



## LESSON THREE

### *Exploring Biological, Interpersonal, Systemic, and Cultural Contexts*

Summarized from Chapters Three and Seven through Ten

#### ***Integrative Multitheoretical Psychotherapy***

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris (2008) Boston: Houghton-Mifflin

[www.multitheoretical.com](http://www.multitheoretical.com)

#### **Working Contextually** (Brooks-Harris, 2008, p. 91-93)

Where do dysfunctional thoughts, ineffective actions, and maladaptive feelings come from? Problems in current functioning are often related to difficulties in adapting to contextual dimensions of life. Maladaptive patterns are often shaped by and learned within contextual environments. In order to effectively promote adaptive thoughts, actions, and feelings in psychotherapy, it is helpful to explore and work within the contextual environments that shape current functioning. These contexts include: (1) Biology, (2) Interpersonal Patterns, (3) Social Systems, and (4) Cultural Contexts (BISC). Counselors can explore how a contextual dimension is related to a client's presenting concern and to use corresponding key strategies to promote adaptation.

#### **Biopsychosocial Psychotherapy** (BH08, Chapter Seven, p. 232-276)

- Biopsychosocial Psychotherapy focuses on biology, connecting body and brain.
- Biopsychosocial approaches include health psychology, psychiatry, and body therapies.
- Biopsychosocial conceptualization involves looking at how biology interacts with both psychological functioning (thoughts, actions & feelings) and sociocultural contexts (interpersonal patterns, social systems & cultural contexts).
- Biopsychosocial strategies encourage adaptive health practices that result in biological health, holistic wellness, and mind-body awareness.

#### **MTP's Catalog of Key Strategies describes 13 Biopsychosocial Interventions**

- BIO-1 Exploring the Effect of Biology on Psychological Functioning
- BIO-2 Recognizing the Influence of Psychological Functioning on Health
- BIO-3 Considering the Interaction between Health and Relationships
- BIO-4 Understanding Health within a Sociocultural Context
- BIO-5 Encouraging Physical Wellness
- BIO-6 Reducing Substance Use
- BIO-7 Teaching Relaxation
- BIO-8 Fostering Physiological Awareness
- BIO-9 Working Interactively with Body and Brain
- BIO-10 Facilitating Acceptance of Illness
- BIO-11 Encouraging an Active Role in Health Care
- BIO-12 Considering Psychotropic Medication
- BIO-13 Considering Alternative Interventions

## **Psychodynamic-Interpersonal Psychotherapy** (BH08, Chapter Eight, p. 277-324)

- Psychodynamic-Interpersonal Psychotherapy focuses on interpersonal patterns and perceptions as well as unconscious processes.
- Psychodynamic conceptualization identifies interpersonal patterns that are often learned in earlier relationships and repeated in current interactions.
- Psychodynamic strategies support adaptive interpersonal perceptions that are accurate and not distorted by past relationships and painful experiences.
- Interpersonal psychotherapy strategies encourage adaptive interpersonal skills that support relationships, help resolve conflicts, and facilitate role transitions.

### **MTP's Catalog of Key Strategies describes 16 Psychodynamic-Interpersonal Interventions**

PSY-1	Listening to Narratives	PSY-10	Attending to Subjective Responses
PSY-2	Encouraging Free Association	PSY-11	Resolving Conflicts in the Therapeutic Relationship
PSY-3	Identifying Relationship Themes	PSY-12	Modifying Relational Interactions
PSY-4	Making Interpersonal Interpretations	PSY-13	Interpreting Dreams
PSY-5	Honoring Resistance	PSY-14	Adapting to Interpersonal Losses or Disputes
PSY-6	Exploring Childhood Experiences	PSY-15	Encouraging New Relationships
PSY-7	Working Through Past Conflicts	PSY-16	Learning from Termination
PSY-8	Identifying Attachment Styles		
PSY-9	Observing the Therapeutic Relationship		

## **Systemic-Constructivist Psychotherapy** (BH08, Chapter Nine, p. 325-369)

- Systemic-Constructivist Psychotherapy focuses on family systems, social groups, and personal narratives.
- Systemic-Constructivist conceptualization looks at the relationship between family structures, family roles, family belief systems, and personal narratives.
- Systemic strategies encourage adaptive social practices that allow individual growth and individuation without threatening the stability of the family system.
- Constructivist strategies encourage adaptive personal narratives that construct meaning in a way that matches a person's experience and supports positive action.

### **MTP's Catalog of Key Strategies describes 14 Systemic-Constructivist Interventions**

SYS-1	Understanding Problems within their Social Context	SYS-8	Giving Directives for Strategic Change
SYS-2	Viewing Families as Systems	SYS-9	Exploring the Social Construction of Meaning
SYS-3	Detecting Repetitive Interaction Patterns	SYS-10	Externalizing Problems
SYS-4	Describing the Structure of the Family	SYS-11	Encouraging Adaptive Narratives
SYS-5	Identifying Family Roles	SYS-12	Utilizing Clients' Resources
SYS-6	Searching for Multigenerational Patterns	SYS-13	Constructing Solutions
SYS-7	Clarifying Family Belief Systems	SYS-14	Orienting Toward the Future

## **Multicultural-Feminist Psychotherapy** (BH08, Chapter Ten, p. 370-412)

- Multicultural-Feminist Psychotherapy focuses on cultural contexts, identity development, gender, and power.
- Multicultural conceptualization looks at how different cultural contexts provide different messages that contribute to identity development or acculturation and result in a worldview that includes current cultural values.
- Multicultural strategies encourage adaptive cultural practices (external) and adaptive cultural values (internal).
- Adaptive cultural practices allow people to adjust to a variety of cultural contexts without violating internal values.
- Adaptive cultural values allow individuals to appreciate their own cultural group as well as respecting others.

### **MTP's Catalog of Key Strategies describes 14 Multicultural-Feminist Interventions**

MCUL-1 Viewing Clients Culturally	MCUL-8 Appreciating Multiple Identities
MCUL-2 Clarifying the Impact of Culture	MCUL-9 Highlighting Oppression & Privilege
MCUL-3 Creating Culturally-Appropriate Relationships	MCUL-10 Exploring Societal Expectations
MCUL-4 Celebrating Diversity	MCUL-11 Supporting Social Action
MCUL-5 Illuminating Similarities & Differences	MCUL-12 Integrating Spiritual Awareness
MCUL-6 Recognizing the Impact of Identity	MCUL-13 Becoming Aware of the Therapist's Worldview
MCUL-7 Facilitating Identity Development	MCUL-14 Reducing Cultural Biases

The MTP textbook, *Integrative Multitheoretical Psychotherapy* (Brooks-Harris, 2008) describes each of the key strategies listed earlier using the following tools:

- **Theoretical Context**—Where did this strategy originate?
- **Strategy Marker**—When would this skill be most useful?
- **Suggestions for Use**—How can this intervention be implemented?
- **Expected Consequence**—What is the likely outcome of using this strategy?
- **Case Example**—What does this skill look like in dialogue between a counselor and client?