

FAMILY SYSTEMS

Societal Regression

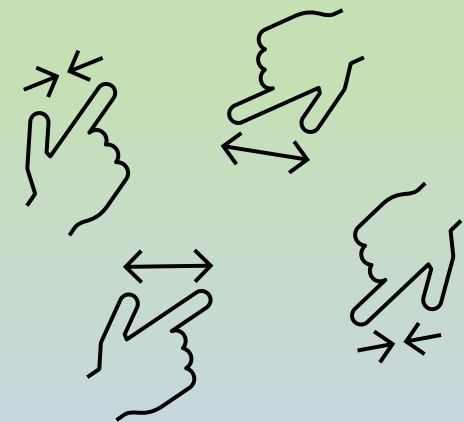
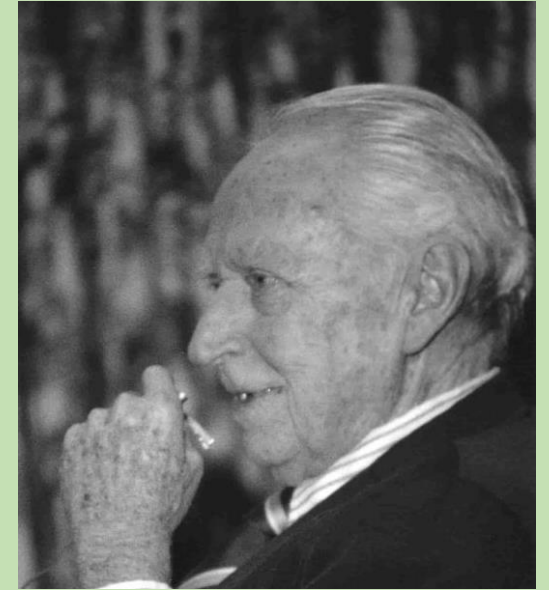


COVENANT

- Confidentiality
 - What is said here, stays here. What is learned here, leaves here
- Mutual Respect
- Grace
- Listening to Others
- Safety
- Encouragement
- Space for internal and external processing

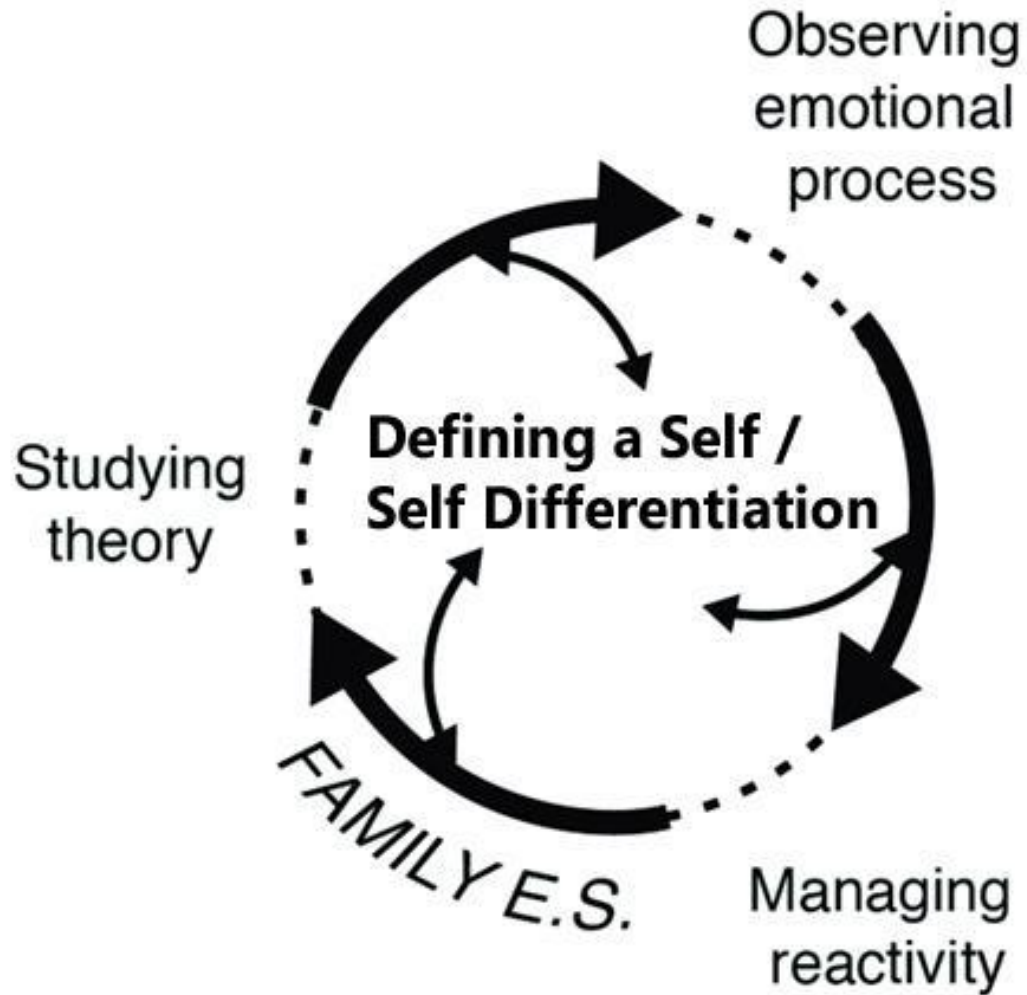
BOWEN'S 9 CONCEPTS

- Differentiation of Self
- Triangles
- Nuclear Family Emotional Process
- Family Projection Process
- Multigenerational Transmission Process
- Sibling Position
- Emotional Cutoff
- **Societal Emotional Process**
(Societal Regression)
- Supernatural Phenomena

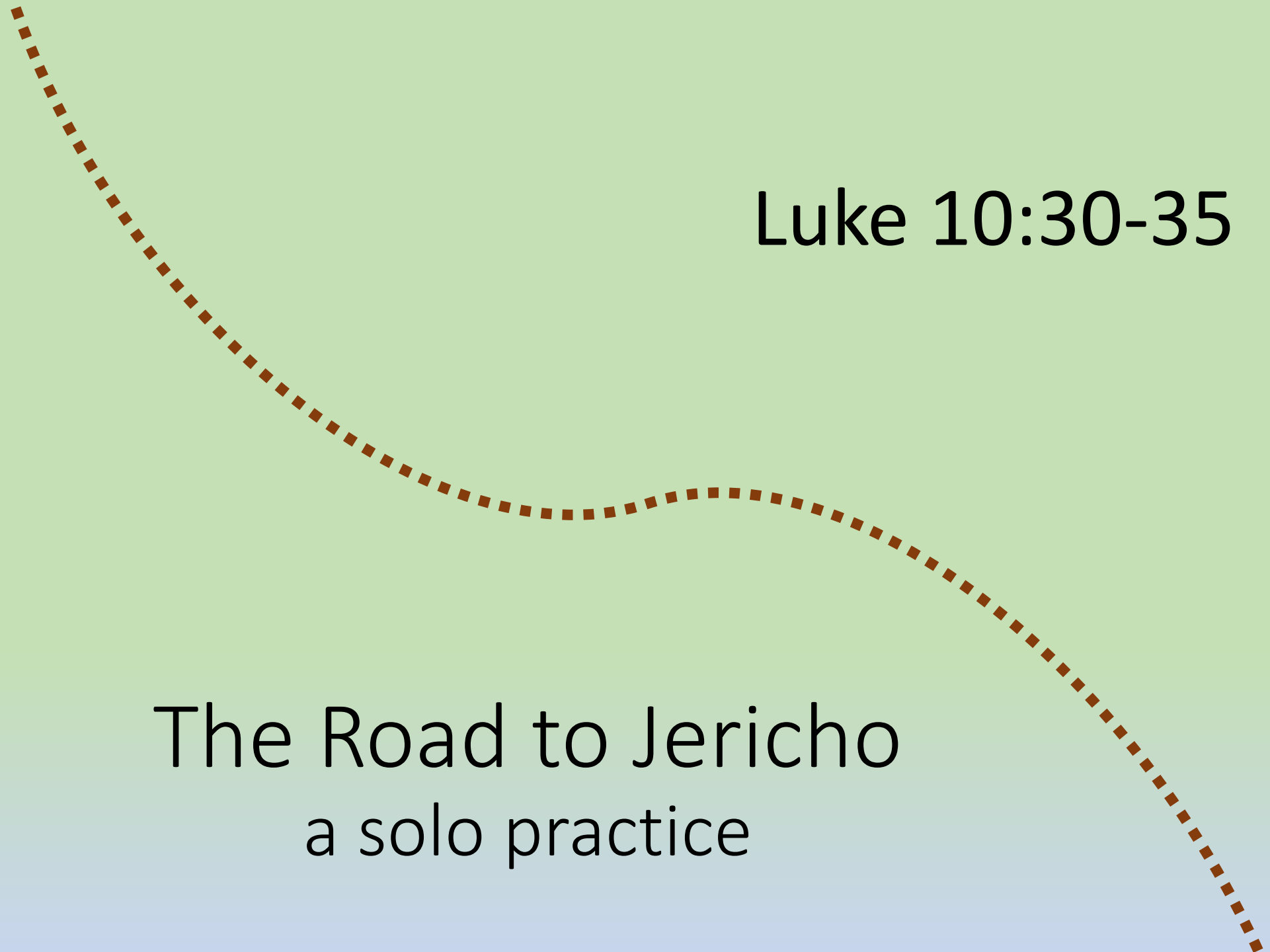


FAMILY EMOTIONAL SYSTEM

Image adapted from:
Helen Reynolds
Research Gate



What do
you
notice at
this
viewing?



Luke 10:30-35

The Road to Jericho
a solo practice

Players on the Road to Jericho

traveler/victim	robbers
priest	levite
Samaritan	inn keeper

My Road to Jericho

Who has 'robbed' you?
Harmed you and left you for
dead?

With whom have you
been a 'good
Samaritan'? Who
have you gone out of
your way to help?

Who have you 'robbed'
and 'left for dead'?

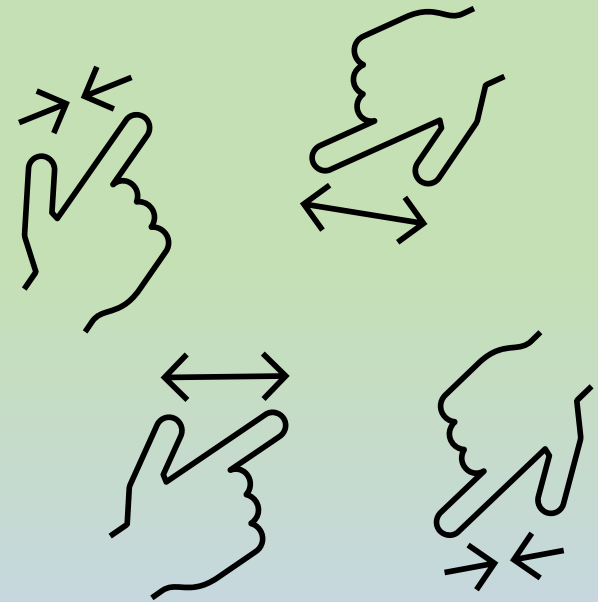
With whom have you been the
priest or Levite? Who have you
avoided? With whom do you
need to initiate contact?

Who has been left at your 'doorstep'?
For whom have you been called to
care? Who has been dumped on you?



With whom do you feel
drawn to initiate contact?

*What do you
notice about how
the concepts
interact?*



Societal Regression

“Society’s emotional reactiveness in dealing with societal problems is similar to the years of slow build-up of an emotional breakdown of a family.”

- Symptom 1st appears in the family.
- Family ignores or does enough to relieve immediate symptom.
- problem considered solved.
- usual course of behavior continues until another more serious symptom,
- followed by another superficial effort to relieve symptom.
- Process repeats until final breakdown, seen as unexpected.



MURRAY BOWEN on SOCIETAL REGRESSION

‘There is a paradox in the rights-responsibility issue. The greater the anxiety, the greater the focus on “rights” that submerge “responsibility.” There can be no rights without a responsible majority to guarantee the right.’

When there is more focus on one’s rights, there is ...

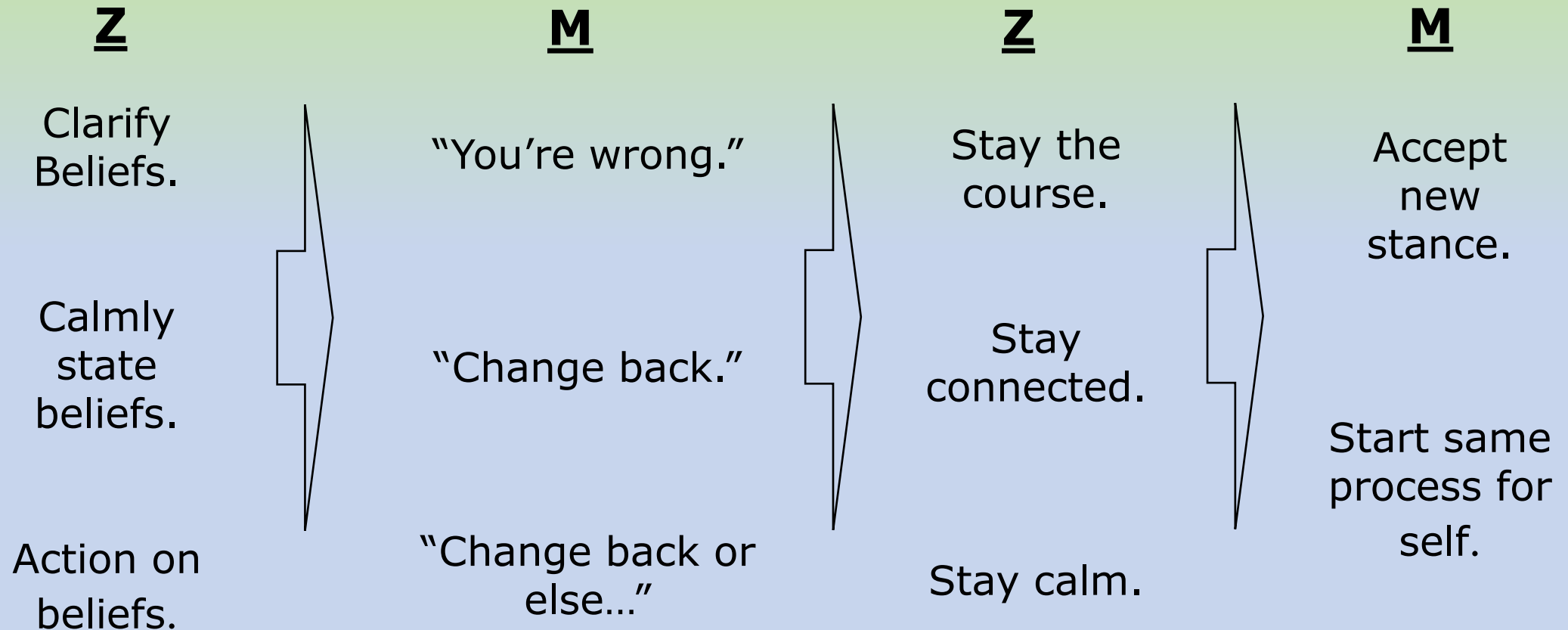
- less awareness of the rights of others, &
- more irresponsibility in violating the rights of others. p. 279.

‘The more [one] anxiously stives for togetherness, the more [one] loses [it].’ 280

‘The knowledge gained from the study of the family is of critical importance to the total human phenomenon.’ p. 282.



BOWEN'S IDEA OF CHANGE



Family Systems mantra credited to students

- Don't attack.
- Don't defend.
- Don't withdraw.



Solo

What are thinking and/or feeling about
'Bowen's Idea of Change' + 'mantra'
attributed to Bowen?

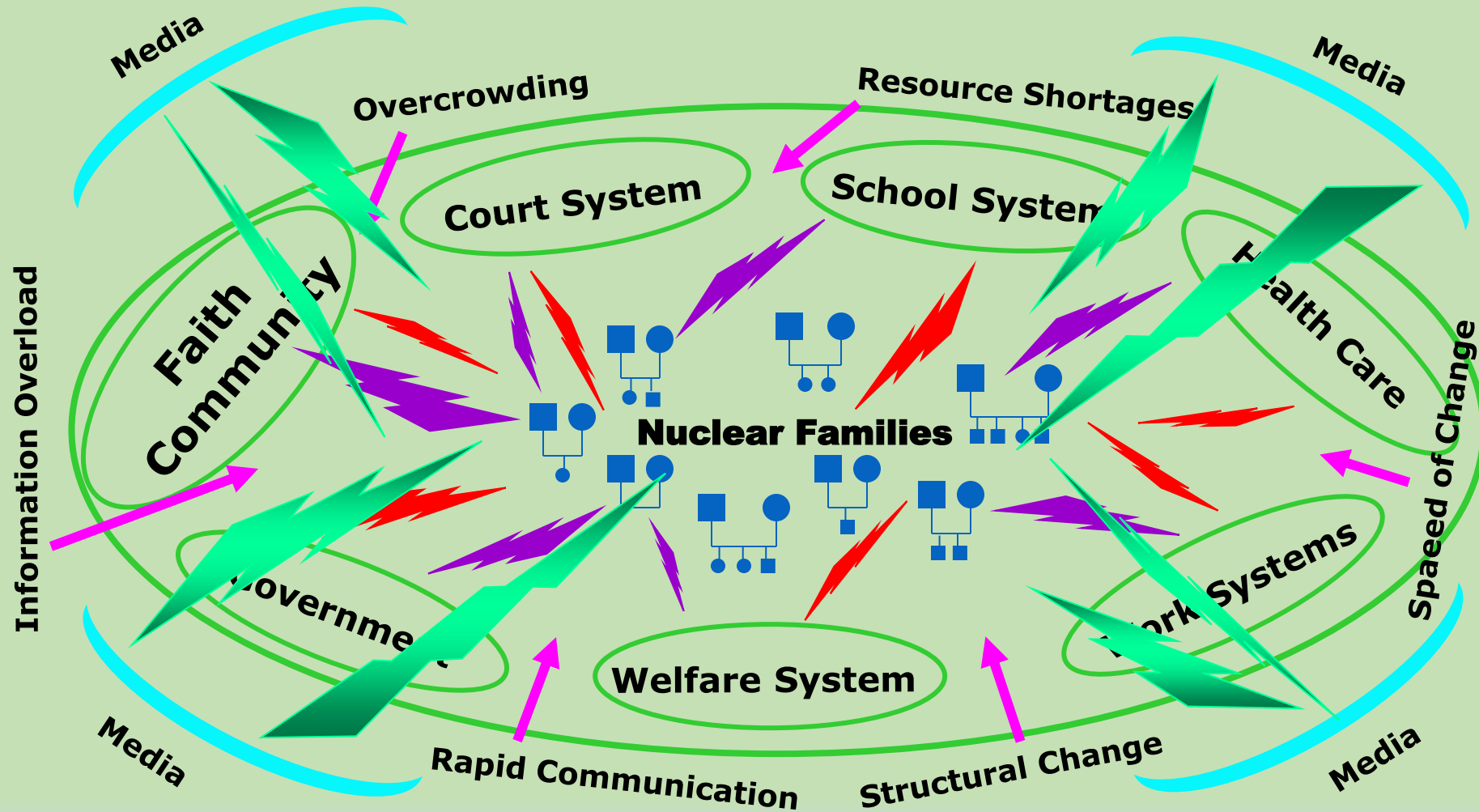
mostly pairs Breakouts

- Introduce self
- Speak one (1) thought/feeling/thing-to-say about Bowen's Idea of Change' and/or 'mantra'.



Societal Regression: A Visual Aid

Bob Williamson, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 2004



Chronic Anxiety, Principle Perversion & Regressive Effects on Society & Leaders

chronic anxiety	principle perversion	effect on society	effect on leaders
reactivity	regulation of instinct	inhibition of self-differentiation	perspective on leadership clouded
herding	adaptation to strength	organization around immaturity	indecisiveness
blaming	response to challenge	disintegration	sabotage
quick-fix mentality	maturation takes time	recycled stuckness	least mature selected

Bowen's 9th Concept: Supernatural Phenomena

'[When] the word "spiritual" is intended...to refer to the difficult to define [and] almost palpable human spirit...seems close to what Bowen intended.'

'...the unfinished business from the Age of Enlightenment...is that the natural philosophers failed to tackle human behavior.'

BOWEN THEORY'S SECRETS, Michael Kerr, 2019, pp. 323.

Former director of

The Bowen Center for The Study of the Family,

www.thebowncenter.org



Bowen's 9th Concept: Supernatural Phenomena

'I propose that Bowen theory's effort to move toward science to understand human behavior addresses [this failure].'



'Subjectivity based beliefs are powerful motivators of human behavior & are important to reckon with in any theory about behavior.'
cure.'

Bowen's 9th Concept: Supernatural Phenomena

'Bowen's intent was not to prove or disprove supernatural causes but to pursue the phenomena ...to look to the Book of Nature.'

'The Roman Catholic Church...detailed studies of people with serious illnesses [who] experienced seemingly complete and lasting remissions of their conditions without any medical explanation.'



Bowen's 9th Concept: Supernatural Phenomena

‘Regarding them as miracles, of course, does not preclude eventual scientific explanations for the processes that resulted in a cure.’



Bowen's 9th Concept: Supernatural Phenomena

‘A major quality in the differentiation of self is complete selflessness in which doing for others replaces personal selfish goals. Jesus Christ has been a model for total selflessness.’



Excerpt from July.1987 ‘Implications of Bowen Theory for Catholic Theology’ conference,
BOWEN THEORY’S SECRETS,
Michael Kerr, 2019, pp. 329.

Bowen's 9th Concept: Supernatural Phenomena

Solo: You & The Holy 1

Δ How do you imagine this experience been for Bowen, scientist & disciple?

Δ Consider what thoughts, feelings or words to bring to the full assembly.



Prayer attributed to St Francis of Assisi, Italy

Lord, make me an instrument
of Thy peace.

Where there is hatred, let me
sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness,
light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,

Grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to

understand;

to be loved as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive;

it is in pardoning that we are
pardoned;

and it is in dying that we are
born to eternal life.

Possible 2024.fall Family Systems Series

- Creating one's own family diagram or genogram
- Learn who to use it through case studies.
- Concept focus, informed by genogram conversations
- Spend 3 or 4 minutes reflecting on what you learned today

- Effectiveness depends on working one's own genogram

Bowen quote, the day before he died...

“You have inherited a lifetime of tribulation. Everybody has inherited it. Take it over. Make the most of it and when you have decided you know the right way, do the best you can with it.”

1990

