

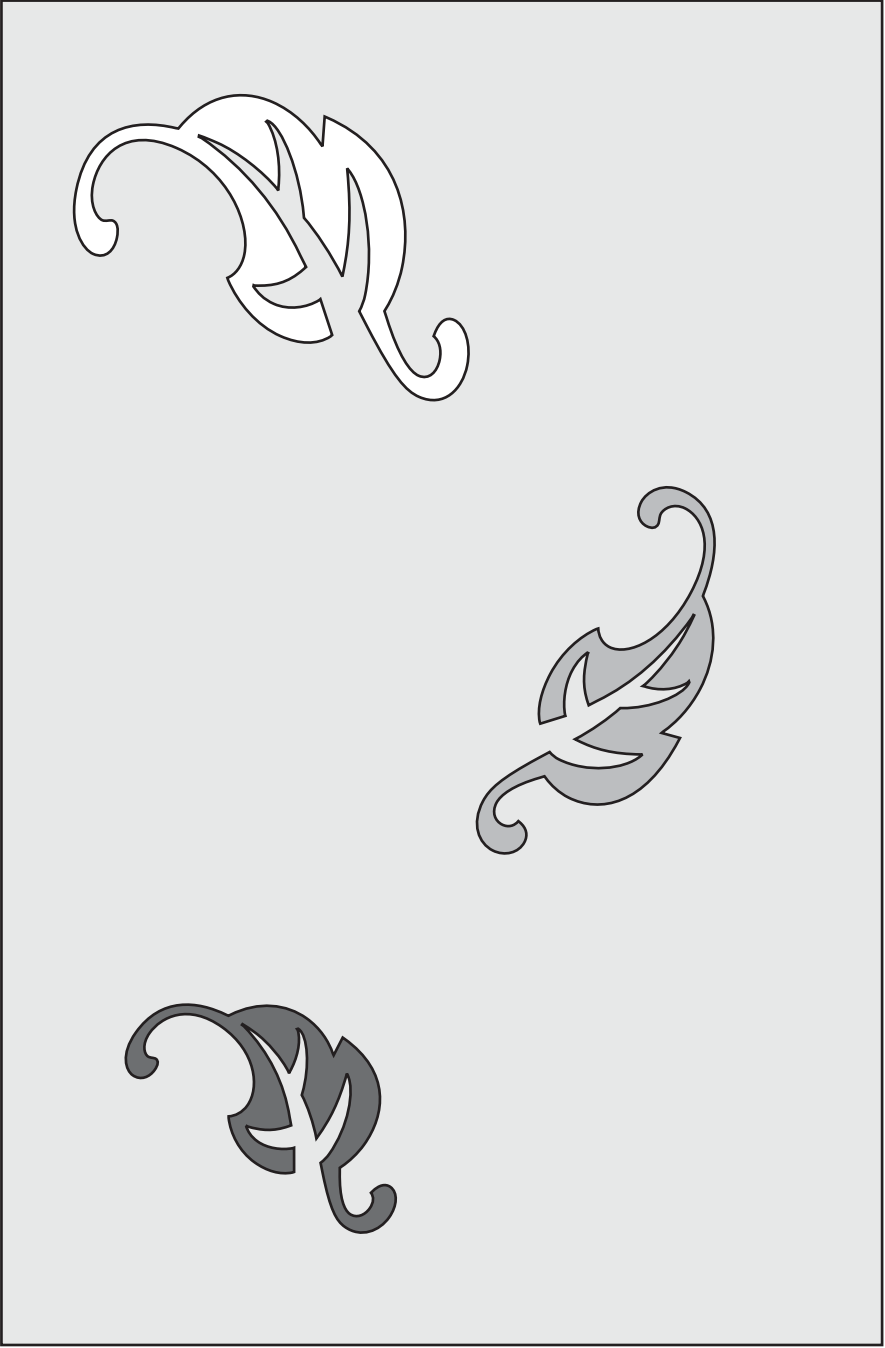
Couples & Family Therapy in Clinical Practice

5th Edition



Ira D. Glick
Douglas S. Rait
Alison M. Heru
Michael S. Ascher

WILEY Blackwell





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Couples and Family Therapy in Clinical Practice

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FIFTH EDITION

WITH FOREWORDS BY
Ellen M. Berman, MD, and
Lloyd I. Sederer, MD

WILEY Blackwell

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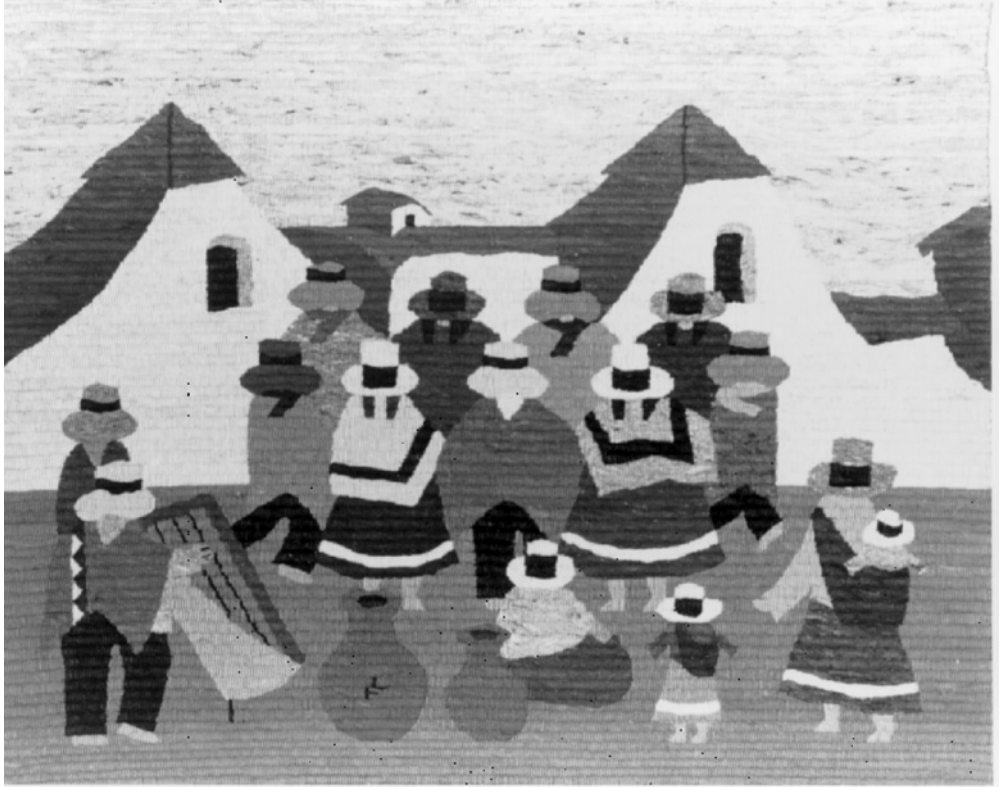
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To our families—
past and present,
personal and
professional



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Contents

Forewords, xix

Ellen M. Berman, MD

Lloyd I. Sederer, MD

Preface, xxvii

Acknowledgments, xxxi

A Guide for Using the Text, xxxiii

List of Tables, xxxvii

List of Figures, xxxix

Section I Family Therapy in Context

1 The Field of Couples and Family

Therapy: Development and
Definition, 5

Objectives for the Reader, 5

Introduction, 5

Development of the Family Therapy Field, 6

Definition of Couples and Family Therapy, 9

Core Concepts, 10

General Systems Theory, 10

*Family Systems Theory and Homeostasis Over
Time, 14*

An Integrative Interpersonal Model, 16

Differentiation of Family Therapy From Other
Psychotherapies, 16

Clinical Practice Implications, 19

Suggested Reading, 19

References, 19

2 Family Life in Historical and Sociological

Perspective, 23

Objectives for the Reader, 23

Introduction, 23

Structure and Function of the American

Family, 23

Immigration, 24

Ethnicity, 24

Secular View of Marriage, 25

Structures of Marriage, 26

Divorce, 26

The Functional Single-Parent Family, 27

Stepfamilies, 27

LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender,
Queer) Couples, 28

Parenting in Post-modern Relationships, 29

Family Types, 30

Multiracial Families, 30

African-American Families, 31

Latino Families, 31

Asian Families, 31

Social Class, 32

Aging of the Population, 33

The Changing Family Life Cycle, 33

Clinical Practice Implications, 34

Suggested Reading, 34

References, 34

Section II Functional and Dysfunctional Families

3 Understanding the Functional Family, 41

Objectives for the Reader, 41

Introduction, 41

The Family as a System, 42

The Couples/Marital and Family Life Cycle, 44

The Individual Life Cycle, 44

The Couples/Marital Life Cycle, 46

Phase of Relationship and Tasks, 46

Marital Coalition, 47

Sex, Intimacy, and Companionship, 49

The Family Life Cycle, 49

Family Tasks, 52

Provision of Basic Needs, 52

Rearing and Socialization of Children, 53

Family Belief Systems, 55

Family Resilience, 55

- Clinical Practice Implications, 55
- Suggested Readings, 56
- References, 56
- 4 Understanding the Functional Family in a Variety of Family Forms, 59**
 - Objectives for the Reader, 59
 - Introduction, 59
 - Impact of an Extended Individual Life Cycle, 59
 - Marriage, 60
 - Divorce, 60
 - Marital Separation*, 61
 - Divorce*, 61
 - Children and Divorce*, 62
 - Binuclear Families, 62
 - The Functional Single-Parent Family*, 63
 - Mother-Headed Single-Parent Families*, 64
 - Father-Headed Single-Parent Families*, 65
 - Remarriage and Blended Families, 65
 - Remarried Couple*, 66
 - Stepfamilies (Blended Families), 66
 - Grandparent-Headed Families, 67
 - Lesbian, Gay, or Transgendered Families, 67
 - Parents with a Gender Non-conforming Child, 68
 - Multiple-Partner Fertility Families, 69
 - Adoption and Families, 69
 - Interracial Families, 69
 - Trends in Parenting, 70
 - Clinical Practice Implications, 70
 - Suggested Reading, 70
 - References, 71
- 5 Problems and Dysfunction from an Integrated Family Systems Perspective, 75**
 - Objectives for the Reader, 75
 - Introduction: The Dysfunctional Family System, 75
 - A Systems Approach to Problems and Dysfunction, 76
 - Historical Perspectives*, 76
 - Current Perspectives*, 77
 - Structural Problems*, 78
 - The Solution as the Problem*, 79
 - Family Beliefs and Myths, 80
 - The Larger Social System and Dysfunction, 84
 - Implications for Treatment—The Development of Symptoms in a Particular Person, 85
 - Life Cycle Problems and Dysfunction, 86
 - Unresolved Grief*, 87
 - Toxic Secrets*, 87
 - Task Performance in the Dysfunctional Family, 87
 - Providing for the Family's Basic Needs*, 88
 - Maintaining a Functional Marriage: Issues of Sex, Intimacy, and Commitment*, 88
 - Rearing and Socializing of Children*, 88
 - Clinical Practice Implications, 89
 - Suggested Reading, 89
 - References, 89
- Section III Family Evaluation**
- 6 The Process of Evaluation, 95**
 - Objectives for the Reader, 95
 - Introduction, 95
 - Who to Include in the Family Evaluation, 95
 - Progression of the Family Evaluation
 - Interview, 96
 - Dimensions of Couple and Family Assessment, 97
 - Joining with the Couple or Family*, 97
 - Seeing Systemic Patterns*, 98
 - Recognizing Family Developmental Stage, History, and Culture*, 98
 - Identifying Family Structure*, 99
 - Working with a Systemic Model of Change, 100
 - Role of Historical Material, 101
 - Role of Individual and Family Diagnoses, 102
 - Clinical Practice Implications, 102
 - References, 103
- 7 The Content of Evaluation, 107**
 - Objectives for the Reader, 107
 - Introduction, 107
 - Dimensions of Family Function, 107
 - Family Evaluation Outline, 107
 - Gathering Identifying Data and Establishing Current Phase of Family Life Cycle*, 108
 - Gathering Explicit Interview Data*, 109

What is the Background of the Family

Problem?, 110

What is the History of Past Treatment

Attempts?, 111

What are the Families Goals and Expectations
of the Treatment?, 112

The Family Genogram, 114

Clinical Practice Implications, 114

References, 114

8 Formulating an Understanding of the

Family Problem Areas, 117

Objectives for the Reader, 117

Introduction, 117

Rating Important Dimensions of Family
Functioning, 117

Communication, 117

Problem Solving, 118

Roles and Coalitions, 118

Affective Responsiveness and Involvement, 118

Operative Family Beliefs and Stories, 119

Recent Family Events and Stresses, 119

Family Classification and Diagnosis, 119

Planning the Therapeutic Approach and

Establishing the Treatment Contract, 124

Case Example Illustrating Evaluation and Case
Formulation, 126

Suggested Reading, 132

References, 132

Section IV Family Treatment

9 Major Family Therapy Schools and Their

Treatment Strategies, 137

Objectives for the Reader, 137

Introduction, 137

Insight-Awareness Model, 137

Family of Origin Model, 140

Systemic-Strategic Model, 141

Structural Model, 141

Cognitive-Behavioral Model, 142

Experiential Model, 143

Narrative Model, 143

Psychoeducational Model, 143

Clinical Practice Implications, 144

Recommended Readings, 144

References, 144

10 Goals, 147

Objectives for the Reader, 147

Introduction, 147

Mediating and Final Goals as They Relate to
Schools, 147

The Most Common Mediating Goals, 147

The Most Common Final Goals, 148

Individualizing Goals With the Family, 149

Goals and Their Relation to Process and

Content Issues, 151

Mediating Goals and Their Related Strategies, 151

Goals and Related Strategies Common to All

Family Therapy Schools, 152

Clinical Practice Implications, 153

Reference, 153

11 Family Treatment: Integrated Strategies and Techniques, 157

Objectives for the Reader, 157

Introduction, 157

General Elements of Psychotherapy and Their
Relationship to Family Therapy, 157

Basic Strategies of Family Intervention, 158

Techniques for Supporting Adaptive

Mechanisms and Strengths: The

Psychoeducational Approach, 158

Techniques for Expanding Emotional

Experience, 160

Techniques for Developing Interpersonal Skills,

161

Techniques for Reorganizing the Family

Structure, 163

Techniques for Increasing Insight and Conflict

Resolution, 167

Techniques for a More Effective Construction of

Family Reality, 169

Treatment Packages, 170

Indications for Differential Use of the Basic
Strategies, 170

Clinical Practice Implications, 171

References, 171

12 The Course of Family Treatment, 175

Objectives for the Reader, 175

Introduction, 175

Early Phase, 175

Identifying Objectives of the Early Phase, 175

- Choosing Strategies to Get Started*, 175
- Distributing the Available Time*, 176
- Gathering History and Simultaneously Building a Treatment Alliance with the Family*, 176
- Distinguishing Evaluation from Treatment*, 178
- Middle Phase, 178
- Termination Phase, 179
- Conducting Brief Family Therapy: Treatment as It Is Influenced by Time Constraints, 180
 - Indications for Brief Family or Couples Intervention*, 181
 - Course of Brief Therapy*, 181
 - Techniques*, 182
 - Setting Limited Goals and a Definite End Point*, 182
 - Active Focus: Reinforcement of Family Strengths, Reconceptualization*, 183
 - Active Exploration of Alternatives: Behavioral and Emotional Rehearsal*, 183
 - Homework and Family Tasks*, 184
 - The Problem-Oriented School of Brief Therapy*, 184
 - Crisis Intervention*, 185
- Clinical Practice Implications, 185
- Suggested Reading, 185
- References, 185
- 13 Promoting Change in Family Treatment:**
 - Issues of Alliance and Resistance, 189
 - Objectives for the Reader, 189
 - Introduction, 189
 - The Therapeutic Alliance, 189
 - Models for Dealing with Families That Have Trouble Forming an Alliance, 191
 - Medical Model*, 191
 - Coaching Model*, 191
 - Conflict Model*, 191
 - Strategic Systems Model*, 192
 - Problems in Creating Change: Resistance and Disconnection, 192
 - Problems in Creating Change: Emanating from the Family*, 193
 - Problems in Creating Change: Emanating from the Therapist*, 193
 - Problems in Creating Change: From the Therapist–Family System*, 194
 - Problems in Creating Change: Stages of Treatment: At Evaluation and Early in Treatment*, 194
 - Problems in Creating Change: In Ongoing Treatment*, 196
 - Problems in Creating Change: At the Termination Phase of Therapy*, 197
 - Problems in Creating Change: Family Secrets*, 197
 - Techniques to Deal with Resistances or Stalled Therapy, 198
 - Assume Nothing*, 199
 - Collaboration*, 199
 - Emphasizing family responsibility*, 199
 - Focus on the present*, 199
 - Clinical Practice Implications, 199
 - Suggested Reading, 200
 - References, 200
- 14 Family Therapy: General Considerations, 203**
 - Objectives for the Reader, 203
 - Introduction, 203
 - Family Participants, 203
 - Extended Family and Significant Others*, 205
 - Caregivers*, 205
 - Including Children and Adolescents in Family Therapy, 206
 - Diagnostic Family Evaluation*, 206
 - Treatment*, 207
 - Therapist Combinations, 208
 - Co-Therapy*, 208
 - Working as a Team*, 209
 - Setting, 210
 - Time, Scheduling, and Fees, 210
 - Keeping a Record of Treatment, 211
 - Family Therapy in Combination with Other Psychosocial Therapies, 211
 - Practical Guidelines*, 213
 - Effective Family Intervention*, 214
 - Comparison of Therapy Formats and Strategies*, 214
 - Clinical Practice Implications, 215
 - References, 215

Section V Couples Therapy

15 Dysfunctional Couples and Couples

Therapy, 221

Objectives for the Reader, 221

Introduction, 221

Marriage in Its Historical Context, 221

Couples Difficulties, Problems, and

Dysfunction, 222

From a Dynamic Point of View, 223

From a Behavioral Point of View, 223

From a Systems Point of View, 224

From a Psychiatric Illness Point of View, 224

Couples' Development Dysfunction, 224

Couples Therapy, 225

The Issue of Commitment—The Problem of Affairs, 225

Evaluation of Partners, 226

Goals, 227

Strategies and Techniques of Intervention, 227

A Model for Intervention Based on Patterns of Interaction, 227

Individual Models, 228

Strategies and Techniques, 229

Clinical Practice Implications, 231

References, 231

16 Sex, Couples, and Sex Therapy, 235

Objectives for the Reader, 235

Introduction, 235

Diagnosis—Systems Issues, 236

Some Parameters of Sexual Function, 236

Assessment of Sexual Disorder, 237

Treatment, 240

Lack of Desire, 240

Erectile Disorder, 240

Premature (Early) Ejaculation, 240

Painful Intercourse/Female Orgasmic Disorder, 240

Other Issues Related to Sexuality and Couples, 242

The Spectrum of Sexuality, 242

Sexual Functioning After Rape or Sexual Abuse, 243

Sexual Problems After Medical Illness, 243

Sexual Problems in the Elderly, 244

Clinical Practice Implications, 244

Suggested Reading, 244

References, 244

17 Couples and Families Breaking Apart:

Separation and Divorce, 249

Objectives for the Reader, 249

Introduction, 249

Separation, 249

Separation Leading to Divorce, 250

Communicating the Issue of Divorce to Children, 251

Immediate Issues, 252

Therapy for Families Facing Divorce, 253

Divorce and Post-divorce Treatment, 254

Single-Parent and Binuclear Families, 255

Blended Families (Stepfamilies), 255

Goals, 256

Evaluation and Treatment, 256

Cohabiting Couples, 259

Serial Relationships, 260

Clinical Practice Implications, 260

Suggested Reading, 261

References, 261

Section VI Family Treatment When One Member Has a Psychiatric Disorder or Other Special Problem

18 Family Treatment in the Context of Individual Psychiatric Disorders, 267

Objectives for the Reader, 267

Introduction, 267

The Family Model and Individual

Diagnosis, 267

Schizophrenia, 268

Rationale, 268

Treatment Considerations, 269

Patients with Schizophrenia Living with or Supported by Families of Origin, 272

Mood Disorders: Bipolar Disorder, 274

Rationale, 274

Treatment Considerations, 276

Mood Disorders: Persistent Depressive

Disorder and Major Depressive Disorder, 277

Rationale, 277

Treatment Considerations, 279

- Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), 281
 - Rationale*, 281
 - Treatment Considerations*, 282
- Anxiety Disorders, 283
 - Rationale*, 283
 - Panic Disorder and Agoraphobia*, 284
 - Treatment*, 284
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, 285
 - Rationale*, 285
 - Treatment*, 285
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, 285
 - Rationale*, 285
 - Treatment*, 286
- Dementia, Amnesia, and Other Cognitive Disorders, 286
 - Rationale*, 286
 - Treatment Considerations*, 287
- Eating Disorders, 288
 - Rationale*, 288
 - Treatment Considerations*, 288
- Substance-Related Disorders, 289
 - Rationale*, 289
 - Assessment and Treatment Guidelines*, 290
 - Children of Alcoholic Parents*, 291
- Psychiatric Disorders of Childhood, 291
 - Intellectual Disability*, 291
 - Treatment*, 291
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder*, 292
 - Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder*, 292
 - Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Conduct Disorder*, 294
 - Anxiety Disorders*, 294
 - Mood Disorders*, 294
 - Childhood Obesity*, 295
- Clinical Practice Implications, 295
- Suggested Reading, 295
- References, 295
- 19** Family Treatment in the Context of Other Special Problems—Violence to Self and Others, 301
 - Objectives for the Reader, 301
 - Introduction, 301
 - The Family Model and Violence, 302
 - Description of the Problem*, 302
 - How Violent Acts Occur: The Cycle of Violence*, 303
 - Assessment of Individual and Family Systems Issues*, 304
 - Physical and Psychological Consequences of Violence*, 305
 - Treatment*, 306
 - Clinical Issues for Therapists*, 309
 - Intrafamilial Child Sexual Abuse, 310
 - Individual Issues*, 310
 - Family Issues*, 310
 - Larger System Issues*, 311
 - Assessment*, 311
 - Treatment*, 312
 - Outcomes*, 312
 - The Family Model and Child Abuse, 312
 - The Suicidal Patient and the Family, 314
 - Acute Management*, 314
 - Evaluating the Family*, 315
 - Involving the Family*, 315
 - Treating the Family*, 316
 - Discharging the Hospitalized Patient*, 316
 - Clinical Practice Implications, 316
 - Suggested Reading, 316
 - References, 317
- 20** The Family and Treatment of Acute and Chronic Psychiatric Illness, 321
 - Objectives for the Reader, 321
 - Introduction, 321
 - Background, 322
 - Acute Treatment, 322
 - The Function of the Acute Team for the Family*, 322
 - Family Responses to Mental Illness of a Family Member*, 323
 - The Family Burden in Psychotic Illness*, 323
 - Rationale for Acute Treatment of Families*, 324
 - Process of Family Treatment in Acute Care*, 325
 - Common Goals of Acute Family Intervention*, 326
 - Particular Decisions in Acute Care and Family Intervention*, 328
 - Family Techniques*, 329
 - A Working Model of Acute Family Intervention*, 330
 - Guidelines for Recommending Family Intervention in an Acute Care Setting*, 331
 - Empirical Studies*, 332

Families of the Chronically Ill, 333
 Community-Based Support Groups, 335
 Controversies in the Treatment of Acute and
 Chronic Psychiatric Illness, 336
 Clinical Practice Implications, 337
 References, 337

21 Working with Families in the Medical Setting, 343

Objectives for the Reader, 343
 Introduction, 343
 How Family Functioning Impacts Illness, 343
 Gender Matters, 344
 Family Health Beliefs, 344
 Family Adherence, 344
 How Illness Impacts Family Functioning, 345
 Family Coping and Adaptation to Illness, 345
 Learning to Cope and Adapt, 346
 Providing a Therapeutic Space, 347
 Caregiving, 347
 A Family Systems Interview for Families with
 Medical Illness, 347
 1. *Problem Solving*, 348
 2. *Communication*, 348
 3. *Roles*, 348
 4. *Affective responsiveness*, 349
 5. *Affective involvement*, 349
 6. *Behavior control*, 350
 Family Interventions, 350
 Family Support, 350
 Family Psychoeducation, 350
 Family Systemic Interventions, 351
 Multifamily Groups, 352
 Clinical Practice Implications, 352
 Suggested Reading, 352
 References, 352

Section VII Results of and Guidelines for Recommending Family Therapy

22 Indications for and the Sequence of Family Therapy Evaluation and Treatment, 359

Objectives for the Reader, 359
 Introduction, 359

Sequence of Evaluation and Treatment
 Planning, 359
 Step 1: Is Family Evaluation Indicated?, 360
 Step 2: Is Family Treatment Indicated?, 361
 Family Therapy Versus Individual Therapy, 361
 Managed Care, 364
 *Individual, Couples, or Sex Therapy for Sexual
 Problems*, 364
 Family Crisis Therapy Versus Hospitalization, 365
 Step 3: What Shall Be the Duration and
 Intensity of Family Therapy?, 365
 Family Crisis Therapy, 366
 Brief Family Therapy, 366
 Long-Term Family Therapy, 366
 Step 4: What Model of Family Intervention Is
 Indicated?, 367
 Clinical Practice Implications, 367
 References, 367

23 Controversies, Relative Contraindications, and the Use and Misuse of Couples and Family Therapy, 371

Objectives for the Reader, 371
 Introduction, 371
 Couples Therapy, 371
 Couples Conflict and Dissatisfaction, 371
 Sexual Issues, 373
 Families in the Process of Divorce, 373
 Unmarried Couples, 373
 The Child as the Identified Patient, 373
 The Adolescent as the Identified Patient, 374
 Family of Origin Issues, 375
 Situations in Which Family Therapy Is
 Difficult and Perhaps Contraindicated, 375
 *When Psychopathology in One Family Member
 Makes Family Therapy Ineffective*, 375
 *When the Family or Therapist Thinks the
 Risks of Therapy Outweigh the Advantages*, 376
 *When the Family as a Whole Denies Having
 Family Problems*, 377
 *When Cultural or Religious Prejudices Are
 Present*, 377
 Skills and Attributes of the Therapist as They
 Affect Family Work, 377
 Clinical Practice Implications, 377
 References, 378

24 Results: The Outcomes of Couples and Family Therapy, 381

Objectives for the Reader, 381

Introduction, 381

Overview of Psychotherapy Outcome Research, 381

1. *Specificity*, 381
2. *The Difference Between Efficacy and Effectiveness*, 382
3. *The Difference Between Qualitative and Quantitative, or Exploratory and Confirmatory, Research*, 382
4. *The Difference Between Process and Outcome Research*, 383

What the Studies Show?, 383

Couples Treatments for Adult Disorders, 384

Insight-Oriented Marital Therapy for Marital Distress, 384

Integrative Behavioral Couple Therapy for Marital Distress, 384

Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy for Marital Distress, 385

Behavioral Marital Therapy for Depression, 385

Behavioral Couples Therapy for Alcoholism, 385

Couples Therapy for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, 386

Family Treatments for Adult Disorders, 386

Schizophrenia and Major Mental Illness, 386

Focused Family Therapy for Bipolar Disorder, 386

Family Treatments for Child and Adolescent Disorders, 387

Brief Strategic Family Therapy for Children and Adolescents with Externalizing Disorders, 387

Functional Family Therapy for Delinquent Adolescents, 388

Multidimensional Family Therapy for Adolescent Substance Abuse, 388

Multisystemic Therapy for Youth at Risk, 388

Functional Family Therapy for Adolescents with Bipolar Disorder, 388

Family-Based Treatment for Anorexia Nervosa, 389

Family Interventions for Medical Illnesses, 389

The Effectiveness of Combining Medication and Family Therapy, 389

Limitations of Family Therapy, 390

Negative Effects of Family Therapy, 391

Inability to Engage and Premature

Termination of Family Therapy, 394

Clinical Implications of Data from Couples and Family Therapy Outcome Studies, 395

Clinical Practice Implications, 396

References, 396

Section VIII Ethical, Professional, and Training Issues

25 Ethical and Professional Issues

in Couples and Family Therapy, 405

Objectives for the Reader, 405

Introduction, 405

Ethical Issues Inherent in Family Therapy, 405

Conflicting Interests of Family Members, 406

Understanding HIPPA, 406

Secrets and Confidentiality, 407

Issues Involving Gender, Gender Roles, and Sexuality, 409

Ethics in a Managed Care World, 409

Informed Consent, 410

Financial Issues, 410

Professional Issues, 411

The Problem of Boundaries and Dual Relationships, 411

Competencies, 411

Training Issues, 414

Clinical Experiences, 416

Training Programs in Family Psychiatry, 417

A Multidisciplinary Field, 417

Family Therapy Fellowships, 418

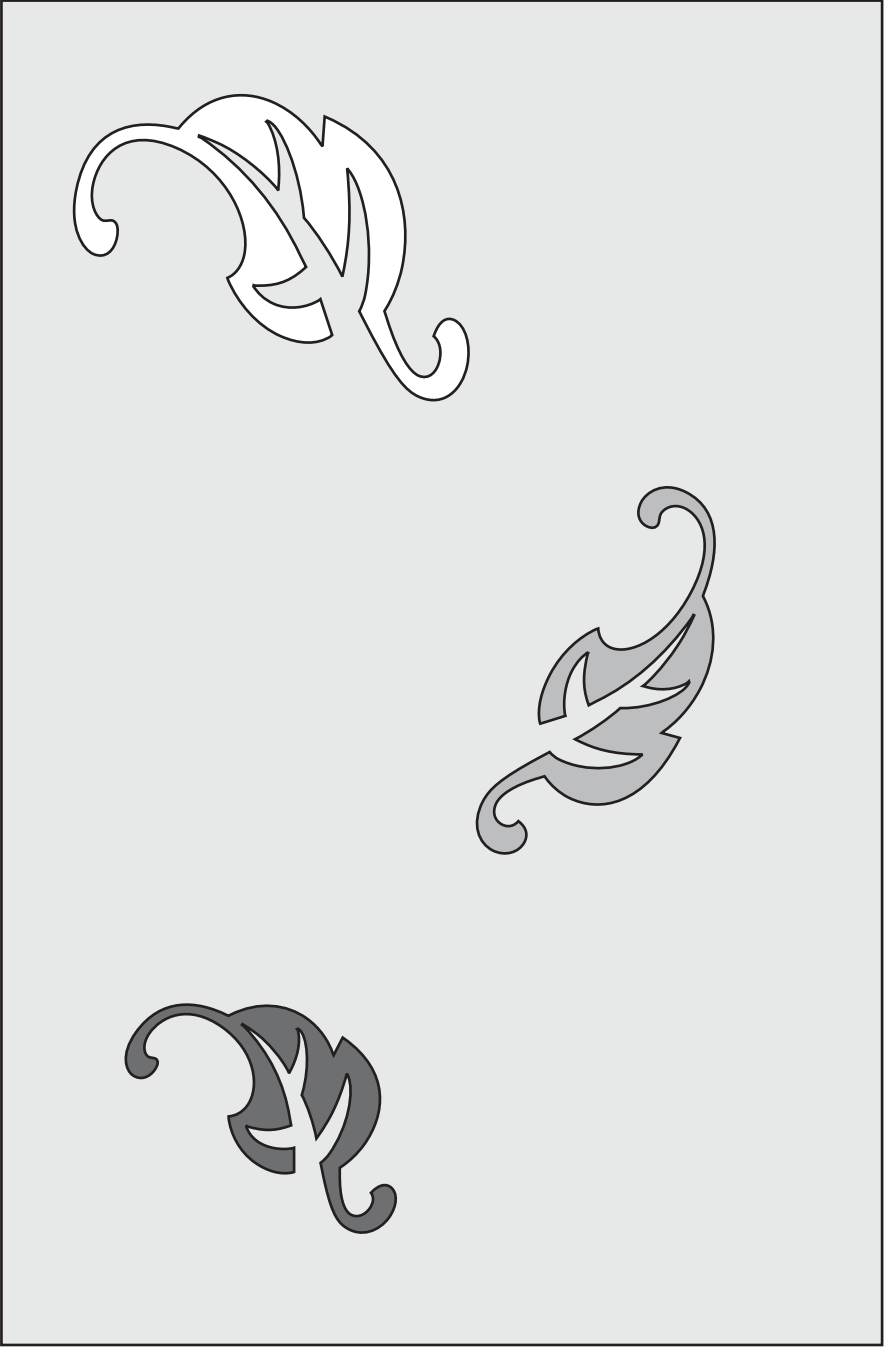
Training and Licensure, 418

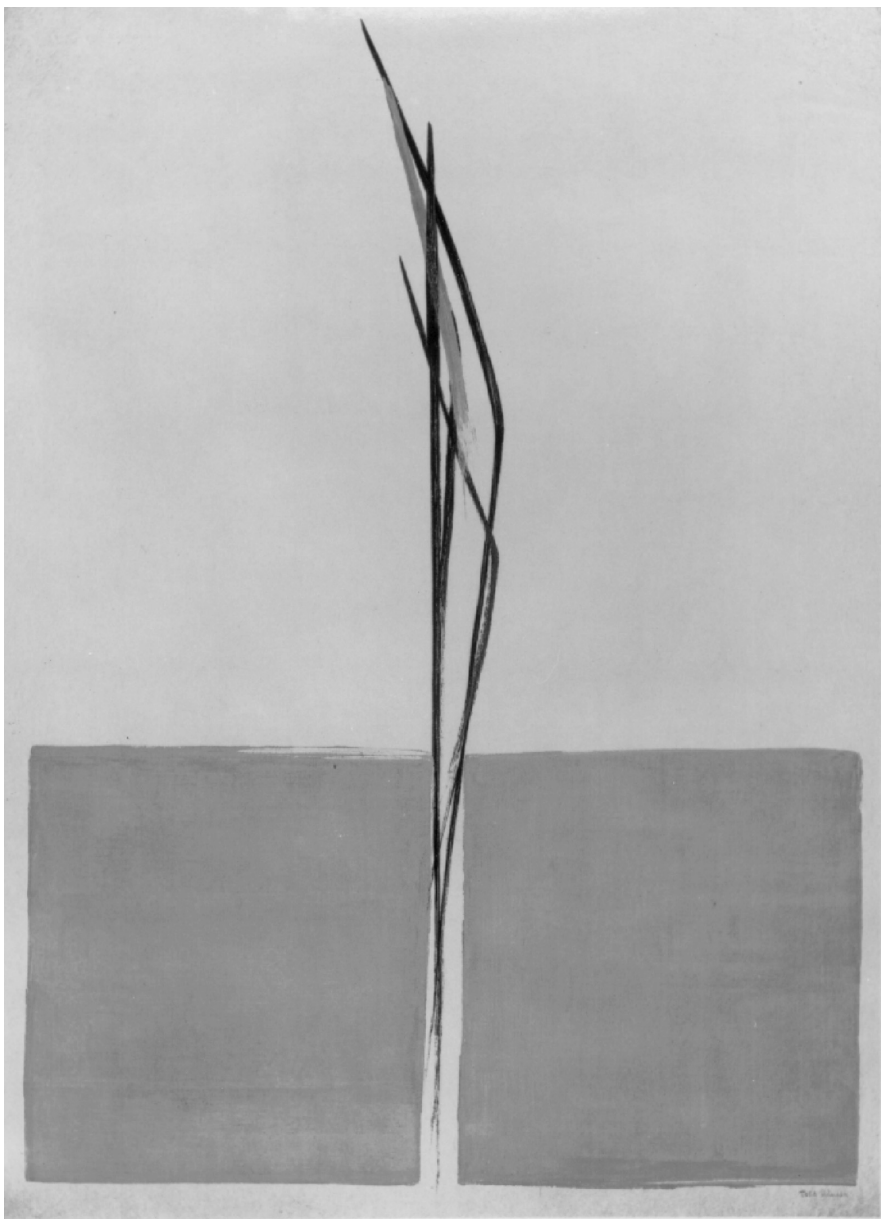
Clinical Practice Implications, 418

Suggested Reading, 419

References, 419

Index, 421





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Foreword

by Ellen M. Berman, MD

Edition Five of *Marital and Family Therapy* continues our long-standing efforts to make family inclusion and family therapy part of the everyday life of psychiatrists and other therapists. The new title, *Couples and Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*, reflects the goal of making this book a basic text for those working with families in psychiatric settings, medical settings, and couple and family clinics.

Family therapy has a high success rate with children's issues, with couples in crisis, with three-generation families struggling with transitions, and with families with a mentally ill member. For some couples and families, including those dealing with marital stress, family transitions, affairs or a life crisis, a systems approach is the main form of treatment. Couple and family work is also a crucial adjunctive treatment for those with psychiatric disorders including depression, addiction, and anxiety. Studies dating back to the 1960s, supplemented by much recent research (see Chapter 24), provide evidence that families are important in recovery from illness, and that family psychoeducation can decrease relapse and rehospitalization in very ill psychiatric patients by up to 50%.

Family inclusion and psychoeducation are highly efficient tools for extending the scope of today's brief psychiatric visits. Teaching the family to support the patient, increasing hope, calm and good communication, and decreasing anxiety in family members, improves everyone's functioning. This would suggest strongly that family intervention and psychoeducation be part of every provider's armamentarium.

Nevertheless, psychosocial interventions, and particularly the use of family interventions, have, if anything, decreased in recent years as a biomedical focus has become more common.

Training in family systems has yet to become an integral part of most psychiatrically based training programs. However, recent research suggests that in many cases psychosocial intervention can be as effective or more effective than a change in medications (Miklowitz et al. 2007). We believe that the treatment model is expanding and that we need to move in the direction of increasing the options for therapy and psychoeducation. The family therapy community, much of which in the past was strongly against individual treatment, is slowly finding rapprochement with the mental health system and incorporating medication and individual sessions into treatment. As a family psychiatrist and coauthor of the fourth edition, my own work has spanned the boundaries between the family therapy and the psychiatric community for my entire career, as have Dr. Glick's and Dr. Rait's. We are proud to have contributed to the growing integration of these fields.

For a field to grow, it is imperative that younger members become involved. We hope that this book will encourage young therapists and psychiatrists to join us in supporting families and family therapy research. I am happy to be a colleague of the two new authors, Dr. Alison M. Heru, a midcareer psychiatrist whose books on families and health and families and inpatients are widely read, and Dr. Michael Ascher, an early career psychiatrist who coedited *The Behavioral Addictions* (APPI Press). I am so pleased to pass the baton to Dr. Heru and Dr. Ascher and hope that their example encourages many of you to join them in becoming family-oriented psychiatrists. We encourage the readers of this book to also join organizations which support growth in the field—Association of Family Psychiatrists

(familypsychiatrists.org) and the American Family Therapy Academy (afta.org).

This book is designed for family therapists from many disciplines, especially psychiatrists, who wish to understand the basics of family work and begin to apply it to the patients they are seeing now. Therapists new to the field experience several challenges in beginning work. The most critical is a shift in vision from an individual and linear model to a systemic one, in which the person in interaction with others is the key. If an individual presents for treatment, it requires that the person in front of them be seen in context and that the person be understood as an actor interacting with other actors. How does the person's family affect their lives, and how does the person affect their family? How can we see the person-in-context? For example, an adult with attention deficit disorder (ADD) may struggle in a marriage because some aspects of ADD (procrastination, forgetfulness) may provide aversive stimuli to family members, and therefore be met with disapproval and hostility, which increases their anxiety and ADD symptoms. In this case, the reverberating issues are the problems that must be addressed by the systems therapist. Without including the partner, the couple difficulties may persist even if the ADD is addressed by medication. If a couple or family presents to treatment with all family members, a systems approach requires that the family be seen as the unit of treatment rather than identifying one member as the patient.

The second challenge is learning a series of new techniques, including the ability to manage a session with multiple family members each with their own agendas. As authors of family therapy research and practice tend to publish mostly in their own journals, psychiatrists are less likely to be familiar "thinking family," or reading about clinical skills necessary.

A third challenge is a shift from a problem-focused model to one that incorporates strengths, and an awareness of the many varieties of normative behavior—variant family

forms, differing life cycle trajectories, and fluid sexuality. It must include a deep understanding of how power and gender shape individuals and relationships. This may produce therapist anxiety when the family's life or value system is outside his/her own experience. In addition, beginning therapists must pay close attention to how culture/ethnicity/setting affects the family's life. For example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may be less of a problem in a rural setting where there is a focus on physical activity than in an urban setting where the focus is on doing well in school and spending much of the day sitting still. Understanding a culture also includes familiarity with community resources for family support. All of these issues are well covered in the new edition and ground the new therapist in clinical realities. The current text should go a long way toward helping therapists integrate family work into their current models and supporting people who wish to learn family therapy.

A new edition of a standard text needs to demonstrate growth and changes in the field. The fifth edition of this book pays particular attention to major changes in our understanding of culture, increasing variations in family forms and new research in the neurobiology of attachment and stress. Our understanding of the biological co-regulation of attached persons, and how that affects mental and physical health has broadened greatly. This has led to more focus on intimacy and connection, and emotional regulation, in addition to the traditional focus on communications and behavioral training. Understanding that culture, gender, and ethnicity can be fluid rather than binary has led to a more nuanced understanding of how biology, psychology, family, and culture interact. The increasing number of family psychoeducation studies in those suffering from severe mental illness provides a deep evidence base for incorporating those treatments into the complete treatment model. This edition explores these fascinating changes in addition to providing basic knowledge in the field.

It is with great pleasure that I introduce this edition to my colleagues, my students, and now to you.

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Reference

Miklowitz D, Otto M, Frank E, et al.: Intensive psychosocial intervention enhances functioning in patients with bipolar depression: results from a 9-month randomized controlled trial. *American Journal of Psychiatry* 164(9):1340–1347, 2007.

Foreword

by Lloyd I. Sederer, MD

The title of this text does not fully portray its breadth and wisdom. For sure, we read about therapy but we learn about it in its most meaningful way—in the context of appreciating how marriages and families have changed, evolved, in ways that our grandparents could never have imagined!

What we are offered here is a needed rapprochement between family theory (and therapy) and psychiatric and mental health services. The latter has become highly stylized (as with CBT, DBT, and analytic psychotherapy) and drawn mightily to medication and case management, especially for severe mental disorders; thus the need for this text. Families are, in the great predominance of instances, the greatest resources and most enduring sources of support for a person suffering from an illness, including a mental illness. Not recognizing the power of the family, for good or ill, or handing them off to a case worker is missing the forest for the trees. As amazingly valuable as volunteer organizations like The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) they do not mean to cleave the family from professional caregivers, nor should clinicians use such organizations as a way to not themselves engage with families.

Yet few mental health clinicians are well trained in assessing, engaging, and working with families. Graduate and residency training programs looking for a core text, even a curriculum in families and couples, will find it in this text. For clinicians wanting to learn or refresh skills essential to working with families you have what you need right here.

As has been said, “You can observe a lot by just watching.” All good clinical work starts with knowing what to observe, which requires a theory of how a person or family functions, and

how it can veer toward and enter dysfunction. *Couples and Family Therapy in Clinical Practice* provides the background for as well as depicts the major schools of thought for intervening and restoring the capacity of a family or couple to care for itself and manage the everyday as well as the extraordinary demands of our lives.

Informed observation makes possible a formulation, which is the way we summarize a problem in a manner that lends itself to remediation. We learn from the authors how to fashion a clinical formulation that, *ipso facto*, directs the treatment plan—perhaps best understood as an agreement, full of possibilities, hope, and likely difficulties, between therapist and family. Change always evokes a counter force, a demand to stay the same, in families not just in physics. Readers will learn how to recognize “resistance” and work with families so their strengths can prevail.

Practical matters are given the attention they deserve. Who should participate in the treatment (including children), working with co-therapists; the use of medications and other forms of therapy; the setting, scheduling, fees, and session times; duration of treatment; and medical records are all discussed. Common and destabilizing events like marital separation and divorce are given their due as is the sexual life of couples. This book has its head in theory and practice and its feet on the ground.

Dr. Glick and his coauthors are mindful of the advances in working with families who have a member with a serious and persistent mental illness, like schizophrenia or borderline personality, and give needed attention to evidence-based practices like family psychoeducation. They attend as well to how to help families where a member has an acute or chronic

physical illness, noting the need to establish roles and responsibilities, ongoing problem solving, and ready avenues of communication.

Paraphrasing Tolstoy and his enduring claim about unhappy families, we learn from this text that we must consider and relate to every family as unique—shaped by its natural roots in race, ethnicity and religion; the effects of immigration; of being born into a particular social class; existing in its respective social milieu; and when turned asunder by illness and misfortune.

In *Couples and Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*, we are delivered a wonderfully comprehensive view of contemporary (Western) family life: unmarried and married parents; serial relationships; divorces (now in half of marriages); hetero and gay pairings; unmarried, committed partners, with and without children; single-parent families; and blended families. We follow the natural stages of family life that parallel the “stages of man.” The new norm is that there is rapidly becoming no norm. Modern means varied and diverse, with all its textures, vitality, nuances, and demands. Yet if there is one constant, it is that we humans are devoted to coupling, creating families, and producing the next generation of our progeny.

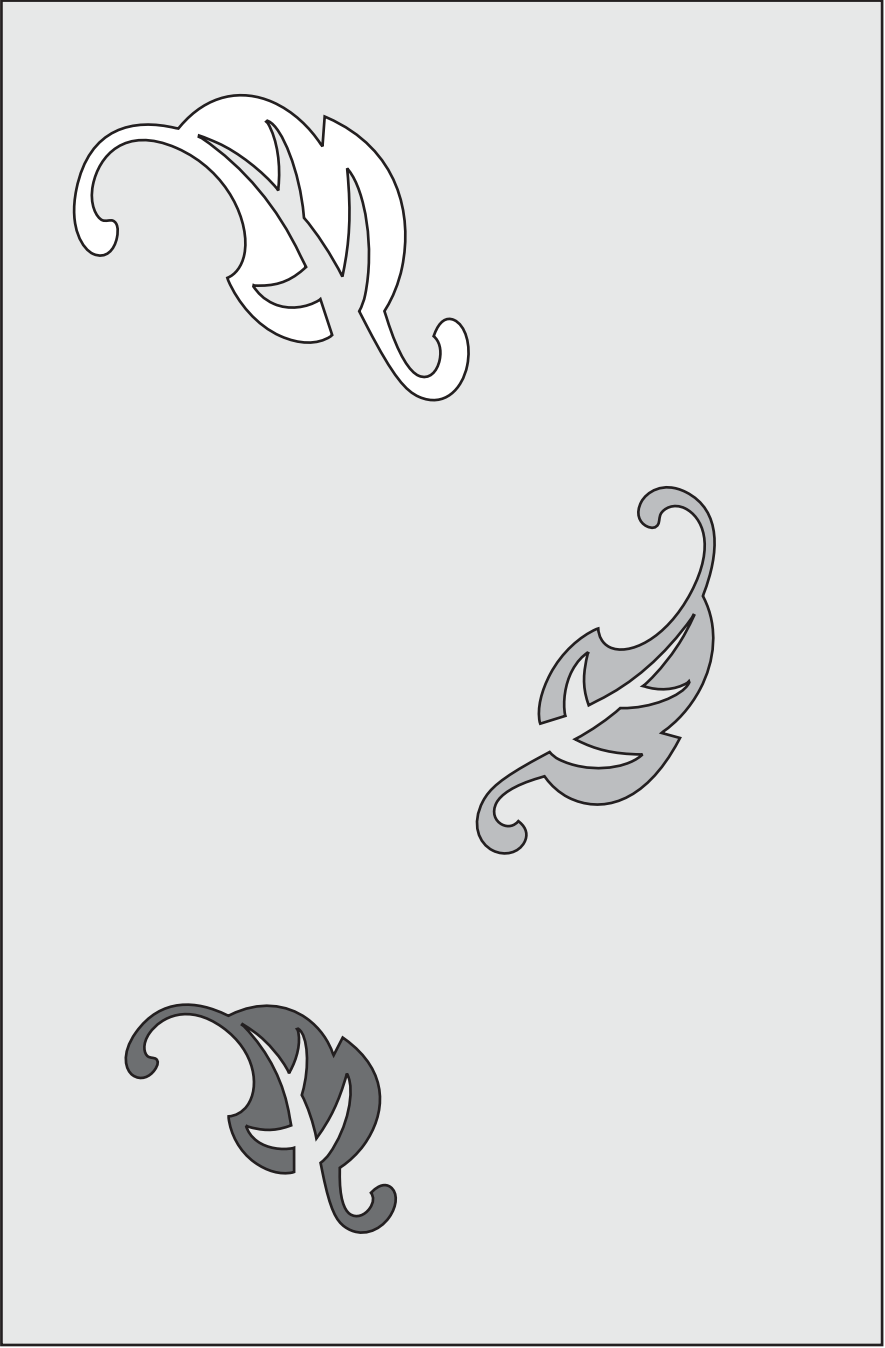
Does marital and family therapy work? You will need to read the last chapter to find out. Because the authors are rigorous academics, we

get a fine overview that explains the evidence for what works, for whom, when, as well as potential negative effects of treatments and their limitations. Anything less would be testimonial, and our patients deserve more and get more from the authors of *Couples and Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*.

As a young psychiatrist but a few years out of residency, I trained in family therapy at the Cambridge Family Institute in Massachusetts. What I discovered forever enriched my work not only as a psychiatrist but as a clinical administrator and public health doctor. Now, perhaps as a village elder, I have renewed my work with families seeing them as the too often unsung heroes and the allies and advocates people with mental disorders deeply need to find help, to sustain hope, and to build a life of dignity and contribution, what we all want.

My hat is off to the authors of *Couples and Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*, now in its fifth edition. Their work will help keep an often overlooked and underused yet critical clinical perspective and set of practices fresh, accessible, and useful.

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Family on the Move, Asim Basu, 2004. Private Collection.

Preface

Background

The five editions of this textbook of family therapy reflect the history and development of the family field, which has evolved rapidly since the 1960s. The first edition was an outline about a field that was just beginning to grow and gain momentum. The second edition was a statement that the family field, which began in the minds of creative individuals in diverse settings (and often unknown to one another), was blossoming with great enthusiasm. The field had arrived with full gusto, and many clinicians were doing family work and clamoring for theoretical clarity and more training in this form of intervention. The third edition heralded a field that had come of age. It had expanded in scope and was being commonly used in clinical practice.

In 2000, the fourth edition made a statement, like its predecessors, about the current state of the art of family intervention. As we saw it, the field had gone beyond its heyday of enthusiasm and advocacy of family intervention for every clinical condition, to a more sophisticated time of differentiation. This differentiation was taking place on many levels. Examples include differentiating when family therapy is indicated, when the symptoms are under systems control, and when they are more strongly determined by other factors such as biology and genetics; how one evaluates in order to make both individual diagnoses and a family diagnosis; when the whole family is the patient and when the family is best seen as part of the treatment team in order to help the individual with symptoms; and when behavioral or educational strategies of family intervention are particularly helpful.

New developments in theory and technique, and a widened lens in terms of specific problem areas, have enriched the field.

Over the past two decades, the most critical changes in family theory are the incorporation of new attitudes and information about ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and social class into our theory building. The rules that govern all aspects of family life and the experience of persons in families may be vastly different for men and women. Families may operate by systems principles, but men and women bring to the system different ways of thinking and different types of influence. Norms of closeness and distance, emotional expression, basic aspects of viewing and disciplining children also vary greatly across ethnic group, social class, and age cohort. The integration of this knowledge into the broad principles of family therapy, enabling therapists to work with a wide variety of families, is one of our key goals. Theory building in this area is still in a period of rapid growth and will probably be altered again by the next edition.

More integrative ways of working have replaced narrowly based schools of family therapy, and brief therapy models such as solution-focused and narrative therapy have been added to our armamentarium. New information about previously ignored or inadequately researched issues—such as gay and lesbian families, the sequelae of abuse, the complexities of AIDS, and family response to reproductive events—have enriched our understanding of family life. Family systems medicine has become a new subspecialty in recent years. We hope that this edition adequately reflects this growing sophistication of the field.

Since the publication of the first edition of this book, we have consistently been gratified by the response of both readers and many reviewers, as well as by its adoption by some teachers as the standard introductory text. Since the publication of the second edition, it has been translated into Japanese and Spanish, and parts into Chinese; it has been adopted widely in Italy, England, and other European countries. Because of the growth and changes in the field, as well as suggestions received, we have decided that this is an opportune time to expand and rewrite the text. Most important, we are convinced that the field has matured. Presently there are many established schools of thought that continue to evolve. At the same time, just as in the adjacent field of individual psychotherapy, there is growing interest in adopting a more integrative (rather than parochial) perspective that highlights some of the factors shared by these different models. **In this text, we offer our version of an integration of different models of family theory, that is, a framework for trainees and practitioners in the family therapy field and those persons in various fields that need an introduction to family therapy.**

Fifth Edition Changes

The fifth edition brings the reader into the twenty-first century with a flowering of this psychotherapy technique. As such, couples and family intervention have become important components of an integrated prescription for the treatment of most mental disorders. The key message is that there is new evidence-based data suggesting that combining family intervention with medication is better than either modality alone.

Our aim/hope is that the material in the text will be used as a core curriculum for both psychiatric residency programs and family therapy institutes. Family interventions have positive implications for the family system as well

as the patient who can feel ambivalent about adhering to individual therapy and medications on their own without a family aboard as “a treatment team member.”

As we mentioned, we have not provided detailed information on the details of specific approaches of couple and family psychotherapy. This is not to say other models do not have important virtues or clinical utility. Rather, we have tried to include in our integrated model, the best of their techniques, as such, we have provided some of the crucial elements of the classic models.

We have described some of the classic models, for example “systems, structural, behavioral” in Chapter 1. We mention a few of the newer models in Chapter 9 as they relate to our integrated theory of couples and family therapy. In Chapter 18, we discuss family interventions and certain models used to treat specific mental disorders such as psychoeducation in schizophrenia. We also borrowed heavily from the McMaster Model detailed in the Keitner, Heru, and Glick text entitled *Clinical Manual of Couples and Family Therapy* (2009).

Although the newer body of knowledge has required extensive rewriting, the basic organization of the book is largely unchanged. The history of the field precedes general concepts of how families function, which are followed by evaluation, treatment, indications, and finally, results.

For this edition, we have highlighted the essentials and have thoroughly updated our chapter on family life in its historical and sociological context, and throughout we have paid special attention to both classic and newer family forms. Our sections on function and dysfunction have been expanded and rewritten to present the latest information on how families globally cope with rapid changes in our society. Given the publication of DSM-5, we have made a thorough review of understanding and treatment of dysfunctional families both for Axis I conditions and for other problems of living together. In our treatment section we have