

Bowen theory: emotional cutoff. retrieved

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I definitely agree with many of the observations that Bowen made through his theoretical framework. If there is one concept that has stood out from among the rest it is none other than the concept of Emotional Cutoff. Bowen refers to this as an individual's manner of managing many of his critically unresolved issues that he has had with his direct personal family or his family of origin (Bowen, 2004).

Painful experiences with the family are "better" managed in the present when the members concerned are either being dealt with in a superficial way especially where emotional or sensitive concerns are the issue or the person chooses to distance himself from his source of pain by leaving or refusing contact with those members of his family (Bowen, 2004). Every human experience involves a causative factor that produces a kind of response. In explaining the behavior of people, we start our description with reference to some kind of active driving force: the individual seeks, the individual wants, the individual fears.

Various psychologists describe motivation, in other words, as the driving force behind our behavior (Atkinson, et al. 1983). This is essentially very familiar to me especially that my family seemed to be in constant denial (especially both of my parents) about the failure of our home life. We were together but we existed in pieces because daily my father was an epitome of someone whose inner life seemed to be torn in disarray due to worry, unresolved anger and insecurity. He had started the vicious cycle of pain then emotional cutoff and on and on.

He had distanced himself so much that he never bothered to attend to any of our graduation rites and he was forever busy, that was what he said.

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Eventually this spilled over to my relationship with my spouse and children; I tended to somehow demand things that were more reminiscent of those days with my family at home. I was fortunate enough that these days my spouse is a fierce watchdog over my tendencies and helped me overcome my disconnectedness which had started to threaten even to overwhelm my family as well at the early part of our marriage.