

Working with Emotional Cutoff and Distance: A Challenge in Applying Family Systems Theory

FRIDAY, OCT. 13, 2023 | PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

In-Person attendees are asked to arrive around **8:00 am** to sign-in; continental breakfast will be provided. **Zoom attendees** are asked to login by **8:15 am**.

THE 44TH PITTSBURGH FAMILY SYSTEMS
CONFERENCE AND SYMPOSIUM

8:30 - 8:45 AM	<i>Welcome from Walter Smith and Cynthia Larkby</i>	
8:45 - 10:00 AM	Emotional Cutoff Redux: An Update on Emotional Cutoff and the Brain	Priscilla Friesen, LICSW
10:00 - 10:15 AM	Q & A	Led by Moderator
10:15 - 10:30 AM	<i>Break</i>	
10:30 - 11:15 AM	The Indirectness of Differentiation: Developing Stillness as an Alternative to Change	Arthur Zipris
11:15 - 11:45 AM	The Benefits of Extended Family Connections: Differentiation of Self	Victoria Harrison, MA, LMFT
11:45 - 12:15 PM	<i>Panel Discussion</i>	
12:15 - 1:15 PM	<i>Lunch</i>	
1:15 - 2:00 PM	Do I Have to Believe What Mom & Dad Believe? A Journey Toward Self-Differentiation	Susan Schwartz, MDiv
2:00 - 2:30 PM	Emotional Cutoff and Anxiety: Five Clinical Case Studies	Zane Schwaiger, LLMFT, LLPC
2:30 - 2:45 PM	<i>Break</i>	
2:45 - 3:15 PM	Managing One's Anxiety in the Work of Differentiating a Self	Joseph Dreiss, PhD
3:15 - 3:45 PM	<i>Panel Discussion</i>	
3:45 - 4:00 PM	Q & A / <i>Closing Comments</i>	Led by Moderator
4:00 - 4:15 PM	<i>Break</i>	
4:15 - 5:15 PM	Optional Reception & Brief Annual Meeting	



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SATURDAY, OCT. 14, 2023 | PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

In-Person attendees are asked to arrive around **8:30 am** to sign-in; continental breakfast will be provided. **Zoom attendees** are asked to login by **8:45 am**.

THE 44TH PITTSBURGH FAMILY SYSTEMS
CONFERENCE AND SYMPOSIUM

9:00 – 9:15 AM	<i>Welcome from Sandra Caffo and Allison Whitney</i>	
9:15 – 10:30 AM	Emotional Cutoff and the Process of Aging and Death	Priscilla Friesen, LICSW
10:30 – 10:45 AM	Q & A	Led by Moderator
10:45 – 11:00 AM	<i>Break</i>	
11:00 – 11:30 AM	Functional Shifts, Emotional Cutoff and Fusion: One Person's Observations	Heather Brown
11:30 – 12:15 PM	Bowen Theory on the Big Screen: The Thing	Allison Whitney
12:15 – 12:45 PM	<i>Panel Discussion</i>	
12:45 – 1:45 PM	<i>Lunch</i>	
1:45 – 2:15 PM	Defining Self as a Parent Of a Transgender Adolescent	Vincent Randy
2:15 – 3:00 PM	Bridging Cutoff: The Collapse of the Familial Narrative	Ashley North
3:00 – 3:15 PM	<i>Break</i>	
3:15 – 3:45 PM	The Autonomic Socioeconomic Reflex Arc – A Starting Point for Emotional Distance?	Dave Galloway
3:45 – 4:15 PM	<i>Panel Discussion</i>	
3:45 - 4:00 PM	Q & A / <i>Closing Comments</i>	Led by Moderator



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Speaker Biographies

Keynote Speaker

Priscilla J. Friesen, LICSW

Priscilla Friesen was introduced to the ideas of Murray Bowen in graduate school in social work at the University of Kansas. She moved from Kansas to Washington, DC, in 1978 to pursue her interest.

She was the clinical and administrative assistant to Dr. Lillian Rosenbaum, who developed the Biofeedback Program at the Georgetown Family Center, while Ms. Friesen participated in the Postgraduate Program. Her early exposure to biofeedback significantly influenced her understanding of Bowen theory and of the physiology of relationships.

She was appointed to the faculty in 1987. She directed the Postgraduate Program in Bowen Family Systems Theory and its Applications, 1990-2003. In 1994, she expanded her clinical work to include neurofeedback. This led her into the study of evolution and the development of the brain, as well as how the brain, mind, and relationships operate in synchrony.

In 2005, she co-founded The Learning Space, a conceptual place where individuals have an opportunity to experience and challenge themselves in relationships through the integration of Bowen theory and neurofeedback.

In 2012, Ms. Friesen and Kathleen Wiseman created a program designed for experienced family enterprise professionals, advisors, and responsible family members. This program integrates Bowen theory and neurofeedback to challenge people to be more of a self in their family and work settings.

Ms. Friesen is also active on the board of The Murray Bowen Archives Project, the organization responsible for making the Bowen Archives available to the world.

Additional Presenters

Arthur Zipris

Arthur Zipris is a licensed psychologist, practicing at the Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute, where he sees individuals, families, and couples. He has studied Bowen Family Systems Theory (BFST) for over 30 years and has done many presentations on different applications of the theory in Pittsburgh and elsewhere. He was an adjunct lecturer with the MFT program at Seton Hill University. Dr. Zipris is on the faculty of the Western Pennsylvania Family Center (WPFC) where he is the primary author of the BFST workbook and developed, along with other faculty members, WPFC's online program. Dr. Zipris is a frequent facilitator of the WPFC Basic Seminar, the two-years program for the foundational study of Bowen Theory.

Victoria Harrison, MA, LMFT

Victoria Harrison began to study Bowen theory, biofeedback and physiology at Georgetown Family Center in 1977. She served on faculty there from 1992 - 2023 and directed Postgraduate Programs, developed online conferences and programs, conducted research, taught, and supervised. She received the Polly Caskie Research Award for the study of relationships, reactivity and reproduction.

Ms. Harrison directs Center for the Study of Natural Systems and the Family in Houston, Tx., featuring programs on Writing Based in Bowen theory and on Clinical Consultation. She supervised renovation of a building that will open with a program on extended family research in October 2023. She provides online and in person family systems psychotherapy with neurofeedback for self-regulation.

She wrote The Family Diagram and Family Research and My Family My Self: A Journal of Discovery as tools for

working on differentiation of self in coaching as well as other articles and book chapters. She is editorial consultant for Family Systems Forum, a quarterly publication of CSNSF since 1992. Her current article in Family Systems vol. 17.2 presents an example of sustained intellectual activity in the face of anxious physiology as a benefit of working on differentiation of self with extended family contact

Susan Schwartz, MDiv

Susan has served as a pastor in congregations within the metropolitan Chicago and Pittsburgh areas. She is one of the first American female Lutheran pastors, having graduated from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in 1980. It was while at Trinity that she was introduced to Family Therapy in reading the Napier and Whitaker book, *The Family Crucible*. She saw herself as the identified patient and threw the book across the room!! In Chicago she learned from Peter Steinke, here in Pittsburgh she studied at the Western Pennsylvania Family Center and engaged in personal work with staff. This Fall Susan begins work on a Doctor of Ministry degree at United Lutheran seminary, Gettysburg-Philadelphia.

Zane Schwaiger, LLMFT, LLPC

Zane Schwaiger, LLMFT, LLPC is a Marriage and Family Therapist practicing in Traverse City and Suttons Bay, Michigan. She has training in Bowen Family Systems Theory and Emotionally Focused Therapy. Zane has a particular passion for working with couples, looking through the lens of family systems and honoring each person's need for belonging and independence within their closest relationships. Before working as a therapist, Zane worked in conservation and agriculture. Her understanding of natural systems has influenced her work with family systems. Over the past three years, she's had the privilege of learning from her supervisor, Michael Sullivan, LMSW, a family therapist who trained with Murray Bowen for twelve years. Zane lives in Suttons Bay, Michigan with her husband, three children, and an extended family of dogs, cats, and chickens.

Joseph Dreiss, PhD

Joseph Dreiss is a retired clinical psychologist living in Hershey, Pennsylvania. He received his PhD in Psychology from Duquesne University in 1972 and was licensed in Pa. in 1974. Dr. Dreiss maintained a private practice from 1985-2022. He has served as an Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh in Child Development and Child Care and in the Department of Behavioral Sciences at Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He has presented Bowen Theory in both academic and community settings. His present interests include the application of Bowen theory to the later stages of life and mentoring human service workers.

Heather Brown

Heather Brown is a licensed Marriage and Family therapist practicing at The Center for Relational Change in Pittsburgh, Pa. Heather invites individuals, families, and couples into thinking about systemic process. She also supervises clinicians who are working toward licensure in the center's resident program as well as clinicians who are seeking to further their systemic thinking. Heather holds a position on the board at Western Pennsylvania family center an opportunity to further her own systemic thinking. Historically Heather has taught as an adjunct professor at Seton Hill's Marriage and family therapy program. Heather also values furthering her thinking around systems of oppression, societal process and understanding oneself. She has presented her thinking around these topics at workshops, conferences, and symposiums in Pittsburgh Pa. Lastly and most importantly Heather is a human who is seeking to take a position of learning and growing in this life. She attempts this through being in nature, taking photos, being in relationship to others, exploring movement and any other ways she sees an opportunity to do so.

Allison Whitney

Allison is an artist-scientist, comedienne, and a passionate advocate of Bowen Theory. With nearly 17 years of immersion in the financial planning industry, including her more recent role as a financial advisor, she views Bowen Theory as the most precise and robust framework for making reality-based, evolutionary contributions to the human experience. Allison's dedicated study of Bowen Family Systems Theory spans over 15 years, during which she has delved into how the theory manifests universally in day-to-day interactions, intricately woven into the fabric of our existence. Her focus lies in observing the narratives being shared and the exchange of thoughts over time. Currently, Allison holds the position of Board President at the Western PA Family Center.

Vincent Randy

Vincent Randy holds a Bachelor of Arts (Business Administration) from the ESSCA (Ecole Supérieure des Sciences Commerciales d'Angers) Business School in Angers, France. A native of France, now a resident and citizen of Canada, Mr. Randy has been working in information technology as well as learning about and applying Bowen theory in his own family and the workplace over the last 25 years.

Ashley North

Ashley North has been a student of Bowen Theory for over a decade, having first encountered the theory in 2010 in the graduate program of Marriage and Family Therapy at Seton Hill University.

Ashley attempts to think theory within her own relationships, in her practice with clients, while on the board of the Western Pennsylvania Family Center, and anywhere else that nitrogen and oxygen can be found.

Ashley has a particular interest in more clearly understanding the biological foundations of theory and how a focus on emotional process may be an emotional process in itself.

Dave Galloway

Dave Galloway has been personally and professionally involved with Bowen Family Systems Theory for over 15 years. He is interested in emotions and the supporting biology across species and from a human evolutionary perspective. Having worked as a consultant in high tech, he has thought and written about the application of theory in the workplace. An important idea for Dave is that theory is found in biology if one looks for it.