

*The Bowen Center for the Study
of the Family Presents the*

**60th Annual Symposium on
on Family Theory
and Family Psychotherapy**

NOVEMBER 3-4, 2023
CROSSWAY MONTESSORI COMMUNITY
KENSINGTON, MD



GUEST LECTURER: CAITLIN O'CONNELL, PHD

Guest Lecturer

Caitlin O’Connell, PhD

Dr. O’Connell is an Instructor at Harvard Medical School, studying the elephant’s low frequency ear and hearing, in work funded by the National Institute of Health.



She has been studying elephant society in the wild in Namibia for thirty years and has written dozens of scientific articles on her research, as well as eight popular books, several winning numerous awards. She was awarded a National Geographic research grant to study seismic communication in elephants, resulting in numerous scientific publications.

In 2007, Dr. O’Connell was awarded “Outstanding Young Alumna” by her PhD alma mater, University of California, Davis in recognition of her elephant communication discoveries. A Smithsonian documentary about her research won the CINE Golden Eagle award in 2013.

Prior to her position at Harvard, Dr. O’Connell was a consulting Assistant Professor in the Department of Otolaryngology, Head & Neck Surgery at Stanford University School of Medicine, where she developed a vibrotactile hearing aid inspired by the elephant’s vibrotactile sense. Dr. O’Connell is the co-founder and CEO of the elephant nonprofit, Utopia Scientific, and runs a long-term elephant field site in Namibia where she returns every summer with a team of experts and Namibian students. She is a Fellow of the Explorer’s Club and her books have been translated into French, Dutch, Chinese and Korean.

Dr. O'Connell's Presentations

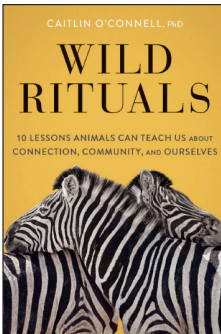
Wild Rituals: What Families can Learn from Nonhuman Animals about the Importance of Ritual in Strengthening Bonds and Reducing Stress

Dr. O'Connell will present an overview of major themes in her book, *Wild Rituals*, and review why all social animals engage in ritual and for what purposes, and why that is relevant to families:

Elephant Family Rituals and Parallels to Humans

Elephant families experience the same social and environmental pressures as human families. These parallels will be discussed in light of Dr. O'Connell's long-term elephant field work, where she will review known elephant family histories and show how visual, tactile, and vocal rituals serve to strengthen relationships, facilitate coalitions, coordinate action, as well as mediate stressors imposed by outside influences.

Wild Rituals Book Signing Friday 12:45



In *Wild Rituals*, Dr. O'Connell dives into the rituals of elephants, apes, zebras, rhinos, lions, whales, flamingos, and many more to reveal the importance of rituals and how they can help us find a simpler, more meaningful way of living.

Dr. O'Connell will sign books during the lunch book signing event. A limited number of books are available.

Use the qr code to purchase online at any time—up to an hour before the event. Or stop by the publications table before or during the book signing. Your pre-purchased book will be set aside for you.



Symposium Schedule

Friday, November 3, 2023

9:00 **Welcome**
Randall T. Frost, MDiv, Director of the Bowen Center

Morning Moderator: Anne S. McKnight, EdD, LCSW

9:10 **The Emotional System: Studying the Dance of Life**
Daniel V. Papero, PhD, LCSW

9:40 **Genetic Expression of the High and the Low**
Laurie Lassiter, PhD, MSW

10:00 **Panel Discussion: Presenters and Dr. O'Connell**

10:25 **Break**

10:45 **What Families can Learn from Nonhuman
Animals about the Importance of Ritual in
Strengthening Bonds and Reducing Stress**
Distinguished Guest Lecturer: Caitlin O'Connell, PhD

12:15 A complimentary lunch will be served.

12:45 **Lunch Event: *Wild Rituals* Book Signing**
Dr. O'Connell will sign copies of her books

Afternoon Moderator: Amie Post, MA, LCMFT

1:15 **"Lending a Hand": Rites of Passage and
Human Families**
The Rev. Katie Long, DMin

1:35 **Characteristics of Higher and Lower
Functioning Families**
Phillip Klever, LCSW

1:55 **Panel Discussion: Presenters, Drs. O'Connell and Papero**

2:20 **Break**

2:40 **Thinking Systems in Clinical Research**
Randall T. Frost, MDiv

3:10 **The Concept of Cutoff in the Human Family and in
the Natural World**
Anne S. McKnight, EdD, LCSW

3:35 **Panel Discussion: Presenters, Drs. O'Connell and Papero**

4:00 **Conference adjourns for the day**

4:30 **Anniversary Reception! In person and online**

Saturday, November 4, 2023

9:00 Housekeeping and Welcome Back to the Symposium
Randall T. Frost, MDiv

Morning Moderator: Kathleen Smith, PhD, LPC

9:10 Cognition and the Emotional System
Robert J. Noone, PhD

9:40 Barriers to Science for Bowen Theory
Patrick Stinson, PsyD

10:00 Panel Discussion: Presenters and Drs. O'Connell and Papero

10:25 Break

10:45 Elephant Family Rituals and Parallels to Humans
Caitlin O'Connell, PhD

12:15 A complimentary lunch will be served.

Afternoon Moderator: Carrie E. Collier PhD, LPC

1:15 Aging Informed by Differentiation
Eileen Gottlieb, MEd

1:35 Relationship Harmony
Michael Sullivan, LMSW, ACSW

1:55 Panel Discussion: Presenters and Drs. O'Connell and Papero

2:20 Break

2:40 Family of Origin Size and Stressor Impacts
Bruce Hiebert, PhD

3:00 It Ain't Over Till It's Over: The Long Game of Bowen Theory
Anthony Wilgus, MA, MSW

3:20 Discussion

3:45 Conference Adjourns

Conference Notes:

- All panel discussions allow ample time for audience questions.
- Please raise your hand in-person or in the chat to join the que.
- For technical support, please let "technology help" know in the chat.
- Registrants will be emailed discount codes to purchase recordings at a reduced rate.

Abstracts

Daniel V. Papero, PhD, LCSW
dpapero@thebowencenter.org



The Emotional System: Studying the Dance of Life

The theoretical assumption considers emotional illness to be a disorder of the emotional system, an intimate part of man's phylogenetic past which he shares with all lower forms of life, and which is governed by the same laws that govern all living things. [Bowen, 1978, 356]

In broad terms, the emotional system governs the "dance of life" in all living things. It is deep in the phylogenetic past and is much older than the intellectual system. ...The theory postulates that far more human activity is governed by man's emotional system than he has been willing to admit, and there is far more similarity than dissimilarity between the "dance of life" in lower forms and the "dance of life" in human forms. [Bowen, 1978, 305]

In the two passages listed, Bowen draws the evolutionary link between the human and the rest of life, the processes he calls the emotional system. The emotional system, or the collection of instincts possessed by all living forms, guides the response of the organism to the vicissitudes of life, an operating system without an instruction book. With the discovery of the family unit and its functioning, Bowen extends the term to the family emotional system, the operating system of the family unit or organism.

This talk will endeavor to examine the idea of the emotional system, the family emotional system, and the evolution of the human family system. That evolution links the human family to deep evolution of the mother-offspring bond and the many evolutionary developments that lead to family. The comparative study of behavior between species can expand the knowledge of the human family emotional system and move a bit closer to understanding the "laws that govern all living things."

Bowen, Murray. 1978. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. New York: Jason Aronson.

Laurie Lassiter, PhD, MSW
lauri lassiter@gmail.com



Genetic Expression of the High and the Low

Scientists can predict a rhesus macaque's rank within her group by the gene expression in her immune cells. The higher the rank, the better the health of the animal (not the other way around). These findings contribute to understanding the relationship of social status to health. Rhesus macaques are matrilineal, and males are not part of the core social group, often moving to other groups.

Researchers¹ determine macaques' social rank by watching them compete for access to food and water and observing grooming interactions. They studied ten groups of female macaques (five each) in which researchers could manipulate individuals' social rank. Before being placed into new groups, all of the macaques started out as middle rank.

In the wild, macaques inherit their social rank from their mothers." "But in our research, the order of introduction determines rank; the newcomer is generally lower status. When some macaques' status changed after a newcomer arrived, so did their patterns of immune system gene activity.

The researchers used microarrays, a technology that allows them to scan thousands of genes and read the expression levels, to look at the macaques' immune cells. The genes that changed the most depending on social rank were those involved in inflammation. Previous studies have found lower status macaques have higher levels of inflammation and have changes in levels of hormones that indicate they're under more stress.

Based on the pattern of gene activity, the researchers could, without looking at a monkey's identity, predict whether that animal was high, middle, or low rank with 80 percent accuracy.

Steve Cole and others have shown similar genetic expression toward inflammation in humans with lower status.

¹ Tung J., Barreiro L. B., Johnson, Z. P., Hansen, K. D., Michopoulos, V., Toufexis, D., Michelini, K., Wilson, M. E. & Gilad, Y. 2012. "Social environment is associated with gene regulatory variation in the rhesus macaque immune system." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA*, 109: 6490–6495.

The Rev. Katie Long, DMin
katieflong@ymail.com



“Lending a Hand”: Rites of Passage and Human Families

Murray Bowen wrote,

A family unit is in functional equilibrium when it is calm and each member is functioning at reasonable efficiency for that period. The equilibrium of the unit is disturbed by either the addition of a new member or the loss of a member.” (Bowen, 324-5)

Bowen notes that physical losses such as a child’s leaving for college or such functional losses as a breadwinner’s incapacitation, can also disrupt family equilibrium. (325) Anthropologists have long understood rites of passage as marking a change in an individual’s life-stage, social status or both in a society. These rituals attend birth, puberty, marriage, religious profession, and death—all of which involve the addition or loss of a family member or at least a change in the member’s presence or function in the family.

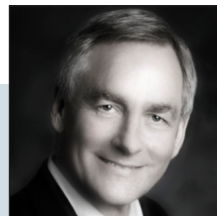
This presentation proposes that Bowen theory, which understands the family as an emotional unit, would frame rites of passage as marking a transition for a family. Bowen defines the goal of funerals, for example, as bringing

the entire family system into the closest possible contact with death in the presence of the total friendship system and to lend a helping hand to the anxious people who would rather run than face a funeral.

The presentation will propose that not only funerals but other rites of passage, which have been present in human societies for millennia, function to “lend a hand” to families in times of transition. This raises the question of how those conducting such rites, religious or secular, and family members might be more thoughtful in approaching them.

Bowen, Murray. 1978. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. New York: Jason Aronson.

Phillip Klever, LCSW
pgklever@gmail.com



Characteristics of Higher and Lower Functioning Families

This presentation describes the results of a fifteen-year longitudinal study of the nuclear and multigenerational family. The overarching study question was “What contributes to variation in family unit functioning?” With this question in mind, the researcher tested some of the hypotheses in Bowen theory. Family unit functioning was measured annually by assessing the degree of physical, psychiatric, and social symptoms in the adults and children and of marital distance and conflict.

Participants in families of procreation with lower composite symptomology usually had more viable emotional contact with their multigenerational families, multigenerational families with lower symptomology, less tension or stress in the nuclear and multigenerational family, more steady goal direction and effectiveness, less family of origin projection in the form of worry directed at the participants, more nuclear family unit stability in year-to-year functioning or symptomology, and less divergence in functioning between the couple and between the children. Participants in families of procreation with higher symptomology usually had more cutoff with the multigenerational family, multigenerational families with higher symptomology, more tension or stress in the nuclear and multigenerational family, less or no goal direction or effectiveness, more family of origin projection in the form of worry directed at the participants, more fluctuation in year-to-year nuclear family functioning, and more divergence between the spouses and between the children.

These results support some of the hypotheses in Bowen theory related to emotional cutoff, the multigenerational transmission process, the family projection process, chronic anxiety, differentiation of self, and the nuclear family emotional processes.

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Thinking Systems in Clinical Research

Family systems theory is based on the assumption that human behavior is significantly regulated by the same natural processes that regulate the behavior of all living things (Kerr, 3). Murray Bowen employed what he called systems thinking to conceptualize the interplay between a person and his or her functioning position in their emotionally most significant relationship system. By carefully observing the back-and-forth interaction among members of families, he observed facts of functioning in the unit that repeated over and over again under similar conditions. His observations eventually led to a systems theory of the family as an emotional unit. This presentation will propose the systems thinking engendered by Bowen's theory should not only guide the conduct of family psychotherapy, but also research into its outcomes.

Bowen developed his theory by making predictions about the outcome in family therapy. He wrote "any failure to change was as much a reason to reexamine the hypothesis as any other unpredicted change." (Bowen, 471) The same methodology used by Bowen to develop the theory can be used to test the efficacy of the theory in its more developed form. By establishing a baseline of family functioning at the start of family psychotherapy and conceptualizing the family's understanding of the family problem through the lens of Bowen theory, it is possible to make if...then hypotheses about family progress toward differentiation of self. The therapist and the family can then track progress toward differentiation (or the lack thereof) over the course of therapy.

Specific milestones are especially important as markers on the road to better levels of differentiation. This presentation will highlight some of these milestones and discuss their implications for the progress toward differentiation that theory predicts is possible.

Bowen, Murray and Michael E. Kerr. 1988. *Family Evaluation*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

Bowen, Murray. 1978. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. New York: Jason Aronson.

Anne S. McKnight, EdD, LCSW
amcknight@thebowncenter.org



The Concept of Cutoff in the Human Family and in the Natural World

Attachment theory and Bowen family systems theory are often conflated or confused. This presentation seeks to delineate their differences and the resulting implications in addressing family rifts by examining the concepts of estrangement and cutoff. Both concepts address tension and the resulting rupture in adult/child relationships, but with entirely different paradigms.

Attachment theory, created by John Bowlby and extended by Mary Ainsworth, focuses on the infant/mother-caretaker dyad. The capacity of the mother to nurture the child in a secure attachment has implications for the adult's mental health and well-being. The concept of estrangement in which the child has received insufficient nurturance or abuse is embedded in the attachment theory concept of maternal deprivation. The widely held view that cutting off from a "toxic mother" is a life affirming stance is emblematic of this theoretical idea. The recourse to an estrangement is to find support through therapy, internet groups, or an alternate family.

Bowen theory, as a natural systems theory, views distance and cutoff as phenomena in the natural world to handle tension for the preservation of the young or the functioning of the group. This theory considers the functioning of an adult/child relationship within a context of a multi-generational family system of which the mother and child are a part. Cutoff, a means of handling tension in an intensely fused relationship system, is part of a pattern of managing anxiety across generations that often fragments the family and reduces resources available to subsequent generations. Cutoff in Bowen theory is an expression of the family's emotional life related to their level of differentiation, chronic anxiety, reaction to current stressors, and the family patterns of managing tension. Researching and connecting with the broader family gives individuals perspective about the family that mitigates the blame and the emotionality that often accompany a family rift. The work toward differentiation of self and toward resolution of unresolved emotional attachment to the parental generation are efforts that include the bridging of cutoffs in the family.

Robert J. Noone, PhD
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Cognition and the Emotional System

Central to Bowen theory are the interactive processes which Bowen defined as the emotional, feeling, and intellectual systems. The emotional system can be observed in the regulation of behavior from the automatic elements observed in functioning from single-celled prokaryotes to nature's most complex expressions of life. Bowen defined the human family as an emotional system. The intellectual system is posited as a function of the human's higher cortical systems which allow for the capacity to think, reason, and reflect in guiding behavior. The degree to which the maturation or differentiation of the intellectual system occurs is viewed as largely influenced by the family system over the course of an individual's development.

Expanding knowledge in biology and the neurosciences has shed light on how all three systems interact. It is interesting to speculate about how the emotional and intellectual systems influence each other. Is differentiation of self principally brain-based? Is it largely a top-down process? Is the emotional system entirely automatic or does it have some capacity to learn? Is it informed by the intellectual system?

In this presentation I will discuss some of the emerging evidence that non-neural organisms learn and that even some cells in multicellular organisms demonstrate some capacity to process information, store it, and to learn from the environment.

Patrick Stinson, PsyD
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Barriers to Science for Bowen Theory

The field of Clinical Psychology has no broad, predictive theory to diagnose and guide the treatment of behavioral problems. Bowen theory is one attempt to organize all observations of human behavior into a single, integrative, and predictive framework. Bowen theory also stands alone as a conceptual system grounded first in evolution, with an emphasis on logical coherence in a world of divergent species.

However, Bowen theory has yet to enjoy scientific critique from outside the network of professionals who are already interested in it. With no formal explicit predictive models or comprehensive data set to support its claims, even good faith critics are left with mere mental logic and insufficient attention to evaluate its complex ideas. Further, a lack of explicit predictive models leaves the ideas vulnerable to erosion through a group process, a problem articulated by Murray Bowen himself.

These problems will be examined as impacted by pseudoscience. The term pseudoscience refers to knowledge systems mistakenly regarded as being scientific. This presentation will begin with a review of previous critics of psychological pseudoscience such as Popper, Lilienfeld, and including Murray Bowen. New markers will be proposed from experience learning and applying Bowen theory both within and without professional circles interested in the theory. The reviewed markers will be used to assess current limitations in Bowen theory and point to areas of future work. The goal is to help clarify when resources are steered toward generating scientific knowledge versus merely maintaining relationships.

Eileen Gottlieb, MEd
ebgfamilycenter@comcast.net



Aging Informed by Differentiation

Murray Bowen suggested that “the differentiation of self is roughly equivalent to the concept of emotional maturity.” (Bowen, 365)

Maturation pertains to the process of becoming mature. A mature organism, for instance, is one that has completely grown or developed for any function or state. The state of full development or completed growth is referred to as maturity. In biology, maturation is the process of differentiation... a mature cell is a cell that has acquired a specific rather than generalized function. In developmental biology, cell differentiation is the normal process by which a less specialized cell develops or matures to possess a more distinct form and function. *Online Dictionary of Biology, 2023*

Aging is a challenge faced by all families whose members manage to survive to the point of growing old. There is wide variation in the manner in which a family grows up and grows old. What can be learned about the differences in how families adapt to aging from studying this process?

Issues particular to but not exclusive to aging may be markers of variation in family functioning.

An examination from the perspective of dimensions as opposed to symptoms may provide a broader and more factual view of differentiation as it impacts the process of aging. How does the family’s response to health, finances, relationships, location, activity and death vary with level of differentiation? Using the Papero Family Dimensional Assessment model to examine the family response to aging may offer a useful guide for clinicians and families challenged by the effort to consider the role of differentiation in this process.

How does family resourcefulness, connectedness, self-regulation, systems thinking, and goal setting impact the manner in which its’ aging members function at the end of life? What variation can be observed and how does Bowen theory inform it?

Bowen, Murray. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. New York: Jason Aronson.

Michael Sullivan, LMSW, ACSW
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Relationship Harmony

Recently I had the opportunity to attend a Bruce Springsteen concert at Little Caesar's Arena in Detroit. A crowd of roughly 20,000 strangers joined voices screaming the lyrics to "Born to Run" - a moment of shared euphoria. Despite the intense social polarity, for that moment we were one in a ritual that provoked a sense of awe and social connectedness.

What is it about music that promotes such a response?

Theorist Geoffrey Miller suggests music is an example of runaway sexual selection, a species wide trait evolved to promote social cohesion, display fitness, and attract partners.

Music is considered a mechanism of social bonding that reflects the quality of relationships and influences brain and social development. (Dunbar, Trehub) According to Schafer "people listen to music to *regulate arousal and mood*, to achieve *self-awareness*, and as an expression of *social relatedness*." Huron proposes music as an evolutionary adaptive pleasure-seeking behavior linked to survival.

This presentation will examine the psychological functions of listening to music. Music will be considered a multigenerational communication process from a Bowen family systems perspective that binds anxiety and promotes closeness or distance. Several forms of songs will be reviewed to illustrate this perspective: lullabies, love ballads, folk tunes and rebel songs. The presentation will conclude with research and examples of the synchrony of brain activity between the musician and listener.

Bruce Hiebert, PhD
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Family of Origin Size and Stressor Impacts

Murray Bowen indicated the family constellation was a significant aspect of the multi-generational family system. Calling upon the work of Tolman, he accepted that family constellation includes factors such as birth order and sibling pool gender dynamics. However, there are other family constellation factors such as family size which he did not consider and which potentially carry aspects of multi-generational family dynamics and reflect aspects of family theory such as triangling.

This study¹ explores the impact of the size of the sibling pool on a random sampling of 2800 Mennonite men born 1878 to 1912 taken from the GRANDMA genealogical database. These men were all the children of recent immigrants from Russia and born in the USA, primarily in Kansas and Nebraska. These men were raised within a homogenous rural family environment, often in clan groups, and shared social conditions and social stressors, especially the conscription of 1917-1918 for World War I.

This study finds, using linear regression analysis and life length as the dependent variable, that sibling pool size correlates positively with a longer life and with greater resilience to the social stress of conscription. It is hypothesized that these results come from the possibilities of a larger sibling pool to mediate emotional intensity in the primary triangle and find additional emotional resources among siblings, and the development of greater emotional maturity due to a more complex emotional field in the birth family. This study is the first large scale, systematic, historical study of family size guided by Murray Bowen's perspective. The results are suggestive that Bowen theory has significant implications for aspects of family life and the social conditions families encounter, even those not initially considered in the theory.

¹ The study was conducted with Amit Kohli, PhD, a statistician who is, like Dr. Hiebert, is a professor at University Canada West. The full title of the study is "Family of Origin Size and Stressor Impacts: Family systems and stress resilience among Mennonite males born 1878-1912."

Anthony Wilgus, MA, MSW
wilgus@findlay.edu



It Ain't Over Till It's Over: The Long Game of Bowen Theory

In a world that embraces the quick fix such as a pill for a host of emotional and physical conditions, fast remedies to a healthier lifestyle, and miracle surgeries to eliminate fat, Bowen theory offers another perspective on addressing the challenges occurring in all human families. Committing oneself to a radically different way of thinking about the world requires time, effort, and persistence. Highlighting the rationale for this long-term view, the discussion will underline some of the factors that contribute to this kind of protracted effort, including, the temporal aspect of appropriating a new world view, the arduous reality of integrating the cognitive and experiential components of the theory, and the predictable pushback that ensues in relationship networks when a person begins to think for self.

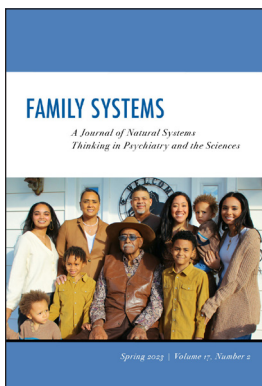
As social animals, humans learn through play, collaboration with significant others, and participation in a multitude of group gatherings. In that spirit, this presentation will review a 45-year endeavor to discover and to connect with the multigenerational family rooted in the principle of establishing person to person relationships with as many living family members as possible. Critical to this endeavor is the notion of being present and accounted for not only at key family rituals as Dr. Caitlin O'Connell describes in great detail but also in times when the family is highly anxious. A depressed teenager, a marital crisis, a reconnection with distant relatives, and the suicide of a family member are opportunities to put theory into action. Failures and successes and the ebbs and flows of this process capture both the challenge and the reward of staying the course. Defining a self does not emanate from a charismatic pep talk. The road to understanding the human condition is long and hard. And worth it.

About the Symposium and Family Systems Journal



A group of Murray Bowen's graduating residents began the Annual Symposium for Family Theory and Family Psychotherapy. Each Symposium has featured a presentation by a Distinguished Guest Lecturer.

In the early years, the lecturer was a pioneer in family therapy. Later, guided by the belief that understanding the family must be based on the human's position in the natural world, Dr. Bowen invited scientists from a wide range of disciplines to present. Scientists such as Paul MacLean, Jack Calhoun, Stephen Jay Gould, E. O. Wilson, and Stephen Suomi have participated, permitting an exchange with systems ideas and the further development of Bowen theory.



Family Systems: A Journal of Natural Systems Thinking in Psychiatry and the Sciences is an interdisciplinary journal, published since 1994 by the Georgetown Family Center. The aim of the journal is to advance the understanding of human emotional functioning and behavior based on Bowen theory. Reflecting the assumption of Bowen theory that the human

family is governed by the same natural forces that govern all life, the journal publishes articles that contribute to a better understanding of any living system.

Celebrate!

*The 60th Anniversary of
The Annual Symposium on Family Theory
and Family Psychotherapy
& The 30th Anniversary of
Family Systems Journal*

We invite all attendees, both in-person and online, to join us in celebrating these anniversaries and honoring former faculty and staff who contributed to the Bowen Center reaching these milestones.



Friday, November 3rd, 2023 | Online and In-Person

4:00 PM Food and Drink Opens for In-Person attendees

4:30 PM Gather in Great Hall: Online Reception Begins

Remarks by: Randall T. Frost, Director of the Bowen Center

Joanne Bowen, PhD, Michael E. Kerr, Director Emeritus,
and Robert J. Noone, Editor, *Family Systems*

5:10 PM Bach Piano recital by Stan Proffitt

5:30 PM Online Reception Ends: Food and Drinks Re-Open

6:30 PM Reception Concludes

Bowen Center Training Programs

INTRODUCTION TO BOWEN THEORY

An introduction for people who have little to no formal training or education in Bowen theory. There are no prerequisites.

POSTGRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAM

Designed for those with prior training/coaching experience utilizing Bowen theory who want to establish a foundation in theory and learn to apply it in their personal and professional lives.

CONTINUING STUDIES PROGRAM

The Continuing Studies in Bowen Family Systems Theory Program is for professionals in various fields with at least one year of training in Bowen family systems theory.

FAITH LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

An online seminar for those leading faith communities. Includes guest speakers, small group, and individual coaching sessions. For those who have had experience with Bowen theory.

DIFFERENTIATION AT WORK

A think tank for those interested in the application of Bowen theory to work organizations: leadership, coaching, organizational development, family business and transfer of wealth in families.

CLINICAL STUDY GROUP

A monthly discussion format for applying Bowen theory to clinical cases.

SPANISH SPEAKING STUDY GROUP

The Spanish Speaking Study Group centers around the reading and discussion of Dr. Bowen's seminal book, *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*.



Bowen Center Conferences and Resources

Clinical Conference Series

The Clinical Conferences combine presentations by Bowen Center faculty with recorded clinical interviews with families.



Upcoming (post Symposium): December 1, 2023

"Tango Through Transitions with the Thinking Bowen Theory Provides" | Amie Post, MS, LCMFT

Learn more: thebowncenter.org/clinical-conferences

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Online Via Zoom.

Free and open to the public

Upcoming Lecture:

November 30, 2023 7:00-8:30 PM

Michelle Brafman, novelist

"Bowen Theory and the Geometry of Crafting Fictional Families"

Ms. Brafman's newest book is *Swimming with Ghosts*

Learn more: thebowncenter.org/professional-lectures



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Your ongoing generosity is important and makes possible the continued development of theory and engagement for students of Bowen theory around the world.

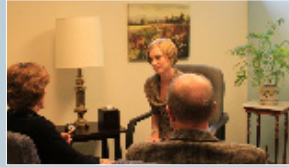
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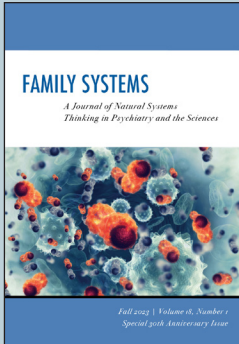
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Family Systems Journal

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 1



The journal's purpose is to advance the understanding of human emotional functioning and behavior based on Bowen theory.

The journal is published twice per year and is available in print + digital and digital-only subscription options.

Visit thebowencenter.org/journal/ to learn more and subscribe.

FROM THE EDITOR

Robert J. Noone, PhD

FROM THE EDITOR, Volume 1.1

Michael E. Kerr, MD

ARTICLES

Darwin to Freud to Bowen: Toward a Natural Systems Theory of Human Behavior

Michael E. Kerr, MD

FACULTY CASE CONFERENCE

Efforts to Differentiate a Self in Response to a Cancer Diagnosis: From Volume 7.2

Michael E. Kerr, MD

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Triangles and the Scale of Differentiation of Self

Murray Bowen, MD

Introduction by Daniel V. Papero, PhD, LCSW

BOOK REVIEW

Thinking Systems: Applying Bowen Theory in Clinical Practice

Anne S. McKnight, EdD, LCSW

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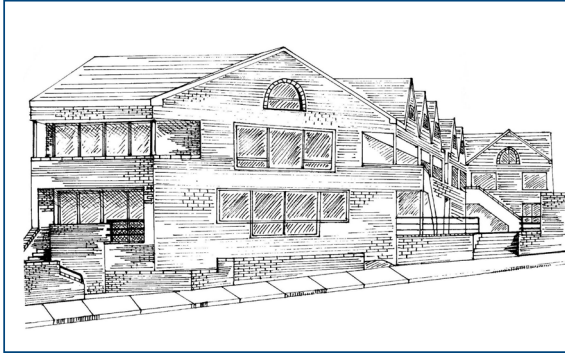
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The Family Center was originally established by Murray Bowen, MD in 1975 under the auspices of Georgetown University. The Center became independent in 1990 as the Georgetown Family Center. In 2000 it was renamed for Dr. Bowen.

Dr. Bowen was a pioneer in family research who developed a new theory of human behavior and a different approach to the treatment of human problems. Through the varied activities of the Center, Bowen theory continues to be refined by the latest knowledge from the various scientific disciplines. The Bowen Center is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.