

Family System Therapy-Ordinary People Paper

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A Family System filled with love, compassion, understanding, care, and knowledge of what a family member is going through is crucial to the healing process. It helps the individual heal faster knowing that someone familiar is in their space, helps them to pick up the pieces, can help to pick them up when they fall, and lean on them when they are weak, and have no desire to do anything or go anywhere. In Conrad's situation, he has a family, but his family system was broken due to the loss of not only one family member but two. He lost his brother Buck by drowning, and then he lost his mother emotionally. Even though she was physically present, she was unavailable for him to lean on or talk to. They both lost someone who was very dear to each of them.

Like building anything whether it is a business, a house, a school, or a family, a structure is absolutely necessary, and if a part of that structure is broken, then the entire structure can crumble if not corrected timely. The family system is a building block that needs constant rebuilding, restructuring, and realignment for it to grow in love, peace, and harmony. In Conrad's situation, his mother was one of the main links to his family structure, but it was broken. Due to the brokenness, it became weak. Even though his father did not have the knowledge, information, and the "know-how" of making his son well, he became his biggest cheerleader and his advocate for change.

Two of the techniques Dr. Berger used are Narrative and Strategic. Dr. Berger helped Conrad to reshape his personal narrative by recognizing and embracing his positive qualities, skills, and strength to hold onto his brother as long as he did, in order to help him constructively confront and conquer the problems he faced regarding the responsibility he felt, and the burden he carried for his brother's death. He helped him to break through and break free of the

destructive path he was on.

He was able to identify the patterns of interaction, and conflict between him and his mother with the help of his father, he was made aware of these patterns since Buck died. His father also helped Dr. Berger to identify and understand that his wife's love and behavior towards both of their sons, was obvious even before Buck died, but it became more prominent after his death. Her love and affection for Buck, compared to Conrad, was too obvious and too strong to ignore. Perhaps Conrad knew it all along but had no language for it until after Buck passed. His father equates it and justifies her behavior as "Buck being the firstborn."

Those techniques used by Dr. Berger were important and necessary to Conrad's healing. They helped Conrad to understand his mother's reaction towards him. They helped Conrad to unfortunately confirmed that he was not paranoid about his mother's love for him. In Conrad's own words, "She hates me." They helped Conrad to reframe and reshape his way of thinking. His attitude and behavior in dealing with his loss suddenly took on a different meaning. They gave hope.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the family unit, the family structure, and the family narratives are all part of the family component's powerful tools for family healing. The family is seen as and is considered a whole, so if one member of the family is hurting, all hurts. When a member of the family unit failed, the family failed. The family is like a necklace or a bracelet, where if a link is broken, the entire bracelet or necklace is broken, and due to the brokenness, they are unable to be worn. The disruption of a family member is a disruption to the entire family structure.

References

Corey, G. (2018). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy*, (10th ed., pp. 95-128). Cengage Learning.

Ordinary People, released September 19th, 1980 (USA)

Directed: Robert Redford

Award: Academy Award for Best Picture, Academy Award for Directing, More

Language: English

Music composed by: Marvin Hamlisch

Watched on Pluto