DMM: Integrative Approaches to Family Treatment

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DMM - Family Formulation

DMM directs us to focus on attachment processes in the context of the family system – move beyond the dyad which has been central to attachment theory.

Focus on:
- Trans-generational processes, both on continuities and CHANGE
- Interplay between parents’ DRs
- Parents’ DRs both shape the family process and family processes shape/maintain or alter their DRs.
- TRIADIC as well dyadic processes
Individual and systemic Formulations

- Systemic therapies focus on transactional processes in families
- Core concept - Feedback loops maintaining escalations and ‘stuck’ patterns
- The stuckness is inadequately conceptualised and does not consider:
  - Causal – developmental processes
  - Trans-generational attachment processes
  - Current on-going attachment dynamics in the family
DMM - and the therapeutic relationship

- Therapeutic relationship central to all forms of therapy
- Work with families is more complex have to form therapeutic relationship with each member of the family
- Different DRs for each member
- Also the interplay of their DRs
ACCIDENTIAL EFFECTIVENESS

Many therapies mostly only work when they 'accidentally' involve a systemic attachment intervention.

Example:

Mentalisation based treatment for children with ADHD .. Consists of teaching mentalisation/meditation to mothers and a child together.

Intention is to train the child to be able to self-regulate and use mentalisation.

Does positive change also, or even mainly occur because the attachment relationship between the child and the mother changes, i.e. they learn that they can mutually regulate their affect, mother gains confidence....?
FAMILY AS TRIADIC PROCESS

Relationship with each parent, e.g., adapt to A or C patterns. Aggravate or compensate each other......
Conflict in construing relationship with each parent
Pulled in to take sides
Conflict in understanding impact on parent’s relationships ‘is it my fault?’

Child also has an attachment relationship with the parents’ relationships

MOTHER

FATHER

Conflict/stress

CHILD

A +

C +

Child also has an attachment relationship with the parents’ relationships
A few examples of Integrative Formulation and Interventions…
Utilising ideas from DMM

ABC model assumes continuity. Applications using DMM consider a dynamic, evolving processes in families.
Farnfield’s Parenting Model

- Each parent’s DRs - childhood experiences, shape their parenting
- Parents’ may have different DRs related to parenting
- Compensation processes - parent with balanced DRs can assist parent with dismissing or pre-occupied DRs
- Multi – level, holistic: Individual, dyadic, triadic, community, culture...
DMM: Systemic processes and DRs

- Kozlowska’s Model of Somatic Processes

Embodied, implicit DRs in parents can shape psycho-somatic symptoms in the child. Vulnerability relates not just to primary attachment figure but the interaction between AFs. Focus on breakdown in family systems ability to communicate re. pain.
ANT: Systemic FT and DMM

ANT – combines systemic FT, with a focus on narrative FT approaches with DMM:

- Emphasis on change as well as continuity in trans-generational patterns
- Narratives and communication as shaping family life
- Narratives as shaped by and shaping attachment processes
- Corrective and replicative scrips - integrative DRs as representing potential for choice and change
- Triangulation - Emphasis on triadic processes - child exists in the context of attachment to each parent and their relationship
- Narratives and representational systems. Not just what is said but how it is said
ATTACHMENT NARRATIVE THERAPY

Co - Creating a secure base

Exploring Narratives and Attachments

Considering Alternatives

Future and Maintaining the therapeutic base
Process of Exploration in ANT: Formulation, intervention and permission

- **FAMILY PATTERNS /CIRCULARITIES**

- **ATTACHMENT DYNAMICS SHAPING CURRENT FAMILY PATTERNS**

- **TRANS-GENERATIONAL ATTACHMENT DYNAMICS SHAPING CURRENT FAMILY PATTERNS AND ATTACHMENT S**
# DMM: Formulating Choice of Systemic Techniques

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*REFLECTING TEAMS and REFLECTING PROCESSES*
ANT - FORMATS FOR EXPLORATION:

Utilises sections of the DMM/AAI in therapy

- To promote revision of DRs and shared family DRs
- Promote integration and Reflection
- Promote changes in the family processes

FORMATS: Comforting, corrective scripts, triadic processes, semantic – episodic representations
Comforting

When you were ill or upset as a child – what happened?
Try to remember a specific instance of when you were ill or upset

- How did you get to feel better? Who helped you to feel better? How did they do this?
- What have you learnt from this in terms of how you comfort your own children? What do you want to do the same/differently?
- What do you think your own children have learnt about comforting from you?
- If it did not happen how do you imagine it might have? What difference would it have made to you if you had been comforted?
- How do you see that comforting was done in other families you have known?

Can be held as a family or couple interview or as a one-to-one conversation.
Exploring memories of Comfort

So if you were upset or distressed or frightened when you were young, who would you go to?

Nobody. I wouldn’t go to anybody. The only time I ever did was once when Mum was at work and I had to sleep in my brother’s room. I can’t remember why, and there was a picture of me and her when we were little, cuddling, and I was only young and I was looking at this picture and I was crying so much because I thought because they’re older than most parents that she was going to die really soon and I went down to Dad and he was like “Don’t be stupid and go back to bed”, and I had to go back to bed. And after that I didn’t bother going to him. I would just bottle it all up and just not bother.’

Claire

Explorations:

*What do you think your dad’s intentions were?*
*Can you think of a time when your dad responded differently?*
*What made you upset about looking at their photo?*
*Do mum and dad respond similarly or differently when you are upset?*
FORMAT FOR EXPLORATION: Corrective and Replicative Scripts

Allows us to work in a positive frame with the family in that we assist the family to construe their intentions positively, i.e. they have tried to repeat what was good or correct what they felt was bad about their own experiences. This can then lead to a discussion of whether these attempts have been successful or not and possibly how they might be altered, strengthened, elaborated etc.

- What have you tried to do similarly or differently as a parent to how your parents acted with you?
- How has this worked, why.. What influences it?
- How is your relationship with your partner/spouse similar or different to how your parents were as a couple?
- What do you value vs feel critical about in either of your parent’s relationships?
- Does what you have tried to repeat/change work? Is there anything that you want to alter, strengthen, abandon about what you have been trying to repeat or change?
- What do you think your children might do differently when they are parents to how you were with them as parents?
- If you have not tried to do anything differently to your parents, can you imagine how it might be if you did?
- Why do you think your parents acted as they did?
To download program materials, click here
https://www.iasa-dmm.org/iasa-conference/