk are used?
- ☐ What are their family roles?
- ☐ Who is allowed to talk to who?
- ☐ Who holds the family power?
- ☐ How do they handle crisis?
- ☐ When was the last time they discuss with family members/ friends some solutions.

Treatment Plan

- ☐ Client reports of what is going well
- ☐ How many times did they: Remove self from negative conversations
- ☐ Reminder all parts work together for greater health
- ☐ Let's choose to look at this with "What To Do"
- ☐ Train families to MOVE together
- ☐ Report ways they have accepted: Support
- ☐ Report How Managers and Firefighters have calmed and included Exiles.
- ☐ Reminder Internal Systems are working in harmony with RESILIENT SELF

Compassionate Resilience

- ☐ The family is a structure of related parts or subsystems. Each action or change affects every other person in the family.
- ☐ The family structure has elements that can only be seen in its interactions. Individuals make up a family system. This family system is a complex whole that cannot be understood by examining members separately.
- ☐ Family **Roles**: Patterns of interaction become ingrained habits that make change difficult.
- ☐ Family **Rules**: Each family has certain rules that are self-regulating and peculiar to itself. The family is a purposeful system; it has a goal. Usually the goal is to remain intact as a family.
- ☐ **Boundaries**: For families to function well, subsystems must maintain boundaries.
- ☐ **Adaptation**: Despite resistance to change each family system constantly adapts to maintain itself in response to its members and environment.
- ☐ Systems change through the family life cycle. Changes in family systems are caused by both normative (predictable life cycle changes) and non-normative (crisis) traumas.

Ability to Change

Systems are self reflective. As humans we have the capability to examine our own behavior . This self reflectivity allows us to focus on our systems and set goals. We no longer need to accept that what we experience is

“just the way things are.”

Compassionate Family System

- * Humor
- * Ability to Join
- * Willing to Learn
- * Accept Compliments
- * Accept Criticism
- * Desire to Change Unhealthy Thoughts and Somatic Parts/ Emotions
- * Practice