Bowen Family Systems Theory
Clinical Certificate & Workshop Series

The 2015-2016 Program will offer two eight-person cohorts. Select the day that works best for you:
Saturday cohort or Monday cohort

Faculty
Charles M. White, LCSW, LCADC & Ellen Rogan, MSN, APN
Center for Family, Organizational, and Natural Systems Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop Day Overview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>9:30 AM - 10:45 AM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10:45 AM - 11:00 AM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11:00 AM - 12:00 PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12:00 Noon - 1:00 PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1:00 PM - 1:45 PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1:45 PM - 2:00 PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2:00 PM - 3:30 PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3:30 PM - 4:00 PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4:00 PM - 4:15 PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4:15 PM - 6:00 PM</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Workshop Topic and Film Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop Day &amp; Date</th>
<th>Bowen Family Systems Theory Education Presentation &amp; Discussion Topic (Charles M. White, LCSW, LCADC &amp; Ellen Rogan, MSN, APN)</th>
<th>Presentation Topic(s) and/or Applications Video</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/19/15 or 9/21/15</td>
<td>“The Family as an Emotional Unit or System”</td>
<td>“Applying Systems Thinking to Human Behavior” Michael E. Kerr, MD (1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/7/15 or 11/9/15</td>
<td>“Chronic Anxiety &amp; Individuality/Togetherness in Relationships”</td>
<td>“Individuality, Togetherness, and Triangles” Michael E. Kerr, MD (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/9/16 or 1/11/16</td>
<td>“Triangles”</td>
<td>“Triangles &amp; the Scale of Differentiation of Self” Murray Bowen, MD (1970)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/5/15 or 3/7/15</td>
<td>“Emotional Cutoff”</td>
<td>“Extended Family &amp; Emotional Cutoff” Daniel V. Papero, Ph.D., LCSW &amp; Kathleen B. Kerr, MSN, MA (1992)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Workshop Descriptions

### Workshop 1

**#5463**  
**Run for the Hills, It’s Alive!**  
**The Personal and Practice Implications of the Family as a Living Emotional System**

Bowen family systems theory postulates that the family is a living *emotional system* where the behavior of each family member both simultaneously contributes to and reflects what is occurring in the family as a whole. Functioning in reciprocal relationships, changes in one family member’s functioning is automatically
compensated for by changes in other family members’ functioning – resulting in one family member’s behavior only being adequately understood in the context of understanding the primary emotional system in which he or she functions – usually his or her nuclear or extended family. This workshop considers a few of the profound personal and practice implications resulting from this perspective, specifically that: (1) people have less autonomy in their functioning than is commonly thought, (2) every family members’ functioning contributes to medical, psychiatric, or social symptoms in another family member, and (3) treatment need not be directed at the symptomatic family member.

Date: Saturday, September 19, 2015
or
Date: Monday, September 21, 2015
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
390 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ

Workshop 2

#5464
The Road to Emotional Maturity has No Fast Lane: Towards Becoming a More Inner-Directed Self
Most people want their decision-making and day-to-day behavior guided by a conscious set of well thought-out stances or principles. Perplexed by their own limitations in executing such thoughtful and principled behavior, they find it harder still when anxious or when their thinking calls on them to give up the “group think” of their primary emotional system(s) in order to achieve more individuality. Differentiation of Self, a cornerstone concept in Bowen family systems theory, attempts to explain these difficulties and variations in terms of the degrees to which people are able to achieve emotional separation from their families-of-origin. This workshop considers the cognitive, emotional, and relationship variables that contribute to a person’s basic levels of Differentiation of Self, as well as, explores some of the essential elements needed in any concerted effort to increase one’s basic level of self later in life.

Date: Saturday, October 3, 2015 or
Date: Monday, October 5, 2015
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
390 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ

Workshop 3

#5465
Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My! – Balancing Individuality & Togetherness in Key Relationships
Bowen family systems theory postulates that among the biologically-rooted drives within an organism, there are competing forces for *individuality* and *togetherness*. It is these forces that govern emotional transactions in all relationships. These counterbalancing life forces shift the locus of control for behavior from the individual to the emotional system. What transpires in the emotional system impacts the interplay of feeling and thinking in the individual which has a direct effect on his or her relationships. Increased *chronic anxiety* can result in an individuals’ feelings overwhelming their intellectual system which leads to a drive for togetherness overwhelming their individuality in that emotional system. This workshop demonstrates how understanding the effects of chronic anxiety on individuality-togetherness balances can enhance one’s functioning in various emotional systems.

Date: Saturday, November 7, 2015 or
Date: Monday, November 9, 2015
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
390 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ
Workshop 4

#5440

Helicopter Parenting while in Perpetual Conflict with an Underfunctioning Co-pilot ... A Love Story

The Bowen family systems theory concept Nuclear Family Emotional Process describes the basic patterns of emotional functioning among and between members of two successive generations of a family – most often between partners and between the partners and their offspring. These basic patterns result in chronic anxiety. Family tensions come to rest in certain parts of the family such that the more anxiety one nuclear family or relationship absorbs, the less other family members or relationships must absorb. This workshop will explore how at sufficient levels of anxiety intensity, each pattern contributes to the development of one of three categories of clinical dysfunction in a nuclear family: (1) illness in a spouse; (2) marital conflict; and (3) impairment of one or more children.

Date: Saturday, December 19, 2015 or Monday, December 21, 2015
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
390 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ

Workshop 5

#5441

How to Avoid Getting Voted off the Island – Understanding and Managing Relationship Triangles

Remember your junior high cafeteria? If you generally artfully navigated through the dozens of relationship challenges, then skip this workshop. However, if those years still conjure up a bewilderingly painful struggle of relationship suffering, then this workshop is for you! Triangles, a Bowen family systems theory concept and Rosetta Stone for understanding those years as well as more recent distressing relationships, are the smallest stable relationship units or building blocks of larger emotional systems. If calm, a two-person unit may be stable, however since it tolerates little tension and calm, it is very difficult to maintain. It is automatic that when dyadic anxiety rises, one or both participants recruit a third into the situation – resulting in a triangle that can contain much more tension than the dyad because the tension can now shift between three relationships.

Date: Saturday, January 9, 2016 or Monday, January 11, 2016
Time: 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
390 George Street, New Brunswick

Workshop 6

#5442

Are “Squeaky Wheel” Children a Self-Fulfilling Prophecy?
The Challenge of Developing Reality-Based Relationships with Our Children

A child’s degree of relationship dependence is a product of forces that promote and undermine that child’s emotional separation from the family. According to Bowen family systems theory, when parent and child functioning promotes emotional separation, the emotional maturity level is maintained between generations. When their functioning undermines separation, parental generation immaturity is transmitted to the next generation. Family Projection Process, a Bowen theory concept, describes how parents instill part of their immaturity into children. Typically the parent becomes less anxious by focusing on one or more of their children. Their partner, sensitive to the caregivers’ anxiety, supports their involvement with these children.
Projection process steps are explored where a parent: (1) focuses on a child fearing something is wrong with that child; (2) interprets the child’s behavior as confirming that fear; and (3) treats the child as if something is really wrong with that child.

Date: Saturday, February 6, 2016, or
Date: Monday, February 8, 2016
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
390 George Street, New Brunswick

Workshop 7

#5466
Wherever I Go, There I Am (Eventually) – Repercussions of Escaping an “Impossible” Family

Emotional Cutoff, a Bowen family systems theory concept, describes how unresolved emotional issues with parents, siblings, and other family members are managed by reducing or totally cutting off emotional contact with them – moving away and rarely going home or by staying in physical contact but avoiding sensitive issues. “Escaping” their families-of-origin and determined to be different, they invest strongly in their “new” families or develop substitute families with friends or organizations – investing much more emotionally in them than their families-of-origin. While a cutoff may relieve immediate pressure and lower anxiety, the vulnerability to intense relationships remains – making it likely a more intense version of the past (or its mirror image) is replicated in the present. Covering cutoff origins and consequences, this workshop also explores how bridging cutoffs provides a path out of recreating the past in the present nuclear family while reducing anxiety and improving personal and relationship functioning.

Date: Saturday, March 5, 2016, or
Date: Monday, March 7, 2016
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
390 George Street, New Brunswick

Workshop 8

#5467
Getting Beyond Blaming Self or Others – Becoming Factual about 500 Pound Gorilla

Multigenerational Patterns

- April 2nd or 4th, 2016
- 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
- Location: Location: 390 George Street, New Brunswick

Workshop 9

#5468
The Birth Order Blues – Understanding Sibling Position Strengths, Blind Spots, and Liabilities

- May 21st or 23rd, 2016
- 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
- 390 George Street, New Brunswick
Workshop 10

#5469

- June 4th or 6th, 2016
- 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (9:30a.m.-6p.m. for Institute-Level Training)
- 390 George Street, New Brunswick