



5th Meeting of Trainers

“Issues of Family Therapy Training in an Unpredictable World”

October 2nd – 4th, 2009

Collegium Medicum Didactic Conference Center

Krakow, Poland

Book of Abstracts

European Family Therapy Association
Training Institutes Chamber

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5th EFTA-TIC Meeting of Trainers Program at a Glance

Friday, October 2nd 2009

- 12.00-14.00 Registration
- 14.00-14.30 Opening Greetings
- 14.30-15.00 “Liquid Modernity”: An Interview with Zygmunt Bauman
- 15.00-16.00 Systems Formation Process
- 16.00-16.30 “Liquid Communication”: An Audiovisual Stimulus
- 16.30-17.00 Coffee Break
- 17.00-17.30 Presenters’ Descriptions
- 17.30-19.00 Parallel Workshops
- 19.00-19.30 Inter-Workshop Exchange
- 20.15 Welcome Reception

Saturday, October 3rd 2009

- 09.00-10.30 Parallel Workshops
- 10.30-11.00 Coffee Break
- 11.00-12.30 Oral Presentation Sessions and Parallel Workshops
- 12.30-13.00 Inter-Workshop Exchange
- 13.00-15.00 Lunch Break
- 15.00-16.30 Round Table Discussion:
“Training Family Therapists for a Changing Society: Implications of new media and ecological and socio-political processes”
- 16.30-17.00 Coffee Break
- 17.00-18.30 Parallel Workshops
- 18.30-19.00 Inter-Workshop Exchange
- 20.00 Dinner

Sunday, October 4th 2009

- 09.00-10.30 Oral Presentation Sessions and Parallel Workshops
- 10.30-11.00 Inter-Workshop Exchange
- 11.00-11.30 Coffee Break
- 11.30-13.00 Implications for Applications: an Open Co-creative Conversation
(Incorporation of EFTA-TIC General Assembly)
- 13.00 Post meeting activity (to be announced)

Abstracts

Friday, October 2nd 2009

17:30-19:00 Workshops

Institute: Elkaïm Formations, France
Title: "The Ethnical Importance of Unpredictability for Systemic Therapy and Training. "
Presenter: Mony Elkaïm, Director

Abstract: For psychoanalysts, the “subject” was seen as the unconscious, what is acting unconsciously upon the individual. For the systemic therapist, the individual is acted upon by the rules of the system h/she is part of. The “subject” becomes then the system.

How to be systemic and avoid an “anti-humanistic” approach like the one of French structuralism as described by the philosopher Gilles Delevere (where the individual is acted upon by the structure)?

In this workshop, Mony Elkaïm will use simulations of interviews, as well as supervisions to present the importance of non-predictability for an ethical approach in family therapy and training.

Institute: SHINUI - Israel Institute for Systemic Studies, Family, Personal & Professional Change, Israel
Title: "Training for Mastering the Yin and Yang of Spontaneity and Planning in Family Therapy."
Presenter: Noga Rubinstein-Nabarro, Director

Abstract: Spontaneity and Planning are often perceived as separate and contradictory processes by both therapists and trainees. The yin and the Yang relate to opposites, yet one cannot exist without the other. In our fast changing and paradoxical world as ours, therapists must be trained for flexibility. They need always be “prepared for being caught unprepared” and must learn to navigate without a map” in the therapeutic situation. Through narratives, video clips and experiential exercises and metaphors the presenter will demonstrate ways of training advanced family therapists to combine “in the moment” spontaneous responses of the Resourceful and Creative Self with exact planning and design into a cohesive effective, interesting and surprising therapeutic intervention.

Institute: Leeds Family Therapy and Research Centre, UK
Title: "Cross Culture Training or Training across Cultures – Training Professionals from Different Cultures."
Presenters: Paula Boston and Marie McGovern

Abstract: Family Therapist training not only seeks to prepare the trainees for working with a diverse client population but increasingly represents a diverse culture of trainees. This diversity is not only experienced in broader terms of identity, belief systems and practices but also includes specific orientations to learning, the educational institution, professionalization and relationship to staff. These differences shape the interactive worlds of academic production, evaluation and training group functioning. With increased intra country diversity and professional mobility across EU countries, Training Institutions are able to make use of the student's experiences in a recursive way that supports their appreciation of the influence of culture and helps the course recognize and accommodate to these emerging and changing themes.

LFTRC has an established practice of exploration of each trainee's learning narrative. This interview attends to the trainees' story of their past educational experiences, achievement, difficulties, preferences of learning styles and current hopes for this particular professional training. These stories are also understood as partially shaping the initial relationship to the University context and the degree to which a trainee might 'know how to go on' in a Wittgensteinian sense. The mapping of this experience enables both the supervisor and other group members to make connections and appreciate differences.

This workshop will provide a brief theoretical overview and offer examples drawn from our training. Participants will be asked to engage with interactive exercises designed to highlight the cultural elements at play in their own training organizations and to reflect on their own relationship to education from a cultural lens.

Saturday, October 3rd 2009

09:00-10:30 Workshops

Institute: FOCUS - Systemic Training & Supervision, Israel
Title: "Between Necessity and a Free-Mind - Improvising in Family Therapy."
Presenters: Haviva Ayal and Sara Ivanir, Co-Directors

Abstract: This workshop focuses on the issue of how we create a context conducive to the development of improvisation skills, flexibility and creativity within the training setting.

In Family Therapy, as in music, elements of the "presented" reality are transformed, through improvisations, into a new harmonious arrangement. Improvisation is a very basic and necessary skill in therapy – for both therapist and family. (John Bing-Hall, 1995 *Rewriting Family Scripts*)

When novice jazz musicians commence their training, they begin by imitating a master artist. As they progress, they move from “mind-less” imitation to "mind-full" attunement, joining the other musicians in artful synchronicity. At the peak of this artistry, one becomes original by “being in one’s origin”, namely acting out of one’s own center, and combining what is there with what could potentially come into being.

In Family Therapy as well, improvisation is the peak of the therapist-artist’s ability to integrate what is already “there” with new, extraordinary and unimagined possibilities, responding and creating at the same time.

The workshop will offer an opportunity to examine and experience some training processes necessary for the development of improvisation skills in therapy (e.g. attunement, mindfulness, playfulness, acting freely within a clear structure, self disclosure, risk taking).

The workshop will include mind and body experiences that stimulate the capacity to improvise in clinical and training situations.

Institute: CARDIFF Family Institute, UK

Title: "Predicting the Unpredictable in Systemic Therapy Training - Co-creating Authentic Learning."

Presenters: Kieran Vivian-Byrne, Billy Hardy and Mary Morris

Abstract: “Without the random there can be no new thing” (Gregory Bateson 1979 *Mind and Nature : A Necessary Unity*). We at The Family Institute are curious about the unpredictability of the learning process. Although this stochastic nature of learning can be very challenging for us personally and as a training team, we find that if we can embrace the energy which seems to flow from it – then much more than we can ‘predict’ or imagine, in learning terms, is often achieved. Learning harvests are rich indeed. This approach to learning reflects more authentically the experience we have of a complex and unpredictable world.

There remain struggles in how to operationalise these ideas in our teaching practices and plan for the unplanned to happen. It would appear to entail leaving more to emerge than is often expected in a training and university education environment. This approach privileges an acceptance of uncertainty, as a given, and works to create safe enough spaces to encourage, embody and enact together learning rituals, which open up diverse worlds of possibilities in relation to our knowledges, understandings and practices.

This workshop we hope will offer the participant some glimpses into how we seek to create these learning opportunities with our students in our three courses - in simulated and actual clinic settings, and collaborative learning processes which span from undergraduate systemic counselling to advanced higher degree levels trainings. It will also seek to elicit from participants their experience of similar learning opportunities and challenges.

Institute: Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Ireland & Diakonhjemmet University College, Norway
Title: "Further Developments in the Concept and Reality of a European Masters Degree in Family Therapy."
Presenters: Jim Sheehan and Per Jensen

Abstract: This workshop will consider ways in which a European Masters Degree In Family Therapy can be helpful to students and teachers from different kinds of training Institutes throughout Europe. It will look in a very concrete way at the challenges and opportunities faced by a number of particular and different training Institutes if they were to participate in such an idea. This should demonstrate both the possibilities and challenges for the idea as a whole. The workshop / presentation will also look at:

- (a) partnerships between Institutes and Universities as the structural / institutional framework for the degree
 - (b) the place of such a Masters degree in the framework of further educational opportunities such as a European PhD structure in Family Therapy
 - (c) the setting of an agreed core curriculum for a European Masters Degree
 - (d) the role of EFTA-TIC in safeguarding both the European character of the degree as well as the clinical standard and integrity of the degree.
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11:00-12:30 Oral Presentation Sessions and Workshops

Oral Presentations

Institute: Elkaïm Formations, France
Title: " The Learning of Freedom: contributions by Murray Bowen and Joseph LeDoux ."
Presenter: Anne Chouhy

Abstract: What could it mean, training a therapist for freedom? A central aspect of the formation in family therapy consists in the acquisition, on the part of the therapist, of an adequate regulation of his emotions, that is to say, learn to use

himself as a therapeutic instrument without being invaded by the emotions or perceptions that the therapeutic system evokes and/or amplifies from his own family history. In this context, the therapist freedom would lie in his possibility to choose how to act therapeutically, whilst any instinctive and automatic reaction would bring about the loss of such freedom. The paper presents an analysis of the concept of emotional learning, starting from the concept of Bowen's Differentiation and from LeDoux's triadic neural model; it highlights the elements common to both approaches and proposes some reflections on the learning of freedom.

Institute: Laboratoire de Psychologie Appliquée (URCA et UPJV), France
Title: "The Flotation of the Theories in Our Practices of Systemic Training."
Presenters: Michel Wawrzyniak and Gerard Schmit

Abstract: La référence à la psychopathologie phénoménologique et à la psychanalyse enrichit continuellement notre pratique de formateur aux approches systémiques. Notre exposé traitera donc, depuis une position psychique d'orphelin d'un corpus théorique unifié, des apports de ces autres courants de pensée dans notre pratique de formation.

The reference to the phenomenological psychopathology and to the psychoanalysis enriches constantly our trainer's practice in the systemic approaches. Our statement will thus handle, since an orphan's psychic position of a unified theoretical corpus, contributions of these other currents of thought in our practice of training.

Institute: Jagiellonian University Department of Family Therapy, Poland
Title: "Is a Family Therapist a Psychotherapist? Teachers' Dilemma."
Presenters: Bogdan de Barbaro, Barbara Jósefik and Lucyna Drożdżowicz

Abstract: Training for family therapy in Poland is most commonly done as part of a course leading to obtaining a certificate of a psychotherapist. The knowledge and skills of a family therapist taught on this course are just one component of the training programme encompassing other modules, such as psychodynamic therapy. However, a conflict arises when family therapy seems not to be fully in line with other aspects of psychotherapy. As a result, there are a number of challenges for us as trainers: 1. an issue related to how to present psychodynamic and systemic models so that students are inspired and experience 'creative chaos' rather than destructive rivalry between conflicting approaches; 2. how to help students to assimilate paradigms which are often contradictory; 3. to what extent our graduates are supposed to be a

‘therapist for any and all problems’ and to what extent should they be specialized in family therapy

It seems quite essential to attempt to resolve these issues, the more so that currently in Poland new legal regulations are under preparation for the therapist as a profession, and we as trainers have a significant influence on the final outcome of this process.

Workshops

Institute: The Athenian Institute of Anthropos, Greece
Title: “With Family Therapy - Not with Family Therapy Alone: Training Future Therapists in the Face of Postmodern Realities.”
Presenters: Kyriaki Polychroni, Giorgos Gournas

Abstract: Intense social change and unpredictable postmodern processes have created a new unprecedented setting confronting individuals with a series of challenges never before confronted. Traditional social forms and institutions such as the family no longer serve as sole frames of reference for human actions, development and long-term life plans. The individual is now called upon to be open to the process of creating personal meaning, to be flexible and adaptable – to be constantly ready and willing to change while acting and relating according to clear personal values and choices of commitment.

At the Athenian Institute of Anthropos, we have found that the processes of both therapy and training need to reflect the process of developing skills for meaningful living in a complex and ever-changing world. Rather than focusing only on training family therapists, our purpose is to train “*systemic therapists*”. Towards this goal we have developed specific methods where family therapy acts as the context crucial to understanding individual difficulties and changing relational patterns, while the context of *systemic group therapy* becomes the “cistern” within which individuals learn and experiment with skills to creatively live in the unpredictable “sea of postmodernism”.

In this workshop, we will offer a didactic demonstration of our approach involving experiential exercises and the presentation of material on which participants will interactively share their experiences. Participants will be invited to engage in a process of temporarily “giving up the security and reassurance” of our family therapy approaches in favor of “broadening to improvisation and personal change”. We hope to co-create and mutually learn from an unpredictable process ...

Institute: Institute for Systemic and Family Psychotherapy, Slovenia
Title: "Training Family Therapy – Coping with Uncertainty."
Presenters: Maja Rus Makovec, Mojca Breclj Kobe, Dubravka Trampuž, Mojca Močnik and Jana Borštnar

Abstract: The authors present the dilemmas with which they cope in the process of developing a systemic family therapy (SFT) training course. The rapid development of systemic theory and practice has over-flooded the family therapy field with a rich array of theoretical ideas, and therapeutic approaches. The move towards postmodernism has extended our understanding of the contextual nature of theoretical ideas and concepts and has broadened our awareness of their inherent limits.

The authors present an interactive interplay between theory and practice and emphasize both the relational and contextual aspects of systemic psychotherapy and training. In the presentation the authors present the challenges in developing a training curriculum for SFT and underline the need for an ongoing dialogue that helps to deal with uncertainties.

The trainers in our training programme originated from a group of psychiatrists and clinical psychologists who were experienced clinicians and previously skilled in some other modality of psychotherapy (mostly analytical/psychodynamic) before their own training in SFT. SFT was embraced by them enthusiastically: patients that we had previously evaluated as 'not suitable for psychotherapy' become 'treatable' in systemic paradigm. Our trainees have different professional origin, from psychiatric clinical settings, general practice, social welfare and educational contexts. The curriculum of SFT should cope with their diversity in professional context, clinical needs and educational backgrounds.

The workshop will enact spectrum between theory and practice of SFT by presenting different voices/presenters of theoretically grounded dilemmas and by illustration the training process with inclusion of reflecting team of participants of the workshop.

17:00-18:30 Workshops

Institute: Scuola Etno-Sistemico-Narrativa di Roma (Ethno-Narrative School of Rome), Italy
Title: "The Ethno-Systemic-Narrative Approach Applied to Families Belonging to Different Cultures."
Presenter: Natale Losi, Director

Abstract: I will call this case, the family "of the wall". They are just one of the many Palestinian families who are forced to live cut off from their original community as a

consequence of the Israeli's decision to build the so called "wall". This family can be proposed as both a case of "different culture" belonging (if compared with the therapist), as well as a case of oppressed group by continuous traumatizing events. Mariam, the wife/mother, since the beginning of this imposed situation (September 2003), was suffering from sudden violent headaches, that forced her to lie onto the bed, in silence and obscurity.

The family has been visited twice. At the first session (12 November 2005), which took place at their home, about 10 co-therapists (some of the trainees) participated as well as all the family's members except Nidal, who was working. As a conclusion of this 1 hour conversational session, the therapist proposed a symbolic/ritual prescription that concentrated in itself the meaning of the "ethno-systemic-narrative" model.

The second visit to the family of the wall on 2nd March 2006, found that both the family and family relations has completely changed. In particular Mariam's symptoms, she had previously been suffering from, had now disappeared.

The case of the family of the wall will be presented through a short video, interpreted and discussed on the basis of the ethno-systemic-narrative model.

Key words: prescription and rituals; ethno-systemic setting; narrative/memory and resilience.

Institute: Institut d'Etudes de la Famille, France
Title: "Creating Changes in Times of Crisis."
Presenter: Eric Trappeniers, Director

Abstract: During this workshop Eric Trappeniers will draw on his experiential systemic model to illustrate the ways in which he uses himself to initiate change with families in crisis. He will show how, by letting himself be overcome by the implicit rules of the family system - whilst at the same time amplifying them, before distancing himself - he enables the different members of the therapeutic system to step out of the well-trodden affective ruts they find themselves in, thus creating a potential for change which opens up new doors and new avenues of possibility for the family.

He will explain how his treatment model is consistent with his training model, and how this enables his students to combine rigour with resourcefulness.

(French) A partir de son modèle, l'approche systémique expérientielle, Eric Trappeniers, présentera la façon qu'il a de s'utiliser et d'accompagner le changement avec une famille dans une situation de crise.

Il montrera comment, en se laissant gagner par les règles implicites du système familial tout en les amplifiant avant de reprendre de la distance, il permet aux différents

membres du système thérapeutique de sortir des sentiers battus affectifs pour favoriser l'émergence de nouveaux possibles.

Il expliquera en quoi son modèle de traitement est en adéquation avec son modèle de formation pour permettre à l'étudiant d'associer la rigueur à l'inventivité.

Institute: The Family Psycho-Social Institute (FPSI), Bulgaria
Title: "What to Do When the Broader Social Context Pertains to the Illusion of Control? Systems, Psychodrama and Process Work Techniques that Embrace Unpredictability."
Presenters: Jenia Georgieva and Roumen Georgievi

Abstract: One lesson that Central and Eastern Europe at least, can be expected to have learnt, is that certain types of human systems can render people helpless, independent of peoples' education, culture etc. To accept helplessness in its different degrees would have been a valuable and much needed today lesson. Regretfully, it has not been learnt. It seems that the more one has been pushed to experience helplessness, the more the need to feel in control, comes up, becoming almost obsessive. The anxiety related to unpredictability rises to levels that advise most distorted ways of functioning – both within informal and formal relations. A research of ours in Bulgaria showed that over 90% of hospitals and other structures within the field of medicine, for instance, pertain rigidly to dysfunctional power hierarchies, highly similar to the model of diffuse inner boundaries of the system and diffuse hierarchy, characteristic for a schizophrenic (schizo-present) family.

When the broader context pertains to, and breeds the illusion of control, it becomes even more important that the training process befriends unpredictability and flexibility. In order that form and content of what we teach are coherent, the very organization of the training and the tools we select are to be ones, for which, embracing unpredictability is somehow inherent. This workshop will demonstrate the qualities in this respect that a systems technique, developed by The Athenian Institute of Anthropos, possesses. As well as techniques liberating spontaneity and flexibility and stimulating awareness and endurance of different levels of helplessness, borrowed from psychodrama and Process Work (Arnold Mindell).

Sunday, October 4th, 2009

09:00-10:30 Oral Presentation Sessions and Workshops

Oral Presentations

Institute: CERFASY, Switzerland
Title: "From the Construction of Values into the Family to the Training of Knowledge - Being of the Systemic Therapist."
Presenters: Marco Vannotti and Olivier Real de Sarte

Abstract: The workshop deals with epistemological and ethical aspects and the « knowing how to be » during the learning process.

The training's values do not simply consist of general principles; they take place, emerge and are active during the exchange; they build up particularly from the pupil's feelings about what is just and unfair.

That is why the representation of values (what is just and unfair) as it gradually developed in the family of origin, must be approached and worked again through the existential experiences during the training.

Institute: Association of Systemic Therapists, Serbia
Title: "Introducing the Concept of Happiness in Unpredictable Times."
Presenters: Ljiljana Miroslava Maksimovic

Abstract: Understanding that happiness is almost a tabooed word in working with families who encounter problems and relate them to living in an unpredictable context. Training team decided to explore how clients, trainees, trainers define and implement or avoid and/or neglect concept of happiness.

Training team will present research data obtained after having administered three different semi-structured questionnaires to trainees in an ongoing training groups, at various stages of their training in systemic family therapy, namely at the introductory, advanced and supervisory level.

Semi-structured questionnaires used were :
Satisfaction with life scale, developed by Diener, E. ;
Subjective Happiness Scale, (SHS) , developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper;
Meaning Life Questionnaire (MLQ), developed by Stegger, M. and Frazier, P.

Obtained results will be commented upon from different positions relevant for training, addressing the importance of introducing the concept of happiness.

Institute: Istituto Europeo di Formazione e Consulenza Sistemica (I.E.F.Co.S.), Italy
Title: "The Logbook: A Metaphor Tool for Training Group"
Presenters: Maria Laura Vittori and Anna Eugenia Squitieri

Abstract: A Metaphor for Training Group of Family Therapy: The Logbook. This is a working tool for the group at the first year of training. It re-builds, through the metaphor of "journey", the common thread of emotions and learning and returns the differences and similarities. The Logbook is written by the students who freely elaborate the theoretical and practical stages of group work, in turn for each game. This is the right tool for the teacher to find connections, through the individual items, which found the "History of the group" and the formation of the "common mind". This tool was particularly valuable in a situation of complex psychological intervention.

A training group was involved by the teacher in a supporting work for the population of L'Aquila, after the earthquake, directly in the place.

In a situation where the danger was to be overwhelmed by emotions, the Logbook has helped to maintain a high level of thought with a transformative function: from individual to group, from episodic to historic.

Workshops

Institute: Agape Foundation, Romania
Title: "I Wish S/he Didn't Show Up..." - Exploring Irritations about Trainees through Identifying Personal Emotional Triggers."
Presenters: Agnes Konya and Zoltan Konya

Abstract: Irritation felt by the trainer while interacting with particular trainees with particular behaviors is a common experience in our work. When irritations become a pattern, they may come to organize the way we perceive our student. The pattern may escalate and become mutual, constituting a hindrance in the training process.

Systemic theory offers a number of possibilities for dealing with such situations. Trainers can positively connote trainee behaviors or transform their irritation into a hypothesis about the teaching/learning system.

Using the lens of personal emotional triggers, irritations about trainees can also be transformed into hypotheses about the past experience of the trainer and its connection with the present. Emotional triggers are stimuli (behaviors, situations, sensorial experiences, words, etc.) that cause a disproportionately intense emotional reaction. Our workshop offers an opportunity for self-reflexive, experiential work to identify personal triggers connected with specific trainee behaviors or training

situations and think about alternative, more useful responses. On a different level, we would like to illustrate the way a different theory (triggers, psychodynamic) can be utilized within the systemic frame.

Institute: Leeds Family Therapy and Research Centre (LFTRC), U.K.

Title: "Exploring Change during Family Therapy: Announcing the SCORE Outcome Measure."

Presenters: Peter Stratton and Helga Hanks

Abstract: A group of systemic therapists, supported by the UK Association for Family Therapy has created a self-report outcome measure (SRM) for families, called SCORE. The first phase of the research used a 40 item version and acquired data from 228 families. This substantial body of data, generated in clinics from all over the UK, has enabled us to create trustworthy versions of the SCORE that can now be used to investigate how clients feel their families have changed during therapy.

The workshop will present the characteristics of this SRM and then engage participants in using and exploring the version: SCORE 15 constructed for regular clinical use. It is intended to be a robust measure which is user friendly, non-judgemental and captures the kinds of change we hope to see during therapy. Workshop participants will be invited to explore the features of family life that the SCORE 15 describes and we will consider how well these features apply in different societies. Then we will explore how well they describe the changes that family therapists with different approaches and models are trying to achieve with their families. As we move towards a European-wide project through EFTA, discussion will focus on whether an outcome measure should attempt to be culture free or culture sensitive, and the issues in creating translated versions of a scale that was developed in English.
