

Structural family therapy in families essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The structural family therapy (SFT) developed by Salvador Minuchin can help families that have structural problems caused by ineffective members of the family. One particular example is the family whose parents are ineffective in rearing their children because of non-involvement. The dysfunctional structure is identified by its inability to adapt to various stressors. The focus of this therapy theory is on understanding the structure of the family, including its various substructures then the structural family therapist will join the family system to serve as a catalyst for positive change.

Families with noninvolved parents are problematic families. For one thing, parental guidance is needed for the children to grow normally. However, this need is suppressed by many factors, such as non-involvement of parents and family restructuring. The first is about the inability of parents to reach out to their children. In today's society, songs that portray family disputes are becoming more and more popular, especially in the youth. One particular example is the song " Perfect" by Simple Plan which depicts misunderstandings between the parent and the child, the speaker in the song.

The other cause of problem is the absence of the parents due to unforeseen circumstances, such as death or willful abandonment. In this case, other members of the family must take over the vacated position(s). Also, there are times when someone in the family gains power and overthrows the parents' position. In either case, the absence of effective parents in a family may lead to and maintain dysfunctional behaviors that will bring identified patients and their families to therapy.

Minuchin's structural family therapy (SFT) can be used to remedy dysfunctional structures in a problematic family system. This theory is effective in addressing problems like non-involved parents by understanding the various family structure and substructures. This is done by introducing various stressors in the family system that is called unbalancing. The introduction of the structural family therapist is an essential trait of SFT that is effective in implementing change in the existing dysfunctional structure to a more functional one.

According to Minuchin, a family is either functional or dysfunctional depending on its ability to adapt the various stressors. Upon introduction of these stressors, the subsystem boundaries are distinguished and they are drawn in a diagram. These boundaries are then characterized along different levels starting from enmeshment, semi-diffuse permeability, to rigidity. Also involved in family structuring is the hierarchy of power. A normal family may exhibit a normal condition where parents and children have both clear and semi-diffused boundaries.

This allows parents to gain some degree of authority to their children while the children experience a degree of autonomy to interact with other people that produce socialization. On the other hand, dysfunctional families have mixed subsystems and improper hierarchies rendering a dysfunctional structure. The goal of SFT is to promote restructuring of the family system to a healthier structure by bringing about ways that will cause instability of the dysfunctional structure.

The consistent changes done on the existing family system will eventually result to a more functional family system. In the case of the families with noninvolved parents, SFT will eventually cause unbalancing in the existing structure. With unbalancing and restructuring, problematic families will heal in time. Parents will eventually learn the importance of understanding the need of their children while children allow their parents a degree of authority on them. Yet the new functional structure formed has to be maintained unless a more functional structure is reached.