

Multigenerational Transmission Process and Society Emotional Process

Adult Formation: In Relationship
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In the Silence, Name Me

(from *Guerrillas of Grace: Prayers for the Battle* by Ted Loder)

Holy One,
untamed
by the names
I Give you,
in the silence
name me,
that I may know
who I am,
hear the truth
you have put into me,
trust the love
you have for me,
which you call me to live out
with my sisters and brothers
in your human family.

Multigenerational Transmission Process

The small differences that happen in the levels of differentiation between parents and their children lead over many generations to marked differences in differentiation among the members of a multigenerational family

A cycle forms:

- One child usually has lower self-differentiation and one child usually had higher self-differentiation in the family of origin
 - Over-functioning parent & under-functioning child leads to adult child under-functioning and chosen partner over-functioning, which leads to children who under/over-function, etc.
 - Projection from parent to child leads to child low self-differentiation, which leads to adult child with low self-differentiation in romantic relationships and parental roles
- People usually seek out partners with similar levels of differentiation, which means the child with higher self-differentiation is more likely to find a partner who also has higher self-differentiation
- As this continues over each generation (within each “family of origin”), some families will grow to higher and higher levels of self-differentiation and some will grow to lower and lower self-differentiation

**Roots of the most severe human problems
and of the highest levels of human adaptation are generations deep**

Society Emotional Process

The principles that affect the emotional system of a family also affect the emotional system of society. In other words, each concept of the Family Systems Theory can also apply to nonfamily groups, such as work and social organizations.

Plus, eventually, the emotional system we see in our families can also govern behavior on a societal level, promoting both progressive and regressive periods in a society.

“Symptoms” of societal regression:

- Growth in crime and violence
- Increasing divorce rate
- More litigious attitude
- Greater polarization between racial groups
- Less principled decision-making by leaders
- Drug abuse epidemic
- Increase in bankruptcy
- Focus on rights over responsibilities

What happens to the individual when we are in a regression?

- Where togetherness forces in society are strong, differentiating moves are hard
- When emotional process in society is intense, socially accepted goals and standards of behavior tend to be incompatible with responsible individual inner beliefs
- When togetherness forces are strong, one tends to sacrifice self for others' needs and to act from pseudo-self
- Actions based on self-differentiation and personal conviction is almost impossible
- Decisions tend to be made in response to anxiety of the moment
- Less able to formulate an effective plan for differentiating in one's family

How can we de-triangulate?

- By being as differentiated as possible when engaged with the triangle
- By being as calm and cool as possible by not taking sides
- By not becoming emotional reactive
- Or you can make it a functional triangle by helping the dyad to resolve their problem

How can we increase self-differentiation?

- Cultivating tolerance for going against the crowd
- Thoroughly thinking through and develop your own values, ideals, and beliefs
- Noticing when you feel resentful and/or other non-productive emotions and own them
- Noticing what makes you feel alive and refreshed and continue that