
Reflections on Lifelong Learning: The Doctor of Ministry

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Beginnings

The Doctor of Ministry program could save your ministry! Jesus often withdrew to a "place apart" (Luke 6:12) to find quiet for prayer and perspective. He returned to people in public places with teachings of wisdom and mission. A Doctor of Ministry program serves clergy and other spiritual leaders in a similar way. As an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Doctor of Ministry program provided a disciplined place apart for me to study and deepen my work as a parish pastor. After fourteen years in the parish ministry, this course of study led me to a focus and integration of my beliefs and thinking about my work as a leader in the church.

Complexities in counseling issues, difficult people in the parish, and family struggles were puzzles that daily challenged my energy and time. Whether it was a couple to be married without parental support, a treasurer who missed important meetings, or a child in confirmation whose parents were divorcing, their needs and demands were intense and immediate. My attention to them created a dilemma. How could I most effectively address their situations and still preach, teach, evangelize, and administer the programs and needs of the whole parish? How many clergy have been in this position when their own child or family needed them in an important way? The irony in all of this is that the painful needs of the parish often take priority over the joys and "little" family moments of our own. Of course, one could question the point of entering the ministry if there is no acceptance of the struggle that goes with the territory. This would be a legitimate question. The struggle became part of the pull and challenge to grow.

These issues and others led me to the importance of practical theology in my ministry. Almost every letter of the Apostle Paul deals with practical problems and theological perspective (1 Cor. 1:10ff., Gal. 1:6) in the early church. Jealousy, rivalry, compromises of beliefs and commitment, organizational issues, and moral behavior are themes. Human functioning in the faith was no different then! My early search revived past understandings of such social science models as transactional analysis, growth groups, sensitivity training, behavioral modification, and psychodynamics.¹ Pastoral theology as it is taught is usually underpinned by some form of the social science construction of reality.² These

models can be helpful ways of addressing human relationships. However, I was finding that life in the parish presented an experience much more complex than these models addressed.

I noticed that the parish was a marvelous laboratory of life. I came to see that the position of clergy is unique as it relates to people. The church is "sandwiched" between family and society. The church is made up of generations of families. Clergy relate to many generations over time. Clergy relate to a spectrum of human functioning, to people who do well with life's stresses and those who do not. Clergy are regularly at the center of such major rites of passage as birth, marriage, and death, offering emotional and spiritual leadership. The fact that no other vocation has all these features is a major point of consideration as one moves toward a new way of thinking about clergy leadership and human functioning.

In my search for a focus in the Doctor of Ministry program, pastoral counseling and family systems became the key areas. My knowledge of *Systems* thinking and its application to clergy originally stem from hearing Rabbi Edwin Friedman at a conference on "The Family Puzzle" in 1979. Several educational leaders were brought together to examine family issues in the modern world. Friedman spoke about anxiety and emotional triangles in relation to clergy stress. As he applied a so-called "Family Model" based on *systems*³ thinking to the clergy position as leader, I noted that his descriptions and illustrations came close to my experience. It made more sense than any technique or model I had used. I perceived something fresh and deeply accurate breaking in for me. It fit, but not like a formula or so many keys, habits, steps, skills, laws, or guidelines. Most importantly, theory and practice were coming together in a provocative way. It was open-ended. The seed was planted. I wanted to hear more.

This experience was instrumental in shaping the Doctor of Ministry program that I formally began in 1983. It drew me into a way of thinking that informed my practical parish concerns. I had met a rabbi on the road, and he had made a difference in my life and the lives of many others. The appeal of this doctoral program was that I could tailor a course of study to fit my ongoing function as a full-time parish pastor. It provided a meaningful "place apart" to look at the connections between families, congregations, and leadership. I gained more clarity both in my own family process and in my pastoral function. My life became a laboratory for lifelong learning.

The Presence of the Past

How do we think about our past? Are we shaped by our childhood? Many thinkers in the behavioral sciences believe we are largely shaped by our early years, and that the past is more a part of us than we know. Rupert Sheldrake, an English biochemist and philosopher, speaks of "morphic resonance,"⁴ a term

describing how we connect to the living past at deep levels. Generations of ancestors have a "presence" in the way we function and live together. The difficulty of proving this thesis is obvious. Yet, it is intriguing that this kind of thinking comes at a time when sciences such as physics are raising questions similar to those in organic and field theories.

The notion of the interconnection of generations somewhat parallels that of Murray Bowen, one of the founders of the family therapy movement. Bowen's theory, based on *natural systems*⁵ thinking, has led to a mode of therapy that emerges from clinical experience with families.⁶ Bowen sees a family of one generation as part of an emotional process connected to previous generations. His thinking affirms the influence of childhood years in understanding human development. However, the infancy or childhood years, according to *natural systems* thinking, is understood as part of a larger relationship system. Bowen shifts from seeking the causes of human behavior in the individual to seeking them in the family as an interconnected emotional unit. Edwin Friedman, a student of Bowen, has applied this shift to clergy leadership in his book, *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*.⁷

I invite the reader to explore the importance of family *systems* thinking for the clergy leader. It is difficult to condense a *systems* orientation in a short document. Learning to think *systems* is a "work-in-progress" for a growing body of clergy across the country.⁸ *Process* and *natural systems* theory are concepts to be understood over time as one integrates personal learning with a way of understanding human relationships. The parish is an ideal field for this study.

A major concept in Bowen Theory⁹ is called the *multigenerational Process*.¹⁰ In family *systems* terms, we are born not only as individuals, but as part of a larger emotional *system*.¹¹ Here "emotional" means more than just feelings. The term refers to the instinctual, underlying life process that governs the development of living systems. It has to do with the deep-seated life force that shapes protoplasm and living organisms. This emotional process moves toward reproduction, survival, and the persistence of form. For Bowen and others, the concept describes the interconnectedness of generations. It allows for individual variations while describing the processes we have in common with all humans and other forms of life from the beginning.¹² This broadens the understanding of human functioning beyond one generation. This way of thinking about the human family moves toward a larger picture or whole mosaic of a family. It thus moves away from reducing the subject of focus down to its parts and pathologies.¹³ With regard to human problems, it tends to be inductive rather than deductive. Thus, the focus is on forces beyond the individual which appear to govern living systems yet include the individual as part of the process.

A *systems* view brings a new lens for exploring myself in my own family and the congregation. I now relate my own journey as part of a broader and deeper history. This way of thinking encourages lifelong learning which is integral to maturity, and it is to be hoped, toward gaining wisdom. Part of the disciplined study involves clinical work. "Family of origin"¹⁴ work is central for the clinical effort to gain knowledge of the theory and its application to one's own functioning. It is the ongoing work on "self" in relationships that moves toward less anxiety, more self-regulation, and self-definition.¹⁵

Over time, a significant shift occurred in the orientation of my pastoral practice. Much pastoral care and counseling have assumed an individual framework to explain the functioning and interaction between people. Communications skills, or management techniques, or diagnostic skills were useful and helpful but limiting.¹⁶ For example, when a parishioner telephoned to complain about the youth group snubbing her daughter, my response earlier might have been to listen, empathize with her, and then speak to the youth group. By viewing the family as an emotional unit and working on emotional triangles in my family of origin, I found other options available. This time I relayed the mother's concern to the daughter, thereby putting the content of the complaint back into the family where it originated. This response was based on a view of emotional triangles and some knowledge of family process. By not rushing to take responsibility for the mother's view of the problem, I helped prevent a family issue from spilling over into the congregation and unnecessarily involving the youth group and others.¹⁷ A family *systems* view opened up choices.¹⁸ I could hear the mother's frustration but redirect the process from my position as pastoral leader. Conceptualizing a problem in terms of family process has the benefit of reducing stress and complications. The increased repertoire of responses generated by an understanding of family process is on the side of overall health in congregation and family.

As a parish pastor operating with individual or group models of pastoral care, I realized limits of promoting change in difficult situations and patterns of behavior. In the context of parish ministry—organizing around the liturgical season, raising a family, scrutinizing budgets, preaching regularly, serving on committees, recruiting committees and teachers, dealing with difficult people, and maintaining spiritual vision and resiliency—it seemed there must be a more relevant approach. There are many variables in being the pastor of individuals and families. The parish experience raised valuable questions around my own growth and maturity. *Systems* thinking struck me as comprehensive and inclusive of deeper processes in human relationships. I gradually came to see these processes were the same as those operating in past generations.

Entering the Parish: A Look-Homeward Angle

When I entered the parish as a newly ordained pastor, I went against the conventional advice not to serve one's home congregation. I accepted the call as assistant pastor in my home congregation for several reasons: the senior pastor was near retirement; some lay leaders believed I "knew" the congregation well; and I could be an asset to the ministry where roots and relationships were already established. I wondered if they could adjust to a son of the congregation becoming their pastor. Part of what appeared to drive the request from the congregation was an underlying current of tension. Many families had left under the present pastor, and others were on the verge of separation. I thought I could help in this tense situation.

I eventually realized how natural and automatic it was for me to move in a homeward direction during a time of turmoil. From a *systems* perspective I moved into the same emotional process that all clergy do when entering a congregation as leader. I simply located myself in a more intense version of what was already familiar. Having studied my family of origin experience I came to see how this response could be quite automatic. That is, my functioning position, the emotional position from which I grew up in my family, prepared me for the naturalness of such a move. In a tense situation, I would automatically try to calm things down. While anxious, I was pulled toward the tension as long as I was not its main target. My internal wiring was ready for activation, and I responded automatically.

The experience of becoming pastor of my home congregation has brought into bold relief one of Bowen's key concepts, the *emotional triangle*.¹⁹ The emotional triangle describes a process in which a two-person relationship (A and B) is unstable and will automatically pull in a third person (C) or issue. When tension or anxiety rises in a two-person or two-party relationship, a third person or party can help stabilize or bind the anxiety ($A > < B \text{---} C$). This is an automatic process. It does not require thought or reasoning. Triangles are not always easy to recognize. A moderate amount of tension can help one see the phenomena. When things are tense between two persons ($A = B$), a third (outside) person ($> > C$) is desirable. One of the closer twosome will make an effort to connect with the outside one ($A = B > \text{---} C$). When things are calm, the twosome is desired ($A < > B$). Then the outside person becomes uncomfortable and makes a move toward one of the twosome ($C \text{---} > A$ or B). This oversimplified description is an attempt to highlight what Bowen watched in families early in his research. The emotional triangle became for him the basic molecule of all human relationships. In the nuclear family one could observe this dynamic process between parents and children, between brothers and a parent, between grandparents and grandchildren. Triangles, for Bowen, are natural. They are always shifting. They are neither good or bad. They just are. Observing this process makes it possible to understand the governing forces

beyond the nature or personality of the individual. One can observe families or congregations and see the dynamics being played out.

For instance, when a minister arrives at a new charge, a member may greet with, "Reverend, I'm sure glad you are here. So and so didn't want you to come here, but we will be with you." One can observe the process at other levels. Internationally, President Kennedy, Chairman Khrushchev, and Premier Castro comprised an emotional triangle in the 1960s crisis. Today Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the United States are in a shifting, dynamic relationship, each taking positions or making moves in reaction to the others. An understanding of the process allows one to concentrate on one's own self-definition and self-regulation. Working on one's own functioning in the relationship system makes it possible to modify other relationships and reduce stress.²⁰ Solomon stayed "detriangled" when facing two mothers arguing over the ownership of one child (1 Kings 3:16-28). Jesus could be described as "in but not of" the emotional triangling process when he faced the crowd and the woman caught in adultery (John 8:3), answered the lawyer's question on inheriting eternal life (Luke 10:29-37), and stood before Pilate (Matt. 27:11-14). In the above example of the mother and daughter, I was able to stay less "triangled" as their spiritual leader, and therefore less hooked into the intensity of their difficulty. It is better to contain the problem than to allow it to spill over into other relationships in the congregation. This approach challenges the family to use its own resources in dealing with relationship issues.

The concept of an emotional triangle provides a blueprint for Bowen in understanding what often appears as chaos in a family or organization. Triangles reveal an order in the process. Triangles are in motion and become interlocked. In fact, for Bowen they are interlocked down the generations. The emotional, instinctive current flows through relationship systems. Triangles give coherence to the process. In retrospect I can describe entering my home congregation as an instance of being triangled into a tense situation which became a familiar opportunity for me. Furthermore, when all clergy enter parishes, the established emotional triangles are there to greet them.²¹ It thus becomes useful to have an awareness of this process in human interaction. One can reduce stress by not taking responsibility for other people's behavior while, at the same time, remaining connected to those relationships. Stress, rather than being related to overwork, is connected to our position in the relationship system. The position of secretary, for example, can be a vulnerable one in the congregation. Secretaries often find themselves in the position of handling work for the minister as well as fielding the complaints of some parishioners. To the extent the secretary absorbs the content of complaints while trying to soothe the tension, there is likely to be increased stress.

I served two parishes in twenty-four years. Scripture and theology continue to hold a keen interest for me. Questions of life and meaning are in the

forefront of ministry. The parish is the "ground reference" where biblical theology and practical living dance intentionally. I wanted to balance theory and practice while serving the congregation and maintaining theological reflection. For me the human condition, the human factor in a technical world²² had become a crucial issue where we struggle with perversity and healing, pain and regeneration. Seminary preparation is adequate for the ecclesiastical tradition and the theological basics, but after entering the parish something else comes into play. As in marriage, one can prepare ahead of time, but until one commits oneself, it is difficult to grasp the full challenge of the relationship. One enters the parish as a called minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, equipped with skills, exposed to scholarship, armed with Scripture and sacraments, five thousand years of tradition, and pursuing the highest vision. Suddenly, each minister faces an emotionally embedded pantheon, the gods of administration, finance, property, music, dependency, and displaced energy charges. These gods appear sooner or later, to claim energy, time, loyalty, high rank, and recognition.²³ In addition, the fact that clergy bring into the mix their own level of functioning and maturity only heightens the drama. At this meeting place, the parish, the lives of past and present join. Where else then can theory and practice, theology and ministry find such a rich laboratory?

If You Meet the Rabbi on the Road, Listen to Him!

Rabbi Friedman published *Generation to Generation* in 1985. It describes clergy leaders as involved in three emotional systems simultaneously: the congregation, families in the congregation, and their own family.²⁴ Understanding what occurs in one system can bring insight into how one functions in the others, and how they impact each other. All three are on the same emotional current. This perspective, made relevant and alive with illustrations, brought insight into my own functioning. It captured more variables and integrated my experience in a new way. It became clear that clergy have a common terrain, an ecumenical grounding regardless of tradition or theology. Friedman consistently heard common stories, particularly around stress issues. Using Bowen Theory he offered a way of thinking that coincided with reality as I was experiencing it. It would have been difficult to hear this way of integrating theory and practice outside the parish experience. Nor would it have resonated earlier in my ministry.

For Friedman, a family systems model purports that congregations are made up of families and individuals in families. People function in congregations even as they function in families. Emotional functioning is learned in our families of origin and replicated in the work system. Clergy, who also are part of their own family process, become positioned as leaders in the congregation. In addition, family process is played out in the congregation's life where religious and spiritual issues are present. This heightens the intensity of the clergy

position. The clergy position is key from the point of view of family systems thinking.

Studies of human functioning and leadership often focus on personality characteristics, techniques of management, and administrative skills.²⁵ While skills and personality characteristics may color the way clergy function in their position, what seems to be most crucial stems from another variable. The level of maturity, or what Bowen calls *self-differentiation*,²⁶ is more determinative of effectiveness than what shows up on a Myers Briggs or Minnesota Multiphasic test. Differentiation of self, the cornerstone of Bowen Theory, has to do with the way one defines self and regulates self. It relates to clarity of beliefs, appropriate boundaries, responsibility for self, having vision, resilience, and energy over time. The concept, described more thoroughly in the literature,²⁷ is a major indicator of maturity level.²⁸ Along with individual functioning, families and congregations also exhibit a level of maturity over time. This variable is usually left out of conventional approaches to understanding leadership. To the extent it is an accurate description of an underlying process, it becomes the overriding consideration when studying leadership from a systems or organic point of view.

For clergy, or any leader—parent or president—one's level of differentiation influences the level of anxiety and stress in a system or organization. Differentiation of self is not easily defined. The concept puts human functioning on a continuum which can describe human variability in functioning. It suggests that when immature persons are under high anxiety they are more vulnerable to having problems that produce symptoms.²⁹ Those more mature are less likely to have the most severe or chronic symptoms. The family process over generations provides the medium in which these various capacities are expressed.

A congregation therefore, is made up of a variety of families, some who do well, and others who struggle as they live out their lives. Pastors and priests have a leadership position in the congregation's or system's emotional network. If one person in a system can function at a higher level of differentiation and stay connected, this challenges others in the system to raise their level of functioning. When clergy, as leaders, work on their own maturity, they are promoting maturity in the system. According to Friedman, leadership becomes a healing modality.

The Doctor of Ministry: A Work-in-Progress

Jesus had trouble with his treasurer (John 13:21). To some extent, the problems of founding families become the problems of the institution. For example, problems around money and leadership might show up years after the original people are gone. Does this topic resonate in the church today? It did for me in a situation involving our church treasurer. That experience became a transition point in my pastoral thinking. How could I deal with a problem

involving the treasurer in a way that would promote change and healing? This became one of the pivotal issues in my doctoral process of integrating theory and practice.

In 1983, Western Theology Seminary became the site for working toward my goal of growth in ministry. I was intrigued with biblical theology, families, relationships, leadership, change, therapy, healing, and dealing with difficult people. Interest in these areas had been growing since my first contact with Friedman. One of several perceived advantages of Western's doctorate in ministry was the opportunity, under faculty and peer guidance, to tailor a program that would allow exploration and direction in a course of study. My first year I took on personal supervision with Blaine Rader, a Methodist pastor and psychologist. I also entered case conference work with Al DeVoogd, a family therapist supervisor. Initial learning units and electives were laid out along with residency and seminar meetings. Before long I made two observations. First, as I investigated counseling and pastoral care literature and learned the DSM IIIR³⁰ terminology, I found that "systems"³¹ meant different things depending on the kind of system field being pursued. Second, by taking the problem with the treasurer to my supervisor, I could step back, gain some objectivity through coaching, and then decide on how best to minister to the situation.

The interchange between literature, theory, and practice took on a comprehensive academic and clinical style, even as I was functioning as a full-time parish pastor. The compatibility of this arrangement hinged on timing, congregational support, family support, and balance of energy. It became necessary for me to extend the program beyond the normal three-year period, as my thinking was being reshaped and expanded. A major benefit of the program was discipline combined with flexibility. It allowed me to process further and deeper. Eventually my Doctor of Ministry program produced a cluster of improvements in my own function and status: a wider repertoire of responses under stress, clinical accreditation in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, becoming a Fellow in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, participation in part of Friedman's advanced Postgraduate Seminar on Family Process, faculty status at the Minnesota Institute of Family Dynamics, training as a consultant with Bridgebuilders under Peter Steinke, becoming a licensed therapist, undertaking postgraduate work at the Georgetown Family Center, *and* experiencing lower blood pressure at annual congregational meetings.

I had found a meaningful place where I could work on my ministry within the congregation. Preaching, teaching, administration, committee work, rites of passages, pastoral acts, and community service became integrated. I was less reactive to criticism, and more neutral (able to see various sides) in tense situations. I found ways to challenge others to take responsibility. The

loneliness of the leadership position became less distracting. Working on family process shifted my orientation in relation to individuals, families, and society.

The final phase of the degree program, the Doctor of Ministry Project, aims to pull together the learning units and one's experiences to that point. The members of my faculty committee, Professors Stan Rock and Donald Bruggink, met with me frequently to scrutinize each step. They also made two visits to the place where I lived and served. My project was entitled, "Self-Definition as a Leadership Strategy for Clergy," and its honing and completion under high standards provided a sense of accomplishment. Putting my own thought and situation into the academic and clinical process became the occasion for significant learning and practice.

On the Horizon

The benefits of a Doctor of Ministry degree are many. It offers some time for the study of a specific topic. It gave me a new way of thinking about my situation. The process is not linear; development and growth involve a "pool" of experiences, thinking, luck, random circumstances, opportunity, and various other potential categories.

I believe we need a "common terrain"³² in order to be in conversation with modern scientific and intellectual disciplines. One way to approach common ground is to investigate what living systems have in common, particularly the family as an emotional unit connected to the life process. From a natural systems perspective, I understand the family to be the experience we all have in common. This goes beyond culture, gender, race, and conventional dichotomies.³³ Families everywhere face the same emotional process which connects us across generations. Bowen and Friedman saw life as interconnected, grounded in creation with all other forms of life. In his search for a science of human behavior,³⁴ Bowen developed a way of thinking that has universal appeal, depth, and integrative power beyond conventional cause-and-effect thinking in the "post-modern" age. For clergy as leaders, this way of thinking promotes maturity and the management of anxiety. It focuses on strength rather than pathology. It takes into account a larger picture of relationships while providing for individual variations. This field theory³⁵ offers strategies based on one's "being" rather than one's learning technique.

I have recently begun to apply this thinking in continuing education seminars for clergy leaders. It has reminded me that a natural systems approach to clergy leadership and family issues is difficult to learn at a conference, from a book, or through brief study. Rather, it is "organic," a day-by-day process. Learning a new way of thinking relies on a more traditional mentoring or coaching³⁶ style. In this sense it cannot be packaged or cloned. It is a venture in maturity which leads to better functioning, clearer boundaries, less stress, taking personal responsibility, and more resiliency.

As interest in this way of thinking grows, leaders working on their own maturity or self-differentiation are becoming aware that leadership becomes a healing modality in family and social systems. Mature leadership has the capacity to (1) define a self, i.e., know where one ends and the other person begins, know what he or she believes; (2) maintain a vision; (3) remain connected to the rest of the body or organization; (4) maintain self-regulation in the face of sabotage (which always comes when a leader functions well); and (5) continue to function with energy and resiliency.³⁷ Leaders (and particularly clergy leaders in key positions within the web of relationship systems), will function on the side of long-range health and well-being if they are able to take responsibility for their own emotional well-being and destiny. In an age that seeks a quick fix, the challenge is not to get caught up in the surrounding anxiety of a family or system while remaining a part of it.

We live in anxious times. Friedman once said, "The spirit of adventure overrides anxiety."³⁸ Another Rabbi said, "Do not worry about your life, . . . [b]ut strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, . . ." I have focused on the integration of one person's odyssey in relation to the Doctor of Ministry program. I have been blessed by the presence of peers and mentors who prodded my spirit of adventure.

ENDNOTES

1. Some form of social or psychological understanding of human behavior can be assumed to be behind pastoral care and counseling approaches taught in seminaries. Generally these models focus on individual pathology or human potential. Group approaches typically operate on the assumption that a group is a collection of persons or personalities.
2. A phrase Friedman began to use in recent months describing civilization's stuckness with an "information base" on human functioning that is accurate but not likely relevant to getting civilization or families unstuck.
3. After considering general systems thinking based on mathematics and engineering, and then moving to natural systems arising out of evolution and biology, Bowen saw a bridge to a science for understanding human behavior. He stayed with natural systems connecting to the life sciences.
4. *The Presence of the Past: The Habits of Nature* (Rochester, VT: Park Street Press), 97ff.
5. Michael Kerr, *Family Evaluation* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 3ff.

6. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice* (New York: Jason Aronson, 1978), 147ff.
7. (New York: The Guilford Press, 1985), 1-8.
8. For recent applications to congregations see, Peter Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works* (Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute Press, 1993), and *Healthy Congregations* (Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute Press, 1996).
9. Between the mid-fifties and mid-seventies Bowen arrived at eight major concepts which constitute his theory. He was also beginning to work on a ninth concept dealing with spirituality. The eight concepts are: Differentiation of Self, Multigenerational Transmission Process, Nuclear Family Emotional Process, Projection Process, Emotional Triangles, Sibling Position, Emotional Cutoff, and Societal Regression.
10. See Kerr, 221ff.
11. *Ibid.*, 27ff.
12. *Ibid.*, 89ff.
13. A major stream of thinking in the social sciences analyzes human behavior in terms of disorders or pathologies. The therapy field which uses a diagnosis and treatment approach appears to reduce behavior and functioning to categories or labels. This tends to fix perceptions in the field and narrow the view of humans. There are others who like to maintain a more whole view of persons and families. That is, some theorists (and theologians) prefer to see a pathology focus as reductionistic (and even idolatrous). Furthermore, third party payment for therapy services hinges on ascribing a diagnosis to clients which in turn require approval by insurance companies.
14. "Family of origin" is a phrase used by Bowen in his clinical research. He found that his trainees made better and more effective advances when they began to rework issues in their own family. Bowen saw that working on one's own progress and maturity was essential for therapists using his approach. Other schools of therapists use the term today but generally leave out the underlying assumptions from natural systems theory.
15. Friedman uses self-definition as the outer dimension and self-regulation as the inner dimension for the concept of self-differentiation—yet neither can be separated in reality.

16. Listening to a person who is angry or sad with the intention of "getting their feelings out," for example, is often a method of trying to care. It may be more beneficial in the long run to consider other responses such as challenge, or maintaining one's own non-anxious presence, each requiring one to deal with one's own anxiety. This latter posture tends to call out strength in the other as opposed to getting the reacting person to just feel better.
17. Friedman recently has pointed to a connection between having a "self" and having an intact immune system. This has led to his observation that the pastor, minister, or clergy leader serves as a major part of a congregation's immune system. It is when the leader or head is unclear, absent, anxious, or a "peacemonger" that opportunistic infections get going in a system.
18. One's repertoire of responses is related to survival and well-being, according to Friedman. Increasing that repertoire is on the side of life and spiritual health.
19. See Kerr, 134ff.
20. Modifying a system or relationship by working on oneself is based on Bowen's concept of the emotional triangle and seeing the family as an emotional unit.
21. When clergy enter a parish setting, the system has already established a relationship system with some history. It often takes about a year to graft into the system. The emotional process governs the nature of the graft, and, to some degree, the longevity of clergy serving a church.
22. See Philip Hefer, *The Human Factor* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).
23. Judging by the "helping clergy and congregation" literature today, one can affirm many of the stories heard in clergy seminars about the challenge to balance their ministry with all the various expectations in the field.
24. This thesis has been used with other professions including educators, lawyers, judges, physicians, nurses, social workers, and business executives.
25. Friedman has repeated over the years that consultants basically offer solutions to problems based on managerial, administrative, or technical thinking. An understanding of the underlying emotional process is left out.
26. See Kerr, 89ff.

27. See Friedman, 27.
28. Walter Brueggeman, *In Man We Trust* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1974), 104ff.
29. See Kerr, 256ff.
30. *The Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, III, (the third series revised). The DSM IV has been published recently, adding about a hundred new disorders. Another large number were submitted but not included in the manual. This book gives numerical codes along clinical diagnostic axes which are ascribed to a patient or client in treatment.
31. A major division in the field is between general systems (mathematics and engineering) and natural systems (living sciences). In the therapy profession a variety of orientations have developed from these roots: the structuralists, strategics, experientialists, and Bowen Theory.
32. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Anthropology in Theological Perspective* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 15.
33. Friedman and others challenge the conventional paradigm in the therapy field. Natural sciences have shifted from the mechanistic world view in physics, for example, to a more organic view. The social sciences seem to remain in the former realm using established dichotomies based on culture, ethnicity, gender, race, class, etc. It is possible that a paradigm shift in the human sciences is on the horizon because of new theoretical orientations that seek a viable dialogue with the natural sciences. Friedman on occasion has suggested that a true paradigm shift re-formats conventional dichotomies such as nature/nurture, culture/anti-culture, black/white, male/female. It is not that these categories are false, but that the information or data that counts for bringing change may have to come from a new way of thinking.
34. Bowen's aim was to move toward a science of human behavior. Some are thrown by this and see it as moving toward a determinism which a full understanding of the theory may not do.
35. One definition of "field" is: "An immaterial sphere of influence where one part affects other parts at a distance." See, Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Toward a Theology of Nature: Essay on Science and Faith* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 37ff.

36. Bowen (as a psychiatrist) moved from couch to couch. The therapy style that came from his research moved the therapist away from the expert position into a coaching mode.
37. This represents a list of leadership characteristics often cited by Friedman.
38. A quote from Friedman's Maps Presentation in which he metaphorizes change as the freeing of the imaginative capacity. The maps indicate views of the territory around the discovery of the New World by Columbus. Columbus stayed on course and his discovery opened up a new understanding of our relationship to the planet and beyond.