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# The systemic perspective and psychotherapy: A literature survey

Monica T. Cavalieri

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## OPSOMMING

Hierdie verslag bevat 'n oorsig oor die onlangse literatuur wat handel oor die ontplooiing van die sisteembeweging en die praktiese gevolge van hierdie beweging, veral met betrekking tot die veld van die psigoterapie. Eerstens is daar 'n bespreking van die onlangse veranderinge in die wêreldsiening wat deur die behoeftes van ons tyd en die herorganisasie op 'n verskeidenheid van vakgebiede te weeg gebring is. Hierna volg 'n beskrywing van die algemene sisteemteorie, as die alomvattende raamwerk, wat in baie vakgebiede tot 'n verskuiwing na 'n steeds ontwikkelende paradigma aanleiding gegee het. Die verslag eindig met die implikasies van hierdie verskuiwing van paradigma vir die verwante vakgebiede van sielkunde en psigoterapie.

## SUMMARY

This report is a survey of recent literature pertaining to the emerging systems age and to the practical consequences of this movement with particular reference to the field of psychotherapy. It begins with a discussion of the recent changes in world view brought about by the needs of our time and the reorganization of material in a variety of fields of study. This is followed by a description of general systems theory as the all-encompassing framework which has given rise to a still-evolving paradigm shift in many disciplines. The report culminates in the implications of this paradigm shift for the related disciplines of psychology and psychotherapy.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: THE EMERGING SYSTEMS AGE

After a time of decay comes the turning point. The powerful light that has been banished returns. There is movement, but it is not brought about by force ... The movement is natural, arising spontaneously. For this reason the transformation of the old becomes easy. The old is discarded and the new is introduced. Both measures accord with the time; therefore no harm results.

I. Ching

Paradoxical as it may seem we find ourselves both in what some may perceive as a golden age of scientific, technological and industrial sophistication and in the throes of a multifaceted world-wide crisis at the same time. A closer look at this seemingly paradoxical situation, however, reveals a state of affairs that is actually not surprising at all. As pointed out by Capra (1982) scientific progress has, to a large extent, been an intellectual affair dominated by rational and analytical thought which, at the same time, has been both slighting of intuitive wisdom and negligent of ecological awareness. While technological growth has resulted in the development of highly complex nuclear weapons for security purposes, the greatest danger facing us today is the threat of nuclear war. Indeed, "the Defense Department has become the greatest threat to our national security" (Capra, 1982, p.26). Furthermore, it seems

ironic that as more and more funds are poured into this venture of protecting humanity, stockpiles of nuclear arms continue to grow while "the possibility of world famine in the immediate future" (Bateson, 1972, p.495) draws closer and closer. In the process of improving the living conditions of some people, we are impoverishing the existence of others (Auerswald, 1971). Another case in point (Capra, 1982) is the severe degradation of the natural environment by the forces of industrialization and technological progress which have come to be much prized in society today because of their perceived contribution to the raising of standards of living. Such perceptions must inevitably be short-term for together with the health hazards implicit in plastics, cosmetics, pesticides, and synthetic food additives to name but a few, are social sequelae even more disturbing to contemplate:

The industrialized countries are plagued by the chronic and degenerative diseases appropriately called 'diseases of civilization', the principal killers being heart disease, cancer, and strokes. On the psychological side, severe depression, schizophrenia, and other psychiatric disorders appear to spring from a parallel deterioration of our social environment. There are numerous signs of social disintegration, including a rise in violent crimes, accidents, and suicides; increased alcoholism and drug abuse; and growing numbers of children with learning disabilities and behavioural disorders (Capra, 1982, p.4).

These and other manifestations of our world-wide crisis that have seemingly co-evolved are closely interconnected and interdependent and may therefore be seen as symptoms of what is essentially the same crisis (Auerswald, 1971; Capra, 1982). Even the acute difficulties that have resulted in the multidimensional "state of emergency" that South Africans are experiencing at

present may be viewed as an integral part of this global crisis. Although it would seem that these circumstances have resulted from the South African-specific socio-political context which formally advocates the policy of racial segregation or "apartheid" - a situation unique to our society - the oppression and presence of "haves" and "have nots" that ensue from this policy are not peculiar or specific to South Africa (Dawes, 1985). Rather, an examination of the South African situation reveals a microcosm of the world-wide state of affairs that Capra (1982) maintains is characterized essentially by "a crisis of perception" (p.xviii) arising out of the continued application of the concepts of an outdated world view - the mechanistic-reductionistic world view of Cartesian-Newtonian science. In a similar vein, Bertalanffy (1950) commented that "dynamic interaction appears to be the central problem in all fields of reality" (p.165), and Bateson (1972) observed that the catastrophic dangers of our time "have grown out of the Occidental errors of epistemology" (p.495).

These problems of ours cannot be understood in the isolation engendered by a methodology of separated academic disciplines which is both fragmented and fragmenting. Our problems will undoubtedly remain unresolved as long as we adhere to the linear, causal models of traditional natural science. Schoderbek (1971) has suggested that the problems being experienced in the various existing disciplines may only be solved by the development of a different discipline, one that "looks at the entire problematic universe instead of segmented portions thereof" (p.1). What we

need, therefore, is a new vision of reality that will give rise to a new integrated interdisciplinary approach - holistically conceptualized from an ecological perspective (Auerswald, 1971; Capra, 1982; Rademeyer, 1978). Clark (1971) was of the opinion that "the real need of the day is to restructure knowledge. The information explosion, the growing degree of specialization among scientists, and the growing complexity and interdependence of specialties ... demand that knowledge generally be simplified, unified, and fortified with operational content" (p.23). This opinion is echoed by that of Ackoff (1980) who has suggested that the traditional doctrines be "supplemented (not replaced) by the doctrines of expansionism and teleology and a new synthetic or systems mode of thought" (p.26).

The movement towards an interdisciplinary approach has arisen both in response to the needs of our era and as a result of the reorganization of material from a variety of fields of study - including the profound changes in our world view brought about by the new concepts in physics which have been outlined by Zukav (1979). This movement has been characterized by the emergence of a range of specialized frameworks or new interdisciplines that utilize the holistic, gestalt or systems approach (Boulding, 1971; Rademeyer, 1978; Schoderbek, 1971). Although general systems theory, communication theory, information theory, cybernetics, and operational research are amongst those that feature most prominently (Auerswald, 1971; Schoderbek, 1971), general systems theory appears to be the all-encompassing framework (Rademeyer, 1978). While the others may be referred to

as particularized systems theories, general systems theory appears to succeed in deriving "generalizations valid for all systems theory" (Schoderbek, 1971, p.2). This being the case, general systems theory may be considered a "meta" theory - a systems theory which generalizes about all systems theories. Furthermore, perceived as an all-encompassing explanation of reality, general systems theory may be viewed as a suprasystem - a systems theory forming a system larger than the sum of systems theories from which its generalizations are drawn.

## CHAPTER 2

## SYSTEMS AND GENERAL SYSTEMS THEORY

A system may be defined as a set of two or more interacting entities (Ackoff, 1980; Capra, 1982; Miller, 1978), which "is not an ultimate indivisible element but a whole that can be divided into parts" (Ackoff, 1980, p.26). Although when viewed from a structural perspective a system is a whole that can be reduced to its component parts, when it is viewed functionally it is an integrated whole that cannot be dissected into smaller units without destroying its essential properties (Ackoff, 1980; Capra, 1982). These properties of a system are encapsulated in Ackoff's (1980) concept of expansionism as

a doctrine that maintains that all objects and events, and experiences of them, are parts of larger wholes. It does not deny that they have parts but it focuses on the wholes of which they are part. It is another way of viewing things, a way that is different from, but compatible with, reductionism (p.26).

As far as we know there is only one system, namely the universe or cosmos. It may be viewed as a macrocosm of reality that "can be conceptualized as a series of organized systems" (Steinglass, 1978, p.306). While general systems theorists together with those who advocate general systems theory are in agreement that the universe may be described "in terms of the interrelatedness and interdependence of all phenomena" (Capra, 1982, p.26) their writings (Ackoff, 1980; Bateson, 1972; Boulding, 1971; Buckley, 1980; Capra, 1982; Chin, 1971; Emery, 1969; Keeney, 1983; Miller, 1978; Polkinghorne, 1983; Rademeyer, 1978; Rubin, 1971; Schoderbek, 1971; Steinglass, 1978) reflect varying descriptions

and organizations of these phenomena and highlight a range of assorted systems as a result of their own interpretations and experiences of the macrocosm of reality. These varying conceptualizations, inherently representing constituent elements of general systems theory, are not true conceptualizations but subjective arbitrary "punctuations" all of which provide an explanation that in some way approximates what the nature of the universal system or part thereof seems to be. General systems theory may thus be considered the label assigned to an explanation of reality and not to a reflection of reality. It does not furnish a comprehensively circumscribed true description of reality but rather an abstraction that fits. As described by Caillé, Abrahamsen, Girolami, and Sorbye (1977) "it concerns itself with the network of simultaneous events and circular interactions that compose an ecological reality" (p.455).

Indeed, Boulding (1971) referred to general systems theory as the "skeleton of science" (p.27). He described it as a structural framework of systems that provides an outline of reality into which specific disciplines can be integrated and suggested two possible complementary approaches to its organization. His first approach is based on Rubin's (1971) notion that there are many concepts or phenomena which fit a wide range of disciplines, and is concerned with the discernment of apparent interdisciplinary singularities and then with the development of theoretical frameworks that may be applicable to these phenomena. As illustrations of this approach Boulding (1971) mentions population theory, growth theory, interaction theory as well as



the theory of information and communication. His second approach involves the classification of nine levels of theoretical systems into a hierarchy of increasing complexity. In short, these may be outlined as the levels of frameworks, clockworks, thermostat, cell, plant, animal, man, social organization and transcendence.

Most other theorists (Ackoff, 1980; Buckley, 1980; Capra, 1982; Chin, 1971; Emery, 1969; Miller, 1978; Schoderbek, 1971; Steinglass, 1978) seem to approach the twin tasks of describing general systems theory and the organization of systems within the universal system by advocating various ideas or concepts, many of which may either be considered the major tenets or hallmarks of general systems theory or viewed as the generalized properties or axioms of systems. This wide range of attributes considered to be interrelated and interdependent characteristics of general systems theory and the systems it describes may be found in the related literature. Some of the more important or definitive of these which, however, do not "constitute separate and distinct qualities" (Schoderbek, 1971, p.5) or concepts, follow. Concise definitions of each may be found in the references given alongside each attribute or concept:

1. Interrelatedness and interdependence (Capra, 1982).
2. Organization (Capra, 1982; Steinglass, 1978).
3. (W)holism (Ackoff, 1980; Bertalanffy, 1950; Capra, 1982; Polkinghorne, 1983; Schoderbek, 1971; Steinglass, 1978).
4. Boundaries (Chin, 1971; Rademeyer, 1978; Steinglass, 1978).
5. Inputs and outputs (Schoderbek, 1971).

6. Openess and closedness (Bertalanffy, 1950; Buckley, 1980; Chin, 1971; Koehler, 1969; Miller, 1978; Rademeyer, 1978).
7. Morphostasis and morphogenesis (Buckley, 1980; Rademeyer, 1978).
8. Transformation (Schoderbek, 1971).
9. Hierarchy (Ackoff, 1980; Boulding, 1971; Rademeyer, 1978; Schoderbek, 1971; Steinglass, 1978).
10. Regulation, feedback, or the concept of control (Buckley, 1980; Chin, 1971; Miller, 1978; Rademeyer, 1978; Schoderbek, 1971; Steinglass, 1978).
11. Equilibrium, steady state, and homeostasis (Miller, 1978; Rademeyer, 1978; Steinglass, 1978).
12. Entropy (Rademeyer, 1978; Schoderbek, 1971; Steinglass, 1978)
13. Tension, stress, strain, and conflict (Chin, 1971; Miller, 1978; Rademeyer, 1978).
14. Equifinality (Bertalanffy, 1950; Bor, 1984; Schoderbek, 1971;)
15. Goal seeking (Schoderbek, 1971).
16. Differentiation (Schoderbek, 1971).
17. Time and space dimensions (Miller, 1978; Rademeyer, 1978; Steinglass, 1978).

Schoderbek (1971) pointed out that general systems theory "has as yet no definite body of doctrine (if it ever will)" (p.5). Therefore, irrespective of which approach one uses to describe it, "one should be prepared to find little law or order in the characteristics of the systems theory that aims to search out

order in order and to formulate a law of laws" (Schoderbek, 1971, p.5). Ultimately, any approach used to define general systems theory or the systems it describes may be considered a punctuation inescapably linked to one's own view of the macrocosm of reality, which in turn could be termed one's philosophy of life. Indeed, Rubin (1971) has suggested that "a large part of the attraction of general systems is its relation to a philosophy of life as well as to a philosophy of science. Perhaps it is a way of relating philosophy of science to a philosophy of life" (p.576).

## CHAPTER 3

## THE SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

Theory has various meanings .... in a broad but particular way, theory refers to whatever general concepts and principles a person holds in connection with some area of knowledge and action - in essence, a view or mental model of some matter .... that is, we do not think and act in direct relation to reality, but in relation to some theory, view, or model ... of reality. Accordingly, any theory held ... has important practical consequences (Weakland, 1976, p.112).

The practical consequences inherent in the emergence of general systems theory have become manifest in giving rise to a paradigm shift which is still evolving in a wide range of disciplines. In the related disciplines of psychology and psychotherapy, such a shift embodies the appearance of the new systems approach to psychology and psychotherapy, which is characterized by an increasing awareness that there is a need for a kind of psychotherapy in which it is recognized that a person's psychological position cannot be isolated from his/her emotional, social and cultural context (Capra, 1982). It also embodies the emergence of systemic epistemology as a more philosophical account of general systems theory integrated with clinical practice and research (Keeney, 1982b), or as an epistemological metaphor "that is concerned with how we know, think and decide" (De Shazer, 1982b, p.71). In accordance with their own abstractions of reality and the seminal ideas or "basic, perception-determining beliefs" (Engel, 1972, p.vii) inherent in Gregory Bateson's cybernetic epistemological premises (Bateson 1971, 1979; Dell, 1985), various theorists-therapists-thinkers

have used differing terminology, for example, ecological epistemology (Auerswald, 1971), circular epistemology (Hoffman, 1981), clinical epistemology (Dell, 1982b), and ecosystemic epistemology (Keeney, 1979, 1982a; Keeney & Sprenkle, 1982), in order to describe what are essentially their own particularized punctuations of the "new" or systemic epistemology that have co-evolved with what may be referred to as their particularized systemic approaches to therapy.

Historically, the emergence of a systemic approach to therapy originated in the work of Bateson, Jackson, Haley, and Weakland (1956), which characterized human problems not as intrapsychic conflicts or inappropriately learned stimulus-response behaviours but rather, as arising out of confused communication patterns. Since then, a number of theorists-therapists-thinkers have developed a wide range of therapeutic punctuations of the emerging systemic approach. Perhaps the most prominent of these particularized approaches to therapy that have arisen are those of:

1. Milton H. Erickson in private practice, Phoenix, Arizona (Haley, 1967, 1973; Zeig, 1982).
2. The communications theorists-therapists-thinkers associated over time with what has come to be known as the Mental Research Institute Brief Therapy Centre in Palo Alto, California (Bodin, 1981; Fisch, Weakland, & Segal, 1982; Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967; Watzlawick & Weakland, 1977; Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974, 1980; Weakland, 1976, 1977; Weakland, Fisch, Watzlawick, & Bodin, 1974).

3. Mara Selvini Palazzoli and her colleagues at the Milan Centre for Family Studies (Parry, 1984; Selvini Palazzoli, 1980, 1985; Selvini Palazzoli, Boscolo, Cecchin, & Prata, 1974, 1977, 1978a, 1978b, 1980, 1982; Tomm 1984a, 1984b).
4. Maurizio Andolfi and his colleagues at the Rome Family Institute (Andolfi, Angelo, Menghi, & Nicoló-Corigliano, 1983; Andolfi, Menghi, Nicoló, & Saccu, 1980).
5. Steve de Shazer and his colleagues at the Brief Family Therapy Centre in Wisconsin (De Shazer, 1982a, 1982b, 1983).
6. Jay Haley, Salvador Minuchin and their colleagues at the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic (Haley, 1962, 1963, 1976, 1978, 1980; Minuchin, 1974; Minuchin & Fishman, 1981; Minuchin, Rosman, & Baker, 1978).
7. The associates at the Ackerman Institute for Family Therapy (Hoffman, 1971, 1976, 1981; Keeney, 1979, 1982a, 1982b, 1983; Keeney & Cromwell, 1977; Keeney & Ross, 1983; Keeney & Sprenkle, 1982; Papp, 1976a, 1976b, 1980, 1982).

Each of these approaches differs from the others in some respects "due to a combination of the personal characteristics of the people involved, the characteristics of the majority of their patient populations, and the context limitations of each" (Guerin, 1976, p.21) and they may therefore be viewed as particularized therapeutic approaches of the emerging systemic way of thinking. Even though Aponte and VanDeusen (1981), Foster and Gurman (1983), Guerin (1976), Olson, Russell and Sprenkle (1980), Rosenberg (1983), Stanton (1981a, 1981b), and White

(1979), amongst many others, have differentiated and grouped these particularized therapeutic approaches as either strategic, structural or strategic/structural approaches to psychotherapy, they necessarily share the premises of a systems-based ideology in representing differing punctuations of psychotherapy and the systemic perspective.

Adopting a therapeutic approach that is in line with a systems-based ideology may be viewed as signifying a number of things. Like any other theory or world view, a systems-based ideology provides "a means of choosing, mapping, and excluding certain sets of information for pragmatic purposes" (Liddle, 1982, p.245). Accordingly, as Liddle (1982) goes on to conclude,

therapist attraction to any given model is not accidental or purely a matter of objective choice. A basic issue in therapist 'selection' of a theoretical orientation is the degree of fit or congruence of the model's elemental assumptions about people and therapy with the therapist's own beliefs in this regard (p.248).

Therefore, therapists who have chosen to work within a systemic therapeutic approach make a general statement about their basic assumptions regarding people and their contexts, and their definition of therapy which, according to Bowen (1976), Coopersmith (1983), Strupp (1978), Weakland (1976), and Weakland, et al. (1974) amongst others, is inevitably linked to their theory of pathology or, punctuated differently, to their theory of health and normality.

The appearance of the new systems approach to psychology and psychotherapy is characterized by a rejection of linear, causal models which form the basis of conceptualizations such as intrapsychic and stimulus-response processes (Borgen, 1984), as well as of the so-called "medical model" which has traditionally viewed bad or mad behaviour as some kind of "mental illness". What is proposed instead is that such different or deviant behaviour be viewed as "a multidimensional phenomenon involving interdependent physical, psychological, and social aspects" (Capra, 1982, p.417). Indeed, "psychiatric symptoms, previously thought of as maladaptive behaviours or illnesses ... [are] now beginning to be described as functional for at least one of the contexts in which they occur" (Hoffman, 1976, p.503). This conception is in line with the systemic view of health and illness in which the traditional health/illness dichotomy is rejected and health is seen instead as "an ongoing process ... which naturally include[s] temporary phases of ill-health" (Capra, 1982, p.353). Furthermore, such periods of ill-health, otherwise characterized as "stuckness" in rigid or pathological patterns of interaction (Barnhill & Longo, 1978), are viewed as only one way in which the individual can punctuate his or her response to changes in the environment which demand that s/he adapt, and that the more flexible a person is, the more options s/he has at his or her disposal for adapting to changes in the environment. Indeed, Capra (1982) equated "loss of flexibility ... [with] loss of health" (p.354) and suggested that a holistic approach in which "both physical and psychological therapies" (p.396) are integrated may be the most effective intervention in



helping an individual extend the repertoire of his or her adaptive responses. As pointed out by Barnhill and Longo (1978), Bowen (1976), and Caillé et al. (1977), interventions from without create a disturbance in rigid patterns of responses or interactions which facilitates the emergence of more flexibility and therefore new or different ways of adapting to changes encountered throughout the different phases of the life cycle of an individual (Carter & McGoldrick, 1980).

This emerging view of mental and physical distress in an individual (excepting, of course, the distress of those syndromes that are clearly organic or genetic) as essentially a situational phenomenon, occurring as one aspect of a social system, is inescapably linked with the fact that many of the systemic approaches to therapy that have appeared share the context of either family or group as opposed to individual therapy (Beal, 1976). While most people belong to a wide range of different social systems, the family system is the one social system that more often than not is the common denominator system for most individuals. In highlighting this notion, Caillé et al. (1977) seem to have captured the essence:

A human system consists of two or more individuals who have an ongoing, often goal-directed, relationship with each other. The most important human system today is undoubtedly the family. The welfare of the individual is usually related to membership in a vital, well-adjusted family. A dysfunctional family easily becomes dependent on mental or behavioral deviations in one of its members as a means of preventing disintegration (p.455).

There has, thus, been a proliferation of family psychology and family therapy (Guerin, 1976, Olson et al., 1980; Walrond-Skinner, 1984). With regard to the field of family systems theory or general systems theory in combination with that of family psychology, Baker (1976) suggested that the prevailing theoretical and practical considerations have been "how the family functions and maintains its integrity as a system, and how this system impedes or facilitates individuation of its members" (p.1). In describing this arena he has selected the following concepts as the most prominent in the related literature on family systems and has delineated them in a way that is comparable to that in which some have outlined and described the properties or characteristics of general systems. The endorsement of some of these in the literature is indicated by the references which have been included in parentheses:

1. Differentiation (Bowen, 1976; Hoffman, 1981; Kerr, 1981).
2. Homeostasis (Andolfi et al., 1980; Dell, 1982a; Greenberg, 1977; Hoffman, 1976).
3. Rules (Greenberg, 1977; Jackson, 1965).
4. Double bind (Bateson, 1978; Bateson et al., 1956; Watzlawick et al., 1974).
5. Qualification (Watzlawick et al., 1967).
6. Enmeshment (Hoffman, 1981; Minuchin, 1974).
7. Sets (Bowen, 1976; Minuchin, 1974).
8. Triangles (Bowen, 1976; Hoffman, 1981; Kerr, 1981; Minuchin, 1974).

That families are referred to as social systems in this context is not because they are such systems, but rather because it is helpful for a therapist to have such a conceptual framework. An arbitrary distinction is made in calling a family a system, and likewise for any boundaries made around any group of people (Campbell, 1985). Also of importance in this regard is the misconception that a systemic approach to therapy is equivalent to the practice of family therapy. Perhaps linked to this misconception at some level is the fact that it has recently become more and more apparent that the offering of family therapy "is both seen, and too often practiced [sic] as simply another treatment modality, rather than an epistemological shift" (Coopersmith, 1983, p.217). Indeed, in common with Beal (1976) and Szapocznik, Kurtines, Foote, Perez-Vidal, and Hervis (1983), Segal and Moley (1983) suggested that the essence of

working with a systemic model is not determined by who attends the treatment interview; it has to do with the therapist's conceptual model and how he or she proceeds, based upon that model. If a therapist is thinking interaction, family treatment can be done while working with only one member of a family. Conversely, one can interview an entire family in conjoint sessions but in actuality be doing individual treatment (p.365).

Likewise, a therapist's beliefs and theories may have a strong influence on the length of treatment offered (Weakland et al., 1974). According to Papp's (1976a) punctuation, "the rate of change is related to the therapist's expectations. The therapist's belief that immediate change is possible and desirable influences the rate of change" (p.350). In this regard, Searight and Openlander (1984) have pointed out that

therapists who have adopted a systemic approach to therapy frequently see "substantial changes in their clients in relatively short periods of time, often in less than ten sessions" (p.388). Therefore, many systemic approaches to therapy have come to be described and referred to as brief therapy. In this regard, however, it is important to note that while shorter-term therapy has recently come into vogue as the most economically viable and time effective approach, brevity is not in itself a goal in the practice of systemic short-term therapy. While many of the short-term therapies currently being offered "are essentially scaled-down versions of traditional long-term intervention models (i.e., 'less of something')" (Searight & Openlander, 1984, p.387), systemic short-term therapy is not an abbreviated version of any therapy. It is brief by virtue of its premises regarding the "conceptualization and treatment of human problems" (Coopersmith, 1983, p.216).

In most of the centres where a systemic approach to psychotherapy has been developed by various theorists-therapists-thinkers, a well defined programmed service, which inherently divides the therapeutic process into various stages, has been established. In this regard, Weakland et al. (1974) and Selvini Palazzoli et al. (1978b) have outlined the operation of their respective therapy centres in a clear and pragmatic fashion. Indeed, it is these two particularized approaches that have had the greatest influence in the movement towards the development of a systemic short-term counselling programme in the context of the National Institute for Personnel Research (Cavalieri, 1986).

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