Second Marriage

Children from second marriage

Second Marriage of both spouses (with children from first marriages)

Divorce (One spouse re-marrying)

Non-marital Relationship (reference on relationship line)

Children from non-marital relationship
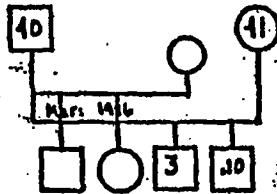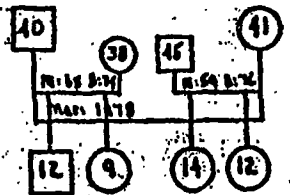
Death: Indicated by "X" followed with date of death and cause of death. Age given at time of death

Emotionally Close Relationship

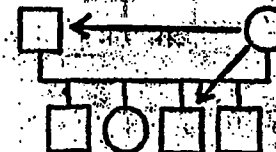Conflictual Relationship

Dominate – Submissive Relationship

Significant Triangle
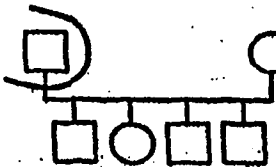
Emotional Cutoff
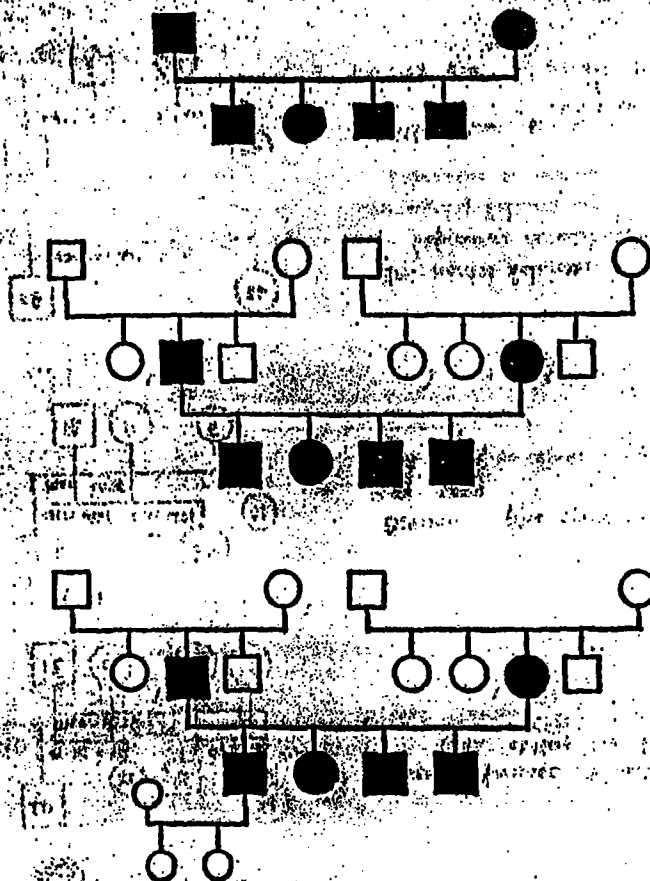
Nuclear Family

Extended Family

Four Generations

Reproduced from:

FAMILY THERAPY WITH THE HISPANIC FAMILY:

THE USE OF FAMILY HISTORY

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California Family Study Foundation

Faculty & Clinical Supervisor
California Family Study Center

Marriage and Family Therapist
El Centro Community Mental Health Ce

Symbol	Meaning
☐	Male (Name over square)
○	Female (Name over circle)
☐40 ○38	Age (Current)
☐40 — ○38 Marr. Oct. 15, 1965	Marriage (Marital information marital line)
☐40 — ○38 Marr. 1965 ○12 ○9 ☐5	Children (Begin with oldest from left to right)
☐ — ○ (twins)	Twins
☐ — ○ (adopted)	Adopted Child
☐ — ○ △7	Pregnancy (Length of pregnancy indicated in triangle)
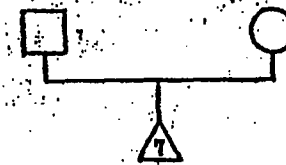
GENOGRAM EXAMPLE (FOR USE IN SOCIAL ASSESSMENTS)

Part 1

The Basic Genogram

Extended Family
        Age

Children . . .

Nuclear Family

Children . . .

Third Generation

☐ - - - Male

○ Female

——— Marriage Relationship

| Parent
Child
Relationship

- - - - - Relationship

Adopted Child

Pregnancy

Miscarriage or Abortion

Death

Divorce

Separation

Twins (this case boys)

Intensity of Relationships: Overclose

Conflictual

D Distant

Facts to be Recorded on Genogram

1. First names, nick-names, and family titles (prince, family diplomat, . . .) for each person.

2. Ages and dates of births, deaths, severe illnesses, marriages, separations, divorces, rites of passage (e.g. opening new residence, promotions, graduation . . .)

3. Physical locations.

4. Frequency of contact between various members of the extended family.

5. Type or types of contact (e.g. mail, telephone, audio cassette, visits . . .)

6. Primary representational system of each person. (See No. 6 on p. 6)

7. Closest relationship on each generational level.

8. Most distant relationship on each generaitonal level.

9. Place siblings in order with the oldest on the left.

10. Characteristics of the relationships you form with each person on the genogram (e.g. I never met them, person to person, we hear about each other from . . .)

11. Emotional cut-offs; what was the event? When did it happen?

General Situational Influences

12. Ethnicity and ethnic presentation of each nuclear family household.
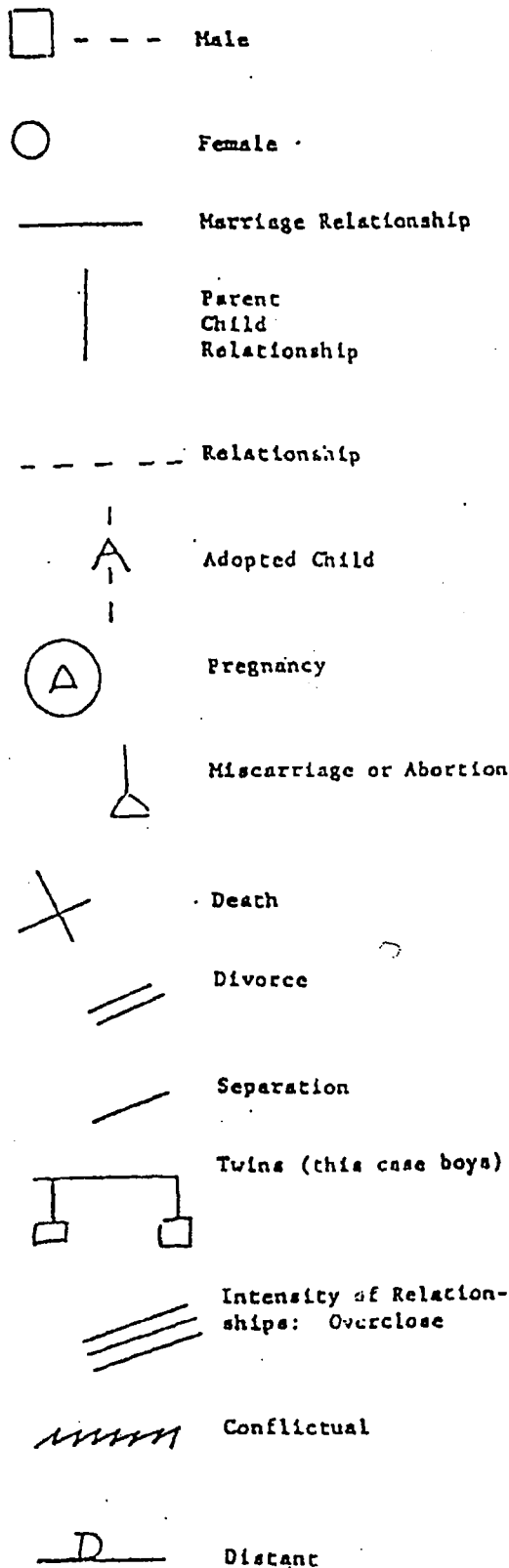
PREPARING A FAMILY HISTORY

Write in paragraph style about your family, including the family you came
from and the one you are in now. Use the following guidelines to help you
think about your family story, but write the story in the best way you see
fit.

1. Construct a family genogram (see attached instruction sheet). Try to
   put down exact dates for births, deaths, marriages, divorces, birth
   of children, etc. Put your genogram on a large, separate sheet of
   paper.

2. Who are (were) your parents, where did they come from, what work did
   they do, where are they now, etc. Who are (were) your siblings? Where
   are they now? What are they doing?

3. Describe what kind of family experience you had in growing up: perhaps
   the kind of closeness or distance family members had, typical ways of
   reacting to events, what you remember as being of special significance.
   In what ways has the family changed since you left it?

4. If you are (were) married, identify your spouse and your children (if
   any). What has married life been like, and what has changed about your
   marriage over the years? What has been your experience in being a
   parent and in watching your children grow?

5. If you are not married, what kind of family are you now part of? How
   does this current family experience work for you?

Do not slavishly follow this outline but use it to stimulate your reflection
on your family experiences. Write what you can, at whatever length and in
whatever detail you feel appropriate.

Please bring your family history to class the first day and have a copy
ready to turn in. Also, be prepared to share portions of what you have
written with other class members; this will be at your own discretion.

Richard A. Bollinger, D.Min.

DRAWING A GENOGRAM

Your Grandparents

Your Aunts, Uncles

Desie
11/1/2(
Martha

Your Parents' Generation

Robert 4/19/19
|65| Factory Worker
5/39 - 1/25/84

Anna
b.11/19/18 ⊗ Housewife
d.1/25/84

George
College |69| 4/25/15
Professor
6/41-3/69;
(Div(

b.3/7/53
Henry Bill
|35| |33|

Your Siblings

2/6/40   7/18/42
(44)   (42)

Your Children

Mechanic |Bob 7/16/44
Asthma |40| Grand Rapids, IA
H.S.

School
Teacher Susan
3/4/45
Rochester, NY (39)
M.A.

b.10/3/!

Yourself and your spouse

Ruth
⊗ d.1/15/76
6/7/64 - 1/15/76   8/8/76

Your Children

Mary
(7) 6/5/77
Topeka

Bill
|5| 12/31/80
Topeka

Information it is useful to have:

1. Birthdates
2. Places of Birth
3. Serious illnesses, physical and emotional
4. Marriage, separations, divorces - dates
5. Occupations
6. Schooling

Males ☐ on the left
Females ◯ on the right
Oldest to youngest siblings, from
   left to right .
Death ✕
Divorce —//—
Separation —/—

CONSTRUCTING YOUR GENOGRAM

1. Genogram: a diagramatic representation of one's family
network to be used as a tool for studying the dynamics of one's
nuclear and extended families.

2. Symbols for constructing your genogram:

   ○ = female   □ = male   △ = person's sex unknown

   __ = marital tie | = parent-child   △ = miscarriage
                           tie
                                              △ = abortion
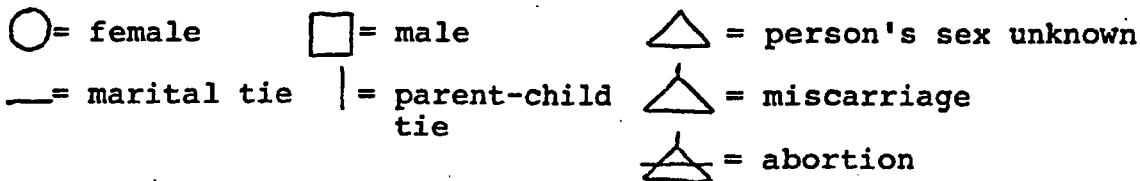
   An X over a circle or square means that person is deceased;
e.g. ⊗ deceased female relative (died at age sixty).

   A slash (/) over a horizontal line (marital tie) means
separation; a double slash (//) means divorce.

   Children should be placed according to birth order, going from
left to right (oldest to youngest).

   A dotted vertical line ┊ is used to symbolize any nonbiological
parent-child tie (e.g., adoption).

   Insert ages in circles and squares and year of marriage on
horizontal lines.

   The number inside a deceased person's symbol (e.g. 1968 [60]
or 1953 (93) should represent age at the time of death.
Outside the square or circle indicate the year of death.

3. Sample Genogram (assuming the year 1976 as present). I
recommend constructing at least a three-generation genogram,
with you as a member of the third generation. Each person is
encouraged to construct a genogram.
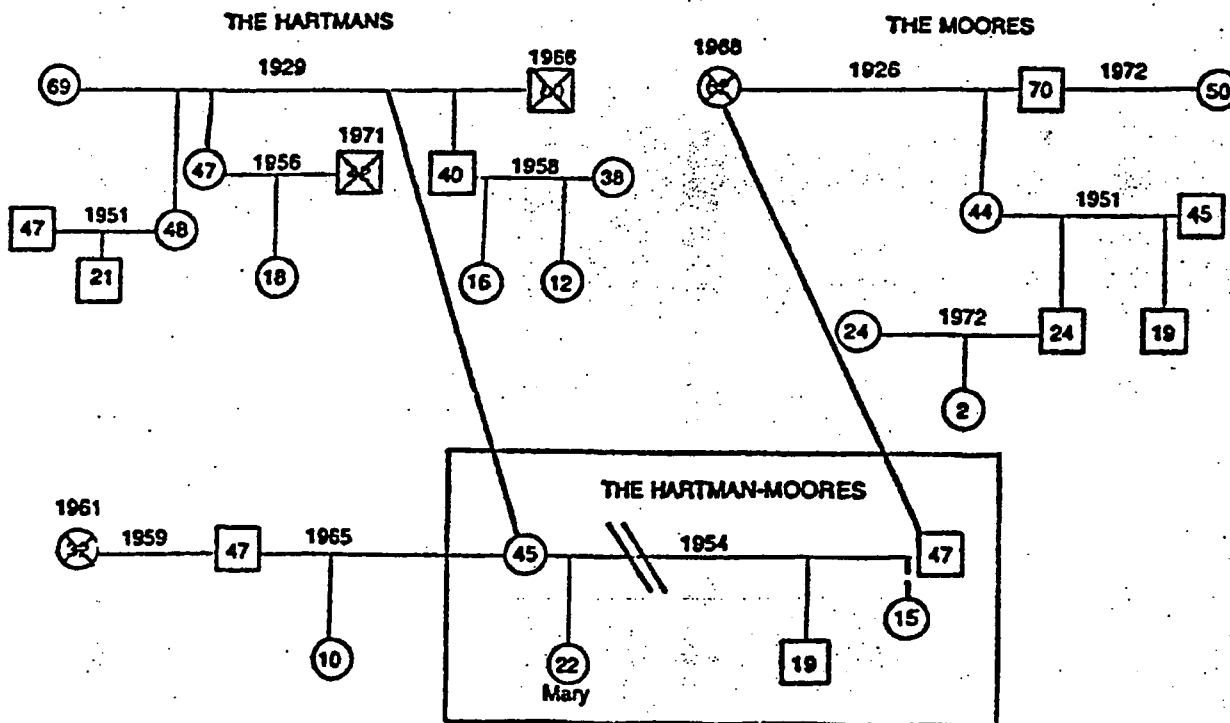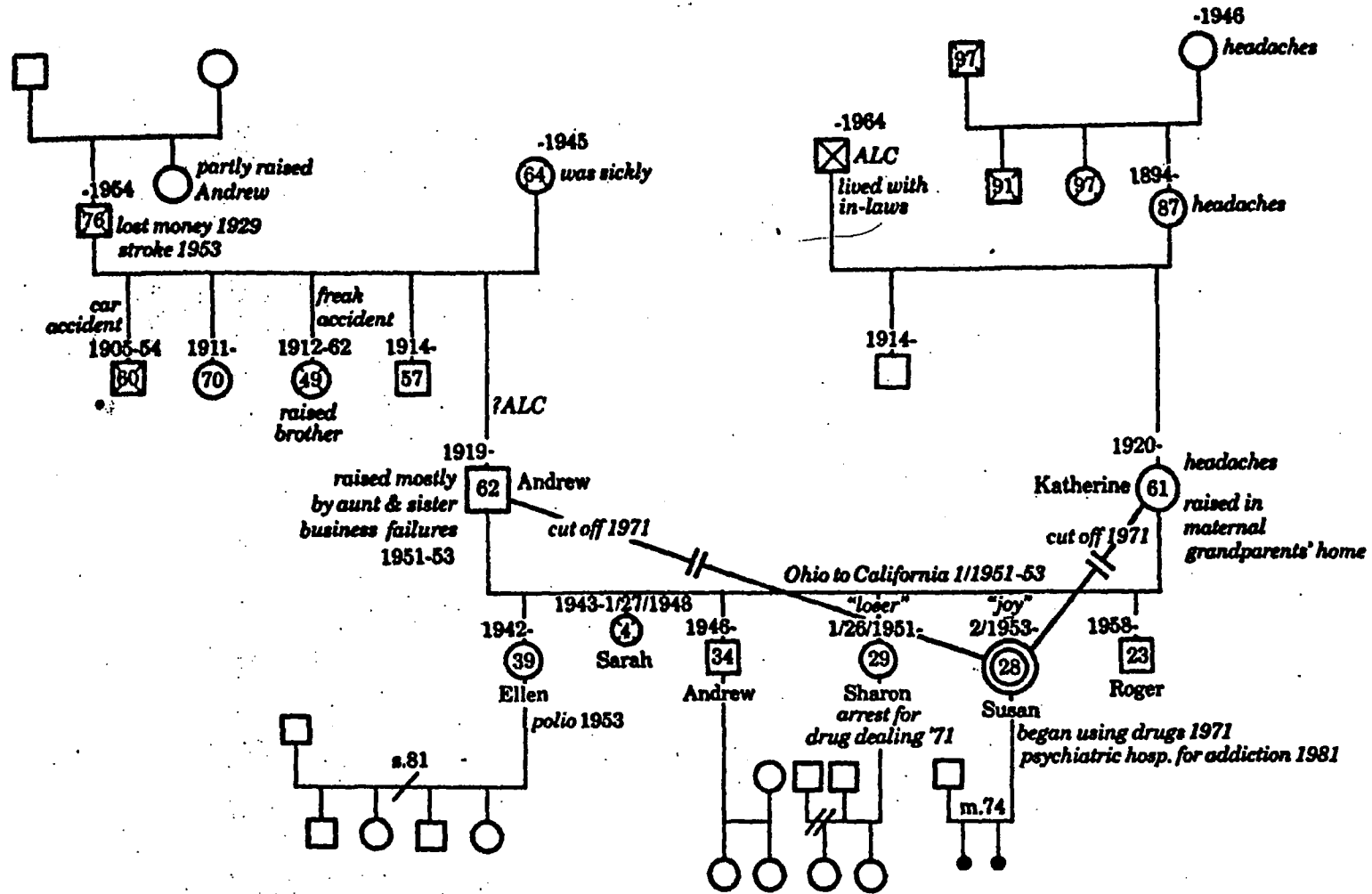
KEY EVENTS

1/27/48	Sarah dies, age 4	1953	Father's business failed and family returned to Ohio	1971	Sharon arrested for drug dealing—Father bailed her out
1/26/51	Sharon born			
2/51	Family moved 2,000 miles for new business	1953	Susan born	1971	Susan began living with boyfriend-parents disowned her
1953	PGF had stroke	1953	Ellen got polio		

November 1981

Diagram 4.2 The B. family

Spiritual Genogram
Chaplain Bud Onstad

1. **Background**: This exercise is designed to do three things. First, it is a useful exercise to teach how to do genograms. Second, it is a spiritual journey to remind us of our spiritual roots. And finally, it is an example of how to use the genogram in a family life education setting.

2. **Scripture Readings**: Exodus 12:21-28, John 1:35-51

3. **Review Genograms**: When I do this program in a family life educational program, I show only the basic symbols of the genogram. I am more concerned with format when I work with counselors/chaplains.

4. **First exercise**: Have each participant draw their family of origin genogram, to include their grandparents. Ask them to consider following questions:
   - How were you spiritually influenced by your family of origin?
   - Who were your spiritual models? (you may consider those inside your family and outside your family)
   - How did God work through these people to touch you?
   - Who did God use to call you into ministry? (Name the 3 most influential/important.)

   After the participants have completed their spiritual genograms, have them pair off and share their spiritual journey. After a suitable amount of time, bring everyone back into a group and ask participants to share their insights.   Hes 12:1-2

5. **Second exercise**: Invite participants to use their imagination and draw their genograms 20 years into the future. I ask participants two sets of questions during this exercise. The first set is to help them look into the future.
   - How old will you be in 20 years?
   - How old are your children?
   - What are your children doing (career, etc.)?
   - Are your children married?
   - How old are your grandchildren?
   - Who in your family has died?

   The second set of questions deal with their spiritual journey. They are designed to help participants reflect on how they might be spiritual models for others. My basic assumption is that God will use us.
   - Who did you influence spiritually that made a difference in their life?
   - How did that influence grow through the generations.
   - Who met Christ through you?
   - Who did God call to full time ministry because of your influence (inside or outside your family of origin)?

   After each participant has had a chance to draw their genograms into the future, invite them to pair off again and share their future stories. Again bring them back into the larger group and share their insights.

6. **Other options**: I have used this exercise in several different settings. I have used it in a creative worship format during a retreat. I concluded the exercise with communion. Additionally, I have also used this in teaching morals, ethics and values. Instead of lecturing participants, I use this exercise and ask questions such as where did they received their morals, ethics, values. I also asked what were three important values they received from their family of origin. Name three values you did not receive from your FO that you want to pass down to your children and grandchildren, etc.

GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTING A GENOGRAM

The genogram is a therapeutic tool to assist the client in identifying repeating themes within his/her family system. The theory is that the client is "bound" to repeat these themes unless he/she becomes aware of them and makes changes to break the patterns.

"We use the structure of the genogram to spell out the physical and emotional boundaries, the characteristics of the membership, the nodal events, toxic issues, emotional cutoffs, the general openness/closedness index, and the multiplicity of available relationship options." (Philip J. Guerin, Jr., M.C. and Eileen G. Pendagast, M.S., M.Ed.)

The questions asked in the genogram will vary from therapist to therapist--but here are some basics with which to start. The truth or falsity is not important--it is the clients impressions that are therapeutically relevant.

PHASE I: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL FAMILY MEMBERS

- ages?
- <u>illnesses</u>, <u>diseases</u>, miscarriages, abortions (dates and specifics are important)?
- temperaments?
- cultural, ethnic, religious affiliations?
- legends, stories?
- special quirks (handsome, ugly, eccentric, outgoing, quiet, etc.)?
- how made or received money?
- education?
- most memorable story or event?
- marriages, deaths, divorces, births, living together, adoption, foster children?
- handicaps, <u>physical or mental deformities</u>, reading or learning difficulties?
- how isolated is entire family from the community?
- physical location of each member? when moved?
- frequency of contact, how contact is made--e.g. formal gatherings, spontaneous, at one persons house, telephone (who answers telephone, who calls whom (or writes)--do they prime the anxiety pump or calm things down?
- emotional cutoffs?

PHASE II: TOXIC ISSUES, RELATIONSHIPS, AND FAMILY LEGENDS

A) TOXIC ISSUES

- Money, sex, parenting, children, alcohol, education level, religion, premature death, divorce, normal death, oldest leaving home, handicap in family, youngest child,

marriage of children.   Money--who makes it, who controls
it, who doles it out?   Which side of family has most and
how is it passed on?   Attitude towards how money is made--
occupations that are banned?   Occupations that are
encouraged?   His, hers, ours, and their money.

B)   RELATIONSHIPS--OPEN/CLOSED RELATIONSHIP INDEX

- Mother and Father--was their love warm, hot, cool, cold,
  or at war?   Significant remembrances one said about the
  other?   What did they fight over?   Explore relationship
  processes around these issues.
- Grandparents--same questions.
- Past and present marriages or serious relationships--
  same questions.
- Who is white knight of family--who is black sheep?
  Explore how conflicts repeat generation to generation.
  In the family--relationship to relationship in
  individuals.

C)   FAMILY LEGENDS

- Mother and Father--origin, how they met, courted,
  stories of early childhood, relation to family members.
  Stories about them before client was born or of age.
- Grandparents--same questions but also go back to stories
  of origin of the family (e.g. if they came from Europe,
  what does client know about the family in Europe, great
  grandparents)?

PHASE III: HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Each therapist then works with the data according to his/her
own frame of reference.

Homework assignments are highly recommended as they not
only gather information but start the client interacting
with family members in a different way.   One of the most
therapeutic uses of the genogram is to identify information
"blanks" (areas that are a mystery to client).   These
areas have probably been kept a mystery for a reason.
There is many times a direct link between the clients
blind spots to growth and their "family secrets".

The client can then, with therapists help in the session,
identify blind spots, (what relative or family friend may
possibly have the missing information), and then
strategically seek out this information.

Developing a Spiritual Assessment Toolbox:
A Discussion of the Strengths and Limitations
of Five Different Assessment Methods

David R. Hodge

Increasingly, social workers are being called on to conduct spiritual assessments, yet few
assessment methods have appeared in academic literature. This article reviews five
complementary assessment approaches that have recently been developed to highlight different
facets of clients' spiritual lives. Specifically, one verbal model, spiritual histories, is discussed,
along with four diagrammatic approaches: spiritual lifemaps, spiritual genograms, spiritual
ecomaps, and spiritual ecograms. An overview of each approach is provided along with a
discussion of its relative strengths and limitations. The aim here is to familiarize readers with a
repertoire of spiritual assessment tools so that the most appropriate assessment method in a
given client–practitioner setting can be selected.

KEY WORDS: *assessment; religion; spirituality; spiritual sensitivity; spiritual strengths*

It is increasingly recognized that health care professionals should consider conducting a spiritual assessment as part of holistic service provision (Plante & Sharma, 2001). Assessment helps to provide effective, culturally sensitive services while concurrently providing a forum to explore spiritual strengths that might be used to ameliorate problems or cope with difficulties. Spirituality is often a core animating principle in clients' view of reality; their spirituality, thus, often fosters a culturally distinct worldview. Hindus, evangelical Christians, traditional Catholics, Muslims, Mormons, Pentecostal Christians, and Orthodox Jews are all examples of populations who have developed distinct cultures. Clients' spiritual worldviews often guide their attitudes and behavior in a number of areas of significance to social workers, including their views on child care, communication norms, diet, family relations, gender interactions, marital relations, medical care, recreation, and schooling. Many Muslims, for example, are uncomfortable receiving medical services from providers of the opposite sex unless a member of the same sex—a family member, preferably—is present (Hodge, 2002). Spiritual assessment provides a window into these worldviews and enables social workers to tailor services in a manner that respects this most important aspect of clients' cultures.

In addition, a growing body of research indicates that spirituality is often a significant client strength (Johnson, 2002; Koenig, McCullough, & Larson, 2001). Spiritual assets, such as prayer, meditation, worship, scripture reading, clergy consultation, and spiritual groups, can facilitate coping, well-being, and recovery. A client wrestling with mental illness, for example, may find the support of a church group instrumental to his or her recovery upon discharge.

Assessment provides a method of identifying spiritual assets that can be operationalized in treatment and discharge planning. Consequently, social workers are being called on more often to conduct spiritual assessments. Perhaps most prominently, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), the organization that accredits most hospitals and many other health care providers in the United States, now recommends that a spiritual assessment be conducted (JCAHO, 2001). At a minimum, JCAHO stipulates that a spiritual assessment should determine the client's denomination as well as important spiritual beliefs and practices. The purpose of the initial assessment is twofold. One goal is to identify the effect of client's spirituality on service provision and client care. As implied earlier, for service provision to be as effective as possible, spiritual beliefs and practices often have to be taken into account. Adherents of the

Islamic faith, for example, may refrain from ingesting medicines containing alcohol or pork by-products (Hodge, 2004a). A Hindu person's recovery from schizophrenia might be aided by engaging in spiritual practices such as meditation and ritual offerings, such as *puja*, an act that shows reverence of a god, spirit, or other divine being (Hodge, 2004c).

Another goal is to identify whether an additional, more comprehensive spiritual assessment is required. JCAHO does not stipulate the conditions under which additional assessments are warranted so social workers must use their own judgment. Two general guidelines, however, may be useful in making such a determination. First, assessment is generally called for when the norms of the client's faith tradition relate to service provision and client care, as might occur with Pentecostalism and mental illness. Hearing the voice of God is considered normative within the Pentecostal tradition, for example, so hearing a voice external to oneself is not necessarily a manifestation of mental illness with Pentecostal Christians. In such cases, a comprehensive assessment is necessary to determine whether the voices are, in fact, a sign of mental illness or are normative, and quite possibly, a strength (Hodge, 2004b).

Next, a comprehensive assessment should be considered when spirituality plays a central role, functioning as an organizing principle, in the client's life. The extent to which clients practice the tenets of their faith tradition is one way to assess the centrality of spirituality in their lives. For example, a comprehensive assessment may be warranted with Catholics who attend mass weekly or Muslims who practice the five pillars.

Although social workers are called on increasingly to conduct spiritual assessments, relatively few assessment methods have been developed (Sherwood, 1998). Furthermore, studies indicate that most social workers have received little, if any, exposure to spiritual assessment during their graduate education (Canda & Furman, 1999; Murdock, 2004). Accordingly, this article introduces readers to a complementary set of assessment methods and reviews the strengths and limitations of each assessment approach. Both clients and social workers have a variety of needs and interests in any clinical context; consequently, some assessment approaches will work better in some situations. The family of assessment tools reviewed in this article was deliberately designed to highlight different facets of clients' spiritual lives. Discussion of the strengths and limitations of each assessment method is offered to help social workers select the method that best fits the needs of a given situation. In effect, this article provides social workers with an assessment "toolbox" from which practitioners can select the most appropriate instrument.

The five assessment methods reviewed and compared are (1) spiritual histories (Hodge, 2001a), which is the only verbally based approach discussed, along with four pictorial approaches: (2) spiritual lifemaps (Hodge, 2005b), (3) spiritual genograms (Hodge, 2001b), (4) spiritual ecomaps (Hodge, 2000; Hodge & Williams, 2002), and (5) spiritual ecograms (Hodge, 2005a). These methods are all designed to provide comprehensive spiritual assessments. Readers interested in an initial assessment model may consult Hodge (2004b) for a short, oral tool designed to meet the JCAHO standards for conducting an initial spiritual assessment. Alternatively, it is also possible to adapt these methods, particularly spiritual ecomaps, to conduct an initial spiritual assessment.

It is important to note at the outset that some topics cannot be discussed due to space limitations. Communications styles and many other facets of behavior can be influenced by one's spiritual and cultural background, for example. Obtaining some degree of knowledge regarding a client's spiritual tradition before assessment is generally helpful. It is, however, beyond the scope of this article to present information on various spiritual traditions, guidelines for conducting an assessment in a spiritually competent manner, suggestions on appropriate spiritual interventions, or even detailed accounts of each assessment approach. Interested readers are encouraged to obtain the original articles for information on these topics or consult the works of other authors who address these subjects (Canda & Furman, 1999; Koenig, 1998a; Richards & Bergin, 2000; Van Hook, Hugen, & Aguilar, 2001).

In addition, it is appropriate to specify the working definition of spirituality and religion. Although various definitions of these two constructs have appeared in the literature, *spirituality* can be understood as individual's existential relationship with God (or perceived transcendence), and *religion* can been seen as flowing from spirituality, the actual expression of the spiritual relationship in particular beliefs, forms, and practices that have been

developed in community with other individuals who share similar experiences of transcendence (Hodge, 2001a). Thus, spirituality and religion are overlapping but distinct constructs (Canda & Furman, 1999).

SPIRITUAL HISTORIES

Oral spiritual histories are perhaps the most common approach to assessment (Hodge, 2001a). This method is analogous to conducting a family history. In the spiritual history approach developed by Hodge, two question sets are used to guide the conversation. The purpose of the first question set, referred to as the Initial Narrative Framework, is to provide practitioners with some tools to help clients tell their stories, typically moving from childhood to the present.

The second question set, referred to as the Interpretive Anthropological Framework, is designed to elicit spiritual information as clients relate their stories. The framework is based on Nee's (1968) anthropological understanding. In addition to *soma* (that is, the physical human body), Nee envisioned a soul, comprised of affect, will, and cognition, and a spirit, comprised of communion, conscience, and intuition. Although human beings are an integrated entity, consisting of body, soul, and spirit, it is possible to distinguish the six dimensions of the soul and spirit. Communion refers to spiritually based relationship. More specifically, it denotes the ability to bond and relate to God or the client's perception of transcendence. Conscience relates to one's ability to sense right and wrong. Beyond a person's cognitively held values, conscience conveys moral knowledge about the appropriateness of a given set of choices. Intuition refers to the ability to know—to come up with insights that bypass normal cognitive channels.

The anthropologically derived questions are designed to elicit information about each of the six dimensions, providing a holistic spiritual assessment. As clients relate their spiritual narrative (prompted as necessary by questions drawn from the initial narrative framework), they will tend to touch on some of the dimensions listed in the interpretive anthropological framework. Social workers can interject questions drawn from the anthropological framework into the dialogue to more fully explore clients' spiritual reality in the natural flow of the conversation. In short, the narrative questions help clients tell their stories and the interpretive anthro-

pological questions assist practitioners in eliciting important information as the stories unfold.

Strengths and Limitations of Spiritual Histories

For verbally oriented people, spiritual histories may provide the best assessment method. In addition, the relatively unstructured format allows clients to relate their stories in a straightforward manner without having to adapt their narratives to fit a particular diagrammatic format. For example, whereas spiritual genograms require clients to circumscribe their spiritual stories to fit the parameters of a generational chart, spiritual histories allow clients to express themselves in a manner that is unique to their own experience. Spiritual histories are also easy to conduct. The assessment model is relatively easy to communicate to clients, and the verbal format is conducive to building a therapeutic alliance with clients.

Not all clients are verbally oriented, however. Some may prefer the pictorial assessment approaches discussed in later sections. Individuals who are nervous about sharing what is often a highly personal topic may desire a diagrammatic approach that deflects attention away from themselves and onto an inanimate object. Some clients prefer having a specific framework around which to organize their thoughts, such as a spiritual ecomap. Similarly, the process of conceptualizing and depicting one's spiritual journey pictorially may help to focus and objectify spiritual assets, which can then be discussed and marshaled to address problems. Another limitation is the time spent exploring portions of the client's spiritual history that may have limited utility in addressing the present problem with which the client is wrestling. In addition, more artistic clients may desire an assessment approach, such as spiritual lifemaps, that allows for a more creative expression of their spirituality.

SPIRITUAL LIFEMAPS

Spiritual lifemaps represent a diagrammatic alternative to spoken spiritual histories (Hodge, 2005b). More specifically, spiritual lifemaps are a pictorial delineation of a client's spiritual journey. In a manner analogous to Augustine's (354–430AD/1991) *Confessions*, spiritual lifemaps are an illustrated account of clients' relationship with God (or transcendence) over time—a map of their spiritual life. Much like road maps, spiritual lifemaps tell us where

we have come from, where we are now, and where we are going.

At its most basic level, a drawing pencil is used to sketch various spiritually significant life events on paper. The method is similar to various approaches drawn from art and family therapy in which a client's history is depicted on a "lifeline" (Tracz & Gehart-Brooks, 1999). To assist clients in the creative expression of their spiritual journeys, it is usually best to use a large sheet of paper (for example, 24" x 36") on which to sketch the map. Providing drawing instruments of different sizes and colors is also helpful, as is offering a selection of various types and colors of construction paper and popular periodicals. Providing these items, in conjunction with scissors, glue, and rulers, allows clients to clip and paste items onto the lifemap.

Spiritually significant events are depicted on a path, roadway, or a single line that represents clients' spiritual sojourn (Figure 1). Typically, the path proceeds chronologically, from birth to the present. Frequently, the path continues on to death and the client's transition to the afterlife. Hand-drawn symbols, cut out pictures, and other material are used to mark key events along the journey. In keeping with many spiritual traditions, which conceive material existence to be an extension of the sacred reality, it is common to depict important secular events on the lifemap (for example, graduation, loss of a job, or a car accident). Evangelicals, for example, will not see marriage or death as secular. Although it is often necessary to provide clients with general guidelines, client creativity should be encouraged.

To fully operationalize the potential of the method, it is important to ask clients to incorporate the various trials they have faced along with the spiritual resources they have used to overcome those trials. Hills, bumps, potholes, rain, clouds, and lightning, can be used to portray difficult life situations. Delineating successful strategies that clients have used in the past frequently suggests options for overcoming present struggles.

Strengths and Limitations of Spiritual Lifemaps

Of the assessment methods reviewed in this article, spiritual lifemaps are perhaps the most client directed. The relatively secondary role that social workers play during this type of assessment offers important advantages. Less risk exists that social workers may jeopardize the therapeutic relation-

The pictorial lifemap affords practitioners the opportunity to learn more about the client's worldview, while focusing on building therapeutic rapport.

ship through comments that are inadvertently offensive—an important consideration given that most social workers have had minimal, if any, training in spiritual sensitivity (Canda & Furman, 1999). The pictorial lifemap affords practitioners the opportunity to learn more about the client's worldview, while focusing on building therapeutic rapport by providing an atmosphere that is accepting, nonjudgmental, and supportive during assessment. By placing a client-constructed media at the center of assessment, the message is implicitly communicated that the client is a competent, proactive, self-directed, and fully engaged participant in the therapeutic process. For clients for whom spirituality is a highly sensitive and significant area, lifemaps provide a means of shifting the focus from the client to a more neutral object, a process that may help set clients at ease. In addition, individuals who are not verbally oriented may find pictorial expression more conducive to their personal communication styles, and more creative individuals may feel that this assessment approach allows them to express their spiritual journey in a manner that is more personally authentic. Lifemaps fit well with interventions drawn from existential therapy that emphasizes the brevity of life, and they may be assigned as "homework," saving valuable therapeutic time.

Some social workers, however, may feel so removed from the process that this assessment approach makes poor use of therapeutic time. Another significant limitation is that many clients, such as those who are more verbal, uncomfortable with drawing, or prefer more direct practitioner–client interaction, may find the use of a largely nonverbal, pictorial method to be a poor fit with their current needs. In other situations, it may be important to understand the effects of spirituality in greater breadth (that is, among the wider family system) or in greater depth (that is, across generations). In such settings, spiritual genograms may be used.

SPIRITUAL GENOGRAMS

Spiritual genograms provide social workers with a tangible graphic representation of spirituality across

Figure 1: Spiritual Lifemap
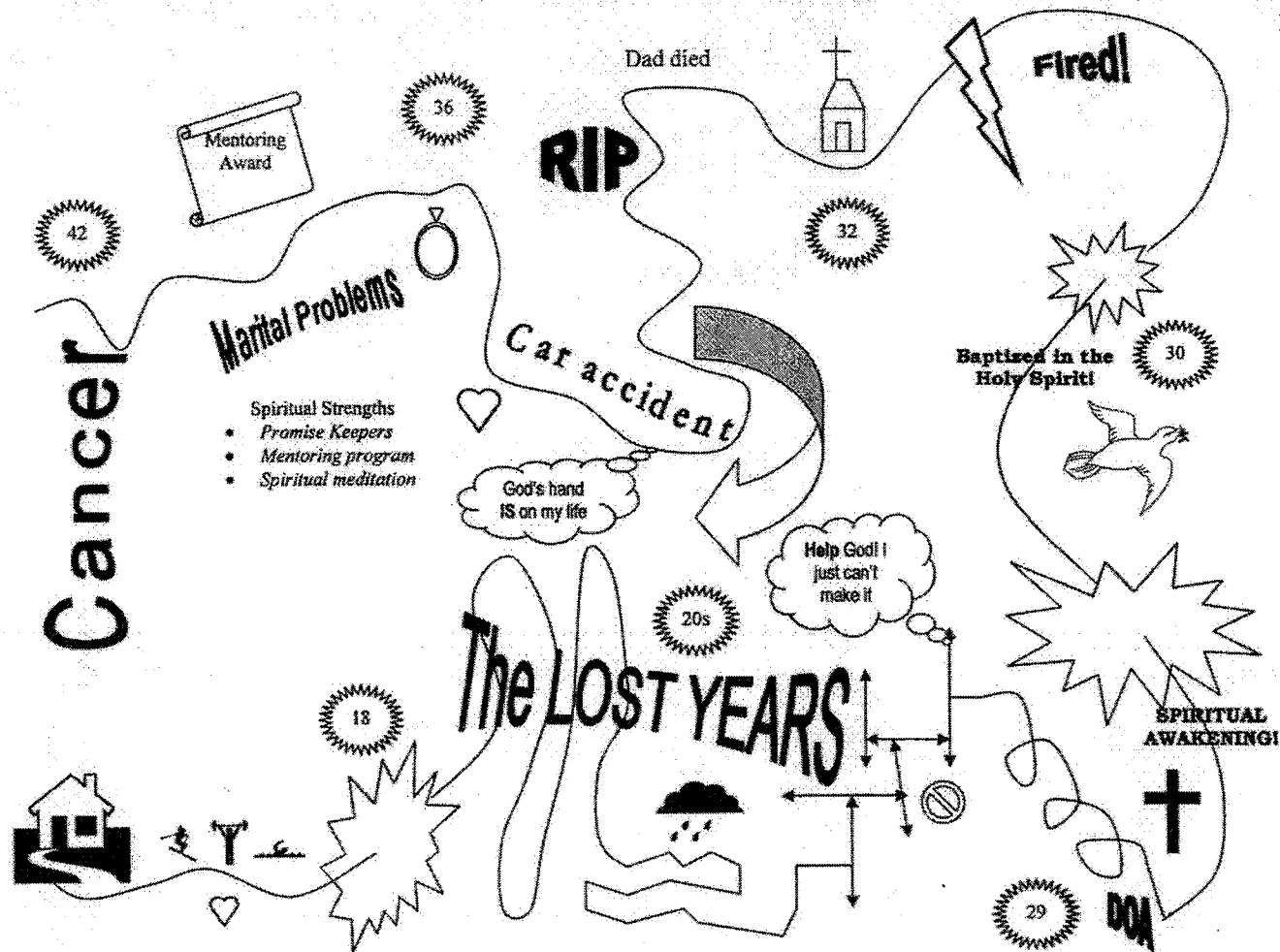
at least three generations (Hodge, 2001b). Through the use of what is essentially a modified family tree, they help both practitioners and clients understand the flow of historically rooted patterns through time. In short, spiritual genograms are a blueprint of complex intergenerational spiritual interactions.

The basic family system is delineated in keeping with standard genogram conventions (McGoldrick, Gerson, & Shellenberger, 1999). Triangles or other geometric shapes, however, can be inserted to designate individuals who have played major spiritual roles but are not members of the immediate biological family (for example, see "Ruth" in Figure 2). To indicate clients' spiritual tradition, colored drawing pencils can be used to shade in the circles and squares. Color coding provides a graphic "color snapshot" of the overall spiritual composition of the family system. Various colors can be used to signify religious preference (for example, Muslim, New Age, none), or when the information in known, denomination (for example, Assemblies of God) and subtradition (for example, Sunni, Shiite). A circle representing a member of the Assemblies of God could be colored red and an individual whose affiliation and beliefs are unknown could be left uncolored. A change in an adult's religious orientation can be signified by listing the date of the change beside a circle, which is drawn outside the figure, and filling in the space between the circle and the figure with the appropriate color. This procedure indicates the stability and fluidity of the person's beliefs over time. Using a similar approach, changes in orientation from one's family of origin can be noted by coloring the vertical segment connecting the child with the parents.

As is the case with spiritual lifemaps, spiritually meaningful events can be incorporated, such as water and spirit baptisms, confirmations, church memberships, and bar mitzvahs. Symbols drawn from the client's spiritual cosmology can be used to signify these events. For instance, a member of the Pentecostal denomination might choose a dove to depict a deeper work of the Holy Spirit. A New Age adherent might use a sunbeam to symbolize a time of profound spiritual enlightenment or an open set of scriptures might be used to indicate a devout person. In addition, this approach allows for short summary statements to denote events, personal strengths, or other important information.

In addition to depicting religious beliefs, it is also possible to include an affective component to spiritual genograms (Hodge, 2001b). In other words, felt spiritual closeness between family members can be illustrated. Lines with double-headed arrows [↔] can be used to symbolize a relationship in which individuals experience a close reciprocal spiritual bond. The thickness of the line can indicate the intimacy or strength of the relationship. In situations where the relationship is more hierarchical and less reciprocal—as might occur with a grandparent mentoring a grandchild—a single arrowhead [↓]can be used to depict the flow of spiritual resources.

Strengths and Limitations of Spiritual Genograms

Spiritual genograms may be particularly useful when the family system plays an especially significant role in the client's life. For the social worker, they help connect spirituality to treatment plans. Poole (1998) suggested that genograms may be helpful with Hispanic clients, for example, as they tend to show respect for tradition. In addition, problems involving family members or family-of-origin issues are often effectively explored with spiritual genograms. For example, with interfaith couples experiencing spiritual conflicts, spiritual genograms can expose areas of difference and highlight the respective spiritual strengths each person brings to the relationship. Genograms also may appeal to clients who prefer a very structured assessment approach.

Spiritual genograms are relatively time consuming to construct, require a fair degree of practitioner involvement to explain and conduct the assessment, and place some limitations on how clients relate their spirituality. In situations where the family system or historical influences are of minor importance, spiritual genograms may be an inappropriate approach. Furthermore, because many clients do not connect past events with current difficulties, some clients may view genogram construction as an ineffective use of time (Kuehl, 1995). With such clients, it may be more appropriate to use assessment approaches that focus on the "here and now," such as spiritual ecomaps.

SPIRITUAL ECOMAPS

In contrast with the previously discussed assessment tools, spiritual ecomaps focus on clients' current spiritual relationships (Hodge, 2000). The assessment approaches discussed earlier are similar in the sense that they are all designed to tap some portion

of clients' spiritual story as it exists through time. Spiritual histories, lifemaps, and genograms typically cover one to three generations of a client's spiritual narrative. Conversely, spiritual ecomaps focus on that portion of clients' spiritual story that exists in present space. In other words, this assessment approach highlights clients' present, existential relationship to spiritual assets.

In the center of a piece of paper, the immediate family system is typically portrayed as a circle, in keeping with traditional ecogram construction (Hartman, 1995). Household family members can be sketched inside the circle, with squares depicting males and circles representing females (Hodge, 2000). Alternatively, separate ecomaps can be drawn for each individual (Hodge & Williams, 2002). On the outskirts of the paper, surrounding the family system, significant spiritual systems or domains are depicted as circles, with the names of the respective systems written inside the circles. Although clients should be encouraged to depict the domains that hold personal salience in their spiritual worldview, several spiritual systems have somewhat of a universal application.

More specifically, social workers should generally seek to explore clients' relationship with God or transcendence, rituals, faith communities, and transpersonal encounters. One's relationship with God or transcendence is widely regarded as a key strength, as are rituals, or codified spiritual practices. Faith communities refer to various faith-based groups that individuals may associate with on a regular basis, such as churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, fellowship groups, mid-week Bible studies, youth groups, and singles associations. Transpersonal encounters refer to encounters with angels, demons, and other spiritual visitations.

The heart of the spiritual ecomap is the relationships between the family system and the spiritual systems, which are represented by various types of sketched lines, much like those discussed earlier in the spiritual genogram section. Thicker lines represent stronger or more powerful relationships. A dashed line represents the most tenuous relationship, and a jagged line denotes a conflicted one. An arrow is drawn on the line to indicate the flow of energy, resources, or interest. As is the case with the other diagrammatic approaches profiled here, short, descriptive encapsulations, significant dates, or other creative depictions, can also be incorporated onto the map to provide more information about the relational dynamics.

When using ecomaps with individuals, the appropriate type of line is drawn between the family system (that is, the figure representing the client) and the spiritual systems. When working with families, lines are drawn to the family system as a unit when the family shares a particular relationship in common, or more frequently, connections are drawn to individual family members depicting the various unique relationships between each family member and the various spiritual systems.

Strengths and Limitations of Spiritual Ecomaps

Spiritual ecomaps are relatively easy to grasp conceptually, quick to construct, and perhaps most important, readily focus on clients' current, existential spiritual strengths (Hodge, 2000). This assessment approach may be ideal for operationalizing clients' spiritual assets in a timely fashion because the time spent in assessment is focused on tapping into present spiritual resources. As is the case with all diagrammatic methods, spiritual ecomaps provide an object that can serve as the focal point of discussion, which can be an important consideration for those clients who find it less threatening to have a concrete object as the focus of conversation. However, by virtue of their design, ecomaps may be particularly helpful in transferring attention from the client to the concrete, diagrammatic assessment tool because they focus on environmental systems rather than, for example, clients' life story. Although other approaches may implicitly emphasize the client, spiritual ecomaps explicitly stress the systems in clients' environments (Hartman, 1995).

Spiritual ecomaps suffer from the same limitations as other diagrammatic approaches relative to verbal spiritual histories. A diagrammatic approach may hold little appeal to clients who want to talk. Although relatively quick and simple to construct, ecomaps may not appeal to more creative individuals, but clients can be encouraged to express their creativity by adding symbols and other material to

the ecomap. In some situations, the focus on the client's current, existential relationships to spiritual assets may result in a limited assessment that overlooks important historical factors. In some contexts, an approach that examines current and historical resources on the same diagrammatic tool may be useful.
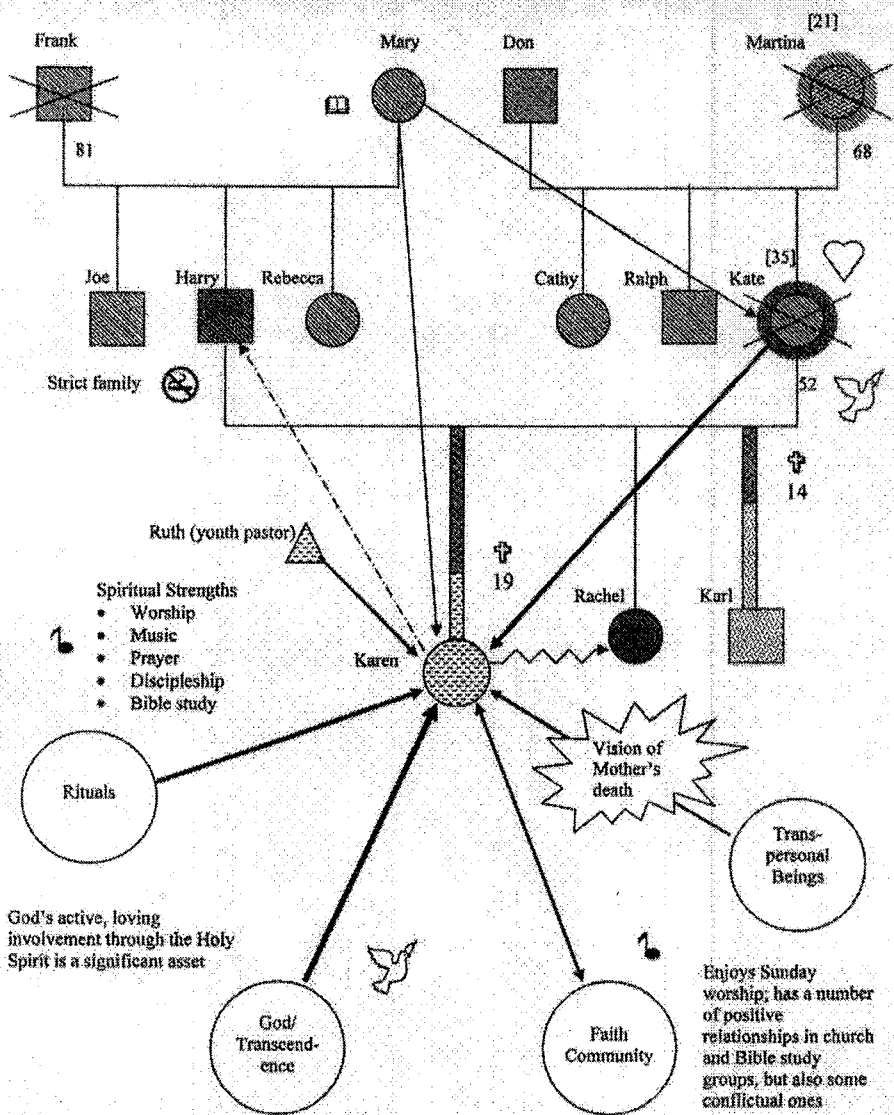
SPIRITUAL ECOGRAMS

Spiritual ecograms combine the assessment strengths of spiritual ecomaps and genograms in a single assessment approach (Hodge, 2005a). Ecograms tap information that exists in present space, much like a traditional spiritual ecomap, and also access information that exists across time, like a traditional spiritual genogram. Ecograms also depict the connections between past and present functioning. Historical influences on current systems can be seen as well as present relationships with historical influences (Figure 2).

Constructing spiritual ecograms is similar to fabricating genograms and ecomaps. The client is drawn

Figure 2: Diagrammatic Approaches to Spiritual Assessment

Source: Adapted from Hodge, D. R. (2005a). Spiritual ecograms: A new assessment instrument for identifying clients' spiritual strengths in space and time. *Families in Society, 86*, 287–296.

in the center of the paper. The top half of the page is used to chart the client's spiritual history through time as discussed in the section on spiritual genograms. The bottom half of the page is used to chart the client's current relationships to spiritual resources as discussed in the ecomap section. Because spiritual ecograms incorporate the basic structure of both spiritual genograms and ecomaps, Figure 2 also serves to illustrate these latter two approaches as well.

As is the case with spiritual ecograms, the nature of the relationships is symbolized with lines drawn between the client and the various systems. Unique to ecograms, however, is the incorporation of the family history as a spiritual system. In other words, the family history can also be seen as a spiritual system alongside other spiritual systems such as God, rituals, and faith communities. Many of the people and events associated with the delineated history continue to exhibit a strong influence in the present. Consequently, in addition to sketching relationships between the client and the traditional ecomap systems, lines are drawn connecting the client to various aspects of the family history. This allows clients and practitioners to see the various connections between past and present functioning in one diagrammatic assessment.

Strengths and Limitations of Spiritual Ecograms

The primary asset of spiritual ecograms is their ability to illustrate current and historical resources as well as the connections between those strengths in a single graphic rendering. This advantage may be welcomed when working with populations in which the family system plays an important role. For instance, because of the sense of cohesion and interdependency among Muslim family members (Hodge, 2004a), ecograms might be used to highlight present spiritual resources and important historical relationships, as both areas are often critical for understanding clients and helping them to ameliorate their problems.

In some instances, however, social workers may desire a simpler, more focused, diagrammatic assessment approach. Spiritual ecomaps, for example, are less time consuming to construct and may provide all the information required in a given situation. In other contexts, social workers may desire to use the limited amount of page space to amplify the generational dynamics in a spiritual genogram.

Lifemaps also may provide a better assessment approach with more artistically inclined clients, and spiritual histories may be better suited for more verbally oriented clients.

CONCLUSION

Spirituality is often a critical factor in clients' lives. Among a sample of hospitalized older adults ($N = 542$), 43 percent spontaneously offered a spiritual response when asked how they cope with their medical illness and other problems (Koenig, 1998b). When asked how important spirituality was as a coping mechanism, 40 percent reported that it was the most important factor that kept them going. As one step toward ensuring that such assets facilitate treatment rather than hinder it, this article has apprised readers of a series of qualitative assessment methods and reviewed their strengths and limitations in relation to one another.

It is important to note that other assessment methods exist (Sherwood, 1998). This article has focused on qualitative approaches, but several quantitative instruments are also available. For readers interested in quantitative approaches, valuable resources include compilations by the Fetzer Institute (1999) and especially Hill and Hood (1999). Among the more prominent instruments are the Spiritual Well-Being Scale, which measures psychological dimensions of spiritual well-being, and the Religious Orientation Scale, which measures the degree of spiritual motivation within religious traditions. Reviews on the validity, reliability, development, and use of both instruments are provided, respectively, by Boivin, Kirby, Underwood, and Silva (1999) and Burris (1999). Readers interested in exploring the degree of spiritual motivation within or outside of a religious tradition can examine the Intrinsic Spirituality Scale (Hodge, 2003).

No single assessment approach, whether qualitative or quantitative, is likely to be ideal in all situations. Clients have diverse needs and interests, as do practitioners. An assessment method that works well with one client may be inappropriate with another. Ideally, social workers should be acquainted with several assessment methods before conducting a spiritual assessment. The five tools reviewed here provide social workers with complementary options so that health care workers are better equipped to serve their clients. Social workers can select the approach that best fits their needs in a given setting. **HSW**

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