



The Craft of Family Therapy: Challenging Certainties

By Salvador Minuchin, Michael D. Reiter, Charmaine Borda

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Family therapy trainees are inundated with a multitude of family therapy theories. They also have difficulty shifting from an individualistic view to one of seeing interactions and systems. How do therapists hone their own methods with all of these choices? And how do they learn how to best treat families with all of the focus being taken away from their clients and redirected instead on processes? Perhaps most importantly, how can they learn through an inductive process of exploring what has occurred during the therapeutic session?

Veteran therapist and founder of Structural Family Therapy, Salvador Minuchin, goes back to basics with his two co-authors Michael D. Reiter and Charmaine Borda in *The Craft of Family Therapy*. In this book they teach readers basic communication and family therapy skills using some of Dr. Minuchin's most interesting and illuminating cases. Not only do readers re-learn basic techniques, such as reframing and joining, but they are treated to an in-depth commentary on each case, with Dr. Minuchin emphasizing the techniques he uses that allow him to refocus attention from the Identified Patient to the family as a whole. The book ends with three supervision transcripts from Dr. Minuchin's students, whose commentary illuminates the struggles, fears, and insecurities that new family therapists face and how they can overcome them. Each of these chapters ends with a consultation interview that Dr. Minuchin conducted with each supervisee's case family.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This is the best book I've ever read about teaching and learning family therapy. There are other fine books that present theories and illustrate practice, but this wonderful guide is far more useful in directly addressing the process of learning the fine art of family therapy." - *Michael P. Nichols, Author of Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods*

"Family therapy today is most often taught deductively, with course textbooks surveying an array of practice models. In this valuable casebook, the preeminent family therapist Salvador Minuchin and his coauthors bring readers into the therapy room, demonstrating the effectiveness of the inductive learning approach at the heart of family therapy training since its beginning. Through session transcripts and commentary, they illuminate systemic patterns; show their own ways of working; and, learning from mistakes; explore the self of the therapist. Above all, they highlight ways to activate the family's own healing potential. A masterful contribution and indispensable resource for teachers and students of family therapy!" - *Froma Walsh, PhD, Co-Founder & Co-Director, Chicago Center for Family Health; Mose & Sylvia Firestone Professor Emerita, The University of Chicago*

"Dr. Salvador Minuchin and his groundbreaking clinical work with families are inseparable from the creation and advancement of our field and, with the publication of *The Craft of Family Therapy*, his sage guidance will be felt by family therapists for generations to come. He and his team question the traditional divides between 'student' and 'teacher' and between 'client' and 'therapist' in order to help readers weave their evolving sense of self together with a developing cache of clinical skills that enact positive change. By sharing the wisdom of a lifetime, *The Craft of Family Therapy* is a work 50 years in the making, but well worth the wait!" - *Ronald J. Chenail, PhD, Professor of Family Therapy, Nova Southeastern University, Florida*

"Minuchin et al. fulfill a need for training materials that include transcripts of therapy sessions that illustrate the concepts presented in the manual. If the volume shared only the transcripts of Minuchin's therapy sessions, family therapy trainees might be daunted by his consummate artistry and skills; however, showing transcripts of his students and their sessions, along with their personal reflections and his supervisory comments, gives this book an effective balance, encourages the aspiring family therapist, and presents an inside view of trainees developing their own personal style and skills as family therapists. It is a rich resource that is recommended for family therapists in training, for experienced family therapists, and for those who are interested in understanding the concepts of family therapy." - *Mary Ann Norfleet, Stanford University School of Medicine, PsycCRITIQUES*

About the Author

Salvador Minuchin, MD, is a family therapist, author, and teacher. He is the developer of Structural Family Therapy and is considered one of the founders of family therapy.

Michael D. Reiter, PhD, LMFT, is Professor of Family Therapy in the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Nova Southeastern University. He is the author of two previous books, *Therapeutic Interviewing* and *Case Conceptualization in Family Therapy*.

Charmaine Borda, PhD, LMFT, LMHC, is the Founder and Director of The Blue Couch, Inc., a private practice in Plantation, Florida.

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