"I always know what Harry's going to say, and he always knows what I'm going to say, so, by and large, we just don't bother."
Dynamics of Marriage: “The Family of Origin” Approach

A Workbook

Presenters
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Cathy Angelica, LCSW
Progression of the theme of the presentation


Part 2 – Slide 10 – 19 - Framework of the Therapeutic Process - Distinction between Individual and couple’s therapy Practice Based and Evidence Based Modalities

Part 3 – Slide 20 – 28 - Presentation review of the Transtheoretical Model of Change and Couples Therapy - Couples’ Engagement in the Clinical and Therapeutic Process

Your journey in exploring the roots of your marriage leads you to rediscover who you are in the intimacy of the most important person in your life, your spouse, and it leads you to your growth together in marriage.
Methods of presentation

Didactic – Lecture/ Open Discussion

Experiential - Exercises
Objectives of the presentation in utilizing the therapist’s expertise in doing couple’s work:

- To elucidate the therapist’s role in couple’s work
- To define the parameters of couple’s work
- To establish rapport in the therapeutic process
- To normalize the couples therapeutic process
- To facilitate critical thinking
- To establish hope for change
- To restore, adjust and integrate the goals of the couple
The distinctive therapeutic approach is what makes *Dynamics of Marriage: “The Family of Origin”* different.

**Process in Couple’s work**

✧ it **creates an open and accepting environment** in couples’ work

✧ it **encourages honesty and truthfulness** without feeling judged in exploring past experiences of the Family of Origin

✧ it **leads individuals to self-understanding and self-acceptance.**

✧ it **focuses on the behavior that binds** the couple together in maintaining the equilibrium and **in the status quo of the marriage unproductively**.
Three-pronged focus to couple therapy

Couple focused
– steps toward the growth of the marriage

Strength
Commitment
Connection

Individually focused
- enhancing the growth of each person

Family focused
- impact on the family (children) of the couple’s relationship
Framework of therapeutic process in couples’ therapy:

- Evidenced Based Practice

- Practiced Based Evidence
Evidence-Based Practice

What is it?
“the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients”

- It integrates best available external clinical evidence from systematic research

In essence we are asking....... ‘Is the right person doing the right thing at the right time, in the right place in the right way, with the right result?’

Questions are guaranteed in life; Answers aren’t.

(Sackett et al 1996)
Practice Based Evidence: Relies on the practitioner’s expertise and professional training

Defined by Sackett et al as:
‘the ability to use our clinical skills & past experience to rapidly identify each patient’s unique health state & diagnosis, their individual risks & benefits of potential interventions, & their personal values & expectations.’

- Individual clinical expertise……
  while
- Taking into account patient preferences/values

Practice Based Evidence Approach can take many forms:

• personal experience and theoretical knowledge

• reflective practice (practitioner derived knowledge)

• audit evaluation of practice and practice based research.
How is Individual therapy different from Couple Therapy?
we believe that individual therapy can be hazardous to a couple’s health.

the calm, understanding environment of one-on-one sessions too often leaves a client ill-prepared to take on the gritty, emotion-charged real world of a troubled relationship.

in sessions, individual clients aren’t learning how to listen, stay calm when triggered, negotiate actively, or stretch to empathize with an intimate partner who intensely annoys and frustrates them.

Ellyn Bader & Peter Pearson - Couples Therapy – Why so many therapist avoid it.
“He misspoke, I misheard, then shots rang out.”
As therapists our responsibility is to facilitate change - to aid in the individual’s growth and the enhancement of the couple’s relationship.

Change has considerable psychological impact on the human mind.

- To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse.
- To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better.
- To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better.

“one’s character and frame of mind determine how readily he brings about change and how he reacts to change that is imposed on him.”

King Whiney, Jr. President of Personnel Laboratory, Inc.
Thumbnail look at several theories use in therapy:

Psychodynamic Theory – also known as insight-oriented therapy. Evaluate the pattern developed over time and beliefs to gain insights to present-day problems....couples learn to understand each other, needs, hopes...

Psychoanalytic Theory – refers to personality development, ego id superego... Therapist needs to watch dynamics – transference, countertransference.

Attachment theory – restoring significant issue of trust and feeling of safety.

Transgenerational Theory – deals with acquired practices, behaviors, beliefs between generations.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy – Uses the power of the mind to influence behavior.

Solution focused therapy – promotes positive change rather than dwelling on past problems.

EMDR – (use with individual spouse as needed) bilateral stimulation of the brain to enhance information processing between the distressing memory and more adaptive information in other memory network.

The Transtheoretical Model of Change

Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983; Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992

✧ an integrative, biopsychosocial model to conceptualize the process of intentional behavior change.

✧ a comprehensive theory of change that can be applied to a variety of behaviors, populations, and settings—hence, the name Transtheoretical.
Couple/ Family Therapy based on Practice-based Evidence Approach and Evidenced-Based Practice thru Integration of Psychotherapy systems Within the Transtheoretical Framework

**Interaction of Levels, Stages and Processes of Change**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Precontemplation</th>
<th>Contemplation</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Symptoms/ situational</td>
<td>Consciousness raising</td>
<td>Dramatic relief</td>
<td>Environmental reevaluation</td>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-liberation</td>
<td>Chapter 1 to 4 – Allow the couple to re-evaluate and to regain the control of the direction of their marriage.</td>
<td>Chapter 5 to 6 – These sections help the individual to rediscover oneself and understand his/her past and it’s impact in his/her life and in the marriage.</td>
<td>Chapter 7 to 9 – These chapters lead the individual in self-understanding within the context of the marriage.</td>
<td>Chapter 12 - Preventing relapse to old behaviors</td>
<td>Chapter 13 – Re-evaluating the progress of the strength of their marriage.</td>
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**Thinking about it**

**Preparing for it**

**Getting ready**

**Taking action**

**Maintaining new behavior for more than 6 months**
Sequence/ Progression of Dynamics of Marriage:
“The Family of Origin” Approach
& The Application of the Transtheoretical Model of Change

PRECONTEMPLATION
Chapter 1 to 4 – Allow the couple to re-evaluate and to regain control of the direction of their marriage.

CONTEMPLATION
Charter 5 to 6 – These sections help the individual to rediscover oneself and understand his/her past and its impact on his/ her life and in the marriage.

PREPARATION
Chapter 7 to 9 – These chapters lead the individual to self understanding in the context of the marriage.

ACTION
Chapter 10 - 11 – Couple renew their commitment to their marriage through continuing the process of change.

MAINTAINANCE
Chapter 12 - Preventing relapse.

Chapter 13 – Re-evaluating the progress of the strength of their marriage.
Emphasis on being self aware to prevent relapse or self sabotaging **by applying:**

- **Contingency management** - one has to be aware of the possibility of situation that may sabotaged the effort to change. i.e jealousy-similar situation that were mishandled in the past.

- **Counterconditioning** – sarcasm, indirect, unclear messages

- **Stimulus control** – being aware of triggers
COUPLE’S THERAPY AGREEMENT WITH AN UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE FOLLOWING PREMISES:

• I am participating in this couple therapy accepting that my marriage is a partnership, and I have an equal role in the relationship. What I have to say is as important as what my partner has to say.
• I am willing to work on my personal growth unselfishly, understanding that my growth will contribute to the growth of the relationship.
• I will show respect and trust by maintaining confidentiality.
• I will be open to the best of my ability:
  – By sharing about myself
  – By responding to feedback without hostility either verbal or physical
• I will refrain from making any decision about my marriage until I have completed this program.
• I will respect the ground rules established for this couple therapy, and I am willing to contribute by making positive suggestion about the existing rules.

_________________________________________        ______________________________
Signature of one spouse             Witness (Other spouse)

___________________               _____________________
Date                                           Date 21
Couples’ Work

- Identify the recurring issues in their marriage.

- Each partner identify their individual stumbling blocks in resolving issues.

- How they can help each other in overcoming and working thru their stumbling blocks?

- What they expect to be the outcome in resolving the on-going issues in their marriage?

- How could their marriage be different? What would BE the effect on THEIR children?
Experiential Exercise: Relationship Skills

Discussion
Relationship Skills
Rank yourself and your spouse from 1 = low – 10 = high (+) each area of the relationship skills demonstrated in your marriage. Spend 5 – 10 minutes discussing the differences/similarities in your rating of each other. Then rate the skills of your father and your mother to gain an understanding of their influence in the development of your own skills.

<table>
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<th>Self</th>
<th>Spouse</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Mother</th>
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Self-management: the ability to deal with stressful situations using the skills below:
Self-talk (things you think or say to yourself)
Self-understanding
Self-care
Self-esteem

Relationships: A) The level of comfort and connection made in these different contexts:
Intra-personal (how you feel/treat yourself)
Inter-personal (how you feel/treat others)
Family
Friends

Relationships: B) Connection of the couple is operationally expressed in the following areas:
Intimacy
Openness
Expression of feelings
Emotional engagement (expressed outwardly)
Feelings: The ability to identify emotions, its source and how it is expressed in action.

Understanding
Expressive
Connecting feeling with behavior

Communication: Being aware of the effect on others the way one communicates.

Distancing
Connecting
Style:
Assertive
Aggressive
Passive
Passive/aggressive

Listening: Being attentive in communication, and in being open in receiving and giving feedback.

Active
Feedback
Giving
Receiving
You can kiss your family and friends good-bye and put miles between you, but at the same time you carry them with you in your heart, your mind, your stomach, because you do not just live in a world
But a world lives in you.

Frederick Buechner, Telling the Truth
Learning about past experiences through the Genogram

- The Genogram/ Genealogy is a way of mapping out our Family Tree.

- It allows us to trace multi-generational characteristics, conditionings, predispositions and family traits.

- The goal is not to blame but to take responsibility for our behavior and to initiate change within ourselves that will ultimately enrich our marriage.
GENOGRAM/ FAMILY TREE
GENOGRAM: SYMBOLS AND MEANINGS

- Male
- Female

- Marriage
- Living Together Relationship
- Divorce

- Birth date – Death date
- Deceased

- Children in birth order, oldest → Youngest

- Identical twins

- Fraternal Twins

- Very close relationship

- Conflictual relationship

- Miscarriage

- Pregnancy

- Adopted

BY EMILY MERLIN
LEGACY OF THE FAMILY OF ORIGIN (FOO)

✧ a universal phenomenon that FOO influences are active in every one's life.

✧ we accept who we are without question, because we learn to accept the environment of our up-bringing.

❓ How did I become me?

❓ How well do I know myself?

❓ Identify and check the deficits you found within yourself

❓ Positive traits gained from early experiences

❓ Who am I?
Marriage maybe compared to a plant that requires daily nurture, daily attention, daily care, and cultivation. It will not develop in its own accord; only when effort and will are exerted will it grow and mature.

For a marriage to succeed both husband and wife must be committed to its success. They must build an enduring love relationship that is centered in the heart of their consciousness.

Their relationship must be nurtured with the water of loyalty and love.

Margaret Ruhe
Marriage and its Dimensional Aspects
Partnership in Parental Role

Three Principles of Parenting (predicated with consistency)

1) Generational boundary – My ability to create structure as a parent so that my children understand limits and respect for authority that will ensure their feeling of safety.

2) Intentional parenting – As a parent I am clear in guiding my children with what I want them to become and what they can accomplish in their life as adults.

3) Parental coalition – I value the importance of discussing family
A dimensional aspect of marriage - Partnership in parental role

The Three Principles of Parenting

- Generational Boundaries
- Parental Coalition
- Synchronicity
- Intentional and Purposeful Parenting

CLEAR PARAMETERS
UNIFIED FRONT
CLEAR GUIDANCE AND OUTCOME
Foundation of the commitment to your Marriage

The ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE STRENGTH
- of your MARRIAGE, of your FAMILY
- of your COMMITMENT to your MARRIAGE

Intentionality of the VALUES/ PRACTICES IN YOUR FAMILY THAT ARE BEING EXEMPLIFIED AS the BASIS OF THE GROWTH OF YOUR MARRIAGE

How would you define the intentionality of maintaining the strength of your marriage.
Chapter 1 to 4 – Allow the couple to re-evaluate and to regain the control of the direction of their marriage.

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Chapter 7 to 9 – These chapters lead the individual in self-understanding within the context of the marriage.

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DYNAMICS OF MARRIAGE -

“The FAMILY OF ORIGIN” APPROACH

Workbook

……grounding for happier and stronger marriage

Leticia S. Isidro-Clancy
Termination interview questions

Describe your experience through the therapeutic process of understanding the legacy of the roots of your marriage.

How much of your understanding of the influence of your family of your origin helped you in working through the problems in your marriage in this therapy? Describe.

What was the most significant discovery you have made about yourself through marriage therapy?

How would rate your marriage from 1= low – 10 = high:
   _____ before therapy
   _____ after therapy

Would you be interested in follow-up / maintenance therapy on a regular or on occasional basis either by phone or in person?

If your answer is yes, Coaching for Healthy Couple Relationship is available. My email address: licnj@yahoo.com

Name: ________________________                            email address: ____________________
Signature: _____________________                                            Date: ____________________
Comments / Questions?