

Jason Ronda

## Family Systems Therapy Essays

1. Off the top of my head, there isn't too much a Christian would complain about in family systems therapy. The focus of Family systems therapy is how the family unit reacts and communicates with each other.

This approach has an emphasis in the family working together and trying to resolve tension and problems by treating their dynamic. So there isn't really much for a Christian to complain about. If anything, they might like it more because of family values in Christianity.

Christians have a thing about how marriage and family relationships are sacred. Technically, despite most countries making divorce legal, us Christians do not technically endorse it. There is also an aspect of respecting and honoring our parents, that one is actually directly in the Ten Commandments. Now the emphasis on this model is that it wants to remedy these relationships rather than severing these relationships. Therapy and counseling only really works when everyone involved wants the productive change, so if it's progressing correctly, then the relationship is actually getting better and everyone involved is trying to help each other.

I genuinely don't see that many things that would constitute a conflict from Christians or from a Biblical perspective.

2. From my understanding, Family systems therapy is about treating a family and their whole dynamic together rather than treating an individual. In this approach, it is more about treating a family unit and their problems as a dynamic together rather than treating one person. That problem with their dynamic/system is what is causing problems for them. There is a focus on faulty ways they interact with one another, their problems with their relationships with each other, and things that were being done in past generations that do not work in the current, AKA generational trauma.

I'm not sure if I'm quoting the guy who invented family systems or the guy who wrote internal family systems, but to paraphrase them, they had insights on how families had problems. So basically, they had a patient, who, in their inpatient clinic had actually shown a lot of growth, they were better off mentally and were about to be discharged. The therapist didn't think too much about it, they were happy for their patient. The patient left and the therapist wished him the best. It wasn't that long before the patient came back and was worse than ever. The patient didn't do anything except for going home to his family. It was at that point where the therapist realized that they had to deal with the family as a whole because the family was treating him badly and their entire dysfunctional relationship was responsible for his predicament.

Individual approaches focus on a single person, their mental problems, focus more on the causes, experiences, and perspectives of one person.

In contrast, the family approach follows the family as a unit. Instead of just individual experiences and perspectives, it relies on the perspectives and experiences of everyone in the family system and the context for how their family grew up, like their culture and rules, etc.

3. The multigenerational family therapy approach was developed by Murray Bowen and the point of this approach was that there was a pattern of interpersonal relationships that family members of a system have. These interpersonal relationships were multigenerational and were somewhat predictable.

Differentiation of self is a concept from Bowen on multigenerational therapy. It entails the separation of intellect and emotions, and the self being independent from other people. If someone has more differentiation, they are better at getting away from dysfunctional patterns with other family members.

Think of it like being less susceptible to the crazy dysfunctional hijinks of family members when you are more aware and able to put your emotions and feelings aside, while also making sure that you can keep your distance from the problems they are trying to suck you into.

Triangulation is when you try to make an argument go around or try to either extend, break up, or strengthen an argument by bringing someone else into the mix. This normally does not help and only works to make everything even more complicated because now someone else is now involved in the argument. This third party has their own opinions and probably has their own allegiances to one or both members of the argument.

6. The process of change in the multigenerational therapy model is facilitated when emotional attachments are dealt with. If a person wants to get better, they have to solve their familial problems first.

Human validation process model is similar to the person centered model, where the therapist needs to be congruent and have a personal relationship with the family to facilitate change. This congruence helps the family be honest with each other.

The two goals of structural-strategic family therapy are to make structural changes by making family members interact differently and by trying to reduce symptoms of dysfunction.

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## Integrated Approaches

24. I think that there are many aspects of the many approaches that we went through that have aspects that I like, and also have parts that I don't. For example, I disagree with most of the things that Sigmund Freud has theorized is complete nonsense. He might have gotten people talking, he might have influenced a lot of ideas, but his theories and methodology to get those theories evidence leave a lot to be desired. I do think that some aspects of psychoanalytic therapy are actually usable, the concept of working through an unconscious idea comes to mind. The part that I like involves the client being introspective, understanding what they did, how it used to work, and how it no longer is working for their benefit.

From person-centered therapy, I like the unconditional positive regard and the core conditions. Both of those aspects are supposed to, by themselves, facilitate change in the client. While I don't believe that they are capable of doing it by themselves, I do believe that it is an effective place to start and present yourself to the client.

My final capstone paper entailed incorporating the understanding of body language and being able to respond to it in a therapeutic setting. This is why I can wholeheartedly endorse the Gestalt approach's awareness of body language and cues as an effective aspect that I would like to incorporate.

There are three parts of choice therapy that I really appreciate. The first part is that it emphasizes that the client has choices and has responsibilities to do things. It also shows them that they have a lot more freedom and choices than they think they do. There is also a focus on the present rather than the past. Personally, I will explore the past, present, and future of a client, but the emphasis on present in this one in particular resonates with me.

Finally, something I want to do is incorporate family systems into this. I like how the method has an emphasis on the family unit and their dynamics between them. I think families need to heal for a person to heal.

I will try to incorporate Christianity into my therapy approach, maybe just the philosophy though. I found out that people who are atheists and are not Christian do not really have a problem with Jesus or his philosophy. They have a problem with the institutions and how serious they can be, amongst other things like how people use Christianity as an excuse to be terrible to each other. I grew up as a Catholic and went to public schools where being religious was frowned upon. I'm not used to how people pray to me, or am used to incorporating Bible quotes. The philosophy is something I know and understand.

26. The integrated method is basically a Frankenstein's monster of ideas and techniques from a variety of different therapeutic approaches. This is used by many therapists and is basically like having your own style when it comes to therapy, or being able to tailor an approach to a client and each is capable of going through a variety of different problems that they are suited to do. It tends to depend on the needs of the client.

Due to be able to incorporate different aspects from different approaches, there is a chance to treat a wide range of problems depending on which approaches you'd wish to incorporate into the session. Because of its pick and choose method, it is possible to make an approach that is tailored to the client. If there are a range of problems with the client and one approach is not enough, there is no need to just stick with only one approach and find something else that is capable of helping the client.

A disadvantage of doing an integrate is that there are troubles actually developing them. Within each approach, there is a certain philosophy about people, not every approach treats

humans the same exact way, nor would they expect anyone to. It is something to keep in mind when actually trying to develop an integrated method. Another place of concern would be to not overwhelm the client. Using one approach is simple and can be easily broken down into simpler terms that the client will not have too much trouble trying to understand. This changes when even another approach is integrated into the mix, because now you're trying to explain a bunch of things going on all at once and they might get in the way of each other.

29. My assumption of human nature is that there are some very good people, some good people, some neutral people, some bad people, and some very bad people. My view is that we are living in this odd tragedy of human beings. While some people are just good from the bottom of their hearts, I do think that people are also bad from the bottom of their hearts. I always consider the fact that people were just dealt a really bad hand in their lives and the way they reacted that actually helped them and gave them some form of results was the terrible way they present themselves. Maybe they thought they had to do all these bad things to actually get ahead in life or have some form of advantage in the way they were living. There's also the tragedy of misunderstanding and miscommunication that I think that people have when it comes to thinking in life. I'm saying from experiences, my family has a horrible, horrible habit of misunderstanding, miscommunicating, and misinterpreting each other and I think that is the cause of most problems in a family unit. I also think there is always room for redemption, learning, and improvement.

While I'm not too sure how other people are willing to go, I think several approaches fit my way of thinking. Those approaches are person-centered therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, and family systems therapy. Person-centered therapy resonates with me because it does have an optimistic feeling towards humanity and a want to see them grow. Cognitive behavioral

therapy resonates with me because it has this link between how people think, feel, and behave, where each of these aspects interact with each other. I believe family systems would be the most effective when trying to help people overcome their family issues and their dynamics with their family.

35. I think that there are a bunch of factors that need to be taken into consideration when making an approach to therapy and how to have actual sessions with clients. Structures of sessions are something that need to be taken into account as well as the clients they are dealing with.

I think the counselor or therapist should be seen as professional, but approachable. In terms of being professional, I go back to when I used to be a nursing student and they told me it was incredibly important that you present yourself professionally. If they, the clients, think you don't know what you're doing, then they are less likely to listen to you. If they think you are hard to approach, then they may be afraid to ask questions or willing to talk without the fear of being reprimanded. I also think a counselor should know when something is wrong based on body language and be able to present themselves with body language so that they look interested, receptive, and are open to talking while also noting the client's body language as talking points to reveal their true feelings.

I also think that sessions should have a certain time limit. The first few sessions are to get a feel for who their clients are, this is utilized so that the therapists can formulate a plan of care and formulate an integrated approach that can help the client. These sessions should take around 30-60 minutes a week. I think that family systems therapy should incorporate more time because a lot more people need to talk and vent their frustrations and people to get their own viewpoints. These sessions should also be around every week or every other week so that there is a sense of

progression and actually noticing growth week by week. Confidentiality and privacy should be talked about in the first session so that they know that their information is safe and they know that they are safe, unless they are going to hurt themselves or others.

I think that counselors should be able to assign homework to the client, not to control the client to do something, but to encourage them to do something a bit out of their comfort zone. So that they know someone is rooting for them instead of wanting to see whether or not they have to do something. It's not forced this way.

I think that termination should be a topic discussed before either party are going to actually go through with it. The client wants to stop, but the therapist has to know as well. The therapist wants what's best for the client and probably knows more at this point too.