

Cross-Theoretical Systemic Case Conceptualization 3.0

For use with individual, couple, or family clients

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Clinician: Jacqueline M. Brooks

Client/Case #: Hayman Family

Introduction to Client & Significant Others

Identify significant persons in client's relational/family life who will be mentioned in case conceptualization:

Adults/Parents: Select identifier/abbreviation for use in rest of case conceptualization

: Age: 42 Occupation: Paper Salesman Other:

: Age: 38 Occupation: Unknown Other:

Children/Adult Children: Select identifier/abbreviation for use in rest of case conceptualization

: Age:14 Grade: Other: Student

: Age: Grade: Other:

: Age: Grade: Other:

: Age: Grade: Other:

Others: Identify all: Biological son of AM1 & AF1

Presenting Concerns

Describe each significant person's description of the problem:

: AM142 is sensitive to any criticism and control. AM142 feels that AF138 is trying to change and control him. AM138 cannot have new friends or participate in the activities he enjoys because it creates arguments between AF138 and AM142. AM142 throws himself into his work to avoid problems with AF138.

: AF138 feels neglected by AM142. AF138 feels that AM142 is insensitive, selfish, and emotionally distant. AF138 feels alone and abandoned by everyone in her family. AF138 resents AM142 for making her feel resentment. AF138 did not set boundaries with her feelings concerning CM116, which caused CM1 to resent her.

: CM116 throws tantrums when he cannot get his way. CM116 had no accountability for his actions. CM116 feels that he does not have his own identity. CM116 was not close to AM1. CM116 resented and blamed AF138 for not being able to make friends.

:

Additional:

Broader System: Description of the problem from extended family, referring party, school, legal system, etc.:

Extended Family: AM's mother often criticized his behavior and often did not allow AM to do things outside the house. AM's mother resented him for wanting to do things outside the home and looking like his father. Father left mother, leaving her feeling abandoned. Father was diagnosed

with bipolar disorder, and during his episodes, the father verbally abused AM. During AM's father's episode, he was arrested for physical assault, and sometime later, the father walked out on the family.

Name: AF's choice to attend college instead of staying home in preparation to be a wife and mother causes conflict with her parents. Choosing to go against the family norms resulted in conflict with her family became damaged and distant.

Name:

Background Information

Trauma/Abuse History (recent and past): AF38 emotionally abuses AM42. AM42 reports father was verbally abusive to his mother, and his father abandoned AM42 and his mother. AM42 reports father was arrested for physical assault.

Substance Use/Abuse (current and past; self, family of origin, significant others): N/A

Precipitating Events (recent life changes, first symptoms, stressors, etc.): AF38 found marijuana in a plastic bag in C14M's underwear drawer. CM14 is combative with AF. CM14 exhibits irritability, distractibility, indecisiveness, and shouts statements like "I hate my life" or "Nothing goes right for me." AF

Related Historical Background (family history, related issues, previous counseling, medical/mental health history, etc.): AM42 and AF38 met in college, where they connected and had similar family backgrounds. Both were cut off from their families. The couple had a brief courtship and then married. Shortly after the couple began to argue, AM42 felt like AF38 was trying to change and control his life. AF38 did not think that AM42's activities were appropriate for her. AF38 felt neglected by her biological family and wanted to try and duplicate the closeness she had with her biological family in her immediate family by making AM42 do activities that AF38 shares with her siblings. AF38 and AM42 conflict is equally intense. Before their fallout, AF38 learns that she is pregnant. When CM14 was born, AF38 became over-possessive and desperately needed closeness. She sought to use CM14 to gain the closeness she needed. AM42 wanted a relationship with CM14 but felt criticized by AF38, and the couple would have nasty arguments over how he would interact with CM14 resulting in AM42 being cut off from CM14 and AF38.

Client/Family Strengths and Social Location

Strengths and Resources:

Personal: AM42 and AF38 are educated, and both care for CM14 and want to help CM14. AM42 enjoys sports events, going to the gym, and working as a paper salesman. AF38 wants a close family. She enjoys being a mother to CM14 and wants to be close to AM42.

Relational/Social: N/A

Spiritual: N/A

Based on the client's social location—age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, social class, religion, geographic region, language, family configuration, abilities, etc.--identify potential resources and challenges:

Unique Resources: AM42, AF38, and CM14 have one another. Although the Hayman family face issues, they are resilient.

Potential Challenges: AM42 is disengaged from AF38 and CM14. AF38 feels neglected and lonely. CM14 resents AF38 and seeks to establish his own identity.

Family Structure

Family Life Cycle Stage (Check all that apply):

- Single Adult
- X Committed Couple
- Family with Young Children
- X Family with Adolescent Children
- Divorce
- Blended Family
- Launching Children
- Later Life

Describe struggles with mastering developmental tasks in one or more of these stages: The couple has difficulty communicating and being unified. AM42 feels that AF38 wants to control and change him, and AF38 does not want him to have a relationship with CM14. AF38 feels neglected by AM42, and AF38 feels lonely now that CM14 resents her. CM14 feels distant from AM42 and resents his AF38 for not allowing him to have his identity.

Boundaries with/between

- | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Primary couple | <input type="checkbox"/> Enmeshed | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Disengaged | <input type="checkbox"/> NA Example: |
| AM & Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Enmeshed | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Disengaged | <input type="checkbox"/> NA Example: |
| AF & Children | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Enmeshed | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input type="checkbox"/> Disengaged | <input type="checkbox"/> NA Example: |
| Siblings | <input type="checkbox"/> Enmeshed | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input type="checkbox"/> Disengaged | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X NA Example: CM14 only child. |
| Extended Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Enmeshed | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Disengaged | <input type="checkbox"/> NA Example: |
| Friends/Peers/Others | <input type="checkbox"/> Enmeshed | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input type="checkbox"/> Disengaged | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X NA Example: |

Triangles/Coalitions:

- Cross-generational coalitions: Describe:
- Other coalitions: AF38 seeks all of her emotional support from CM14, and when AM42 sought to get involved with CM14 AF38 would interfere by controlling how AM42 interacts with CM14 resulting in AM42 giving up and leaving CM14 into AF38's care.

Hierarchy between Parents and Children: NA

: Effective Insufficient (permissive) Excessive (authoritarian) Inconsistent

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Description/Example to illustrate hierarchy: AM42 did not have a relationship with CM14 to keep the peace with AF38. AF38 allowed CM14 to have his way and did not discipline or hold CM14 accountable.

Complementary Patterns between AM and AF:

- X Pursuer/distancer
- X Over/under-functional
- Emotional/logical
- Good/bad parent
- Other:

Example of pattern: AM42 pursued AF38 in marriage and later became distant when the feeling of criticism and control from AF38. AF38 over functions with CM14 by making him the center of her world and doing and giving everything in her to fill her void of missing the closeness of her family.

Interactional Patterns

Primary Pathologizing Interpersonal Pattern (PIPs; A ⇌ B): Describe dynamic of primary PIP:

- Pursuing/Distancing Criticizing/Defending X Controlling/Resisting Other:

Describe the Start of Tension: CM14 throws tantrums when he doesn't get his way.

Describe Conflict/Symptom Escalation: As CM14 got older, he often got noisy, refused to stay in his playpen, and cried when he didn't get his way. The crying frustrated AF,38, but she did not want to give CM14 boundaries, so he got his way. Whenever CM14 did get his way, he threw a tantrum. when CM14 was old enough for school, he would throw tantrums, but his teachers would not give him his way. His classmates avoided him, and his mom would make excuses for his behavior.

Describe Return to "Normal"/Homeostasis: CM14 remained close to his mom until high school.

Hypothesized homeostatic function of presenting problem: How might the symptom maintain connection, create independence/distance, establish influence, reestablish connection, or help organize the family? Let's propose that CM14 wants the family to set boundaries that will help him to understand that being able to restrain oneself will enable one to make friends. It will help unite the family, reestablish closeness, passion for the family and marriage, approval, freedom, recognition of character, sense of belonging, connectedness, sense of identity, and purpose.

Intergenerational & Attachment Patterns

Construct a family genogram and include all relevant information, including

- Names, ages, and birth/death dates
- Relational patterns
- Occupations
- Psychiatric disorders and alcohol/substance abuse
- Abuse history
- Personality adjectives

Genogram should be attached to report. Summarize key findings below:

Substance/Alcohol Abuse: NA History: AM42 and father have a history of going to the bars, but the article does not state alcohol use, but people with mental illnesses are known to self-medicate, so there are potential son and father drinks.

Sexual/Physical/Emotional Abuse: NA History: Father verbally abusive to mother.

Parent/Child Relations: NA History: AF38 and CM14

Physical/Mental Disorders: NA History: AM42's father was diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

History Related to Presenting Problem: NA History:

Describe family strengths, such as the capacity to self-regulate and to effectively manage stress:

Describe typical attachment behavior when a person does not feel secure in relationships; include Satir survival stances (placating, blaming, superreasonable, and irrelevant) used in the description.

:: Anxious Avoidant Anxious/Avoidant. Frequency: Describe: AM42 is emotionally distant and avoids conflict and criticism from AF38.

:: Anxious Avoidant Anxious/Avoidant. Frequency: Describe: AF38 seeks closeness because she is not getting it from her biological family.

:: Anxious Avoidant Anxious/Avoidant. Frequency: Describe: CM14 resents and blames AF38

:: Anxious Avoidant Anxious/Avoidant. Frequency: Describe:

Additional:

Solution-Based Assessment

Attempted Solutions that DIDN'T work:

1. AM42 sought to get involved with CM14
2. AF38 felt that in order for her and AM42 to get close, they would have to share more interests and activities.
3. CM14 realized that his tantrums did not work on everybody

Exceptions and Unique Outcomes (Solutions that DID work): Times, places, relationships, contexts, etc., when problem is less of a problem; behaviors that seem to make things even slightly better:

1. AM42 and AF38 moved out of their parent's homes to attend college
2. AM42 and AF38 had a passionate courtship and married
3. CM14 was born

Miracle Question/Answer: If the problem were to be resolved overnight, what would client be doing differently the next day? (Describe in terms of doing X rather than not doing Y):

1. Instead of arguing, they would healthily be communicating
2. Instead of feeling controlled, criticized, or insensitive and selfish, AF would give AM some freedom outside the house with friends and celebrate him. AM would be compassionate and more generous to AF38.
3. AM and AF will spend quality time with one another, and AM, AF, and CM will all spend quality time as a family and have family unity.

Postmodern: Social Location and Dominant Discourses

Describe the client(s) overall social location (the groups a person belongs to based on diversity factors) and influential dominant discourses related to presenting concerns:

- **Ethnic, Race, Class, Immigration Status, and Religious Discourses:** *How do key cultural discourses inform client identity(ies), what is perceived as the problem, and possible solutions (specify ethnicity, e.g. Italian American rather than White or Caucasian)?* In AF38's Puerto Rican culture, the norm to have a close-knit family was girls being raised to be a wife and mothers, and college was not a part of the norm. The problem could be perceived that because AF38 went outside the family norm and met AM42, Irish American who is sensitive to any criticism and control is why her marriage is not close-knit, and AF38's Puerto Rican relationship with her parents became damaged and distant. CM14 is a Biracial Irish American and Puerto Rican. He has a dire need for Independence and to establish identity.
- **Gender and Sexuality Discourses:** *How do gender and sexuality discourses inform identity(ies), what is perceived as a problem, and the possible solutions? Do these intersect with ethnicity and/or religion?* AF38 wanted to go to college, but the problem is that she comes from a Hispanic culture that believes a girl's role is to become a mother and a wife. AF38 has a different perspective: a girl can have a college education and still be a wife and mother. Gender and sexuality intersect in some ethnicity. In the AF38 case, girls grow up to become wives and mothers.
- **Community, School, Work and/or Extended Family Discourses:** *How do other important community discourses inform identity(ies), what is perceived as a problem, and the possible solutions?* CM14 realizes that throwing tantrums in school does not work outside the home. The problem with tantrums is that they cause his peers to avoid him.
- **Identity Narratives:** *How has the e problem shaped each significant person's identity?* CM14 blames and resents AF38 for not being able to have time to make friends. CM14 desires to get close to AM42, but to keep the peace with AF38, AM42 keeps his distance.

Client Perspectives (Optional)

Areas of Agreement: Based on what the client(s) has(ve) said, what parts of the above assessment do they agree with or are likely to agree with? They would agree that their relationship has criticism, control, insensitivity, selfishness, resentment, blame, avoidance, and distance.

Areas of Disagreement: What parts do they disagree with or are likely to disagree with? Why? I don't believe that the family would disagree about the issues, but the disagreement will be about who will be accountable for their part in having the issues.

How do you plan to respectfully work with areas of potential disagreement? I will use the solution-focus approach focusing on a solution rather than the problem.