

Introduction

This book is intended for graduate students in psychology; professionals in the field who are thinking of including family therapy in their practice; child and adolescent therapists who are interested in working with the whole family; teachers, trainers, and supervisors of students of family therapy who are looking for a way to educate their students in an experiential model.

The book is divided into three sections:

Section I covers the general principles and values of Core Focused Family Therapy (CFFT), desirable qualities of a therapist who may choose to include this practice in his methodology, as well as how it fits into the mainstream of other schools of family therapy. Included will be a summary of the background and some of the basic tenets of the family therapy movement, including an understanding of the paradigm shift from individual to systems thinking.

Section II provides a detailed description of how to put CFFT into use in a very practical, hands-on way. This part of the book will include the “pre-initial session,” the “check-in,” the “direct interaction,” the “check-out,” subsequent sessions, termination, and, finally, a section on common mistakes made by CFFT family therapists.

Section III provides descriptions of two alternative methods of using CFFT when the whole family or parts of the family cannot be present: Psychodramatic Family Therapy and Gestalt empty chair techniques. These methodologies are especially useful for educators of family therapists and facilitators of Psychodramatic Family Therapy work, but can also be used directly in actual family therapy sessions, or individually with one or more clients.