

Systemic Conceptualization and Intervention in Individual Psychotherapy

Psychological functioning is always embedded within the context of social systems. Maladaptive patterns that bring clients to psychotherapy are often learned within the family-of-origin. Psychotherapy can help clients explore and understand systemic patterns and social roles that may contribute to current psychological distress. Clients can learn to recognize and modify maladaptive cognitions, emotions, and behaviors that may have been learned within their families. A systemic focus in individual psychotherapy can help clients function in new social systems in more effective ways.

This seminar will teach both systemic conceptualization and intervention methods that can be used in individual psychotherapy. Systemic conceptualization will include looking at family structure, roles, and beliefs systems. Webinar participants will learn to consider how homeostasis, family life cycle, and multigenerational patterns shape individual functioning over time. In order to promote a unified approach to treatment, the webinar will highlight how families and other microsystems shape the way people think, feel, and act.

Foundational interpersonal skills will be described and demonstrated with role-play videos. These skills will address three general processes: (1) Exploration and functional analysis of systemic patterns, (2) Guided discovery to uncover more adaptive social functioning, and (3) Enacting systemic adaptation outside of psychotherapy. Practical skills that can be learned and utilized with clients will be described for each of these three phases of treatment.

At a more advanced level, this seminar will explore the way clients internalize aspects of the people who raised them in ways that continue to influence current functioning and affective states. Current dysfunction is often related to the way family members and family experiences have been internalized in a manner that shapes schema modes. Diversity is addressed in this seminar by describing the way cultural contexts shape families and other social systems and how families serve as a conduit for cultural socialization.

Target Audience		
Psychologists	Social Workers	Counselors
Therapists	Psychiatrists	Nurses
Course level: Intermediate		

Learning Objectives

At the end of this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Apply interpersonal conceptualization methods to understanding psychotherapy client. Apply systemic conceptualization methods to understanding psychotherapy clients in terms of family structure, roles, and belief systems that shape current functioning.
2. Describe how homeostasis, family life cycle, and multigenerational patterns shape individual experiences within one's family-of-origin.
3. Analyze the functional value of social roles and social skills that were shaped by the family and other microsystems.
4. Explain how systemic interventions used in individual psychotherapy can help clients embrace more adaptive ways of thinking, feeling, and acting within the family as well as external social systems.
5. Describe how to work with clients' internalized aspects of the people who raised them in ways that maladaptively influence current functioning, affective states, and schema modes.

Outline

Begin 11:00 AM ET

A. Introduction to Systemic Psychotherapy
Systemic Themes
Historical Context
Systemic Focus in Individual Psychotherapy
Focusing on Systemic Patterns

B. Systemic Conceptualization
Family Structure, Family Roles, and Family Beliefs Systems
Homeostasis, Family Life Cycle, and Multigenerational Patterns

C. Foundational Skills for a Systemic Focus in Individual Psychotherapy
Exploration and functional analysis of current patterns
Guided discovery to uncover more adaptive functioning
Enacting adaptation outside of psychotherapy
Video demonstrations of foundational skills

Break 12:30 PM ET (15 min)

D. Internalizing Family Members
Schema Modes
Video Demonstration

E. Diversity
Family systems develop within the context of a broader cultural context
Families serve as the primary conduit for cultural socialization

F. Systemic & Constructivist Key Strategies
Ends 2:15 PM ET

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The Presenter

Jeff E. Harris received his Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from The Ohio State University in 1990. In 2004, he was awarded board certification as a Specialist in Counseling Psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology. Dr. Harris has worked as a psychologist, training director, and director of counseling at student counseling centers at Southern Illinois University, the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and New Mexico State University. He also worked as an associate professor of Counseling Psychology at Texas Woman's University. Dr. Harris is a licensed psychology, currently providing telehealth psychotherapy for Amwell Medical Group and BetterHelp. Dr. Harris is the author or co-author of two books: *Workshops: Designing and Facilitating Experiential Learning* (Brooks-Harris & Stock-Ward, 1999) and *Integrative Multitheoretical Psychotherapy* (Brooks-Harris, 2008). In 2015, Dr. Harris started collaborating with other scholars to define Unified Psychotherapy as a distinct route to integration. Dr. Harris has developed Training in Unified Psychotherapy (TUP) as a webinar series and certification program to teach therapists to think about clients in a holistic manner and to utilize diverse interventions based on the individual needs of each client.

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This seminar has been reviewed and approved by Keith Hannan, Ph.D., Laura Davie, LICSW, Tina Jenkins, Psy.D., and Loreen Yearick, MSN, RN. This approval expires on March 1, 2028.

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