

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

24 Learning Objectives for 12 Training Hours

Participants will be able to:

1. Explain and describe how Bowen family systems theory is applied in clinical settings to create cogent hypotheses and design effective interventions.
2. Describe some applications of the concept of cutoff in clinical and personal settings.
3. Explain the impact of cutoff on symptom formation in emotional systems.
4. Describe how emotional cutoff is both between people and within the individual brain.
5. Describe how the family emotional process impacts the individual brain.
6. Explain how the family emotional process impacts the process of aging and death.
7. Identify how to address one's own aging in the family emotional process.
8. Describe how Bowen family systems theory can be used in an effort to assess and describe the functioning of one's extended family.
9. Assess the value of Bowen family systems theory in the effort to navigate family dynamics regarding transgenderism.
10. Demonstrate how communication guidelines can calm an emotional system and redistribute anxiety away from vulnerable persons.
11. Explain the relationships among emotional cutoff, fusion, and functional shifts.
12. Describe the meaning and utility of the concept of emotional cutoff through the use of five case examples.
13. Explain the difference between pseudo and solid cutoff.
14. Explain from a Bowen theory perspective the Autonomic Socioemotional Reflex Arc.

15. Explain how the concept of stillness can facilitate clinical and personal family of origin work.
16. Using data from the Observations of Change Project, describe the impact of contact with extended family on the level of symptoms and functioning in self and nuclear family, in the context of a self-differentiation effort.
17. List five questions to ask when facing high anxiety in the process of differentiation of self.
18. Explain the concept of functional shifts.
19. Explain the concept of bridging cut-off.
20. Identify some basic language patterns indicative of emotional fusion.
21. Explain how emotional cutoff and emotional fusion are manifestations of the same underlying process.
22. Describe the significance of observation in the effort to increase one's level of differentiation of self.
23. Identify strategies for differentiating religious beliefs incorporated from family and church systems (pseudo-self) from those that are carefully thought through and claimed as one's own (solid self).
24. Identify obstacles from within the system and the self to challenge one's religious beliefs based on pseudo-self.