

**FAMILY DYNAMICS: COPING  
WITH TRANSVERSE MYELITIS  
(TM)**

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**“CONVENTIONAL  
TREATMENTS OF SERIOUS  
ILLNESS MAY SAVE THE  
PATIENT, BUT CAUSE  
IRREPARABLE HARM TO THE  
FAMILY UNIT.”**

**John Rolland, MD**

**“THE PSYCHOSOCIAL  
STRAINS ON A FAMILY WITH  
A MEMBER SUFFERING A  
CHRONIC OR LIFE  
THREATENING CONDITION  
CAN RIVAL THE PHYSICAL  
STRAINS ON THE PATIENT.”**

**John Rolland, MD**

**PRESENTATION  
OBJECTIVES**

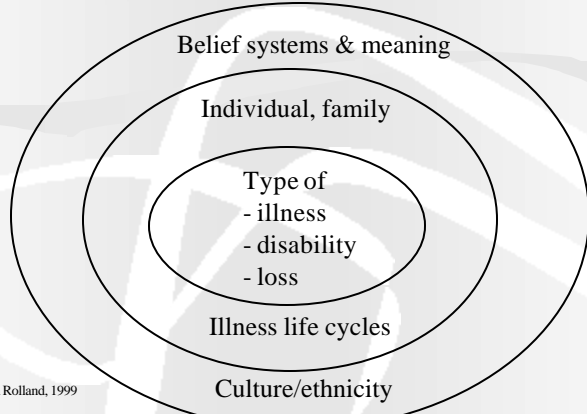
- Awareness
- Family information
- Family types
- Couple/individual characteristics
- Recommendations
- Conclusion

**APPROPRIATE FAMILY  
ASSESSMENT ASSISTS IN  
DEVELOPING STRONG  
TREATMENT PLANS**

- Information
- Stress/crisis
- Type
- Characteristics

**THE IMPACT OF THE  
DIAGNOSIS OF A CHRONIC  
OR LIFE THREATENING  
ILLNESS IMPACTS THE  
ENTIRE FAMILY SYSTEM  
LEAVING NO ONE  
UNTOUCHED.**

## FAMILY SYSTEMS ILLNESS MODEL



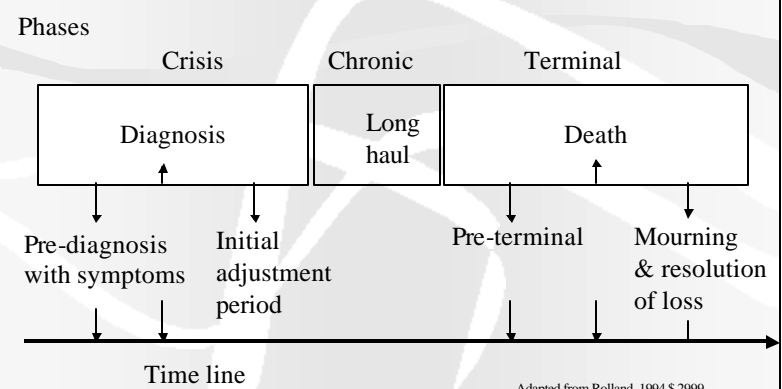
## FAMILY SYSTEMS ILLNESS

FAMILIES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A “HEALTH RELATED FAMILY SYSTEM” RATHER THAN JUST THE “ILL PERSON” OR THE FAMILY OF THE PATIENT (Rolland, 1994).

## FAMILY SYSTEMS ILLNESS

- Psychosocial type

## TIME PHASES OF ILLNESS



INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY NEEDS MUST BE MET IN ORDER FOR THE FAMILY TO DEVELOP HEALTHY PSYCHOSOCIAL ADAPTATION TO CRISES.

## FAMILY/COUPLE INFORMATION

- Family structure
- Age
- Marital status
- Medical history

## FAMILY/COUPLE INFORMATION

- Developmental stage
- Extended family
- Genogram
- Resources

## GENOGRAMS

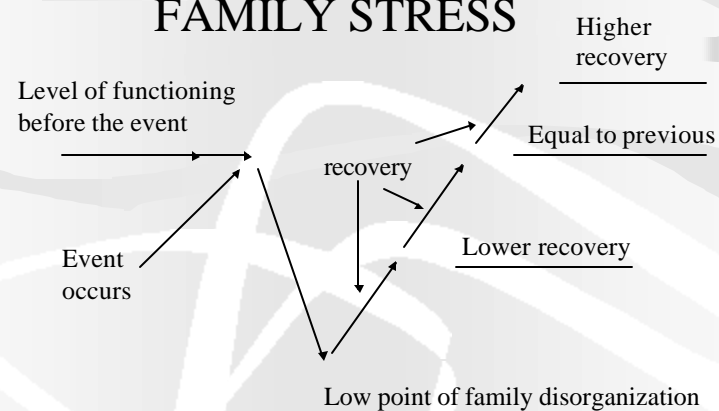
- Family structure
- Life cycle fit
- Pattern repetition
- Life event/functioning
- Relational patterns and triangles
- Family balance

Adapted from McGolrick, & Gerson, R., (1985)

## FAMILY STRESS IS THE UPSET OF THE STEADY STATE OF THE FAMILY

- Stressor event
- Source of the event
- Severity of the event

## FAMILY STRESS



Adapted from Boss 1988

## FAMILY TYPE

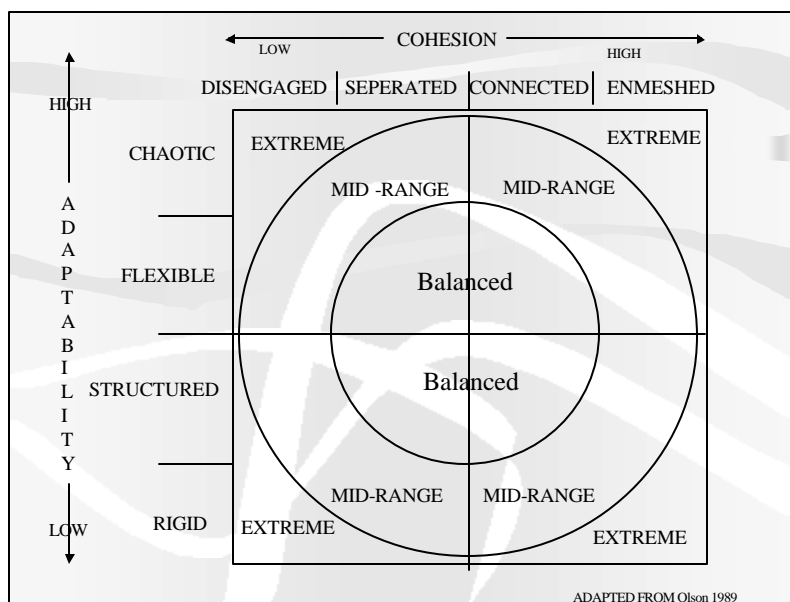
- Communication
  - Positive - Negative
- Adaptability
  - Rigid - Structured - Flexible - Chaotic
- Cohesion
  - Disengaged - Separated - Connected - Enmeshed

**FAMILY ADAPTABILITY (CHANGE) IS THE ABILITY TO CHANGE ITS POWER STRUCTURE, ROLE RELATIONSHIPS, AND RULES IN RESPONSE TO DEVELOPMENTAL AND SITUATIONAL STRESS.**

**FAMILY COHESION (TOGETHERNESS) IS THE EMOTIONAL BONDING THAT FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE TOWARD ONE ANOTHER.**

## **FAMILY TYPE EXTREME**

- Chaotically - Disengaged
- Chaotically - Enmeshed
- Rigidly - Disengaged
- Rigidly - Enmeshed



## **THE BALANCING ACT**

- Time together
- Involvement
- Decision making
- Energy allocation
- Loyalty

## **TIGHT ROPE**

- Leadership
- Roles
- Responsibilities
- Rules
- Children's feelings

## **CHARACTERISTICS**

- Personality characteristics
- Values
- Family background
- Marital conflict
- Relationship experiences
- Satisfaction and stability

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maintain/improve family integrity
- FACES II
- Family stress
- RELATE

## CONCLUSIONS

- Assessment tools
- Referral
- Treatment plan
- Family integration

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