Evolution of Family Therapy

Bowen

Strategic

Structural

Experiential

Psychoanalytic/Object
Relations Cognitive-
Behavioral

Bowen Family Therapy

Murray Bowen
   Phillip Guerin, Thomas Fogary, Michael Kerr, Betty Carter, Monica McGoldrick

Bowen's model centers around two counterbalancing life forces
Individuality (I) ------------ Togetherness (We)
Too much "I" = Emotional Cut-off / Too much "We" = Fusion
Unresolved emotional attachment to one's family must be resolved before one can
differentiate a mature, healthy personality

- Genograms – visual depiction of family (usually 3+ generations)
- Differentiation of Self – balancing emotional/intellectual functioning and
     intimacy/autonomy
- Emotional Triangles – conflicted relationships seek outlet for stress but can freeze
     conflict in place – preventing resolution
- Nuclear Family Emotional Process – emotional forces within the family that create
     pattern of emotion that may / may not be helpful
- Emotional Cut-off – ends or deadens relationship interaction to manage anxiety
- Societal Emotional Process – impact of society on family functioning
- Family Life Cycle – process of expansion, contraction, and realignment

Strategic Family Therapy

Intellectual Foundation: Gregory Batson & Milton Erickson (hypnotherapy)
MRI (Palo Alto): Don Jackson, John Weakland, Paul Watzlawick, Richard Fisch, Virginia Satir
Haley Group: Jay Haley, Cloe Madanes, James Keim, Jerome Price
Milan Associates: Mara Selvini Palazzoli and associates

Pragmatic problem solving approach focused on change (not analysis, insight, or understanding) – preferring to circumvent rather than confront resistance

- Communications Theory – study of relationships in terms of verbal and nonverbal messages
- Homeostatic - families conceptualized as maintained by homeostatic feedback mechanisms
- Content & Process – communication occurs on two levels
- Metacommunication – implied command or qualified part of the message
- Double Bind – contradictory messages on different levels of abstraction
- First Order Change – superficial change
- Second Order Change – systemic change
- Paradoxical Directives – therapist client to continue symptomatic behavior
- Reframing – relabeling description of behavior to make it more amenable change

Structural Family Therapy

Salavador Minuchin
   Braulio Montalvo, Bernice Rosman, Harry Aponte, Marianne Walters, Michael Nichols

All families have problems – adaptive families will modify their structure to accommodate to changing circumstances; dysfunctional families will increase the rigidity of structures that are no longer functional.

- Family Structure – the organizational patterns within which family members interact; how, when and to whom family members relate
- Subsystems – smaller units in families, determined by generation, gender, or function
- Boundaries – emotional barriers that protect and enhance the integrity of individuals, subsystems, and families
- Hierarchy – structural organization of family - emphasis on clear executive subsystem
- Enmeshment – loss of autonomy due to blurring of psychological boundaries
- Disengagement – psychological isolation that results from overly rigid boundaries
- Cross-generational coalition – an inappropriate alliance between a parent and a child who side together against a third member of the family
- Joining – therapist's accepting and accommodating to win families' confidence and circumvent resistance
- Enactment – an interaction among family members designed to observe and then change the interactions that create/maintain dysfunctional family structure

Experiential Family Therapy

Virginia Satir, Carl Whitaker, August Napier, David Keith, Richard Schwartz
Leslie Greenberg, Susan Johnson

Basic model influenced by existential, humanistic and phenomenological theories – strong commitment to individual awareness, self-expression, and self actualization.
Growth (not symptom relief) is the primary goal.

- Emotional Expression – as conceptualized by Gestalt therapy, encounter groups, and psychodrama
- Existential Encounter – therapist establishes caring, person-to-person relationship with each family member while modeling openness, honesty, and spontaneity
- Self Actualization – the process of developing and fulfilling one's innate positive potentialities
- Family myths – set of beliefs based on a distortion of historical reality and share by all family members that help shape the rules governing family functioning
- Family Sculpting – non-verbal experiential technique in which family members position themselves in a way that reveals significant aspects of their perceptions and feelings
- Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy – help partners get past their reactivity toward each other and to get in touch with their hurts and longings for attachment

Psychoanalytic/Objective Relations Family Therapy

Sigmund Freud, Erik Erickson, Harry Stack Sullivan, Margaret Mahler, Melanie Klein
Nathan Ackerman, Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy, Roger Shapiro, Jill Savage Scharff, John Zinner

Recent effort to integrate depth psychology and systems theory to focus on the individual and the system of relationships

Object Relations Theory
Our identities are formed and maintained through relationships – we relate to people in the present based on our early experiences with primary care givers.
These early experiences give rise to "internal objects" – mental images of self, others, and self-in-relation-to-others

- Mirroring – expression by counselor of understanding and acceptance of another's feelings – but not praise or reassurance
- Insight – understanding and accepting of unconscious or repressed parts one's personality
- Working Through – process by which insights are translated into new and more productive ways of behaving
- Separation/Individuation – process whereby the infant begins, at about two months, to draw apart from the symbiotic bond with mother and develop autonomous functioning

Cognitive-Behavioral Family Therapy

Ivan Pavlov, Joseph Wolpe, B.F. Skinner
Gerald Patterson, Robert Liberman, Richard Stuart
Andrew Christensen, Norman Epstein, Neil Jacobson

Behavior is maintained by its consequences – behavior problems are caused by dysfunctional patterns of reinforcement between parents and children or between members of the couple. Behavior will remain resistant to change until more rewarding consequences are introduced.

- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy – help clients alter cognitive distortions and learn new behaviors
- Targeted Behavior – focus treatment on specific behavior changes – usually within a subsystem
- Family Schema – jointly held beliefs about one's own family and about family life in general
- Shaping – reinforcing change in small steps
- Time Out – means of extinguishing undesirable behavior by removing the reinforcing consequences of that behavior
- Token Economy – a system of rewards using points which can be accumulated and exchanged for reinforcing items or behaviors