


Group Exercise: Family Genogram


Pair into Dyads: Designate Therapist and Client Roles

This exercise is intended to introduce you to working with clients and guiding them through a reconstruction of their family structure. Through the genogram construction, work on highlighting generational patterns, family norms, intimacy norms, enmeshments, cut-offs, and socialization styles.


1. List the names of family members for at least three generations (four is preferred), with ages and dates of birth and death. List occupations, significant illnesses, and cause of death, as appropriate. Note any incidents of mental health concern including issues with drugs and alcohol.
2. List important cultural/environmental/contextual issues. These may include ethnic identity, religion, economic, and social class considerations. In addition, pay special attention to significant life events such as trauma or environmental issues (e.g., divorce, economic depression, major illness).
3. Basic symbols describe the relationship between individuals.
4. As you work with your client, use the effective listening, questions, and reflective techniques to draw out information, thoughts, feelings, and insights.


Symbols:

Close 

Enmeshed 

Estranged 

Distant 

Conflictual 

Separated 

Sample Genogram

