

# BRIERCREST

## CO 707 Procedures in Marriage and Family Therapy Fall 2023

Professor: Margaret Clarke, PhD  
Email: mclarke@briercrest.ca  
Phone: 306-631-2594  
Course Dates: September 25-29, 2023  
In-person, on campus

3 Credit Hours

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes the marriage and family model of understanding people and relationships and applies it to specific behavioural and relational issues, with a concentration on those issues related to working with families. The focus is on counselling practices, especially the use of questions in the context of family meetings that can help families and individual family members experience change toward health.

Prerequisite: CO 603 Foundations of Marriage and Family Therapy

### COURSE INTEGRATION

This course is a counselling skills course, intending to build counselling skills and practices that arise from the theories of marriage and family therapy to which students have already been introduced. It integrates marital and family therapy approaches with a theological and biblical understanding of relationships.

### COURSE TEXTS

#### Required Readings

Beyebach, M. (2009). Integrative brief solution-focused family therapy: A provisional roadmap. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 28*(3), 18–35.  
<https://doi.org/10.1521/jsyt.2009.28.3.18>

De Shazer, S., Dolan, Y., Korman, H., Trepper, T., McCollum, E., & Berg, I. K. (2021). *More than miracles: The state of the art of solution-focused brief therapy*. Routledge.

Diorinou, M., and Tseliou, E. (2014). Studying Circular Questioning "In Situ": Discourse Analysis of A First Systemic Family Therapy Session. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 40*, 1, 106–121.

#### **And together also read:**

Chenail, R. J. (2014). Commentary on studying circular questioning "in situ", *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 40*, 1, 122-124.

Furrow, J., Palmer, G., Johnson, S., Faller, G., and Palmer-Olsen, L. (2019). *Emotionally Focused Family Therapy: Restoring Connection and Promoting Resilience*. Routledge.

- Hoyt, M, and Berg, I (2001). Ch. 9: Solution Focused Couple Therapy. In Dattilio, F. (ed.), *Case studies in couple and family therapy. Systemic and cognitive perspectives*. Guildford. **(available on Canvas)**
- Palmer, G., & Efron, D. (2007). Emotionally Focused Family Therapy: Developing the model. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 26(4), 17–24. <https://doi.org/10.1521/jsyt.2007.26.4.17>
- Pilkington, S. M. (2014). Travelling on the journey to death: A story illustrating narrative practice for counselors. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 33, 4, 79-93. **(available on Canvas)**
- White, M. (2007). *Maps of narrative practice*. W. W. Norton & Company.

### Recommended Reading

- De Jong, P., & Berg, I. K. (2013). *Interviewing for Solutions*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Brooks/Cole.
- Johnson, S. (2019). *Attachment theory in practice: Emotionally focused therapy (EFT) with individuals, couples, and families*. Guildford. (Only Ch. 1, Ch. 8, and Ch. 9) \*This is a required text book for CO 713
- Nichols, M. P., and Davis, S. D. (2016) *Family therapy: Concepts and methods*. Pearson. (Only Ch. 12 Solution-Focused Therapy and Ch. 13 Narrative Therapy). \*This is a required text book for CO 606 and CO 714. Note: This textbook is only available for purchase or rent as an e-text through the Pearson website at: [https://www.pearson.com/us/search-results-higher-education.html?\\_charset\\_=UTF-8&q=Family+therapy%3A+Concepts+and+methods+by+Nichols+and+Davis](https://www.pearson.com/us/search-results-higher-education.html?_charset_=UTF-8&q=Family+therapy%3A+Concepts+and+methods+by+Nichols+and+Davis)

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary's APA Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/>.

These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <http://briercrest.ca/bookstore>.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (<https://briercrest.instructure.com>; cf. <http://briercrest.ca/online/canvas>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

### COURSE OUTCOMES

#### A. Cognitive

1. The student will gain an awareness of the systemic interactions that take place in the context of couples or families and how to manage these in the counselling session.
2. The student will understand the relational cycle which couples display and the interactional patterns in families, and how these connect to attachment needs.
3. The student will develop understanding of solution-focused, emotionally-focused and narrative therapy approaches to working with couples and families.

#### B. Affective

1. The student will experience a growing confidence in approaching the challenge of working with multiple clients at once, such as couples or families experiencing relational difficulty.

**C. Skills**

1. The student will begin to be able to engage in collaborative conversations when working with multiple clients at once.
2. The student will begin to develop skills in collaborative and competency-based practices of working with families, especially solution-focused, emotionally-focused, and narrative therapy approaches.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND CONTENT**

DAY	TOPIC	SUPPORTING RESOURCES
Monday	REVIEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Therapeutic Stance (Person-centred, Systemic, Collaborative, Influential)</li> <li>• Integrated Model for Marriage and Family Counselling</li> <li>• Attachment relationships</li> </ul> MFT APPROACHES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative Therapy</li> <li>• Emotionally Focused Therapy</li> <li>• Solution Focused Brief Therapy</li> </ul>	Notes from CO 603
Tuesday	MFT SKILLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working collaboratively with multiple clients at once to create shared goals and plans for therapy.</li> <li>• Recognizing healthy and unhealthy relational cycles and interactional patterns.</li> <li>• Attending to process, rather than content, in session and recognizing the distinction between the two.</li> <li>• Attunement to socio-cultural context of client and self.</li> <li>• Self-of-the-therapist awareness of one's own internal cognitive and emotional processes and experiences and how these may facilitate and constrain interpersonal interactions.</li> </ul>	Diorinou, M., and Tseliou, E. (2014). Studying Circular Questioning "In Situ": Discourse Analysis of A First Systemic Family Therapy Session. <i>Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 40, 1, 106-121. <b>And together also read:</b></i> Chenail, R. J. (2014). Commentary on studying circular questioning "in situ", <i>Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 40, 1, 122-124</i>
Wednesday	NARRATIVE THERAPY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Couples</li> <li>• Families</li> </ul>	Nichols, M. P., and Davis, S. D. (2016) <i>Family therapy: Concepts and methods</i> . Pearson. Ch. 13 Narrative Therapy.  Pilkington, S. M. (2014). Travelling on the journey to death: A story illustrating narrative practice for counselors. <i>Journal of Systemic Therapies, 33, 4, 79-93.</i>  White, M. (2007). <i>Maps of narrative practice</i> . W. W. Norton & Company.
Thursday	EMOTIONALLY FOCUSED THERAPY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families</li> </ul>	Furrow, J., Palmer, G., Johnson, S., Faller, G., and Palmer-Olsen, L. (2019). <i>Emotionally Focused Family Therapy: Restoring</i>

		<p><i>Connection and Promoting Resilience</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Johnson, S. (2019). <i>Attachment theory in practice: Emotionally focused therapy (EFT) with individuals, couples, and families</i>. Guilford. (Ch. 1, Ch. 8, and Ch. 9)</p> <p>Palmer, G., &amp; Efron, D. (2007). Emotionally Focused Family Therapy: Developing the model. <i>Journal of Systemic Therapies</i>, 26(4), 17–24.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.1521/jsyt.2007.26.4.17">https://doi.org/10.1521/jsyt.2007.26.4.17</a></p>
Friday	<p>SOLUTION FOCUSED BRIEF THERAPY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Couples</li> <li>• Families</li> </ul> <p>CONCLUSION</p>	<p>Beyebach, M. (2009). Integrative brief solution-focused family therapy: A provisional roadmap. <i>Journal of Systemic Therapies</i>, 28(3), 18–35.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.1521/jsyt.2009.28.3.1">https://doi.org/10.1521/jsyt.2009.28.3.1</a></p> <p>De Jong, P., &amp; Berg, I. K. (2013). <i>Interviewing for Solutions</i>, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Brooks/Cole.</p> <p>De Shazer, S., Dolan, Y., Korman, H., Trepper, T., McCollum, E., &amp; Berg, I. K. (2021). <i>More than miracles: The state of the art of solution-focused brief therapy</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Hoyt, M, and Berg, I (2001). Ch. 9: Solution Focused Couple Therapy. In Dattilio, F. (ed.), <i>Case studies in couple and family therapy. Systemic and cognitive perspectives</i>. Guilford.</p> <p>Nichols, M. P., and Davis, S. D. (2016) <i>Family therapy: Concepts and methods</i>. Pearson. Ch. 12 Solution-Focused Therapy.</p>

## ASSIGNMENTS

Please ensure all written assignments follow APA formatting and are submitted to Canvas.

### *Pre-Course Assignments:*

Analysis Paper. Write a 5-6 page paper comparing and contrasting the therapeutic practices of Solution-focused Brief Therapy (SFBT), Emotionally-focused Family Therapy (EFFT), and Narrative Therapy with *families* based on the required readings. Comparison should include similarities between the approaches as well as contrasting aspects that make the approaches different from one another. In addition to the 5-6 page paper, include a 1-page “map” for each approach that helps you to visualize the key steps and processes of that approach.

**Due: September 24, 2023**

**Value: 25%**

Case Study. Watch *This is Us, Season 2, Episode 11: The Fifth Wheel* (available on Netflix or for rent on YouTube). Write a 3-4 page case study of the Pearson family, including presenting problem(s), family members, key historic events, and ethnic or socio-economic considerations that may help to understand this family based on what you could pick-up from this episode (only). In addition, create

a genogram, with descriptive lines, indicating the quality of relationships, the existence of triangles, and intergenerational patterns, as well as indicators of strengths.

**Due: September 24, 2023**

**Value: 10%**

***Mid-Course Assignments:***

Role play participation. Throughout the week of the course (and for the post-course assignment) you will be involved role play sessions to practice the family therapy skills being learned. You will be participating as a therapist and also acting as clients.

**Due: September 29, 2023**

**Value: 10%**

***Post-Course Assignments:***

Pearson Family (young) Session. Based the flashback scenes from the *This is Us, Fifth Wheel* episode, imagine what a family therapy session would look like when the family was younger. Choose one of the following combinations of family members to include in this session:

- Parental session
- Sibling session
- Parent(s) with Kate
- Parent(s) with Kevin
- Parent(s) with Randall

The assignment should include:

- 1) Participation. Students will be assigned to groups in class for this assignment and you will need to make yourself available to your other group members to act as the Pearson family for the recorded role plays.
- 2) Written file note (1-2 pages, single spaced). Based on the information shared in the episode's flashback scenes, prepare for your session by writing a file note from an imagined previous session that includes more fulsome "assessment" and "case planning" using the DAP format:
  - a. Data (D): presenting problem(s), relevant family history, and racial or socio-economic factors
  - b. Assessment (A): your perspective and your hypothesizing related to the problems the family is facing (grounded in family systems ideas).
  - c. Plan (P): indicate your initial overall case plan collaboratively developed for therapy with this family and indicate if you will use EFFT, SFBT, or NT; also include a specific plan for the next session including your rationale about which *two or three* family members to include in the session, and the counselling practices that you believe will be helpful for this family, including a few key questions to help family members to engage in the therapeutic conversation.
- 3) Role play and transcript. For this assignment you need to:
  - a. Conduct a 50-min role play where you are the therapist and your group members act as the members of the Pearson family;
  - b. Watch your entire recorded session;
  - c. Select and submit a 20-min continuous section that you feel best demonstrated your use of the therapeutic approach you chose; and
  - d. Along with the role play recording, prepare and submit a transcript for the 20-min section. The transcript should include: time stamp, all therapist speech, all client

speech, and for each of your interactions as a therapist indicate the microskill(s) you used (question, reflect, validate, etc.) and your purpose in doing it.

- 4) Written progress note (1-page, single spaced) of the full role play session using the DAP format including:
  - a. Data (D): relevant information that emerged in the session
  - b. Assessment (A): your perspective on family challenges, the family members' healthy and unhealthy ways of relating, strengths, and resources (grounded in family systems ideas).
  - c. Plan (P): indicate your plan for the next family session, indicating which family members to include and how you plan to use counselling practices of your selected approach to continue to be helpful to the Pearson family, including aspects you'd like to explore and a couple key questions to help family members to engage in the therapeutic conversation.
- 5) Reflection paper: write a 4-5 page paper after having watched your whole recorded session and reflect on your experiences as a therapist in the role play session. Reflect on your ability to:
  - a. work collaboratively with multiple clients at once and help in pursuing a mutually agreed upon direction;
  - b. utilize specific therapeutic approaches, such as NT, EFFT or SFBT;
  - c. attend to process, rather than content, in session; and
  - d. be aware of your own internal cognitive and emotional experiences during the session and how these affected the session, such as any socio-cultural-spiritual values of the family and your own socio-cultural-spiritual influences.

**Due: November 24, 2023**

**Value: 55%**

## SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar:

<https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/academics/calendar/>.

### ***Attendance Policy***

In order to benefit fully from a seminary education, to be good stewards of time and finances, and to be considerate of their classmates and faculty members, students must be in class at every opportunity.

### ***Modular Courses***

Students are expected to attend 100 per cent of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible due to extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made with the course professor before the first day of class. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending class, a maximum of one (1) full day of class can be foregone. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

### ***Online Courses***

If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending scheduled meeting times, then up to 20% of meeting time can be foregone. Students missing scheduled meeting times should make

every effort to inform the course professor prior to any time missed. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

#### *Semester-Based Courses*

All students missing more than two full weeks of a particular course from registration to the last day of classes will receive an automatic fail (0%). A student may appeal a course failure due to excessive absences. Successful appeals will be granted only in rare cases where all absences are clearly beyond the student's control. Appeals must be made through the Academic Appeal Process.

#### *Course Schedules*

Modular classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

#### *Assignment Submission*

All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the [academic calendar](#).

#### *Return of Graded Assignments*

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the [Seminary](#). If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

#### *Academic Honesty*

As members of the Briercrest learning community, students have a responsibility to conduct themselves with integrity and honour. Students who cheat on exams, plagiarize, inappropriately collaborate, or use generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) without instructor authorization in the preparation and/or submission of their assignments violate the trust placed in them by their instructors, fellow students, and the seminary. Any such actions constitute a breach of academic honesty and will result in serious consequences, such as failure of an assignment, failure of a course, or expulsion from the seminary.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or involuntary, is the submission of the work of others, published or unpublished, in whole or in part without acknowledgment or proper documentation. All information, ideas and/or direct quotations taken from other primary or secondary sources must be documented appropriately. Students are responsible to ensure they are using their sources with transparency and honesty. For more details, consult the [Seminary Calendar](#). In addition to being familiar with these pages, instructors assume that you have completed the Briercrest Academic Integrity course on [Canvas](#) and understand the information contained in it.

#### *Academic Accommodations*

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition (mental or physical) who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should contact the ARC Coordinator in person (L234 in

the Library), by phone (1-306-801-6159), or by email ([arc@briercrest.ca](mailto:arc@briercrest.ca)). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.). It is recommended that students meet with their professors to discuss the requirements of their accommodations (i.e., how the student will receive lecture notes, or how the professor wants to receive extension requests).