

BOOKS

Stress and the Family Volume I: Coping With Normative Transitions, Hamilton I. McCubbin and Charles R. Figley. New York, Brunner/Mazel, 1983. 216 pp. \$22.50, hardcover.

Coping With Normative Transitions is the first of two volumes that employ sociology research to focus on family stress. McCubbin and Figley have expanded the pioneering work of Reuben Hill into a general model of stress and family coping. As the editors state in their introduction, "Normative stressors and crises refer to those changes or life cycle transitions that are expected and predictable, which most or even all families will experience over the life cycle, and which require adjustment and adaptation. Stress is part of that developmental process" (p. xx). They delineate two sources of stress: normal life cycle transitions and unpredictable, catastrophic events.

Volume I begins with a conceptual chapter by McCubbin and Patterson outlining their theoretical model for understanding stress and the family's functional and dysfunctional coping patterns. Subsequent chapters, by contributors, consider two categories of stress: (a) family transitions (the life cycle) and (b) environmental demands on the family, such as work, societal stress (in the black family), environmental stress (in the rural family), and economic stress.

The editors gave each contributing author a set of objectives and specific questions within which to frame their essays. These involved understanding the family system as a stress absorber and stress producer, highlighting the particular stress in each life cycle phase, identifying important areas of research in the family stress field, and developing effective interventions for helping families to cope. This format gives the book a coherent structure.

McCubbin's and Patterson's chapter is one of the best, a concise presentation of their Double ABCX Model for understanding stress and the family's ability to cope. They define family stress as "a state that arises from an actual or perceived imbalance between demand (e.g., challenge, threat) and capability (e.g., resources, coping) in the family functioning" (p. 10). The Double ABCX Model is based on Hill's model. As Hill (2) describes it, "A (the stressor/crisis-provoking event), interacting with B (the family's crisis-meeting resources), interacting with C (the definition the family makes of the event), produces X (the crisis).

This model has become the cornerstone of family stress literature. It focuses on the precrisis variables that influence a family's ability to cope with stress. These variables determine whether the outcome will be a crisis for a particular family. McCubbin *et al.* have expanded the model to the *Double ABCX Model*, a more dynamic concept. In the Double Model, each factor is further developed: Aa, Bb, Cc. Thus, Aa implies the *pileup* of demands? the sum of many stressors, normative and nonnormative, that occur together. A given stressor (say, loss of father's job) can happen during the normal life cycle transition of another family member (son's adolescence), at a time that the family is already coping with strain (grandfather's death) and with the consequences of the family's shift in roles (mother went to work), all interacting to unbalance family stability. The factor Bb, family adaptation, describes the new structure needed to adapt to the pileup of stress, such as modification of roles, rules, and patterns of interaction. Adaptation is consolidated not only by intrafamily shifts but with the help of the family's natural support systems.

I wholeheartedly agree with the application of the stress concept to the life cycle. As a family therapist, this framework has always helped me to understand clinical dilemmas. Carter and McGoldrick (1) have presented the emotional tasks faced by the family system at each phase of its life cycle. Adding the Double ABCX Model allows us to look more closely at the configuration of stressors and coping efforts that result in some families' inability to adapt or to move to the next stage.

This volume seems to be addressed to an audience with varying levels of experience, and the roster of contributors reflects this diversity. Although all the authors follow the editors' format, there is wide variation in emphasis. Some focus more on reviewing the literature, others take a sociological approach, and still others write clinically. This diversity results in strengths and weaknesses, and overall I think the book works best for the student and the general reader. Experienced therapists may find some chapters oversimplified and trailing well behind the conceptual model. Among the most informative sections are those on marriage, sexuality, divorce, and the black family. The chapter on adolescence provides a beautiful synthesis of the model with a family systems point of view. The chapter on stepparenting, also outstanding, augments the stress model with direct clinical implications and recommendations.

In summary, Volume I is an ambitious work with wide relevance. For the student, it offers a rich overview of the family stress field and the family life cycle. The experienced clinician is well rewarded by this conceptual model and some of its applications but may be left desiring a stronger clinical and systems focus.

REFERENCES

1. Carter, E. and McGoldrick, M. (Eds.), *The Family Life Cycle: A Framework for Family Therapy*, New York,

Long Struggle Well Functioning Working Class Black Families

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Long Struggle Well Functioning Working Class Black Families:

The Long Struggle Jerry M. Lewis, John G. Looney, 1983 *The Strengths of African American Families* Robert B. Hill, 1999-01-14 Returning to his innovative work of twenty five years ago Robert Hill once more offers an incisive analysis of five key cultural strengths of African American families With compassion and eloquence he argues that these existing strengths provide a solid foundation upon which to develop the kind of public policies and self help initiatives that will truly promote the interests not only of the African American community but of our diverse nation as a whole *Black Families in Therapy* Nancy Boyd-Franklin, 2013-11-18 This classic text helps professionals and students understand and address cultural and racial issues in therapy with African American clients Leading family therapist Nancy Boyd Franklin explores the problems and challenges facing African American communities at different socioeconomic levels expands major therapeutic concepts and models to be more relevant to the experiences of African American families and individuals and outlines an empowerment based multisystemic approach to helping clients mobilize cultural and personal resources for change A New Look at Black Families Charles Vert Willie, Richard Reddick, 2003 Revised edition of classic textbook on black families

A New Look at Black Families Charles V. Willie, Richard J. Reddick, 2010-02-16 Charles Willie and Richard Reddick's *A New Look at Black Families* has introduced thousands of students to the intricacies of the Black family in American society since its publication in 1976 Using a case study approach Willie and Reddick show the varieties of the Black family experience and how those experiences vary by socioeconomic status In addition to examining families of low income working and middle classes the authors also look to the family experiences of highly successful African Americans to try to identify the elements of the family environment leading to success The authors puncture the myth of the Black matriarchy prevalent in the popular imagination and they explore a variety of family configurations including a family with same gender parents The sixth edition has been reorganized and updated throughout The new Part III_Cases Against and for Black Men and Women_unites two chapters from previous editions into a cohesive discussion of stereotypes and misunderstandings from both scholars and the mass media Also a new chapter on the Obama family offers support for cross gender and cross racial mentoring and it demonstrates the value of extended family relations *A New Day for Family Ministry* Richard P. Olson, Joe H. Leonard Jr., 1996-02-01 This ebook is now available from Bloomsbury Academic Bloomsbury Academic publish acclaimed resources for undergraduate and postgraduate courses as well as the general reader across a broad range of subjects including Archaeology Art Visual Culture Biblical Studies Business Management Drama Performance Studies Economics Education Film Media History Linguistics Literary Studies Music Sound Studies Philosophy Politics International Relations Psychology Religious Studies Social Work Social Welfare Sociology Study Skills Theology and Wellbeing Health Lifestyle Visit bloomsbury.com for more information Reading the Family Dance John V. Knapp, Kenneth Womack, 2003 The development in recent years of the intersections between the family and literary study continues to emerge as one of the most productive

and illuminating arenas of contemporary critique In addition to addressing the family dynamic through which a given literary character develops a fully realized sense of self family systems therapy allows readers to examine the patterns by which characters function in their larger intimate systems whether those systems be social institutional or even global As the intellectual foundation for the forms of therapy practiced by the majority of contemporary American and European psychotherapists the study of family systems theory and its intersections with literary works affords readers with an illuminating glimpse into the terminology and processes involved in this dynamic form of critique Perhaps most significantly family systems therapy allows critics to consider the distinctly social interactions that characterise our pathways to interpersonal development and selfhood John V Knapp is Professor of English with a joint appointment in modern literature and in teacher education at Northern Illinois University Kenneth Womack is Assist **Climbing Jacob's Ladder** Andrew Billingsley,1992 To help the reader understand the African American family in its broad historical social and cultural context the author traces the rich history of the black family from its roots in Africa through slavery Reconstruction the Depression the Civil Rights Movement and up to the present The Birth Of The Family Jerry M. Lewis,2019-04-30 In the Birth of the Family Dr Lewis continues one of the most important research projects in clinical psychiatry It gives a picture of the interweaving of three relationships systems before during and after the birth of the first child the marital relationship of the parents and the parental relationship with the new child First published in 1990 Routledge is an imprint of Taylor Francis an informa company **Treatment of Child Abuse** Robert M. Reece,Rochelle F. Hanson,John Sargent,2014-06-15 An essential evidence based reference book for mental health professionals and medical personnel working with victims of child abuse Acclaimed as a milestone resource by the Journal of Child and Family Studies Treatment of Child Abuse has been updated and expanded with ten completely new chapters The second edition adds the expertise of co editors Rochelle F Hanson Ph D and John Sargent M D along with chapters from many new contributors The second edition is organized by various modes of therapy different settings for therapies and the individualized needs of victims correlating to types of abuse and neglect The contributors describe evidence based and evidence supported treatments for traumatized children and adolescents information on research and theory underlying the interventions and explanations of treatment protocols The contributors focus particular attention on special populations and cultural differences Entire sections focus on medical care and legal interventions necessary for abused youth New and expanded material includes information on Bullying Sanctuary Model of trauma informed care Long term medical management Appropriate use of psychopharmacology Importance of self care for professionals Treatment of Child Abuse is an important resource for mental health professionals family physicians pediatricians emergency department physicians physician assistants and nurses as well as child advocate professionals social workers and lawyers

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