



living systems

Counselling, Education, Training and Research

Clinical Internship Program in Marriage and Family Therapy and Pastoral Counselling

PROGRAM OUTLINE

TOWARD A SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE

Living Systems

The Clinical Internship Program in Marriage and Family Therapy and Pastoral Counselling is a two-year part-time training program. The group meets weekly for four hours each week from early October through mid June in North Vancouver. Students ordinarily start a practicum with Living Systems in January.

The program is registered with the Private Career Training Institutions Agency of BC. Professional organizations accrediting faculty include American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC), and the B.C. Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC).

Living Systems began in 1971 as an outreach of West Vancouver United Church. As the community responded to the services offered, a decision was made to create a not-for-profit pastoral counselling centre. In 1974 it received its charter under the British Columbia Societies Act to provide counselling services, educational programs and research.

The internship program began in 1984 and has developed a reputation within the community for providing a quality training option for clinicians and other professionals. This program is unique in its integration of Bowen family systems theory with pastoral counselling.

About our Name Change

In August 2004, the Center formally changed its name from the North Shore Counselling Centre to Living Systems. The new name reflects and continues the historic commitment to providing counseling, education, training and research based on the family systems theory developed by Dr. Murray Bowen.

Dr. Michael Kerr, the successor to Dr. Bowen as the Director of the Bowen Center for the Study of the Family has observed, "All life is systems". By this comment he means that the relationship process that operates between the components of a cell, between cells, between organs in a body, and between individuals of a species may be organized based on some common principles. He goes on to suggest that such universal characteristics of relationship systems are anchored in the life process at a level "probably more basic than genes".

The new name reflects our belief that the more we learn about the principles that govern "living systems", such as the human family, the more we can understand ourselves and our behavior.

Theoretical Foundation

Murray Bowen, MD was one of the first persons to “think (natural) systems” about the human family. He is widely recognized as an originator of family systems theory and family therapy. The internship program is designed to provide a thorough introduction to Bowen theory, which provides the foundation for all the counseling, education and research conducted by Living Systems.

Increasingly, the concepts Bowen developed from his study of the family as an “emotional unit” have been found at the level of organizations and society as a whole. Someone once said that there is nothing as practical as a good theory. Bowen theory guides our practice at Living Systems.

Theological Foundation

As a pastoral counselling society, Living Systems affirms the importance of religious and spiritual beliefs and practices as a resource for many people. Living Systems respects and assists in the development of personal beliefs and values, whether or not they are defined as religious or spiritual.

Bowen theory’s emphasis on principled living and the interrelatedness of all life, as well as the theory’s disciplined way of thinking about human functioning, complement the pastoral perspective. Science and faith each make important contributions to our understanding of human behavior.

Clinical Internship – Year One

A. Purpose

The purposes of the program is:

- to provide the trainee with a thorough introduction to systems thinking from the perspective of Bowen Theory, its methods and techniques
- to apply the theory to efforts in one’s own family, in clinical work and, when applicable, in the workplace
- to relate Bowen Theory to knowledge from the natural sciences and to theological understanding
- to introduce trainees to systems research

B. Weekly Training Format

The internship program is a weekly, part-time, nine-month long period of study, beginning the first week of October and ending the second week in June. The training components include lecture/discussion of theory, group and individual supervision, and clinical conferences.

The program is usually scheduled on Tuesdays from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm or on Saturdays from 8:30am to 12:30pm. In addition, interns join other students and clinicians of the Society in monthly clinical conferences. The regular clinical conference at present is held on Tuesdays from 5 pm to 8:00 pm.

The schedule is approximately as follows:

1. Theory/presentation/dialogue: 64 hours
2. Group supervision: 64 hours
3. Individual supervision: 9 hours
(a minimum of one hour/month, arranged outside of designated program times, in coordination with one’s individual supervisor).
4. Regular clinical conferences: 30 hours
5. Society conferences 24 hours
(NOTE: time spent seeing clients is in addition to the above-designated hours).

Interns have the option of providing clinical or educational services to Living Systems clients. This allows interns to gain clinical and/or instructional experience while assisting Living Systems in its goal of providing counselling and educational programs to all income levels.

Interns who see clients must have sufficient professional and personal maturity to manage a small clinical caseload responsibly. Ethical guidelines for clinical work are contained in the AAPC Code of Ethics and Procedures. It is essential that all interns seeing clients review this material thoroughly. Students may miss up to two sessions during the year for the weekly program. For successful program completion however, additional absences must be made up through special arrangements with the Training Director.

Each student is required to write a 15-30 page paper exploring some aspect of Bowen theory, its clinical or work application, its relationship to knowledge from the natural sciences and/or theological understanding.

The paper is to be based on an academic or clinical research project and is to be presented in a specially designated clinical conference in the spring of the training year. Each oral presentation is to be approximately 30 minutes in length. Successful completion of the program requires both the oral and written presentation. A certificate will accompany the successful completion of the year's requirements.

Two highlights of are the fall and spring professional conferences sponsored by Living Systems.

The fall conference features either Dr. Daniel Papero of the Bowen Center for the Study of the Family, Washington, DC or another expert in Bowen theory. The spring conference features Dr. Michael Kerr, Director of the Bowen Center for the Study of the Family and he is often joined by a leading natural scientist or theologian.

The students are also invited to other functions and presentations throughout the training year.

C. Texts and Reading Material

A reading list (with price and source information for the required books) will be included in the admissions package. Living Systems also has a library of family counselling related books, journals, audio and videotapes available for loan. Students will have an opportunity to view the videotape collection of Dr. Bowen and other Georgetown faculty discussing aspects of the theory.

D. Tuition and Pay Schedule

The tuition for the first year is \$3,400.00, due on the first day of class in October unless other arrangements have been made. There is an \$85 administrative processing fee.

Clinical interns can make up some of the cost of the program tuition through the pay they receive for providing therapy to Living Systems clients. First year interns are paid \$15 per paid client hour, which includes responsibility for completing necessary file notes as well as regular attendance at and active participation in clinical conferences.

A trainee's opportunity to counsel clients of Living Systems depends on two variables:

- availability of clients
- the Training Director's estimation, in consultation with the intern's individual supervisor, of the ability of the intern to carry a professional caseload

Clinical Internship – Year Two

A. Purpose

The purpose of year-two of the Clinical Internship Program is to:

1. deepen the understanding of Bowen Theory and its practical implications for personal and professional functioning

2. gain further clinical experience under supervision
3. specialize in a particular area of interest
4. conduct or contribute to a research study of publishable quality

B. Training Format

The program continues the components of Year One: theory/dialogue, group and individual supervision and clinical conferences. Students assume responsibility for planning their own program of learning within the general structure of the second year. A core curriculum of reading and supervision is supplemented by each student's own interests and research. Students meet twice monthly for four hours each session.

The Schedule includes:

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| 1. | Theory presentation/dialogue: | 32 hours |
| 2. | Group supervision: | 32 hours |
| 3. | Individual supervision: | 9 hours |
| 4. | Clinical conferences | 30 hours |

Each student will present a paper of publishable quality at a specially designated clinical conference in the spring of the training year.

A clinical component to the second year is an option, provided the same two variables are in place as defined above for Year One interns – client availability and clinical/professional experience and conduct. The AAPC Code of Ethics and Procedures is the designated standard for professional practice for the Living Systems training programs. Year Two interns are paid \$20 per paid client hour, which includes responsibility for completing necessary file notes as well as regular attendance at and active participation in clinical conferences.

C. Texts and Reading Material

A reading list (with price and source information for the required books) will be included in the admissions package. Living Systems also has a library of family counselling related books, journals, audio and videotapes available for loan. Students will have an opportunity to view the videotape collection of Dr. Bowen and other Georgetown faculty discussing aspects of the theory.

D. Tuition and Pay Schedule

The tuition for the second year is \$1,900 due on the first day of class unless other arrangements have been made. There is an \$85 administrative processing fee.

Clinical interns can make up some of the cost of the program tuition through the pay they receive for providing therapy to Living Systems clients. Second year interns are paid \$20 per paid client hour, which includes responsibility for completing necessary file notes as well as regular attendance at and active participation in clinical conferences.

Clinical Residency

Building on the two year internship, students may continue their studies as a resident for one or more years after completion of the two-year program. Any second-year intern, on completion of certificate requirements, may apply to be considered. This will allow the trainees to continue his/her clinical development through Living Systems. Consideration will be based primarily on the following combined reasons:

1. Professional accreditation requirements are such that more counselling and supervisory hours are required by the trainee in order to qualify for membership
2. The trainee is strongly motivated to pursue further study of Bowen Theory
3. The trainee has given consistent evidence during the clinical internship of his/her ability to function responsibly in clinical practice, and as a member of a clinical team
4. Client availability and clinical space is sufficient to accommodate one or more residents

Tuition is \$1,900.00 due on the first day of class in October unless other arrangements have been made. A separate certificate will be awarded for successful completion of each year of residency.

Formal commitment is required by July 1st in order to avoid interruption of clinical work.

Clinical Internship Prerequisites

1. **Educational:** First consideration will be given to applicants with or working toward a Master's degree level of education in the health or social sciences, theology, or related helping professions. All applicants must have a solid base level of preparation in their chosen profession.
2. **General:** At least as important as educational preparation is the individual's openness to learning a new way to think about human functioning, and having the ability to manage him/herself with reasonable maturity in relationship connections.

Although Living Systems is a pastoral counselling centre, it does not require applicants to have a particular faith orientation or theological background. However, as part of their training, interns are asked to examine their own beliefs, the way they inform -or do not inform - their life and work.

Clinical Internship Application Requirements

Applicants for the Clinical Internship Program must include all of the following material:

1. Name, address, and phone number, age, marital/relationship status, and present family make-up
2. Work, education and general health history
3. A copy of the highest degree obtained and the academic transcript for that degree.
4. Copies of all relevant supervisory or evaluative reports you have received
5. A statement as to whether or not you want any of your program hours to be used for meeting the qualifications of any particular programs or organizations
6. Two letters of evaluation (not just a letter of recommendation – it should include weaknesses as well as strengths) from two different people who have observed your abilities and/or work
7. A statement indicating what factors led you to apply for this program, and what you expect to get from it.
8. A brief autobiography including a three generational family diagram, and a description of the frequency and quality of contact with extended family over the years.
9. The application fee is \$85 (\$75 will be refunded if you are not interviewed for a position in the program). This fee covers the cost of processing and interviewing applicants and does not apply to program tuition.

Late applications may be considered if space in the program is available.

A personal interview (or negotiated equivalent if distance precludes this) will be arranged with all applicants who are being considered for training on the basis of their written materials. Interviews will be completed by the end of July.

Application submissions requested no later than July 1st. Please direct inquiries and applications to:

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