

FIELD EDUCATION
The Log



Week # 2

Hours This Week: 10 Total Hours: 260 / 360

HOURS SPENT / TASKS & ACTIVITIES	REFLECTIONS JOURNALING THOUGHTS PROCESSING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom: 4-8pm / Monday - Clinical Visit 8-5pm / Saturday - Cross worship experience - Verbatim 	<p>Every day in RGH is unique, one of the first things I would have to do is go to the computer and look at all the patients there, I tried to see the patients who had not been seen yet. First, I thought, you know, it is just a chaplain and the patient and the family members. However, it is important to acknowledge that I am part of the health team.</p> <p>This week we focus on the book review on</p> <p>Generation to Generation Book Review</p> <p>Generation to Generation offers a compelling argument for the importance of community -- the obvious --and is profound. The book, however, is not without its faults. Friedman champions systems theory to the point of setting aside more significant concerns. "Differentiation," for example, is not necessarily the highest good.</p>

MEETING(S) WITH MENTOR(S) || TOPICS OF DISCUSSION || REFLECTIONS

ROCHESTER
REGIONAL HEALTH

Rochester General Hospital
Clinical Pastoral Education
Book Review/ Hervé Talom

Generation to Generation Book Review

Generation to Generation offers a compelling argument for the importance of community -- the obvious --and is profound. The book, however, is not without its faults. Friedman champions systems theory to the point of setting aside more significant concerns. "Differentiation," for example, is not necessarily the highest good.

Section I & II

Section I consist of two chapters

Chapter one focuses on *the idea of a family*

Moreover, chapter two deals with *understanding the family process*.

Chapter one introduces five fundamental concepts of family theory, describes how the family model differs from the individual model, and shows the range of its application for the families of the clergy. In keeping with the approach, we will begin with a short history of its origins.

- 1- the identified patient
- 2- the concept of homeostasis
- 3- differentiation of self
- 4- the extended family field
- 5- emotional triangles.

FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY: FIVE BASIC CONCEPTS

Here are five basic, interrelated concepts that distinguish the family and individual models.

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They are the idea mentioned above of the identified patient, the concept of homeostasis (balance), differentiation of self, the extended family field, and emotional triangles. Not all schools of family therapy emphasize these five concepts to the same extent or with the same terminology. The choice reflects my theoretical orientation within the family movement and the fact that they form a valuable matrix for understanding the similarities and the crossovers among the clergy's three families.

HOMEOSTASIS (BALANCE)

As stated, family systems thinking locates a family's problem like the system rather than its parts. A key to that relocation is the concept of homeostasis: the tendency of any set of relationships to perpetually, in self-corrective ways, preserve the organizing principles of its existence. Theories based on the individual model tend to conceptualize the "illness" of a family in terms of the character traits of individual members and how their various personal problems mesh. ***On the other hand, the family model conceptualizes a system's problems in terms of an imbalance that must have occurred in the network of its various relationships, no matter the nature of the individual personalities.***

The family theory assumes that no matter what the various members' quirks or idiosyncrasies if the system exists and has a name, it must have achieved some balance to permit the continuity necessary for maintaining its identity. ***Therefore, the primary question family theory always asks is not do these types of personalities fit, but what has happened to the fit there? Why has the symptom surfaced now? This is not a static concept but a dynamic one.***

-Two Kinds of Interdependency

Edwin uses two electrical engineering concepts to illustrate interdependency ("series" or "parallel.")

Not all systems are connected in so interdependent a fashion, of course. The reactivity of family members to one another is not always as automatic. Sets of electrical connections help illustrate this point. It is possible to connect electrical systems in what is known as "series" or "parallel." When a system of electrical components is connected in series, the outlets are related in such a way that the energy source runs directly through each part (Figure 1-5). In

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such a system, if one

The connection goes wrong, and they will all go out. But it is also possible to connect electrical components to what is

Edwin wrapped up chapter one with a triangle called:

The seven laws of an emotional triangle.

1. The relationship of any two members of an emotional triangle is kept in balance by how a third part relates to each of them or their relationship.
2. Suppose one is the third party in an emotional triangle. In that case, it is generally not possible to bring change (for more than a week) to the relationship of the other two parts by trying to change their relationship directly. This includes anything from making a child more orderly, trying to make someone give up his or her "habit," or urging someone to come to church more frequently. It may be that, in the history of our species, no family member, upon trying to correct the perception of another family member, about a third has ever received the response, "You are right, honey. I do not know why I did not see it that way myself."
3. Attempts to change the relationship of the other two sides of an emotional triangle are not only generally ineffective but also, homeostatic forces often convert these efforts to their opposite intent. Trying harder to bring two people closer (brother and sister, child and parent) or another party and their symptoms together (anyone and their sense of responsibility) will generally maintain or increase the distance between them.

that is healthier for both leader and follower, in both personal and congregational families. (See Section III.)

5. The various triangles in an emotional system interlock so that efforts to bring change to any one of them is often resisted by homeostatic forces in the others or in the system itself.

A rather humorous example of this kind of interlocking triangle involved two ministers who were brothers-in-law. Mother frequently visited her son-the-minister and was close to his children but rarely came to visit her daughter and her children. It happens that son-in-law.

Minister had been far more successful in his career. Suddenly grandmother started to visit her daughter's children more frequently. The shift coincided with her son-the-minister obtaining an

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equally prominent congregation.

Usually, one triangle in an interlocking system is primary, so change in that one is more likely to induce change in the others. The primary triangles tend to involve the family of origin, even when the other interlocking triangle is in the work system. In Section III, we will see how this may be applied to the extended system of a religious hierarchy. In Section IV, it will be shown that clerical dilemmas of faith are often connected to unresolved emotional triangles in the family of origin and can often be resolved by taking the issues back to the extended family. This is so in part because the choice of the clerical profession is often a way of dealing with such triangles in the first place.

6. One side of an emotional triangle tends to be more conflictual than the others. In healthier families, the conflict will tend to swing around the compass, so to speak, showing up in different persons or different relationships at different times (even on the same day). In relationship systems that are not as healthy, the conflict tends to be in (the identified patient or relationship). Often the distribution and fluidity of conflict in a family are crucial to its health rather than the quantity or the kind of issues that Systems in which the triangles are more fluid can tolerate more conflict (and therefore more creativity) because of that capacity for dirty by" tian.

7- we can only change a relationship to which we belong.

Chapter 2: understanding the family process

This chapter describes ten "laws" of family life derived from family theory. The purpose here, however, is not merely to offer more in. sight. Instead, it accustoms the reader to think about the family process.

Here are some examples of symmetry, asymmetry, and crossover of causes and effects in family life. They will be followed by illustrations of how this concept can be used in charting the family process.

Examples of how the exact "cause" can lead to opposite effects are family life:

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- . Parental investment can promote overachievement or underachievement.
- . An overly strict father can produce an overly strict son (when he is a father) or one who is too permissive.
- . Alcoholic parents can produce alcoholic offspring or offspring who marry alcoholics.
- . Dependency can lead to helpless or controlling attitudes.
 - A "nice guy" clergyman may be beloved by his congregation or taken by them.
 - Well-defined stands can lead to admiration or revulsion.

Surrendering and taking over are both ways of adapting.

Examples of how the same effect could have come from opposite causes:

- Someone who sleeps a great deal could be depressed or content.

A family problem could surface after a business failure or a business success. * A highly rigid or overly flexible parent can produce an extremely rigid offspring.

- Lack of change can be a by-product of polarization or too much togetherness.

- Ineffective leadership can result from stands that are too authoritarian or too concerned with consensus.

- A crisis in faith can develop because of a lack of self-examination, but the overexamined life is not worth living either.

- Chronic means always; it also means never.

In chapter two's last section, Edwin explores the major human factor that promotes survival in any environment. He highlights the hostile environment and human response.

Today the contemporary phenomenon that perhaps most emphasizes the survival ratio between challenge and response is recombinant DNA. Many have expressed concern that recombining DNA from different organisms will create a new toxic substance for which there is no remedy. However, as several less anxious scientists have pointed out, the fact that something is inherently toxic to the human organism is not enough to destroy it. The toxic substance must also have the capacity to bind itself to the cell wall and defeat the immunological response. Toxicity may be viewed as a relational category, not merely as a matter of a Category I noxious threat.

In family relationships, if individuals focus primarily on the toxicity of their relatives' behavior

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instead of what makes them vulnerable, they will fail to realize that it is a far healthier response to work on their own "cells," as a way of immunizing themselves against "insult." Such responses accomplish more than self-protection; they also tend to modify the insulting behavior.

In their wedding vows, a couple asked to have "I vow not to abandon (the other)." They had seen a family counselor for 6 months during courtship and learned that this is what they had been doing to one another. The minister replied, "That is an unworkable basis for marriage." He suggested: "I vow not to be abandoned when (the other) abandon me!"

These ten family process rules are not the only ones that could be formulated, and to some extent, they could be reformulated differently. As a group, however, they touch on most of the significant elements in the family process; they help create a way of thinking that is not moored to symptoms or enmeshed in content, and they provide a matrix for deciding which information is essential. They are equally applicable to all families irrespective of cultural background. Moreover, they are equally applicable to the three families of the clergy: those we counsel, those we lead, and those who comprise our relations.