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Luciano L'Abate

Beyond the Systems Paradigm

Emerging Constructs in Family and Personality Psychology

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Emerging Constructs in Family and Personality Psychology

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*To my fellow Florentines Galileo Galilei
and Nicolo' Macchiavelli*

Foreword

Luciano L'Abate is considered the founder of the field of family psychology. He is by far the most prolific writer in this field, and probably psychology as a whole, and has published over 55 books covering a huge variety of topics. A common theme in his writings has been an emphasis on theory building from his first book to date. The current volume is the culmination of over 50 years of his work on theory development. This volume clearly establishes Dr. L'Abate as the master theoretician of family psychology and personality.

Beyond the Systems Paradigm: *Emerging Constructs in Family and Personality Psychology* can be viewed from a number of perspectives. One could argue from a superficial reading or glance at the table of contents that the book is a scathing attack on the field of family psychology and personality suggesting that the fields are theoretically and conceptually bankrupt. However, this is not his goal as he points out in this volume. The purpose of this book is to provide the reader with a thorough critique and cogent argument that family and personality psychology can be revitalized with concepts which will prove to be more useful to family and personality researches and therapists.

The title of the book may be a bit confusing to the reader unless you understand that the fields of family psychology and personality are intrinsically related. In the past, these two fields rarely intersected. We ended up with theories about families that did not attend to the fact that families are composed of individuals—each with their own unique personalities. Personality theorists tended to focus just on the structure and dynamics of the individual with little attention to their context or relational involvement.

The clinician looking for an easy theory to use and more techniques to add to their skills will be grossly disappointed, especially the family psychologist. Although personality is mentioned in the title, the book is more about the concept of systems theory and family psychology. Unfortunately, few psychologists, including family psychologists receive training in their graduate programs about theory construction and how it pervades every aspect of what we do from measuring or assessing a problem, understanding the problem at a deep conceptual level that is related to a variety of other variables, to differentiating between the functionality of behavior along a continuum that involves moving from the dysfunctional to the functional end of the continuum.

Beyond the Systems Paradigm helps the reader understand the difference between paradigms, theories, constructs, models, and dimensions and how they are linked. Once readers have this understanding they can begin to see how theories should be systematically organized in a way that can lead to more effective clinical practice and research that is theory informed which will then advance the field based on empirical research. The relationship between theory and research will finally make sense to many of us who have seen these as disconnected. This does not mean they have been well connected. In fact, the author points out the shortcoming in this area and offers a theory which will connect these in a more useful way. The author helps the reader understand the meaning and clinical usefulness of constructs in a chapter that is much like a philosophy of science for family and personality psychologists. Dr. L'Abate then describes in great detail the evolution of systems thinking from its inception to today as well as personality theory. Most readers will find this historical analysis new and enlighten them regarding their own theoretical understanding.

Finally, this volume offers new or emerging constructs that will renew our field when they are embedded within his Relational Competence Theory. He also shows that these two concepts are missing in virtually every theory of family psychology. Of these two concepts, the overarching construct is that of identity. Identity is the combination of communal presence and agentic power. Communal presence is further broken down into importance and intimacy and agentic power is broken down into doing (information/services) and having (goods/money). Intimacy is empirically defined by relationships characterized by closeness, commitment, interdependence, and duration. But, more importantly, instead of paper-and-pencil self-report questionnaires, too numerous to list, Dr. L'Abate defines intimacy as the sharing of joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt.

Just to give an example, there have been major studies on the American family. The traditional American family (intact family with father, mother, and children) only constitutes about 25% of households. Traditional definitions of the family, classically used measures, and the meaning of the data collected without a theory to hold it together so that we can make sense of it means that we just have a huge pile of numbers. In addition, on a personal note this author has been using the concept of intimacy for over 20 years in his practice and writing and found it to be clinically useful as a way to understand the origin of some couple dysfunctions and as a goal of therapy. None of the major texts on couple therapy today address the topic of intimacy. If we don't see intimacy as an important part of couple functioning are we not missing the point?

In closing, Dr. L'Abate is challenging us to look beyond our clinical practices and the attainment of more and more skills and for researches to look beyond simply collecting data disconnected from verifiable models. He is challenging us to grasp the whole picture as difficult as that might be so that we can build theories which will not eventually lapse into disuse, become irreverent and meaningless or be mere exercises in rhetoric. The purpose of this book is to change our paradigm of thinking. To realize that by understanding theory construction at all levels we will be able to create a discipline with enduring theories that have clinical utility and be able to further refine those theories with meaningful research that informs us about the nature of and how to better help individuals, couples, and families.

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I have known Lu L'Abate since he joined the editorial board of *The American Journal of Family Therapy* (AJFT) in 1976 and later we met in person at the home of Bernie Mazel, President of Brunner/Mazel Book Publications in Larchment, N.Y. in 1981 to celebrate the pre-publication of *Paradoxical Therapy* (1982) , co-authored with his graduate student at the time, Gerald Weeks. This popular contribution to the field was translated into seven languages. By then, Dr. L' Abate already was recognized as a master clinician who combined research with many ground-breaking experiments such as his programmed writing in the 1970s. As professor of family psychology at the Georgia State University in Atlanta, he authored many textbooks such as those programmed writing experiments eventually resulting in his encyclopedic *Sourcebook of Interactive Practice Exercises in Mental Health* (2011) and his iconoclastic *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy as a Science* (2013). In parallel with his early clinical applications in the 1970s, he introduced a theory of the individual in the context of the family that has been revised for decades illustrating the evolution of his thinking and conceptualization. With the input of his Padua buddies, this approach became known as Relational Competence Theory.

For decades, Lu assisted me with the development of the international aspects of The AJFT at a time when he also became known for his unparalleled creative and prolific writings. He captured the minds of academic and clinical colleagues and the hearts of all those who benefited from reading and absorbing his masterpieces.

Dr. L'Abate and I, with several other colleagues, wrote the first and second editions to the *Dictionary of Family Psychology and Family Therapy*, published in the respective years of 1983 and 1993. Since his retirement from teaching at Georgia State University in 1990, he has continued to write mostly academic books, with a few noteworthy popular texts to share his brilliance with the psychological and mental health community. He has achieved an almost unbelievable number of published books in his career for a now total of 58! Just consider for a moment, in 2011 he wrote three books and edited another three books. In 2012, he slowed down to edit three more texts. However, in 2013 he was back to his usual leisure pastime of writing another four books, a record that, as far as I know, remains unmatched in quality and quantity in the annals of professional and scientific psychology.

Eventually, wanting to change what he considered a "minimal" contribution to AJFT, he asked to become book-co-editor with his friend David Ryback. Little did I know that Lu loved writing book reviews as well as other professional and academic reviews of his own books. He also became a member of the Editorial Board of *PsycCRITIQUES*, the American Psychological Association online book reviews. According to its Editor, Danny Wedding, Dr. L'Abate is the most reviewed and wrote most book reviews than anyone else since the predecessor of that journal which formerly was called *Contemporary Psychology*. If he ever received, which was very seldom, a negative book review, he offered the comment: "It is better to be reviewed negatively than to be ignored".

Until recently, Lu's multiple contributions during the years have not gained the recognition that he deserves by mainstream psychology. However, a growing force of international leaders in Germany, Italy, Japan, and Poland have always valued his original thinking and foundation milestones that have still to influence mainstream psychology without the identification of "whence it all began". The incredibly vast range of topics mastered by his books include such topics as: play, hurt feelings, pleasures, philosophy of science, the laboratory method in clinical psychology, homework assignments, pre-para-post-therapeutic activities in mental health, mental illness prevention, health promotion, psychotherapy and rehabilitation, self-help, and technology in psychology, psychiatry, and neurology.

This volume represents the very core of Lu L'Abate's efforts; that is, to integrate through two simple constructs of intimacy and identity, the family and personality psychology with attachment theory, communication, and relationship science. If and when productivity is matched by originality, and even mastery in a variety of different topics, what is the result and what does one obtain? I leave the answer to the readers of what may be a volume that culminates his six decades of publications in various textbooks and journals, including the one I have edited.

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Preface

This monograph owes its origins to the decades-old proposal by David Bakan (1966) about the duality of human existence. He proposed that community and agency would be two necessary and sufficient constructs to classify and to encompass most human relationships. This dichotomy has been influential and proved valid by a variety of contributions over the last half a century as reviewed repeatedly in various publication (Cusinato and L'Abate 2012a, b; L'Abate 2004, 2005; L'Abate et al. 2010).

Clark (1984) and her coworkers (Clark et al. 1986; Mills and Clark 1986) have added another version to this dichotomy by offering a model where the communal aspect is found in relationships when parties involved feel a special obligation to be responsive to one another. Exchange relationships, on the other hand, do not include an obligation to be mutually responsive. In spite of its being clearly distinct from Bakan's original dichotomy, I prefer to look at the contribution of Clark et al. as another important addition and expansion of Bakan's original dichotomy, as supported, among others, by the research of Helgeson and Palladino (2011).

Additionally, the purpose of this monograph is to argue and assert that two important fields of psychology, family and personality psychology, if not already demised, are conceptually, empirically, and practically moribund. This conclusion, of course, does not in any way, shape, or form apply to both specializations as professional organizations. May they prosper and multiply as academic and profession associations. However, conceptually and critically, both fields need to be reconsidered in the light of recent conceptual developments in the last half-century. Both fields are being superseded by perhaps more appropriate, perhaps more specific, and maybe more likely verifiable concepts and constructs, such as, respectively: intimacy and identity.

Intimacy is related to who we are as individuals—being emotionally available to and aware of ourselves—sharing ourselves communally and reciprocally with those we love and who love us. Identity, on other hand, is defined agentically by what we do or perform and what we have and possess. When what we do and what we have are combined, this combination leads to how effectively powerful we are in intimate and non-intimate, agentic relationships.

The traditional family, still conceived as composed of two parents and two children of different gender, is responsible for only one-fourth of all domiciles in USA. Singles, same-sex couples, and completely different family organizations complete the remaining 100%, especially if we add ethnic and cultural differences. Difficulties in defining what personality is require a change in perspective by emphasizing identity as a more concrete and specific construct.

When both intimacy and identity become imbedded in Relational Competence Theory (RCT), they assume the roles of models within the whole hierarchical structure of that theory. However, ultimately Identity is the overarching construct over intimacy because it belongs to a different level of discourse and observation (Colesso and L'Abate 2012; Cusinato and L'Abate 2012a, b; L'Abate 2005, 2012a, b; L'Abate and Cusinato 2007; L'Abate et al. 2010).

To support many of my arguments, I have found it useful to include some of my book reviews to argue in greater detail what I had already written about a specific topic. Those reviews, as far as I was concerned, dealt specifically with the issues at hand, and illustrated in more ways than one how my thinking evolved over the last few years. If I did not include them they would have gathered dust in an online journal and would have been ignored since there was no link among them. These reviews found their links in this monograph. I hope the reader will forgive me if those reviews might have been more detailed than necessary.

Contents

Chapter 1 is a historical introduction to the systems paradigm pioneered by giants in the middle of the last century. These pioneers stressed the hierarchical structure of organizations and their continuous symbiotic interdependence with the environment. Their contributions lead to think of a theory being constructed just like an organization, hierarchically. Chapter 2 shows how the traditional family as conceived in the past includes only 25% of domiciles in the USA. The major part of existing domiciles is made up of singles and various permutations and combinations of people from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Under such conditions it is virtually impossible to study the family as a distinct group. Instead, the construct of intimacy is introduced and supported by references in some family-related volumes. Chapter 3 criticizes the construct of personality as being difficult to define and study. Instead the construct of identity is introduced as clearly easier to define and evaluate. Chapter 4 introduces how attachment theory, communication science, and relationship science view both constructs in ways that indicate a much greater interest than family and personality textbooks support. In Chap. 5, RCT is summarized to show how both intimacy and identity are two models among 16 verifiable ones. Chapter 6 introduces a model of Communal Power that includes two models of RCT, importance and intimacy, while Agentic Power is defined by Performance and Production.

Readership

This monograph should be of interest to graduate students in clinical psychology, social work, counseling, and other mental health disciplines in seminars or classes devoted to family and personality psychology.

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L'Abate, L. (2006, August 23) Is the interpersonal too impersonal? [Review of the book Self and relationships: Connecting interpersonal and interpersonal processes]. PsycCRITIQUES, 51(34), Article 16. Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/pysccritiques/

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I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Max North of the Georgia Polytechnic Institute and State University for designing Figs. 6.1 and 6.2 in Chap. 6.

Contents

Chapter 1
The Meaning of Constructs

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to explain the meaning of constructs within a larger conceptual context heretofore called the "Systems Paradigm" (Emery 1969; L'Abate 2012c; Magnavita 2012a, b; Stanton and Welsh 2012). A psychological construct is an invented construction given value by its becoming or being a measurable variable. According to VandenBos (2007, p. 221), a construct is a complex idea or concept formed of simpler ideas. Furthermore, according to VandenBos, a construct is an explanatory *model* based on empirically verifiable and measurable events or processes inferred from data but not directly observable. A construct, therefore, could also become a hypothetical model when based on the possibility that, when validated empirically, that construct may become a model. In spite of VandenBos equating constructs with models, we need to differentiate clearly between these two terms. Constructs become models when they are validated and become imbedded within a larger theoretical framework. Without such a connection, many constructs used in past psychological theories are orphan constructs destined to die of inevitably gradual decline and even disappearance from the psychological literature (L'Abate 2009d, 2013a).

One important differentiation that is crucial to the thesis of this volume, lies in the difference between observable and observed constructs versus hypothetical and, therefore inferred constructs. For instance, as argued in Chap. 2 of this volume, a construct such as intimacy, when defined by self-report, paper-and-pencil questionnaires produces a hypothetical or inferred construct defined by a plethora of different test instruments or questionnaires (Mashek and Aron 2004; Prager 1995). Intimacy is not immediately observable and is therefore measured and evaluated from how participants report about this construct. On the other hand, when intimacy is defined behaviorally, as the sharing of joys and hurts and the fears of being hurt, this construct becomes immediately observable and measurable by counting how often, at what rate, and at what intensity joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt feelings are shared between intimates, couples, or families (L'Abate 2009c, 2011a; Rosenbaum and Valsiner 2011).

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The same differentiation can be made and will be made in Chap. 3 of this volume in regard to S*elf*. When the self is defined by what participants self-report on a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, self becomes a hypothetical, inferred construct. When self is evaluated by who one *is* (Presence), what one *does* (Performance), and one *has* (Production), it becomes directly observable and concretely measurable. This point will be elaborated in Chaps. 5 and 6 of this volume.

What is a Paradigm?

To expand on the connection between constructs as models, we need to consider what is meant by "A systems paradigm". To explain their meanings we need to use and apply two important continua that have been present directly and indirectly in most meta-theoretical paradigms, and those are: A continuum of Abstraction–Concreteness and another continuum of Generality–Specificity (L'Abate and Sweeney 2012). Once these two continua are constructed orthogonally, relationships among paradigms, theories, models, and dimension become clearer (Fig. 1.1).

Hierarchically, paradigms are separated from theories, models, and especially dimensions by being both abstract and general with few if any connections to the

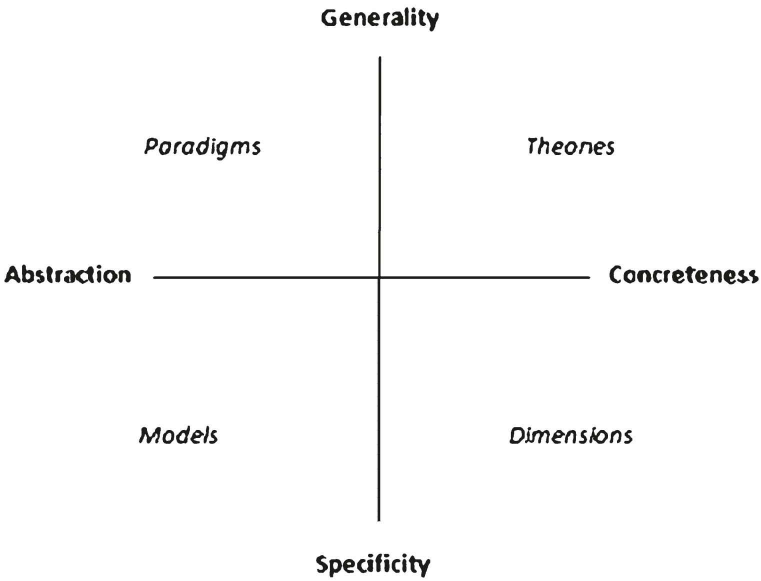

Fig. 1.1 Relationships among paradigms, theories, models, and dimensions according to two orthogonal continua of abstraction–concreteness and generality and specificity (reprinted with the kind permission of Jeffrey Magnavita, Editor of the Journal of Unified Psychotherapy and Clinical Science (JUPCS)

other three terms, especially to dimensions and only through theories and models (L'Abate et al., in press). No wonder if there are so many paradigms without any clear or precise connections to theories (L'Abate 2012c). Theories, on the other hand, may be general in scope; however, they tend to become somewhat more concrete than paradigms. Models may seem abstract at first blush but tend to become much more specific than both paradigms and theories. Dimensions, by their very empirical nature, tend to become both concrete and specific allowing them to connect primarily with both theories and models and only secondarily with paradigms. Dimensions, therefore, can be connected to paradigms only through theories and models. This characteristic leads directly toward empirical validation but further away from paradigms. Consequently, dimensions are connected to paradigms either through theories, models, or both if models are part of a theory, as shown in Fig. 1.1.

Additionally, an important point made by Wolff (1989) relates to links between theory in general and practice:

> The complexity of relation between theory and practice might suggest that theory is so far removed from the everyday concerns of clinical work as to be of no value; and that might be far better than rely on clinical experience and intuitions than on abstract theoretical speculations to plan programs of intervention.. (p. 25).

Therefore, if we are going to have a paradigm, or a theory, both will need to be differentiated from each other conceptually and linked to clinical practices empirically. Meta-theoretical paradigms in psychology (L'Abate 2009d, 2012c) can in turn be divided into at least three different categories:

General Integrative Paradigms

Within this category are included the biopsychosocial paradigm (Woods 2012), interbehaviorism (Fryling and Hayes 2012), systems thinking (Cigoli and Scabini 2012; Magnavita 2012a, b), constructivism (Riegler 2012), and materialism (L'Abate 2012b).

Particular-Specific

Within this category were included paradigms that are more specific and concrete than the previous ones, such as empiricism and cognitivism (Loughlin and Alexander 2012), humanism and behaviorism (Ryback 2012), and existentialism (Cusinato 2012).

Operational

Paradigms included in this category are those where actual concrete and specific operations are performed, such as information processing (De Giacomo et al. 2012), reductionism (Berntson and Cacioppo 2012), produced and spontaneous emergent interactionism (Colesso and L'Abate 2012), spontaneous emergence (Hillix et al. 2012), and essentialism (L'Abate 2012a; Zelazo and Barr 1989).

To go beyond a systems thinking one must assume a decidedly empirical paradigm without any excuses or recriminations (Loughlin and Alexander 2012). To be sure there is no equivocation about this assumption, VandenBos (2007) defined empiricism as

> …. as an approach to epistemology holding that all knowledge of matters of fact either arises from experience or requires experience for its validation. In particular, empiricism denies the possibility of INNATE IDEAS, arguing that the mind at birth is like a blank sheet of paper (unless demonstrated otherwise, n/a)… (p. 328).

After tracing the historical background of empiricism in the hands of such philosophers as John Locke (1632–1704), George Berkeley (1685–1763), and David Hume (1711–1776), VandenBos (2007, p. 328) expanded on this definition: "Although there is strong emphasis on empiricism in psychology, this can take different forms" as shown in its purest form by Behaviorism. Its most extreme form, followed by the present assumption, is that "experimentation is the most important, if not the only, foundation of scientific knowledge and the means by which individuals evaluate truth claims or the adequacy of theories and models." By experimentation is meant replicable manipulations of variables under controlled conditions, as Galileo Galilei originally did.

Consequently, in clinical psychological applications and most mental health interventions both objective evaluations and interventions are manipulations of variables contained in tests and in replicable interventions times (x) the nature of the participant to be evaluated and possibly help. Short of this assumption is the position that any observation (standard operating procedures) needs to be replicable in order to become verifiable (L'Abate 1999, 2013a). Anything outside of this position belongs to the realms of esthetic enthusiasm, faithful fantasy, or wishful thinking.

Of course, this apparently extreme position opens itself to the charge that science may have become a religion and worshipped as such. In rebuttal, a religion usually rejects negative feedback and stays the course without changes favoring the status quo, while change is built in the process of scientific discovery and evaluation. Therefore, science changes continuously on the basis of negative feedback, critical evidence that indicates the need to change. It would be acceptable to say that some scientists are more enthusiastically obsessive about their work than other scientists. However, such a commitment does not make them religious because they do not accept anything on faith.

Therefore, this empirical assumption rejects any conceptual paradigm such as traditional "systems", because it is not verifiable and has not lead to any operations that can be or become empirically verifiable (L'Abate and Colondier 1987). As argued above, paradigms as abstract and general concepts cannot be validated unless reduced to more concrete and specific theories that in turn link them with or produce models with dimensions that can be empirically validated (Fig. 1.1).

Unless the so-called systems paradigm reduces itself in its levels of abstraction and generality, by becoming more concrete and specific in its assumptions and replicable standard operating procedures, it is destined to remain an interesting intellectual enterprise favored by those who prefer rhetorical thinking and speculation over empirical evidence and reduction (Bernson and Cacioppo 2012; Guerra and Capitelli 2009).

As is, systems thinking remains a beautiful exercise in intellectually rhetorical stimulation without any link to other paradigms, theories, models, dimensions, or to clinical practices (Magnavita 2012a, b). Thus far, case studies in couple and family seemingly based on a systems thinking attempted such a link rhetorically, just as in the past clinical case studies were interpreted rhetorically from psychoanalytic thinking, without any empirical link between theory and practice (Carlson et al. 2012). This link can be achieved only when SOPs in psychological evaluations and interventions are preferably administered through structured distance or remote writing as a replicable medium of communication and healing rather than just non-replicable, face-to-face talk (L'Abate 1999, 2003, 2011b, 2013a).

The Systems Paradigm as the Fourth Force in Psychological Theories

In spite of the above criticisms, systems thinking has had important influence in the evolutionary creation and eventual culmination of Relational Competence Theory, as discussed in Chap. 5 of this volume. While psychoanalysis, behaviorism, and humanism (the Third Force) in the middle of last century attempted to obtain a hegemonic competitive position over each other, a fourth conceptual force started to develop that was mostly ignored or overlooked by the other three schools, in spite of its concepts acquiring a wide acceptance even in common English language.

While neither psychoanalysis, behaviorism, nor humanism failed to obtain their desired hegemonic position, systems thinking became a school that, in spite of its misgivings discussed above, influenced this writer greatly. Consequently, the rest of this chapter will attempt to illustrate how pioneers in the development and evolution of a system paradigm lead and influenced this writer's thinking.

George E. Saymour (2007) defined system theory as:

> …an interdisciplinary field of science. It studies the nature of complex systems in nature, society, and science. More specifically, it is a framework by which one can analyze and/or describe any group of objects that work in concert to produce some result. This could be a single organism, any organization, or society, or any electro-mechanical or informational artifact… Systems theory was an area of study specifically developed following the World Wars from the work of Ludwig von Bertalanffy, Anatol Rapoport, Kenneth E. Boulding…C. West Churchman, and others in the 1950s

What is more important about systems thinking that puts it above and beyond psychoanalysis, behaviorism, and humanism, is its emphasis on the continuously strong symbiotic and interdependent relationship between humans and their environment. One cannot live without the other. As Emery (1969) summarized it:

> "The reluctance to tackle environmental analysis appears to have risen from the forbidding nature of two problems—(a) the sheer complexity of most environments, and (b) the

incommensurateness of the many heterogeneous processes that make up the system and its environment (e. g., psychological, economic, technical, metereological" (p. 203).

As discussed and shown in Chaps. 5 and 6, the generic term "environment" practically worshipped by many theorists, has been broken down concretely and specifically into particular settings. It would be impossible to review all the contributions of past systems scholars, some of which had to be overlooked for reasons of space. Only selected ones, those who contributed the most to this writer's thinking, will be reviewed here, albeit shortly and superficially. For another historical and philosophical background of systems theorists, the interested reader may consult L'Abate and De Giacomo (2003, pp. 4–18).

Early Beginnings of the Systems Paradigm

System thinking was born from emphasis on any human business, industrial, or military organization that needed management. For management to occur efficiently it was necessary to differentiate among different levels of organization from bacteria to human societies. Consequently, in addition to a continuum of abstraction to concreteness, another major continuum of relevance to systems thinking was a continuum of generality to specificity, as mentioned above (Fig. 1.1).

The dictum at the time was: "Human organizations are living systems and should be analyzed accordingly" (Emery 1969, p. 8). Organizational management is concerned with control to manage the boundary conditions of any organizational enterprise, governing the interdependence among its component parts and between an enterprise and its environment. An organizational enterprise can achieve a stationary steady state only when there is constancy of directions to produce and maintain a rate of progress toward tolerable limits necessary to succeed. According to Emery (1969) "…an enterprise can achieve a condition of stationary steady state when it allows its human members a measure of autonomy and selective interdependence" (p. 11). Finally, in line with the empirical position assumed above, Emery (1969) concluded that "…theories that cannot predict and hence cannot be experimentally confirmed or disconfirmed are not scientific theories" (p. 12). This criterion has been used as one of at least four requirements in RTC and that is: verifiability, as discussed in Chaps. 5 and 6.

The Contribution of Wolfgang Koehler

Koehler (1938) was one of the early thinkers who distinguished between closed and open systems, including also the concept of equilibrium in organic regulation between those two types of systems. However, a dimension of closeness and openness is relative. Even a dead system decomposes. A stone may become smaller if intensely subjected to continuous spills of dripping water over centuries. On a more relative scale, on a continuum of openness to closeness, for example, some totalitarian political regimes or religious sects, as in some extreme political dictatorships, attempt to maintain a closed system by setting strong boundary rules on how members should behave to be accepted in the fold, by conforming to arbitrary rules and norms that define the system, not allowing its members to leave and not allowing strangers to come inside. Open systems are in continuous interactions with their immediate environment to survive and prosper. Democratic societies as open systems allowing for freedom of expression even though they may have rules concerning violence but allow its citizen to come and go without surveillance.

For Koehler, the concept of systems superseded the concept of a machine—beginning the systems dialogue within a mechanistic conceptual framework. Koehler criticized Cannon's construct of homeostasis as steady, stationary states that maintain and regulate the functioning of an organism. However, it is quite impossible to reach a rule that would allow internal transformation toward a functional equilibrium. The body is an open system in continuous transfer of energy within itself and in continuous transactions with the environment to survive, according to laws of thermodynamics (Capitelli et al. 2009). An example of a steady state is potential energy that varies according to chemical and physiological variables. Therefore, Koehler rejected equilibrium theory or homeostatis as being incompatible to elementary biological factors. He supported, however, the process of control and regulation as an important organic construct over homeostasis, as discussed in Chaps. 5 and 6 of this volume.

The Contribution of Andras Angyal

Angyal (1941) was the forerunner of most systems thinking about the structure of wholes, that is: the logical manipulation of relationships among the component parts or members of a whole system. A relationship required two and only two members, while a system may involve an unspecified number of members. This differentiation is relevant to the arguments made about dimensions. It will take more than one dimension to compose a construct. Angyal used the term "system" to denote a "holistic system" which is constituted by elements that compose a whole system, synonymously with a "holistic organization": A system, therefore, is a distribution of its members in a dimensional domain. This distribution of members in a system is what matters the most, above and beyond the specific nature of its members that could be human beings in an organization as well as objects in a museum, animals in a habitat, or machines in an industrial plant.

After this introduction, Angyal discussed the importance of supra-ordinate levels of organization in order to understand how one component part of the system relates to other parts at different levels. He concluded with a dictum that remained the battle cry of systems thinking: "The whole is more than the sum of its parts." What is more important is not the summation of parts in the whole but their arrangement, according to levels of organization included in RCT (Chaps. 5 and 6 this volume).

The Contribution of James K. Feibleman and Julius W. Friend

Angyal's arguments were expanded further by Feibleman and Friend (1945) who emphasized the different functions that parts in a system play within different levels of analysis according to a hierarchy of interdependent parts and subparts. These authors then developed a taxonomy of relations which exist among parts, a list that included connectedness, symmetry, correlation, addition, and multiplication among others. Furthermore they listed and discussed eight rules of organizations that included: (1) structure as the sharing of subparts between parts; (2) organization is the one controlling order of a structure; (3) one more level is needed to constitute an organization, the more complex an organization the greater the number of shared and unshared parts and a need to separate them according to some rational order of serial relations. No part of a structure can survive without linkage to another part according to a principle of complementarity.

Additionally, in what I think is a visionary article, Feibleman and Friend (1945) suggested nine rules of interactions in an organization such as in every action in one part of the structure there is sharing and interchange with flexibility as a condition for growth and rigidity as a condition for maintenance of the status quo. Equilibrium is the desirable, ideal state to which all organizations aspire up to a point when the status quo does not allow an organization to change, sometime by a disruption. The ability to change is even more desirable than equilibrium, there must be a balance among levels and parts of an organization in order to change positively rather than negatively. Change is also a process related to how an organization interacts with its environment through cooperation or competition.

Finally, these authors emphasized the importance of specific functions in various parts of an organization, decrying their need to use exemplary hypotheses rather than empirical evidence. These functions were divided into static and dynamic rules, in which they differentiate hierarchically among three different levels of organization, subparts, parts, and wholes. As they admitted in their concluding statement, these authors indeed established a canon for the structure and function of organization abstracted from any and every empirical field and science (1945, p. 42). In spite of a very short summary that fails to give justice to this article, I think that their contribution is as relevant today as it was more than half century ago. Its thinking will be visible in Chaps. 5 and 6 about RCT in this volume.

The Contribution of Philip Selznick

Selznick (1948) was one of the first thinkers to consider the foundations of a theory of organizations arguing that the term organization means how personnel is arranged in the system with rationally coordinated activities through the allocation of functions and responsibilities. More importantly, Selznick emphasized the interchangeability of individuals in the systems with overlapping functions and responsibilities. Two important characteristics of such systems are *economy* and *adaptive social structure*. The major characteristic of an organization is to minimize expenses and maximize productivity within a context of continuous cooperation to adapt to changing circumstances.

Besides cooperation, delegation takes place downwardly within a personnel hierarchy, the formal assignments of tasks and responsibilities that minimize costs and maximize gains. The time of an executive is more costly than the time of a line-worker when the former is much more difficult to change than the latter. Executives have the authority to make decisions about tasks and responsibilities that are carried out by lower level personnel. This contribution is important in terms of the characteristics of levels of organization and models in RCT (Chaps. 5 and 6 of this volume).

The Contribution of Ludwig von Bertalanffy

Von Bertalanffy (1950) started its historically important article in this way:

> From the physical point of view, the characteristic state of the living organism is that of an open system, A system is closed if no material enters or leaves it: it is open if there is import and export and, therefore, change of the components. Living systems are open systems, maintaining themselves in exchange of materials with environment, and to continuous building up and breaking down of its components (p. 23).

After expanding on this introduction, von Bertalanffy introduced the principle of *equifinality*, how different conditions or causes may lead to the same outcome, as, for instance, organic development and growth are the outcome of a variety of preliminary conditions, such as the nature of the organism at birth, type of nurturance received, presence of warmth or abuse in relationships surrounding the infant. A different process, called equipotentiality, indicated how one single, simple cause may produce a multitude of outcomes, as in the adult outcome of childhood sexual abuse (L'Abate 2005, 2011a).

The second law of thermodynamics, was used to illustrate another principle of negative entropy (Garuccio and D'Angelo 2009; Guerra and Capitelli 2009; Longo 2009). According to VandenBos (2007, p. 333) entropy has three different meanings: (1) in physics, entropy is a thermodynamic quantity providing a measure of unavailability of the energy in a closed system to work; (2) in statistics, entropy is a measure of the disorder of a closed system; and (3) in information theory, entropy is a measure of the efficiency with which a system transmits information. You may take your pick according to your preferences. I prefer the third definition.

The Contribution of W. Ross Ashby

Ashby (1956) is considered the father of cybernetics, or the scientific study of communication and control applied to machines and living organisms, together with pioneers such as Nobert Wiener, Heinz von Foester, and Ludwig von Bertalanffy. Cybernetics includes the study of self-regulatory mechanisms as in the thermostat or feedback loops in the nervous system as well as the transmission and self-correction of information in both computers and human communication (De Giacomo et al. 2012; VandenBos 2007, p. 253). For instance, for Ashby regulation and control were intimately related to the point that both terms have been used synonymously. What is more important is that hierarchy is built in a sequence of steps necessary to achieve control that is: which part of the system needs control and which part does not? Ashby emphasized the importance of disturbances in the system that forces it to change or be destroyed. The role of disturbances in the evolution of industrial systems has been more recently emphasized by Clayton Christensen (MacFarquhar 2012). I am sorry if I cannot spend more time to expand on Ashby contribution, but the interested reader will find online a great deal of information about this and other systems pioneers.

The Contribution of Ernest Nagel

Nagel's (1956) contribution consisted to insisting on the functional analysis of components in a system. First of all, he discussed the many ways that this term is used in mathematics or in biology. In the latter field, function means what role does one part in relationship to the whole organism. Of course, as soon as this term is used one must pay attention on how, when, and where it malfunctions or fails to function. Secondly, one error present in sociology as the time was to equate *function* with *motive*. According to Nagel (1956), the former was objectively visible while the latter was a subjective and, therefore, inferred construct. Furthermore, one must consider the context of a function, how one particular function is dependent or independent from other functions in a system. This issue will be discussed in the relationships among models of RCT in Chap. 5 of this volume.

The Contribution of Valery I. Kremyansky

This Russian philosopher (Kremyansjy 1960) was responsible for asking which organizations are involved according to their similarities as well as their differences. In trying to answer this question, he argued for fundamental types of material systems, in a way that was acceptable to a political culture that was oriented toward such a paradigm: materialism (L'Abate 2012a, 2013b).

After acknowledging the contribution of Ludwig von Bertalanffy, Kremyansky contributed an important point that needs quoting in toto:

> The more varied and complex the interconnections between components or subsystems (group of components), the deeper the changes in the components (usually in only the first or second immediately preceding degrees). But these components can change only to the extent if their own capacity for change. For example, atoms changes into molecules, and inorganic molecules change into crystals, solutions, and cells; but there is far greater change in large polymerized molecules (macromolecules) in cells, and cells in multi-cellular organisms. The most profound changes occur in multi-cellular animals in the higher-degree systems (Emery 1969, p. 128)

This is perhaps the most clear introduction to the hierarchical nature of organisms. If one were to substitute “degrees” with “levels” of organization, one would conclude that “the whole its bigger than the sum but not bigger than the organized system of its parts, in all its connections and intermediaries” (Emery 1969, p. 130).

Kremyansky (1960) made self-awareness as the first and best example of a corrective reflexive feedback loop that can be generated internally and externally in relationship to the immediate environment:

> Regardless of how highly developed the self-awareness and independent activity of living systems, only the universe… is a perfect cause unto itself. Only the universe possesses complete self-motion. For all finite material formation and particularly for open systems, there exists a relationship to the environment which is based on interconnection with the environment, and hence, there exists an interdependence between each system and its environment (Emery 1969, p. 135).

He went on to assert that such a relationship between the organism and environment does not follow “along a straight line” (Emery, 1969, p. 141), advocating that “…the division and breakdown” [of a system, n/a] “…into relatively distinct subsystems and components…has in general great meaning for the integrity of an organism and for its entire destiny” (Emery 1969, p. 143). The whole issue of self-awareness has been expanded by Cusinato (2012a, b) by finding empirically at least two types of awareness, one becoming or being aware of being aware and the second as insightful knowledge of part errors by correcting them reflexively.

Kremyansky (1960) concluded his article with the argument that “…important feature of living systems can be studied quantitatively and quite objectively…” (Emery 1969, p. 146). This argument eventually lead to an arithmetical model of interactions (L’Abate et al. 2010) that was validated empirically by Colesso et al. (2013) using a lob-logarithmic analysis, as discussed in Chap. 5 of this volume.

The Contribution of Russell L. Ackoff

Ackoff’s (1960) contribution consisted of pointing out how systems thinking pervaded multiple realms of material industry and live humanity with many similarities between the two, such as communication, controls, education, and weapons systems: “…we can define a system broadly and crudely as any entity, conceptual or physical which consists of interdependent parts” (Emory 1969, p. 332). More importantly, Ackoff (1960) insisted that: “A behavioral system, then, is a conceptual contruct as well as a physical entity” (Emery 1969, p. 332). This statement is the link to the argument that a psychological theory must be conceptualized hierarchically, just like any other educational, industrial, military, political, or religious or human organization (Cusinato and L’Abate 2012a, b; L’Abate and Cusinato 2007; L’Abate et al. 2010). All of the above indicates the interdisciplinary nature of systems thinking that encompassed both humans and machines, both separately as well as interdependently.

The Contribution of Frederick E. Emery and Eric L. Trist

Both scholars (Emery and Trist 1960) devoted their seminal article to emphasize the importance of continuous critical analysis of its structure, functions, and responsibilities, acknowledging that there is no simple, linear relationship between what information or material comes into a system and what comes out of it. The process of throughput after receiving input from inside and outside the system, makes it difficult to determine what output will come out (output). Thus, the most important aspect of a system is constant regulation and control of input, its throughput, and its outcome. This analysis, together with the rest of contributions summarized in this chapter, was important in the creation of an information processing Model[1] in RCT (see Chap. 5 this volume).

What are the characteristics of social–technological systems? Emery and Trist (1960) attempted to answer this question by emphasizing the social aspects of an organization (or enterprise) as an open system. These systems "…grow by internal elaboration and manage to obtain a steady state while working at achieving a no simple one-to-one relation between variations in input and output and that the technological component, in converting inputs into outputs plays a major role in determining the self-regulating properties of an enterprise" (Emery 1969, pp. 283–284). More than the other contributors, Emery and Trist (1960) applied these principles to real-life, comparative analysis of industries in India.

The Contribution of Herbert A. Simon

Simon's (1956) contribution consisted of criticizing the term "environment" as "ambiguous" explaining that:

> We are not interested in describing some physically objective world in its totality, but only those aspects of the totality that have relevance as the 'life space' of the organism considered. Hence, what we call 'environment' will depend upon the 'needs,' 'drives,' or 'goals' of the organism, and upon its perceptual apparatus (Emery 1969, p. 215).

The foregoing statement had an important influence on separating subjectively perceived contexts (Model[1] in RCT, Chap. 5 in this volume) from objectively visible physical settings that can be photographed and recorded concretely (Model[3]; Chap. 5 in this volume).

The Contribution of David Katz and Robert L. Kahn

Both Katz and Kahn (1966) emphasized that the first step in trying to understand an organization or a social system is its location and identification, by asking the questions: "How do we know that we are dealing with an organization and what are its boundaries?" (p. 16). According to these authors, an organization is simply the epitome of the purposes of its designer, its leaders, and its key members. The table of organization shows how any organization is constructed at various levels of management.

Additionally, these authors listed the common characteristics of open systems: (1) importance of energy; (2) importance of input, what comes into the system; (3) importance of throughput, how whatever comes into the system is processed; (4) importance of output; (5) systems as cycles of events, indicating changes in the system; and (6) the outcome of the sequence of the four previous steps, including the effects of recursive loops that may strengthen or weaken the system, producing negative entropy: all forms of organization move toward disorganization or death, depending on positive or negative feedback or loop. Criticism is one form of negative feedback that can be avoided, denied, suppressed, or oppressed. Used positively, that is, allowing to enter the system, even criticism can be used to make necessary changes in the system.

An even more important contribution by Katz and Kahn consisted of introducing the process of differentiation, how a system moves from an initially diffuse, global whole into parts with more specialized functions. This process will be considered in detail in the whole pyramidal structure and especially in Model[8] of RCT (Chaps. 5 and 6):

> The growth of the personality proceeds from primitive, crude organizations of mental functions to hierarchically structured and well-differentiated systems of beliefs and feelings. Social organizations move toward the multiplication and elaboration of roles with greater specification of functions. In the United States today [for instance, n/a] medical specialists now outnumber the general practitioners (p. 99).

This process follows what Katz and Kahn attributed to von Bertalanffy as "progresssive mechanization." They concluded with the summary that: "Open systems share the characteristics of negative entropy, feedback, homeostasis, differentiation, and equifinality" (Emery 1969, p. 103).

The Contribution of Gerd Sommerhoff

This thinker (Sommerhoff 1969) went against the grain of the seemingly materialist nature of preceding pioneers by proclaiming the abstract nature of living systems. He argued that "The pysico-chemical nature of the living organism is only half the truth… the teleological nature of human organisms is the other half" (Emery 1969, p. 147). "The most distinctive characteristic of human behavior lies in its goal-directness or apparent purposiveness and the hierarchical manner in which goals of its various part-activities are inter-related and integrated" (Emery 1969, p. 150). Since science started with observable events and goal structures are subjective, Sommerhoff suggested that: "… there is reason why it should not be possible at a later stage to interpret subjective events in terms of such [observable] events" (Emery 1969, p. 154). He went on to give examples of goal-directed behaviors in adaptation, regulation, co-ordination, learning, instinct, and drive. This contribution will be found in Model[12] of RCT about Priorities (Chap. 5 this volume).

The Contribution of Marc-Paul Schutzenberger

Prior to Sommerhoff's (1969) arguments about the purposiveness of human behavior, Schutzenberger (1954) expanded on a tentative classification of goal-seeking behavior, emphasizing the importance of a "well-developed theory" before starting to experiment:

> Such a theory, must inevitably, if it is to be precise, be mathematical; but I hope to show….that what is necessary, at least at first, is logic and precision of mathematical thought rather than its more advanced techniques (Emery 1969, p. 205).

This thinker differentiated between probable strategies and proven tactics in a way that recalled Machiavelli's emphasis that the Prince must have a plan before entering into battle. Schutzenberger's (1954) call for mathematical precision was attempted in an arithmetical Model[10] that differentiated among six degrees of interactions, running from multiplicative to divisive ones, as already noted above (Chap. 5 in this volume), and validated by Colesso et al. (2013).

The Contribution of Gregory Bateson

Only a brief summary of Bateson's contribution (1972, 1980) can be given here. According to Bateson, for something to be defined as "mind" it must follow six criteria: (1) it must be an aggregate of interacting parts or bodies; (2) the interaction of its multiple parts is activated by differences among the parts; (3) the mental process requires an accompanying output of energy; (4) the mental process requires chains of circular determination; (5) in the mental process the effects of differences must be viewed as transformations; and (6) the description and classification of these processes reveal a hierarchy of logical types that are immanent in the phenomena. Consequently, for Bateson the human mind follows the same organization of nature as seen in complex internal and external interactions. For a more detailed explanation of his contribution, interested readers may consult L'Abate and De Giacomo (2003, pp. 6–10).

The Most Recent Contribution of Jeffrey I. Magnavita

Jumping about half a century from past contributions to the present day—status of systems thinking, Magnavita (2012a, b) reviewed past systems thinking in relationship to personality systematics applied to the challenge of unifying clinical science and psychotherapy, especially as applied to family therapy.

To make sure his contribution is reported as objectively as possible, his concluding statement is worthy being cited literally:

> There is a new wave evident in clinical science that seeks to unify our field but which requires a strong foundation in personality systemastics, which is derived from system and complexity theory. Theoretical modeling allows us to develop what are hopefully

> useful paradigms to guide research and practice. Many components of previous models have been blended to create stronger amalgam, which allows a meta-theoretical framework useful for guiding clinical treatment and practice (Magnavita 2012, p. 215).

Magnavita's rhetorical enthusiasm failed to produce any possible empirical links between systems thinking and clinical practice because he was unable to produce any clearly verifiable theoretical framework with specific links to clinical practice. His clinical, psychotherapeutic orientation is still stuck in the face-to-face, talk-based paradigm of last century that makes it impossible to verify its outcome based just on non-replicable talk rather than on replicable programmed distance writing (L'Abate et al. 2011b, 2013a, 2013c; L'Abate and Sweeney 2012). Furthermore, even though the family remains the focus of systemic interest, one must ask about "What family"? As argued in the next Chap. 2 of this volume, the past sociological notion of the intact *family qua family* is only limited to 25 % of all the domiciles in USA. Consequently, we must find a way to find relationships among individuals in way that apply to new, emergent constellations in intimate relationships.

The Contribution of Vittorio Cigoli and Eugenia Scabini

These authors (Cigoli and Scabini 2012) distinguished sharply between an ecological approach found in cybernetics from a sociological-organizational approach found in broad systems thinking in terms of regulation by error in feedback and reflective function found in groups and families. Over time, both approaches evolved into a new inter-subjective narrative for the ecological-cybernetics approach and to a clinical relational-symbolic model from general systems, as applied, for instance, to family therapy. Cigoli and Scabini (2012) emphasized bonds among persons in painful transitions during critical passages and hurtful losses, that is "disruptions" among many other constructs that define and redefine systemic language into a completely new relational dictionary. In contrast to Magnavita and current systems clinicians, whose contribution is and has been strictly rhetorical, Cigoli and Scabini with other collaborators developed and validated various instruments to evaluate families in clinical practice. This constitutes one of the first empirical links between systems thinking and psychological evaluation. However, if their interventions are still based on a non-replicable face-to-face, talk-based paradigm, it will be very difficult to link evaluations with interventions (L'Abate 2013a).

The Contribution of Mark Stanton and Robert Welsh

Stanton and Welsh (2012) represented the wishful thinking inherent in present day systemic thinking, talking about theory and research without any concrete and specific way to evaluate the validity of their propositions. For instance, these writers argued that "Systemic thinking is central to the specialty of couple and family psychology" (p. 14). To their credit, they recommended challenging "mental" models by relying on observing complex and reciprocal relationships instead. This means that one must accept unintended consequences in contemplating connections among family members. Research-wise, these writers recommended identifying collective variables of interest, characterizing behavioral attractor states, describing the systemic trajectory of the collective variable, identifying points of transition, and recognizing and manipulating control parameters to experimentally generating phase transitions.

Furthermore, Stanton and Welsh (2012) attempted to apply systemic thinking to the therapeutic alliance, assessment, case conceptualization, and treatment interventions. As in the case of most systems thinkers, except for Cigoli and Scabini (2012), their interventions were meant to be produced verbally making it impossible to replicate what any therapists says or does, thus reducing talk-based interventions to an impossible position difficult if not impossible to replicate. As is the case of Magnavita's and previous systemic thinkers, Stanton and Welsh (2012) failed to reduce their abstract and generic thinking to concrete and specific standard operating procedures that could be validated empirically and clinically.

Given such an admittedly harsh criticism, what is the solution to such wishful state of affair? The solution is found in Fig. 1.1, and that is: reducing the systems paradigm to a theoretical format that includes verifiable models with even more concrete and specific dimensions that can be empirically validated. This is what RCT has attempted to perform over decades of refinement, reframing, and reevaluation (see Chaps. 5 and 6 of this volume). Furthermore, concrete and specific theoretical expansions of systems thinking can be found in Hooper, L'Abate et al. (2013) about generational and relational models of psychopathology based on Model[14] about the Deadly Drama Triangle.

Conclusion: When does a Construct become a Model?

As noted at the outset of this chapter, a construct becomes a model whenever it is encompassed by, becomes a component of, and made part of a larger theory. In this case, as will be shown in Chaps. 5 and 6, both constructs of intimacy and identity are two Models[8 and 15], respectively of RCT that will be expanded in the two final chapters of this volume (Colesso and L'Abate 2012; Colesso and L'Abate 2012; Cusinato and L'Abate 2012a, b; L'Abate 1986, 1994a, 1997, 2005, 2006, 2009d, 2013b; L'Abate and Cusinato 2007; L'Abate et al., 2010).

Chapter 2
The Decline and Possible Demise of Family Psychology: Families Without Personalities

What makes a group of individuals a family? What is it about a family that makes it a family compared with another social form that is not a family?…The same misunderstandings are seen when people attempt to define the family. Many people say that they want to promote the family, but the definition they give is vague, inexact, and ever more neutral (neutral as regards quality) to the point that the family is eventually confused with any other type of primary group of daily coexistence in which at least one adult takes care of another person (often a minor, but in other circumstances another adult). Today it is evident in the Western world that many conceptions of family have been assimilated into generic relationships of care (Donati 2012).

The purpose of this chapter is to argue that the past sociological notion of the intact *family-qua-family* composed of two parents of the opposite gender and two children, is not longer tenable. This argument, of course, about the decline of the family, as conceived in the past, does not mean that the profession of Family Psychology should decline as well. It means that different conceptions about the family unit have evolved in the last half a century. Those conceptions will remain of interest to such a professional organization (L'Abate in press).

The following data are given to illustrate and support such a decline. According to the latest examination of the American family, intact families occupy only 25 % of all domiciles in USA while singles occupy 27 % of all domiciles wide conglomerate of people (Hofferth and Casper 2007; L'Abate 2004). The traditionally intact WASP and non-WASP family has changed drastically in the last generation. There are more than two dozen surveys about the American family conducted during the last generation from a variety of population samples. The information from these surveys was obtained via structured face-to-face interviews, questionnaires obtained through phone calls, and, of course, the Census Survey conducted through the mail every 10 years. Results from these surveys were used to interpret and make sense of an incredibly large database that needed to be explicated in its multifarious meanings. Most chapters used at least two to three different survey

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results. In some chapters results from up to five different surveys were compared and contrasted to guarantee valid and reliable conclusions.

The data were well explicated by Hofferth and Casper (2007), whose scholarly research will be reviewed in detail because of its relevance to the thesis of this chapter. The primary discussion in Hofferth and Casper (2007) was provided into five sections: marriage and cohabitation (six chapters), separation and divorce (two chapters), household composition and family relationships (six chapters), becoming a father (four chapters), and fathers and "fathering" (three chapters). There was also an introductory and a concluding chapter.

This volume is chock-full of demographic data about the family. Cohabitation, for instance, received the lions share of attention with three chapters in two separate sections, but same-sex couples, the military, and the incarcerated were also included, as well as "absent" fathers, those who disappeared even before the birth of their presumed child or after separation or divorce from the mother. This volume made up for past neglect of the role of the father in family functioning by a staggering number of chapters (7) devoted to this topic. Just this emphasis, let alone the other chapters, makes this volume an invaluable repository of information about the role of fathers in the American family. Much of this information including relevant ethnic differences between Caucasian and African–American fathers, as far as I know, is unavailable anywhere else.

No aspect of family life was left untouched, not only including different family forms, but including issues of poverty (John Iceland), fertility in women and men in three chapters (Mott et al., Marsiglio, Bachrach), and contacts between children and non-resident fathers (Argys et al.). Hence, this volume becomes the most complete and reliable source of information about the American family (loosely defined) available to date.

Common to all chapters of Hofferth and Casper (2007) was the realization of how difficult it is to deal with concepts that have changed meaning over the last generation or that acquitted different meanings over time. For instance, how can one define "cohabitation" let alone "family"? Two individuals living under the same roof? Not likely, because there are as many different forms of cohabitations as there are different possibilities: living together on week-ends, living together during the week but not on week-ends, using two different addresses, living with one partner's parents, sharing the same roof with other house tenants, and so on.

When one attempts to define what a family is, the definition becomes a nightmare for most demographers. As already noted repeatedly, the family as traditionally known (L'Abate 1994b, 2004; L'Abate and Bagarozzi 1993) no longer exists. No more than 25 % of all domiciles in USA are composed by intact families. The remaining 75 % becomes a veritable source of confusion when ethnic, socio-economic, and educational levels are added for interpretation of survey results about cohabiting adults, step-families, same-sex families, grandparents' caretaking of grandchildren, or even single mothers. The latter are another example of how difficult it is to classify any family topic into one single-label , both conceptually and evaluatively. Single mothers may not have a husband, may be divorced or separated from the father of a child, or have multiple fathers for different children, have a part-time, live-in boyfriend, or a same-sex partner, or an occasional visitor boyfriend on week-ends, or a seriatim range of relationships, may or may not have family support, and so on. A chapter (Hill and Callister), for instance, asked "Is *Single Parent Family* a misnomer misdirecting research and policies?" In spite of these definitional difficulties, most chapters try to surmount them by using, comparing, and contrasting different datasets to reach reliable conclusions.

Nonetheless, in addition to definitional issues, there were quite a few deficits in the survey methods used to evaluate "families" since only a couple of chapters (Argys et al., Garasky et al.) included children in their evaluations. Most participants were parents either together or separately. Hence, the family *qua* family was not evaluated since only adults were participants to most surveys. Because of these widely acknowledged deficits, recommendations about improvements in survey methods were provided in quite a few chapters.

The emphasis on being "scientifically correct" in this volume is supported by considering theory-free measurement as the hallmark of science. Consequently, being "conceptually correct" takes a considerable back seat to the former. To be sure, two chapters, one about conceptualizing and measuring marital values (Hawkins et al.) and another about qualitative insights for studying male fertility (Marsiglio) were devoted to "theory." At best, systems theory and symbolic interactionism were deemed sufficiently satisfactory to encompass data and conclusions presented in this volume. However, none of the other chapters attempted to link conclusions obtained from measurement to any theory because all surveys were "theory-free". Perhaps, the reason for this lacuna lies in the possibility that there is no theory existing at this time to account for all the conclusions reached in this volume. What is one to do? Should we have a theory or can we perform research without one? This volume is evidence that it is possible to measure without an underlying theoretical framework. Should one consider an additional requirement of measurement being theory-driven or theory-free?

What happens when measurement is theory-free? As shown in this volume, there are voluminous and disparate results and conclusions without a unifying whole. If one were to conceive of a theory as a coat-hanger, where conclusions are connected by a major holding core, in this volume conclusions lack that holding core. If this is not the case, what is the long-term outcome of theory-free emphasis on measurement? At best there may exist the creation of various and separate models to account for findings and conclusion about a particular topic. Once this outcome is accepted as practice, how is one to link all these disparate findings, conclusions, and models? Here is where the importance of conceptual development comes into being, when "theory" is conceptualized as a speculative framework linking together various models deriving either from empirically based findings and conclusions or that lend themselves to further empirical verification.

This foregoing comment does not even begin to deal with the issue: Once all these measurements and research is completed, even without conceptual underpinnings, what are we to do with the conditions found in the American family? Poverty, alternative life-styles, fertility, absent or distant fathers, and dysfunctionalities are many of the issues that require not only measurement, as done exceedingly well in this volume, but that also need thoughtful recommendations for policy and future research. What are we to do about improving the condition of those families that need more than face-to-face or phone interviews and a steady accumulation of information? What can be done to promote more adequate and functional conditions to prevent sickness and dysfunctionality in American families? These families need interventions besides food-stamps and federal and state assistance programs. This volume of course, does not even begin to address this topic. Theory and activism are not "scientifically correct" topics (L'Abate 2013a, b).

Who would profit by this volume by Hofferth and Casper (2007)? Since it is doubtful whether this volume could be used as textbook, college and university libraries should own a copy as a reference text. Demographers and family researchers would use this volume and might recommend it to policy makers in most states of the Union. There are at least three excellent chapters of special interest to psychologists: one about studying marriage and commitment from survey data (Amato), one on assessing couple and marital relationships beyond form and toward a deeper knowledge of function (Stanley), and a third about developing measures of healthy marriages and relationships (Moore et al.). Personality psychologists might want to review the information contained in this volume to evaluate how personality is socialized in the American culture. Whether family or social psychologists should acquire a copy of this volume is left to how interested they are in the state of the American family (loosely defined) in this generation. Given the steep price of this volume, using the library reference copy should suffice for most purposes, whether for information, teaching, or research.

A second factor in this decline is the lowering of marriage rates (Campbell and Loving 2012, p. 229) in Australia, Japan, Korea, Italy, Sweden, United Kingdom, and increase of divorces in the very same countries, supporting the results of a similar analysis for European countries. The Northern European countries, mostly Protestant, have a much higher percentage of divorces than the Southern ones, still controlled by religious ideologies over divorce (L'Abate 2004). Relevant to this factor is the critical comment made by a lay-writer in a popular magazine (Talbot 2012):

> More than half of all births to American women under the age of thirty now take place outside of marriage, and children who grow up without married parents are less likely to go to college and to find employment, and more likely to live in poverty, to become pregnant as teen-agers, and to go to prison than children with married parents (p. 24).

A third factor stems from the viewpoint of evaluating couples and families psychologically, let alone personality, as argued in the next Chaps. 3 of this volume. We are faced by veritable Towers of Babel in models, tests, and measurements (L'Abate 1994b; L'Abate and Bagarozzi 1993; Williams et al. 2011; Sperry 2012). Many of these tests have been validated repeatedly, fulfilling extremely well scientific requirements of reliability and validity. However, how is one going to chose which test is more applicable to which couple or a family? Ultimately, one would have to select a test in terms of cost: how much information about a couple or family can a test produce per unit of professional time in administration, scoring, and interpretation. Of course, the same question will be raised in evaluating personality (Chap. 3, this volume).

If the present status of the family is so fractured, how can we evaluate it? Manders and Cook (2007) introduced an approach to testing the level validity of family assessment instruments, that is, whether a family instrument measures family functioning at the level of the system it purports to measure. Two parents and two adolescents in 69 families rated the warmth in each of their family relationships and in the family as a whole. Family members' ratings of whole family warmth assessed family functioning not only at the family level (characteristics of the family as a whole) but also at the individual level of analysis (i.e., characteristics of family members as raters), indicating a lack of individual level validity. Evidence was provided for the level validity of a latent variable based on family members' of *whole family warmth*. These findings underscored the importance of assessing the level validity of individual ratings of a whole-family interaction. They also indicate that the level of *warmth* among family members is the underlying variable that must be considered in evaluating multi-relational groups such as the putative family. One could argue that this is the very variable that needs to be considered in any conceptual framework about human relationships in general and intimate relationships in particular.

Additionally, another factor must be considered in support of the slow decline of the family as we knew it, and that is: The failure to provide a satisfactory theory for either couples or families as well as personalities indicates how fragmented the fields of family and personality psychology really are. We have separate models for couples and families as well as for personalities. However, none of them attempts to integrate the many models into a meaningful conceptual structure, as if personality existed without couples and families and couples and families existed without personalities. There is no integration between these two fields of study. For instance, fragmentation of various models without an underlying theory is still the norm (Brady and Stanton 2012; Liddle et al. 2002; Pinsof and Lebow 2005). The most likely candidate for such a possibility is attachment theory (Mikulincer and Shaver 2007) because it has developed well-validated relational tests that could be applied to couples and families. However, as discussed at greater length in Chap. 4, this theory is short in clinical applications for couples or families.

The Relational Nature of Human Relationships

If the family is so difficult to define and even evaluate, as indicated by Hofferth and Casper's research (2007) and other factors just considered, what can be substituted in its place that will satisfy professional and scientific criteria? First of all, we must note the conceptual and professional shift from the intrapersonal to the interpersonal nature of human relationships (Shaver 1984) in terms of constructs such as: (1) *closeness* (Fletcher and Fitness 1996; Harvey and Weber 2002); (2) *attraction* (Bersheid and Walster 1969); (3) *friendship* (Blieszner and Adams 1992; Derlega and Winstead 1986; Fehr 1996; Nardi 1992); (4) *marital interaction* (Aries 1996; Greene and Burleson 2003; Hahlweg and Goldstein 1987; Helmersen 1983; Jacob 1987; Lerner 1978; Miell and Dallos 1996; Noller and Fitzpatrick 1988; Stafford and Bayer 1993; Wachs and Plomin 1994); and (5) the immense contribution of John M. Gottman to the study of marriage (Gottman 2011; Gottman et al. 2005). Secondly, we must acknowledge the importance of the subjectively perceived context as another step toward the relational nature of human relationships separate from objectively existing physical settings, as discussed at greater length in the next Chaps. 3 and 5 of this volume.

Intimacy as the New Kid on the Family Psychology Block

Instead of using the family as the unit of observation, research, and clinical/preventive interventions, one will argue that human relationships should be conceived according to how intimate they are. Intimacy and intimate relationships can be defined according to at least four characteristics (Berlant 2000; Brehm et al. 2002; DeGenova and Rise 2002; Firestone and Carlett 1999; Gilmour and Duck 1986; Shane et al. 1997):

a. C*loseness:* not only in terms of physical, instrumental, emotional, geographic vicinity but also how much time and intensity such a characteristic is shared among individuals living under the same roof or linked by all possible ties of blood, birth, or sense of belonging (Fletcher and Fincham 1991; Kelley et al. 1983).
b. *Commitment:* how people involved with each other are serious on looking after the well-being of individuals close to self and to each other (Luyckx et al. 2007; Stanley and Markman 1992; Rhoades et al. 2010; Rhoades et al. 2010; Stanley et al. 2002; Stanley et al. in press; Stanley et al. 2004).
c. *Interdependence:* This characteristic was hailed by the psychological literature of the time as a discovery attributed to Kelley and Thibaut's (1978) contribution. However, as readers know by now, such a characteristic was well emphasized by the systems literature reviewed in the previous Chap. 1 of this volume.
d. *Duration:* means how long does a relationship last? This characteristic covers processes that are now assuming communal, emotional, instrumental, and agentic roles heretofore left to family members, such as friends and neighbors.

Note that different models of intimacy were defined operationally through self-report, paper-and-pencil tests rather than through actual behavior, making intimacy under those conditions a hypothetical, inferred construct rather than actual behavior. It is based on what participants perceive about intimacy rather than how they actually behave in the context of intimate relationships. Intimacy defined by self-report produces a large number of operational definitions, since there is an

Source	Inti macy	Identity
Acock & Demo, 1994	no	no
Aldous, 1996	no	no
Becvar, 2007	no	no
Bengtson et al., 2005	**yes**	**yes**
Boss et al., 1993	**yes**	**yes**
Broderick, 1993	no	no
Brubaker, 1993	no	no
Burr, 1973	yes	no
Carter & McGoldrick, 1988	**yes**	**yes**
Clarkin, Haas, & Glick, 1988	**no**	no
Constantine, 1986	**yes**	**yes**
Cowan & Hetherington, 1991	no	yes
Daly, 1996	no	yes
DeGenova & Rice, 2002	yes	no
Falicov,1988	**yes**	**yes**
Fletcher & Fitness, 1996	no	yes
Fredman & Sherman, 1987	yes	no
Grotevant, Carlson, 1989	no	no
Harvey & Weber, 2002	yes	no
Hofferth & Casper, 2007	no	no
Holman, 1983	no	no
Hoopes & Harper, 1987	**yes**	**yes**
Jacob, 1987	no	no
Jacob & Tennenbaum, 1988	no	no
Handel & Whitchurch, 1994	**yes**	**yes**
Karpel & Strauss, 1983	no	yes
Klein & White, 1996	no	no
Kreppner & Lerner, 1989	no	no
Lewis & Feiring, 1995	no	no
Liddle, Santisteban, Levant,& Bray, 2002	no	no
McHale & Grolnick, 2002	no	yes
Murray & Holmes, 2011	no	no
Nye, 1982	n/a	n/a
Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1989	yes	no
Oskamp, 1987	no	no
Patterson, 1990	no	no
Pinsof & Lebow, 2005	yes	no
Reis, 1981	**yes**	**yes**
Rothbaum & Weisz, 1989	no	no
Rowe, 1994	no	no
Salmon & Shackelford, 2007	no	no
Sexton, Weeks, & Robbins, 2003	no	no
Slip, 1984	no	no
Sperry, 2012	yes	no
Sprey, 1990	no	yes
Sternberg & Hojjat, 1997	**yes**	**yes**
Toman, 1969	no	no
Touliatos, Perlmutter, & Straus. 1990	yes	no
Tudge, Shananan, & Valsiner, 1997	no	yes
Vuchinich, 1999	no	no
Vetere & Gale,1987	no	no
Walsh, 1993	yes	no
Wlliams, Edwards, Patterson, & Chamow, 2001	yes	no
Young & Willmott, 1973	no	no

Fig. 2.1 Citation frequency about intimacy and identity in selected family psychology publications

incredible number of checklists created to define intimacy verbally (Malick and Aron 2004; Prager 1995).

When intimacy is defined behaviorally as the sharing of joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt, a whole new field opens for researchers and professional helpers (Chapman and Foot 1976; L'Abate 2009c, 2011a; Lutz 1999; Stearns 1972; MacDonald and Jensen-Campbell 2011), including fear of intimacy as the inability to share joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt (Firestone and Carlett 1999). It is visible in a myriad of fictional books, movies, and television shows every day.

These four characteristics, however, say nothing about the level of functionality or dysfunctionality about these relationships. That dimension would pervade all of those four characteristics, as discussed at greater length in Chap. 5 of this volume and in previous publications. Furthermore, these four characteristics apply in the reverse to non-intimate, perfunctory, occasional, short-lived, and business-oriented relationships, as not close, not committed, not interdependent, and not durable.

Is an Intimacy Model an Improvement Over a Family Construct?

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the family qua family is too complex a construct to evaluate statically and statistically, as Hofferth and Casper (2007) have shown, let alone dynamically, since "family" is too variable a construct to define. Therefore, we must ask: How does the family literature account for Intimacy and Identity? This question is answered by the frequency of how often this term in used in selected family psychology publications with the addition of Identity as a second emerging construct considered in greater detail in the next Chap. 3 of this volume (Fig. 2.1).

As can be seen in Fig. 2.1, not all family psychology publications include intimacy and even fewer sources include both intimacy and identity in their contents. Does the small number of references to intimacy argue against the thesis that intimacy is not as important as this writer makes it to be? However, this Fig. 2.1 includes only part of the evidence to support intimacy as an emerging construct because other fields related to family psychology give greater support to intimacy as presented in Fig. 2.1 and reviewed in Chap. 4 this volume.

Conclusion

Although the evidence to support the argument that intimacy is an emerging construct to substitute for the family structure seems meager in this chapter, further evidence to support this argument will be presented in the chapters to follow in this volume. The political claim of "family values" has no longer any validity because it applies only to a selected segment of the population. The training of marriage and family therapists needs to be revised and updated to meet the challenges of this change. Finally, many theoretical models will need to be revised to encompass intimate relationships rather than family relationships. Furthermore, as Bray (2013) has argued conclusively on this regard:

> The changing demographics of couples and families in the United States and worldwide demand new definitions and social policies that recognize and support these emerging transformations (Bray and Stanton 2009). In response to the changing landscape of family relationships, the National Institute of Mental Health created a new definition of families as, “a network of mutual commitment” (Pequegnat and Bray 1997, 2012). The implication of changing demographic trends for changes in social policies must recognize and support the evolving nature of families (Bray and Stanton 2009). Workplace and human resources, health care and the implications of immigration are a few of the areas that policies need to be changed to adapt to the our changing demographics. The implications of such changes for training psychologists to work with couples and families will be discussed. Examples from research on divorce, remarriage, stepfamilies and impact of HIV/AIDS on couples and families will be used to highlight and make suggestions for needed changes in training and social policies. APA policies regarding the training of psychologists the need for evidence-based interventions to recognize these population changes were also discussed (Bray 2010).

Chapter 3
The Decline and Possible Demise of Personality Psychology: Personalities Without Families

This chapter argues that personality as a multidimensional construct is difficult to define and therefore to evaluate. As an invented construct, the Self has been used as a synonym for personality (Corr and Matthews 2009; Curtis 1991; Millon 2012). Furthermore, at least in the past, personality seemed to develop in a vacuum of relationships, where intrapsychic and non-relational constructs, such as, for instance, self-esteem, have achieved a cultural and scientific hegemony. Finally, the paramount influence of context has been acknowledged with a recognition of relationships among human beings is what matters in one's choice of Identity. As Eysenck (1986) questioned whether personality study could ever be scientific, he answered his own question by suggesting that more empirical and experimental research will eventually serve as a foundation for the scientific approach to personality psychology. Even earlier than Eysenck, Dahlstrom (1972) decried the primitive state of what he called the "science of personology." He reviewed in great detail continuities and discontinuities in traits and types, classifications ("taxonomics") and dimensional scales as well as the decline of classic typologies in functional and dysfunctional descriptors.

Personality is really an invisible construct. It cannot be photographed because it is not processual: one cannot video-tape personally in motion unless it is in relationship to another human being, an animal, or an object. Additionally, personality has been used as an equivalent or a substitute for a theory without the characteristics of a theory. A myriad of tests and measurements to evaluate personality have been developed without any links to theory (Maruish 1999). A worst failure, from this writer's point of view, was the inability to link personality to promotional preventive, promotional, psychotherapeutic, and rehabilitative applications and interventions (Harwood and L'Abate 2010; Kazantzis and L'Abate 2007; L'Abate 2007, 2011b, 2013a, 2013c).

The multidimensional nature of personality is visible in examples of personality defined by a variety of sub-constructs, such as: anxiousness, aggression, and sociability (Ganiban et al. 2009). These factors did show that they, as whole, make significant a significant contribution to marital quality and parenting.

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Perhaps the best exemplary attempt to define personality has been the Big Five Factors Personality Inventory (Costa and Widiger 1994; Kristjansson 2012) in addition to the controversy between two personality types and three big mate preferences (Gebauer et al. 2012), and sociality and activeness as predictors of children's behavior problems (Becker et al. 1959). In an earliest review of personality structure and assessment, Jackson and Paunonen (1980) identified four different personality variables (1) locus of control; (2) androgyny; (3) self-esteem; (4) aggression, and (5) introversion–extraversion. It will be interesting to see how these five variables are included in more recent literature reviews of personality. For instance, Costa, McCrae, Zonderman, Barbano, Lebowitz, and Larson (1986) found stability in neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to experience.

Because of the many difficulties defined the construct of personality, various different constructs have attempted to take its place. Before reviewing those different constructs, we need to pay attention to social psychology, a discipline that in one way or another has been considered the most immediate, disciplinary context for personality psychology.

The Scope of Social Psychology: Theory and Applications

This writer had several reasons for wanting to review this book (Hewstone, Schut, De Wit, van den Bos, and Stroebe 2007): (1) curiosity about where recent social psychology contributions are leading the field; (2) my interest in health psychology (L'Abate 2007) that, judging initially from the Table of Contents of this volume, included chapters in that area; (3) my interest in bereavement, betrayal, and rejection (L'Abate 2009c, 2011a), which the book covers in at least three chapters; and (4) quite frankly, a grudge I have held for several years against social psychology for, in my opinion, consistently avoiding the study of the most natural group that needs more understanding than any other group—the family or substitutive intimate (close, committed, interdependent, and prolonged) relationships—relying instead on solely artificial, contrived, short-lived, and sometimes superficial if not trivial laboratory studies with undergraduates rather than with real-life relationships. Even more importantly, within the context of this chapter, often times social psychology has been linked directly to personality, or at least, personality has been the subject of research from quite a few social psychologists.

Recent contributions (Fletcher and Clark 2003; Vohs and Finkel 2006) suggested that social psychology is finally moving away from an intrapsychic reductionistic cocoon and progressing instead toward a relational, emergent interactionalist paradigm. Perhaps this volume would go in the same direction? The answer to that question is no and yes. In reaching this conclusion, of course, one needs to be aware of one's motivation and interests that would affect and even cloud how this volume is reviewed. This is why I stated my motivations and interests from the outset of this review.

This volume is a Festschrift in honor of Wolfgang Stroebe's retirement. Consequently, his manifold contributions are acknowledged in every chapter of this book, from the first chapter by the editors of this volume that defines the wide scope of social psychology to the last chapter that contains a variety of impressions about Stroebe's multifarious contributions. The volume is divided into six parts. Part 1 contains four chapters on attitudes and attitude change. Part 2 contains three chapters on social cognition and emotion. Part 3 contains three chapters on interpersonal and group processes. Part 4 contains three chapters on health behavior and health behavior change. Part 5 contains three chapters on bereavement and coping. Part 6 contains two chapters on psychology in context, one on the Interdisciplinary Social Science Working Group and a second on impressions of Wolfgang Stroebe by various colleagues who have worked with him over the span of his career.

Each chapter is a review of the literature on a particular topic within the range of the titles given for each part. Consequently, all these chapters would serve as the basis for whatever social psychology topic one wants to use in teaching and research. No original research data are given, but research evidence from primary sources is reviewed to support whatever thesis or topic is being considered. Most chapters are written in a tight-reasoned style that may range from the interesting to exciting, depending on the peculiar interests of the reader. The level of writing in each area of interest is for specialists and not for generalists. Only social psychologists interested in the particular area being reviewed would profit by reading it, as detailed before.

I must acknowledge from the outset that about half of the chapters in this volume excited me, which means, of course, that the other half either bored me or, to put it more charitably, were less than exciting, even though they might have been interesting from a general viewpoint. The latter included the first six chapters with one exception, the one on the effects of defensive processing on attitudinal phenomena (Eagly). After those first six chapters, things started to become more interesting and even exciting.

Chapters that I found especially interesting and engaging were those dealing with relational rather than internal factors, such as the chapter on burnout and work engagement, in which results from real couples (on page 237) were reported (Bakker, Schaufeli, Demerouti and Euwema). From then on, the remaining chapters dealt with a real-life topic—what could be more real than bereavement after the loss of a loved one? Loneliness, for instance, is a relational behavior even if it does include the avoidance of others (Weiss). Two additional chapters covered whatever conceptual, empirical, and even applied issue anybody might want to know about bereavement (Abakoumin et al.) and emotional disclosure during bereavement (Zech, Rimé and Pennebaker). The chapters I found less engaging, but nonetheless relevant and interesting, were the ones dealing with more internal processes such as the chapter on the epistemic bases of interpersonal communication (Kruglanski <u>and</u> Semin), social support (Insko and Wolf), positive affect and meaning-focused coping during significant psychological stress (Folkman and Moskowitz), and self-regulation of health communication (De Wit, Das, and

Hoog). Notice, however, that against my assertion of a close link between social psychology and personality, the term personality did not directly appear in this volume or this review. Nonetheless, several topics related to personality were included, as already mentioned.

Who would be interested in purchasing, reading, and perhaps using this volume? I am afraid that the readership might be limited to researchers in North America, United Kingdom, and Europe who are interested in topics covered in this volume. Graduate students in advanced seminars in social psychology could use this volume as a textbook. Finally, graduate students in social psychology looking for an area to study for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation will find a great many topics awaiting further research. This conclusion may seem unfair and unfortunate because there are many health-related professionals outside of social psychology, including clinical, community, and prevention psychologists and psychotherapists, who would profit by reading selected chapters dedicated to this area, including, of course, health and bereavement.

The Self as a Substitute or Synonymous Construct for Personality

This equation between Self and personality has received a great deal of support in the clinical and social psychological literature, this writer being one of the major culprits (L'Abate 1997). We must consider, however, an early, important contribution to the development of self (Leahy 1985) that contained two chapters relevant to the thesis of this chapter about personality, this section on the Self, and particularly relevant to particular models of RCT discussed in Chap. 5 of this volume, especially Model[11].

The first chapter by Harter (1985) introduced a dimension of competence that "… indentified a variety of multidimensional models of the self" (Harter 1985, p. 55). In an historically complete and systematically nuanced review, she identified three salient competence domains in elementary school children: (1) cognitive or academic competence; (2) physical or athletic competence; and (3) social-peer relationships. These domains were validated by a Perceived Competence Scale for Children that lead to reviewing existent hierarchical models of the self (pp. 59–61) and considering the self as a "Superordinate Construct" (pp. 61–64) defined by such similar and overlapping terms such as "*self-theory, sense of self, self concept, self-esteem*, and *self-worth*" (pp. 64–66). She finally concluded her retrospective review by supporting "*Importance plus-self-evaluation as determinants of overall self-worth*" (pp. 66–70).

This conclusion supports the Selfhood Model[11] of RCT based on how we attribute, bestow, and allocate importance to ourselves and others while Self-evaluation is also included as a component part of an horizontal Model[1] of information processing in RCT called Awareness of Awareness and Awareness as a corrective process to change other components of this Model[1] (see Chap. 5 of this volume). Additionally, Harter reviewed the construct of perceived internal and external control as another important factor in self-development (pp. 95–113). Harter concluded her excellent chapter by proposing a comprehensive, global model of self-worth that in some ways preceded and predicted various models of RCT.

In spite of other important and relevant chapters, the most relevant to models of RCT is the chapter by Rosenberg (1985), who argued that "self-esteem" is just ".. one of the many dimensions of the self-concept" (pp. 205). After reviewing research studies that support the validity of this construct, Rosenberg introduced the construct of "mattering" (pp. 214–219) that in many ways overlaps with Harter's construct of importance and with the Selfhood Model[11] of RCT" (see Chap. 5 of this volume). In Rosenberg's words:

> Whereas an immense amount of attention has been given to the dimension of self-esteem, almost no attention has been given to the concept of mattering. *Mattering refers to the individual's feeling that he or she counts, makes a difference, and 'signifies.,,,*Being the object of another person's interest, notice, or attention is thus important to the individual (p. 215)… A third sense of interpersonal mattering is the feeling that we are important to the other person or are objects of his concern (p. 216)…. mattering is apt to be strong when we believe that the other person depends on us (p. 217).

Rosenberg, like Harter (1985), included perceived control and self-consciousness as two other variables relevant to the development of the self. It is unfortunate that publication limits do not allow a more detailed rendering of both chapters as well as many other chapters in what I consider an important pioneering stepping stone in the literature on the Self.

An important, historical contribution to self-theory was Higgins' (1987) self-discrepancy between actual, ideal, and ought states as related to different kinds of emotional vulnerabilities. It is unfortunate that reasons of space do not allow a more detailed expansion of this work, which eventually culminated in a relevant distinction between sickness prevention and health promotion (Higgins 2001) that I found relevant to clinical applications in mental health (L'Abate 2005).

Self-differentiation has been a major contribution in Murray Bowen Family Systems Theory (Jankowski and Hooper 2012) that eventually produced an objective instrument composed of an intrapersonal dimension consisting of the capacity to regulate affect and an interpersonal ability to negotiate independence and togetherness (see Chap. 5 in this volume to see how these constructs are included in RCT). In an excellent study, Jankowski and Hooper (2012) validated this instrument and supported the validity of Bowen's two factor model. Neither one of these major contributors, either Bowen or Higgins defined self in any way that would distinguish it from personality.

How Many Agentic and Non-Agentic Selves are Possible?

Once one accepts the Self as a substitute or synonymous construct for personality, one must ask these questions: How many possible agentic selves are possible? What about non-agentic selves? The contribution by Dunkel and Kerpelman (2006) will be reviewed in an attempt to answer those two questions. It is the best example of the principle of equipotentiality in publishing I have ever seen, in addition to Bakan's (1966) contribution: how one single paper (Markus and Nurius 1986) spawn a list of over 50 publications, including 11 chapters in this volume. These chapters cover most relevant publications on the topic of possible selves, becoming therefore another equipotential source for future research in and of itself. No one studying or researching possible selves in the present or the future can or should do without it. This book would be useful for graduate students in social, developmental, and personality psychology and clinical/counseling specialties looking for a dissertation topic as well as an additional textbook for graduate courses or seminars on personality theories or development.

Apparently, from the many citations about this construct, the self is conceived in terms of actions, performance, or production, not presence. Possible selves is who we would like to become positively in the future, who we might want to become, and who we do not want to become negatively (Markus). Our present Identity is influenced by past and future possible selves (Strahan and Wilson), Practically every chapter in this book shows how many ways possible selves can be measured: by lifeline (Strashan and Wilson), interview protocol (Frazier and Hooker), anticipated life history (Segal), various components of the self-concept (Nurius, Casey, Lindhorst, and Macy), inventory (Anthis), semi-structured interviews, direct observations, recording of conversations with a roommate, self-confrontation, self-report logs, and periodic phone calls monitoring (Marshall, Young, and Domene), Q-sort (Kerpelman), open-ended questionnaire (Dunkel, Kelts, and Coon), and structured questionnaire (Hock, Deshler, and Schumaker).

Of course, emphasis on agentic aspects of self is not new in social psychology (Vohs and Finkel 2006). Unfortunately, this emphasis excluded completely communal aspects of the self (Mills et al. 2004; Suh et al. 2004), giving a lop-sided view of the self that needs to be corrected, lest future students and researchers continue in the same vein, leaving out a significant part of the hypothetical and therefore, inferred self. This view is hypothetical and inferred because self cannot observed and measured directly.

Among vexing questions raised by research-oriented contributions, one deals with the possibility that possible selves may be an artifact emerging from participants being asked about possible selves. Would we be aware of our possible selves if we were not asked about them? Would we be and become effected by them if we were not aware of them? Another question deals with gender differences that were well-covered in quite a few chapters (Knox, Oyserman and Fryberg among others), within a laudable (to this reviewer!), decidedly ecological, relational, and contextual-focus orientation. Nonetheless, there were 22 references to mothers, 0 references to fathers. Whether this lop-sided emphasis was due to the highly deserved number of twice as many women over men contributors could be a possibility.

Another intriguing question about possible selves, touched upon but never addressed directly in most chapters, relates to level of Identity differentiation: would more differentiated individuals possess a greater number and greater balance of positive over negative selves than undifferentiated ones? For instance, if

Identity-differentiation were conceived as a dialectical curvilinear dimension consisting of similarity/differentness in the middle, sameness/oppositeness on either side, and symbiosis/alienation at the two extremes (Cusinato and L'Abate 2012a, b; L'Abate 1997, 2005; L'Abate et al. 2010), one would predict that possible selves defined by an integration of similarity-differentness would be more numerous and more positive than in individuals characterized by sameness-oppositeness, as discussed at greater length in Chap. 5 of this volume. The latter characteristic may show a more restricted number and possibly an equal balance of positive to negative possible selves. Individuals characterized by symbiosis-alienation would show a very restricted number and a much greater balance of negative to positive possible selves, as suggested in quite a few chapters dealing with at risk populatons (Knox, Nurius et al., Oysseman and Fryberg). Inadequately differentiated individuals may also tend to enter in the Deadly Drama Triangle explained in Chap. 5 and expanded to various models of psychopathology by Hooper et al. 2013).

Independently of the possible selves approach, but in line with a model of Identity differentiation in intimate relationships proposed above, if this reviewer could be allowed a personal reference, he produced a workbook that was eventually named "Who am I?" (L'Abate 2011b; L'Abate and De Giacomo 2003, pp. 224–227). lt listed 22 "aspects of Identity" (plus one free choice for an aspect not listed) that are completely analogous with possible selves. Participants are asked to define and give two examples for each aspect, a nomothetic task. Participants are then asked to rank-order those aspects by importance to self, an idiographic task. On the basis of that individual rank-order, each aspect becomes a separate, standard practice exercise elaborated by its developmental history, frequency, rate, and intensity, essentially expanding the original list into a veritable workbook of practice exercises. This is another way in which static evaluations can become dynamic interventions, as could be the case for some static instruments developed to evaluate possible selves.

In spite of the fact that this writer has been guilty of using the self within the family (L'Abate 1997), one cannot help but to view self as a remnant of past intrapsychic, intraindividual theorizing left over from the past century. Hence, to reach a clear division between these two constructs, Self and Selfhood will be left to another Model^{11} of RCT, while Identity will be defined in Model^{8} as relationally developing with the context of continuous intimate and non-intimate relationships (Chaps. 5 and 6 of this volume). The bottom line, however, lies in the Self being an hypothetical, inferred construct, not visible to the naked eye. One could prefer a completely behavioral, directly observable construct such a *role,* because it is much easer to reproduce in the laboratory and to evaluate directly within the processual context of functional and dysfunctional relationships (Biddle 1979; Hooper et al. 2013; Huselid and Cooper 1994; Talley, Kocum, Schlegel, and Molix 2012).

More recently, Leary and Tangney (2012) reviewed the self construct in their most complete exposition. They defined the self as: (1) the total person; (2) personality; (3) experiencing subject; (4) beliefs about oneself; (5) executive agent; and (6) conceptual morass. In spite of this moral, Leary and Tangney included attentional, cognitive, and executive processes as well as developmental, motivational, and emotional processes. They also listed (p. 10) tens of self-related constructs, processes, and phenomena, concluding their chapter thusly:

> Although we are optimistic about the state of self-theory and research, our optimism is tempered slightly by the fact that' the field is composed of a large number of pockets of self- contained research literature that have yet to be adequately integrated (p. 15).

What is even more relevant to the purposes of this chapter is what Leary and Tangley concluded further:

> With a few exceptions, behavioral and social scientists, perhaps with good reason, have avoided large-scale theorizing in favor of limited-domain theories, living the big picture to philosophers of mind…. The future of self-research will depend in large measure on how successfully broad theoretical advances are able to link together specific bodies of research that deal with self and Identity (p. 15).

From this conclusion, as well all the other chapters in Leary and Tangley's (2012) excellent compendium, one is lead to conclude that self and Identity are synonymous constructs equated with each other, since no differentiation is made about their possible differences and similarities. The fact that there are as many possible selves as one can invent leads one to conclude that self and Identity are one and the same construct.

Furthermore, Skodol (2012, p. 334), for instance, concluded that:

> A single global rating of self and interpersonal functioning has been retained, rather than separate ratings, because of evidence of the close developmental and empirical relationships of these components of personality functioning.

Firestone, Firestone, and Catlett (2012), without any qualms, equated self with Identity as being truly representative of our own wants, needs, and goals in life reflecting our own desires and priorities.

Self and Relationships: Connecting Intrapersonal with Interpersonal Processes

The (slow) rise of the interpersonal in personality psychology (Applegate and Leichty 1984; Horowitz 2004; Kiesler 1996; Miell and Dallos 1996; Wells and Sheldon-Keller 1994) needs to be supported by a more detailed review of Vohs and Finkel's (2006) attempt to link intrapersonal to interpersonal processes. If the importance of a book can be judged by how many pages are ear-marked, this is a very important book. This reviewer found himself excitingly earmarking almost every other page. He was excited by the original, sometimes ingenious content, sophisticated methodology, and elegant style of all contributions in what he considered a evolutionary first step and a milestone for social psychology. Contributors represented the very best that social psychology can produce, relying, and expanding on the pioneering work on interdependence by Thibaut and Kelley (1959) as well as on the more recent work by Baumeister and Leary (1995).

Finally, at long last, social psychologists were abandoning the narrow, intrapsychic, monadic viewpoint that has dominated psychology and even social psychology, fully acknowledging the inevitable realization that we do not live in the controlled, arbitrary, arranged, and contrived vacuum of the laboratory. We live always in intimate (close, committed, interdependent, and prolonged) and non-intimate relationships. Of course, we do live also in occasional and perfunctory impersonal relationships, but the latter do not influence us as much as intimate relationships, We are the products and producers of intimate relationships that, in the long range, have an impact on how we feel, think, and act relationally.

The first part of this volume included two chapters on self-regulation, three chapters on self-concept, and four chapters on interpersonal schemas and orientations. The second part includes four chapters on interdependence, four chapters on specific social inter-action processes, and two final chapters on interpersonal cognitive processes. Most contributions rely either on self-report, paper-and-pencil instruments or on short-lived, artificial, and indeed ingenious laboratory experiments. Some chapters do include "real" couples. These couples, however, are usually recruited from an undergraduate population. Hence, their reality is short-lived and limited by age and experience. What do undergraduates, mostly college sophomores, know about long-lasting conflict, distress, and pain over a long period of time experienced by real live couples and families? College age is when most relationships are precarious and short-lived. Only few relationships do persist beyond those formative years. This is the time to party and to forget about painful and stressful relationships from one's family of origin, except for inevitable examinations and occasional affairs.

Nonetheless, contributions in this volume represented also the triumph of the empirical over the conceptual in terms of carefully detailed and oftentimes highly creative models, such as the one by Finkel, Campbell, and Brunell on high-maintenance interaction and self-regulation, or the Michelangelo Phenomenon by Kumashiro, Rusbult, Wolf, and Estrada, just to mention a few among many excellent others.

It is the conceptual where these contributions fell short. For instance, is Self synonymous with personality or is it just a component of personality? The two editors wrestled with this issue in their introductory chapter but no answer or resolution were found to this question, an issue also left unresolved by this reviewer at the time (L'Abate 1997). Perhaps, more than one model might be necessary to distinguish self-identity, an unconscious, intrapsychic process, from selfhood, as shown and observed outwardly in how we behave with intimates and non-intimates. We need to distinguish how self-presentation may represent how we want to appear and behave socially from how our self-identity (along a continuum of differentiation) may influence how we behave in the privacy of our homes. It is in the home where our temporary and superficial social façade drops out to give way to the stress of close, committed, interdependent, and prolonged relationships. How much does that façade influence self-report and short-lived situations in the laboratory? We do not live with a Self *and* interpersonal relationships. We live with a Self *in* intimate relationships (L'Abate 2005).

Although the intrapersonal and interpersonal may represent two highly related continua, it is in the interpersonal continuum where no conceptual clarification was found. One end of this continuum includes short-lived, utilitarian agentic relationships, like those found in grocery stores, beauty-saloons, or ball-games (and the laboratory). The other end includes communally intimate relationships as defined above and in Chap. 2 of this volume. Most of the evidence provided in this volume fell within the agentic rather than within the communal realm, with the exception of a chapter on narcissism by Campbell, Brunell, and Finkel, where Bakan's (1966) highly influential duality was recognized. Most contributions in this volume, therefore, fell within the agentic-exchange end of the interpersonal continuum, whereas communally intimate relationships constitute the other end of the interpersonal continuum not considered in this volume. This point will be discussed at greater length in Chaps. 5 and 6 of this volume.

To be sure, constructs like Intimacy and commitment were indeed mentioned *in passim* in Agnew and Etcheverry's chapter on cognitive interdependence as well as in other chapters. However, they do not represent the thrust of most contributions, since they were not measured. How can one evaluate closeness, commitment, interdependence, and duration, for instance, in short-lived and artificial laboratory conditions or even self-report, paper-and-pencil tests? This question does not deny the importance of the relevant evidence presented in this volume. It just points to how the evolutionary *first step* provided by this volume, no matter how excellent, has not gone far enough conceptually, and, of course, empirically.

For instance, another conceptual weakness of these contributions is fortunately corrected by Leary's chapter on "a functional, evolutionary analysis of interpersonal events on intrapersonal self-processes" (sic!). This weakness refers to the frequent and uncritical reliance by many contributors on using the ubiquitous construct of self-esteem within their methodologies and theoretical reasoning. Leary produced and reviewed evidence to support the view (maintained for years by this writer (L'Abate 1997, 2005), that self-esteem is not a relational construct. It is theoretically and empirically weak and practically contradictory.

Briefly, we do not attend a funeral, a wedding, or a birthday party on the basis of our self-esteem or on the basis of the self-esteem of the deceased, the married couple, or the birthday celebrant. We attend on the basis of the recognition of our importance by being invited to attend those functions, which we attend depending on the importance of the people involved in those functions. We choose not to attend if the people who invite us are not that important to us and find excuses not to attend. Importance, or status in Foa and Foa's (1974) resource exchange theory, for instance, is what is exchanged in relationships, whether intimate or non-intimate, not self-esteem. If these social psychologists want to remain relational, they will need to abandon self-esteem as a major intrapsychic construct in their research and choose more relational constructs, such as those found, for instance, in Foa' and Foa' (1974) resource exchange theory, among others.

Contributions in this volume ignored the field of "relationship science" which has contributed to the interpersonal viewpoint earlier and in more nuanced ways than these contributions seemed aware (See Chap. 4 in this volume for the emergence of this field). This conclusion is reached by the editors not including major contributors from that field. Indeed, the relational aspect of the interpersonal is stressed as if the contributors in this book were the sole ones to discover it, as if no contributions to relational constructs from family psychology or even from couple and family therapy had ever existed. Strangely enough, an author index, much needed in a volume of this kind, is not included, because it would have supported the conclusion that this volume is the fruit of a closely knit, in-grown group of first-rate researchers, who are relying on the very same sources, ignoring relevant ones outside their own field of interest.

The (Slow) Rise of Context in Personality Psychology

Past contributions about the importance of context by this and other writers (Capaldi and Proctor (1999; L'Abate 1986; Strathman and Joireman 2005) seemed to have been ignored or overlooked by most personality psychologists. At best, there were attempts to link personality in interaction with unspecified others (Hudson and Rapee 2005; Schneewind and Ruppert (1998), until interactions were firmly related to between and among intimates (Baldwin, Cole, and Baldwin 1982; Magnusson and Ohman 1987; Patterson 1990). Among the many trends that lead toward a more interactional view of personality were interpersonal attraction (Bersheid and Walster 1969) and friendships (Blieszner and Adams 1992; Fehr 1996; Nardi 1992).

For some time, this writer thought that intimate relationships might be or become an alternative substitute for the breakdown of family or family-like links and ties. However, such a position has been weakened by the disheartening work of Putman (2000) and Klinenberg (2012) as reviewed in part in a popular publication (Heller 2012) that summarized their findings thusly:

> …thirty-one million Americans are getting married later than ever (the average age of first marriage for men is twenty-eight), and bailing on domestic life with alacrity (half of modern unions are expected to end in divorce). Today, more then fifty-per-cent of U.S. residents are single, nearly a third of all households have just one resident, and five millions adults younger than thirty-five live alone (p. 80).

To support this conclusion, Heller cited: (1) Putman's (2000) work about the decline of "social capital" and the decrease of network support and in collective reciprocity; and (2) Klinenberg's (2002) discovery that during the 1995 Chicago heat wave hundreds of people living alone died, "… not just because of the heat but because their solitary lives left them without a support network" (Heller 2012, p. 81). These findings lead Klineberg to a more recent (2012), detailed study of individuals living along in seven major American cities. Putman, Klinenberg, and Heller presented various cultural, sociological, and evolutionary hypotheses about this seeming sad state of affairs.

One explanation was presented by Marche (2012) in a report on what is essentially an epidemic of loneliness in our bodies, minds, and our society. He argued with some evidence that social media –such as facebook and twitter—have made us more densely networked than ever. Yet, with all this connectivity, Marche cited Kleinen's (2012) included abowe shared research that we have never been lonelier (and more narcissistic)—and that this loneliness is making us mentally and physically ill. This paradox is illustrated clearly by Marche:

> We are living in an isolation that would have been unimaginable to our ancestors, and yet we have never been more accessible. Over the last three decades, technology has delivered to us a world in which we need not be out of contact for a fraction of a moment (pp. 60–62).

In addition to possible explanations for singlehood and loneliness, one cannot help wonder whether in the last half-a-century the breakdown of family ties, the importance of work-based income, and living impersonally in large urban centers has produced individuals who are unable to be intimate, within the definition given above about Intimacy and intimate relationships. Such individuals, apparently, have not grown in intimate relationships conducive to share joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt (Hooper et al. 2013; L'Abate 2009c, 2011a).

The foregoing arguments are an introduction to the present context facing us as mental health professionals and our clients. The firm and clear acknowledgment of the importance of context in personality psychology was eventually supported by the timely contribution by Mesquita, Barrett, and Smith (2010). These authors asserted the importance of the "context principle" to correct what they called the "essentialist error", that is, "..its disregard of context" "particularly notable in the Western psychological tradition" (p. 3). In making this assertion, these writers disregarded completely this writer's emphasis on context as a subjective perception of immediate and distal factors distinguished from objective physical settings, as summarized in Chap. 5 of this volume (Cusinato and L'Abate 2012a, b; L'Abate 1976, 1986, 1994, 2005, 2008; L'Abate et al. 2010).

Furthermore, in a review of research about Essentialism (L'Abate 2012a), this writer found a great deal of evidence to support the presence of contextual ethnic and cultural factors in determining choices of group belonging and Identity. That evidence is contrary to Barrett, Mesquita, and Smith' incorrect assertion, that made essentialism their whipping scarecrow to support their thesis. It was completely unnecessary to use essentialism to support the importance of context.

Nonetheless, those authors enunciated their context principle bringing us back to those very same sources in a systems paradigm reviewed in Chap. 1 of this volume. These sources, more than one half century ago, emphasized the reciprocal link between human organizations and their environment. Therefore, by enunciating their own context principle, Barrett et al., acted as if they had discovered the importance of context for the first time in human lives all by themselves. As done in previous writings by this writer (L'Abate 1994, 1997, 2005), for instance, Barrett, Mesquita, and Smith (2010) took also issue with the indefinable construct of situation being too general and non-specific. This point will be discussed in Chap. 5 of this volume. Nonetheless, important contributions about emoting (Mesquita 2010), meaning and meta-cognitive experiences (Schwartz 2010), situated cognition (Smith and Collins 2010), and implicit independence and interdependence, among other contributions, deserve highlighting.

An even more important contribution is found in the work by McNulty and Fincham (2012) who challenged and criticized a major assumption of positive psychology that certain psychological traits and processes are inherently beneficial for well-being. These authors reviewed data from four independent longitudinal studies of marriage revealing that four ostensibly positive processes: forgiveness, optimistic expectations, positive thoughts, and kindness, can be either beneficial or harmful depending on the context in which they operate. Furthermore, McNulty and Fincham (2012) reviewed additional evidence from other research that reveals whether ostensibly positive psychological traits and processes benefit or harm well-being depending on the context of various non-interpersonal domains as well.

The New Kid on the Personality Psychology Block: Identity

Since Erik Erikson's original introduction (1958), eventually, after Self, Context, and Interpersonal Constructs took over in the last half a century, Identity became a possible substitute for Personality. However, before we proceed any further, we need to ask ourselves whether Identity is another *in vacuum* construct, such as Self, without any relational meaning? The answer to this question is that some parts of our Identity are clearly internal and open only if the individual cares, needs, or wants to disclose and share them with others. One specific instance of such a component part of Identity is Intimacy, as defined in Chap. 2 of this volume. We share our joys, our hurts, and our fears of being hurt with selected intimates if any. This is why both Intimacy and Identity are linked together, as discussed in Chaps. 5 and 6 of this volume.

Another question related to Identity is whether this is another orphan construct void of connections to an underlying theory (L'Abate 2013). As noted from the outset of this volume, a construct does not become a model until and unless it becomes a component part of a larger theoretical structure. This is the case for both Intimacy and Identity as included respectively as Models [15 and 8] in RCT.

One could also raise objections about the difficulties in definitions of both constructs, just like family and personality have been. Consequently, both terms need to be defined and refined according to their being defined according to ways that lead directly to empirical evaluation (Colesso and L'Abate 2012), as it the case of most models of RCT.

Lastly, how does any personality theory account for Identity? The answer to this question is found in Fig. 3.1. As one can judge from this Fig. 3.1 not many personality texts or textbooks account for this construct satisfactorily. If that is the case, why continue to support the importance of this construct? An answer to this question will be found in Chaps. 4, 5 and 6 of this volume.

Source	Intimacy	Identity
Barone, Hersen, & Van Hasselt, 1998	no	no
Biddle, 1979	no	yes
Canavan-Gumpert, Garner, & Gumpert, 1978	no	no
Caprara & Cervone, 2000	no	yes
Cervone & Mischel, 2002	no	no
Contrada & Ashmore, 1999	no	yes
Corr & Matthews, 2009	**yes**	**yes**
Derlega, Winstead, & Jones,1991	**yes**	**yes**
Ewen, 1988	**yes**	**yes**
Feist & Feist, 2002	no	no
Fletcher & Clark, 2003	**yes**	**yes**
Hogan, Johnson, & Briggs, 1997	**yes**	**yes**
John, Robins, & Pervin, 2008	**yes**	**yes**
Kelley & Thibaut, 1978	no	no
Klein, Kupfer, & Shea, 1993	no	no
Krueger & Tackett, 2006	no	no
Lochlin & Nichols, 1976	no	no
McCrae & Costa, 1990	no	yes
Maddi, 1989	no	no
Montgomery & Duck, 1991	no	no
Page, 1983	no	no
Pervin, 1990	no	yes
Pervin & John,1999	no	yes
Plutchik & Conte, 1997	no	yes
Schlenker, 1980	**yes**	**yes**
Schneewind & Ruppert, 1998	no	no
Wrightsman, 1994a	**yes**	**yes**
Wrightsman, 1994b	**yes**	**yes**

Fig. 3.1 Citation Frequency about Intimacy and Identity in Selected Personality Psychology Publications

Why is Identity as a Construct an Improvement Over Personality?

Luyckx et al. (2007) used longitudinal data to evaluate whether parental psychological control would have a negative impact on Identity formation. Perceived psychological control and four Identity dimensions (i.e., commitment making, exploration in breath, identification with commitment, and exploration in depth) were assesses three times in a college sample. Associations between psychological control and Identity (i.e., negative associations with both commitment dimensions and a positive with exploration in breath)were stable across time. Further, the developmental pathways of these constructs appeared to be correlated. Increases in psychological control were associated with simultaneous decreases in both commitment dimensions. Finally, reciprocal effects were found. Psychological control inhibits progress in both commitment dimensions, whereas exploration in breath led to increased psychological control. These authors provided additional suggestions for helping emerging adults to approach the task of Identity formation (p. 546). Additionally,

Source	Intimacy
Bosna et al., 1994	yes, pp. 68, 77
Kashima et al., 2002	no
Leary & Tangney, 2012	no
Schwartz et al., 2011a	yes, pp. 45-46
Schwartz el al., 2001b	no
Woodward, 1997	no

Fig. 3.2 Citations about Intimacy in selected Identity Publications

Gaesser and Whitbourne (1985) showed how work Identity salience was related to sources of satisfaction and marital adjustment.

Another issue related to Identity is how often do publications on Identity mention Intimacy? The answer to this question is found in Fig. 3.2. As one can see, only two references referred to Intimacy. This limited outcome raises the question on whether one can have Intimacy without Identity or Identity without Intimacy. This question will be answered in Chaps. 5 and 6 of this volume.

Conclusion

The small frequency of citations including emerging constructs such as Intimacy and Identity is not yet sufficient to support both constructs as significantly emerging in psychological theory and applications. Evidence to support the construct of Identity as a substitute or alternative for personality is still unsatisfactory. We will need to seek for support in other disciplines not usually in the mainstream of personality psychology.

Therefore, we shall turn to fields of attachment theory, communication, and relationship sciences to find support for both constructs, as performed in the next Chap. 4 of this volume.

Chapter 4
The (Slow but Sure) Rise of Attachment Theory, Communication, and Relationship Science

Attachment Theory is without a doubt the most influential and validated relational theory during the last few decades that may include intimacy but not identity formation. Therefore, the work by Mikulincer and Shave (2007) will be reviewed extensively as the most complete representative of this theory.

Attachment in Adulthood: Structure, Dynamics, and Change

Since its beginning, attachment theory (Bowlby 1963, 1967, 1980) has always held a great deal of fascination for me, to the point that I sought hypothetical connections between its original four working models or styles and a selfhood model developed and validated over the years (Cusinato and L'Abate 2012a, b; L'Abate et al. 2010; L'Abate 1994a, 1997, 2005; L'Abate and Cusinato 2007).

During the last generation, the topic of attachment has mushroomed into so many studies all over the world that it has become virtually impossible to keep track of all the primary references reporting on various permutations, combinations, and expansions of attachment with personality, social, and cultural factors. Originally, there were the four "working models" or styles, one secure style, two insecure styles (dismissing and preoccupied), and one clearly disorganized style. These four styles, after many replicated factor analyses, were reduced to two basic dimensions: anxiety and avoidance. Hence, *Attachment in Adulthood: Structure, Dynamics, and Change* summarizes more than 20 years of research emanating from these dimensions in their connections to as many personality and relationship variables as one can find in the literature.

Consequently, the best that one could do in the last 20 years was to refer to the many published secondary references that were read enthusiastically and kept faithfully in this writer's library (See Fig. 4.1). Now, no one has to worry about finding any primary reference. Literally hundreds, if not thousands, of studies in a

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variety of anxiety- and avoidance-related dimensions are summarized or listed in tables, making this volume a veritable, monumental encyclopedia of attachment.

The scholarship exhibited in this volume is superb. No reference to attachment was too small or irrelevant to be included. No relevant personality or relationship dimension was overlooked. Now no one will need to search for primary references because they are all contained in this extraordinary volume. This is indeed a labor of love by the two authors, who rightly deserve the encomium of their colleagues and certainly mine. If fruitfulness is one criterion of the scientific enterprise, attachment research wins first place, hands down. There is no existing theory or model that I know of that comes close to the proliferation of significant research contained in this volume emanating from this topic. It could be said without fear of exaggerating that this volume is the end-all as well as the very beginning on the topic of attachment. I doubt seriously whether any researcher, scholar, student, or professional helper will be able to study, evaluate, or apply attachment without referring to *Attachment in Adulthood*.

The Structure of the Book

It might be helpful to readers to visualize a formal hierarchical structure, akin to an organizational chart, to distinguish various levels along a dimension moving from a continuum of generality to specificity. For instance, starting from the top, attachment and trickling down to a lower level, there would be anxiety and avoidance contained in the first five chapters along with normative processes and individual differences. Here, two additional dimensions are considered vital to attachment: (a) seeking proximity or distance between and among individuals, that is, approach and avoidance, and (b) control–regulation, that is, hyperactivation—disinhibition and deactivation/inhibition strategies related to anxiety. Both dimensions interact with a continuum of security—insecurity. The second level includes intrapersonal aspects such as mental representations of self and others, emotions, and personal growth. A third level deals with interpersonal manifestations of attachment systems, including again the construct of regulation, couple functioning, caregiving systems, and sex. A fourth level includes applications of the theory to psychopathology, counseling, and psychotherapy, and group and organizational settings.

A fanciful epilogue deals with meditation, mindfulness, and Buddhism in their relationship to attachment. Seven appendices include various scales, questionnaires, and structured interviews that can be used to evaluate attachment processes and prototypes. What else would the reader want or need? All the bases are covered; if they are not, there are a sufficient number of measurement instruments in appendices to cover them in the future. These instruments represent a bonanza for doctoral dissertations and research to come.

Methodology

Although most participants in studies covered in this volume were undergraduate students, many participants came from the real world, outside of academic settings, and included, especially in the fourth level, couples, clinical participants, and participants from groups and organizations. Research was not just limited to behavioral observations, structured interviews, scales, Q sorts, and questionnaires included in the appendices. Priming techniques, for instance, were one favored approach, presenting words or names that were related to attachment figures and evaluating their outcome on attachment processes. Another approach was the use of diaries, especially in the study of everyday occurrences in the lives of couples. In short, the methodology was eclectic and not just limited to questionnaires and scales. This diversity in methodology is one of the many assets of this research, which was not limited to just one or two instruments but comprised a variety of evaluative and well-validated approaches.

Theoretical Connections

Historically, object relations theory, an English offshoot of psychoanalysis, is behind attachment theory. Nonetheless, attachment is also evaluated here in its possible connections to psychodynamic, relational, and social-cognitive theories as well as to positive psychology and the Big Five, circumplex, feedback control, and interdependence models. These approaches are linked to, compared, and contrasted with attachment. Especially in the chapter on psychotherapy, psychoanalytic theory still looms in the background, including a discussion of the "resolution of the Oedipus complex," and references to ego defenses, transference, and counter-transference.

Critique

Finding something wrong with this volume is like looking for a needle in a haystack. The writing is so meticulous that trying to find fault with it would be practically impossible. If there are errors of commission, they would be so few that it would not be worthy of my and readers' time to delve into them. For instance, just two dimensions may form a model, but what happens when other related dimensions are added to the original ones? As explained in the hierarchical structure envisaged above, the two dimensions of the model become a comprehensive framework that covers every imaginable aspect of personality and relationships. Although there are frequent claims that make attachment a theory of personality, the issue still remains whether personality can be accounted for by the two dimensions of anxiety and avoidance. On the basis of all the evidence and structure of this volume and research reviewed below, clearly the emphatic answer should be a qualified yes!

However, no theory, no matter how fruitful and comprehensive, as is this one, can escape inevitable corrections and controversies. Therefore, a critique of this book includes possible commissions and unintended omissions. Advisedly, the term *error* is not used here because the commissions and omissions enumerated below do not reach the level of errors. Perhaps they may represent incompleteness in the evolution of this topic.

Possible Commissions

A larger, underlying issue concerns the term *attachment*. If indeed attachment is so ubiquitous, to the point that all relationships can be described by a secure–insecure dimension, with the latter term divided into anxiety and avoidance, then it should follow that all relationships, either intimate or not, derive from attachment. If that is the case, attachment becomes a buzzword; many clinicians, for example, are starting to use the term *disorders of attachment*, as if they had discovered something completely new. Then it would follow that most psychological disorders are indeed "disorders of attachment." This conclusion begs the question "Should we then use the term *attachment* or substitute equivalent or similar terms, such as *personality* or *relational competence*?" Because *attachment* denotes a specific theory of the relationship between personality and personal relationships, as long as there are competing theories, then the term *attachment* needs to be retained. Whether it deserves to be called a theory or model is left to the predilections of its proponents, especially if no clear distinction is made between what constitutes a theory and what constitutes a model.

Throughout the text the intrapersonal and interpersonal wonders of secure attachment are repeatedly proclaimed and supported by an incredible amount of empirical evidence, including descriptions of dreams whose contents may distinguish whether the dreamer is a secure or insecure individual. However, who are these secure super individuals? If such individuals (or families) exist, they need to be identified in the concrete, not in the abstract of various group measurements.

Another issue lies in the book's free use of terms that do not belong to attachment per se, raising the question of whether we are dealing with a theory or a model. These are terms that are extraneous to the dimensions of the topic; they are included to account for aspects of the theory seemingly not validated by existing research. If a theory cannot account for some terms used to describe or even explain behavior, then does the theory deserve to be called a theory or a model? For instance, "self-worth," "self-efficacy," "distress," "ego," and "defenses" are freely used to explain various results throughout the volume. But what is the relationship of these terms to the theory? If they are not connected to or by the theory, then perhaps it means that the theory is incomplete to the point of being a model.

Why do these terms need to be included? Can two dimensions of security–insecurity or anxiety–avoidance be sufficient to account for and describe behavior or relationships? More specifically, throughout the text "bereavement," "distress," "grief," "mourning," and "needs" are also used freely but are disconnected among themselves or from the two dimensions of the theory. Would there be an umbrella term that would cover and integrate terms to denote the outcome of abuses, betrayals, losses, or rejections? *Distress* is one frequently employed term, but it is left undefined, even though it is listed in the subject index. Furthermore, would avoidance occur internally? Through getting in touch with painful feelings as expressed outwardly? How does this intrapersonal avoidance express itself interpersonally and in intimate relationships, especially if these terms are taken for granted but not linked to parts of the overall framework?

Going out on a limb, one would hazard the possibility that some disorders of Cluster C in Axis II in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th ed., text rev.; American Psychiatric Association, 2000) may be characterized mainly by anxiety, making them amenable to professional help and psychotherapy. Some, if not most, disorders of Cluster B may be characterized by avoidance—not only of others but also of underlying feelings of distress, as discussed above, that I have grouped under the rubric of "hurt feelings" (L'Abate 1994, 1997, 2005, 2009c, 2011a). That would also explain why Clusters A and B disorders are usually resistant to talk psychotherapy and psychological interventions, just as Axis I disorders are.

Then, we need to find other media of intervention, such as nonverbal communication and distance writing, to help people who fall into the latter categories. For example, the chapter on psychotherapy shows the limitations of talk therapy in relation to other media of psychological intervention (L'Abate 2005, 2008, 2011c, 2013a, 2013b). If the process and outcome of talk psychotherapy are linked to attachment, then it needs to be demonstrated that attachment-derived therapy is more effective or even more cost-effective and efficacious (longer lasting) than other types of psychotherapy. To prove this point through talk psychotherapy would take years of research and a great many grants. I doubt that this approach would be fruitful because it would be too expensive to implement and questionable in its outcome. To date, perhaps with the exception of cognitive–behavioral therapy, no single theory-related psychotherapy that I know of has been shown to be superior in outcome to other theory-related psychotherapies.

Therefore, if I am allowed to make a humble suggestion, I wonder whether substituting distance writing instead of talk as a medium of intervention would permit the evaluation of whether attachment-related interventions are more cost-effective and efficacious than are nonattachment-related interventions. If writing is used instead of talking, it would do away with expensive recoding, transcribing, and classifying talk therapy sessions, chores impossible to accomplish without research grants. In addition, programmed writing would allow matching anxious or avoidant participants, even in a normal population, with available protocols or workbooks related to same dimensions. Anxious or avoidant participants matched with the appropriate workbook should show more cost-effective and efficacious outcomes than participants matched with workbooks derived from other theories or models or even a control workbook dealing with seemingly neutral experiences (Hooper et al. 2013; L'Abate 2011b, 2013a).

Unintended Omissions

However, the record of unintended omissions needs to be set straight because it involves work related specifically to attachment. Neither Mikulincer nor Shaver was privy to the information provided below because otherwise surely they would have included it in this volume. As discussed above, many major or minor theories or models were included in this volume and reviewed in their hypothetical or even empirical links with attachment. Granted, also, that one study (Lindaver 1998) was published in Italy and another in a family therapy journal admittedly with small impact factor (L'Abate, De Giacomo, McCarty, De Giacomo, and Verrastro 2000), making both studies difficult to locate and include in this volume. Nonetheless, Lindaver's study was summarized in English (L'Abate and De Giacomo 2003, p. 163), whereas L'Abate et.al.'s (2000) study was republished in two secondary publications (L'Abate 2003 pp. 173–191; L'Abate and De Giacomo 2003, pp. 160–173). Both studies suggested that the structure of human relationships is not just indigenous to attachment but that there is a structure underlying personality and intimate relationships that may well be universal. There are at least two other models that replicate the same structure (L'Abate, De Giacomo, De Giacomo 1997).

Conclusion

Who should read this book? The easy answer would be "All psychologists should or will need to read it." If Freud was the major theorist for the last century, Bowlby, as represented in this volume, might well be the theorist for this century. However, given the monumental and scholarly aspects of this work, very few lay readers, unlike what the authors would like to believe (p. 218) will benefit from this book. However, scholars, researchers, and students in the fields of personality and social psychology will have no choice but to refer to it, whether it is in their possession or in their institutions' libraries. At $65.00, this book is a bargain in comparison with more expensive books of less importance because it is and will certainly be the substantive basis for any clinical and nonclinical psychologist interested in personality and human relationships.

How does attachment theory account for Intimacy and Identity? The bottom line of this review is found in how representative attachment treatises and contributions deal with Intimacy and Identity, as shown in Fig. 4.1. The answer to the question of how attachment theory accounts for Intimacy and Identity is; Not very well. Only less than a handful mentioned either construct but only Milulincer and Shaver included both. Perhaps we might find more fertile grounds in support of both constructs in Communication and Relationship Sciences.

Source	Intimacy	Identity
Atkinson & Zucker, 1997	yes	no
Bartholomew & Perlman, 1994	no	no
Cassady & Shaver, 1999	no	yes
Doane & Diamond, 1994	no	no
Feeney & Noller, 1996	no	no
Harwood, Miller, & Irizarry, 1995	no	no
Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007	yes	yes
Rholes & Simpson, 2004	yes	no
Shane, Shane, & Gales, 1997	no	no
Simpson & Rholes, 1998	yes	no
Solomon & George, 1999	no	no
Sperling & Berman, 1994	yes	no
Stosny, 1995	yes	no

Fig. 4.1 Citation frequency about intimacy and identity in selected attachment theory publications

Communication Science: We Cannot Not Communicate

Either in the extreme of catatonic stupor of a schizophrenic or at the other extreme of a manic state in bipolar disorder, we cannot help communicate by words and by deeds. Yet, the discipline of communication theory and research (Greene and Burleson 2003) is largely overlooked by psychologists, while many communication scholars and researchers rely heavily on psychological theories, models, and research (L'Abate 2013a). A review of references in the latest issue of the *Journal of Family Psychology*, for instance, failed to find one single reference to a communication journal. Consequently, where do "communications" begin and how do they overlap with "relationships." Do we need a relationship or an "interaction" to communicate? Can we communicate without a relationship? How about being alone? Do we communicate something by choosing to be alone? Consequently, we cannot help not communicating.

The discipline of communication theory and research is largely derived from sociological and psychological theories, models, and research. Indeed, before we can evaluate properly its specialty of family communication, we need to consider and provide its larger context within the discipline of communication theory and research. This discipline is clearly and firmly established in its own communication or journalism schools, with its own faculties, degrees, and students. Curricula include also advertising, marketing, and public relations. Yet, could one dare call this discipline a hybrid product of both "relationship science" in sociology and social psychology? The term "hybrid" is not used here derogatorily to trivialize this discipline, but to describe it as the possible historical outcome of deficits in applications from both sociology and psychology. Apparently, both fields ignored the field of communication because each felt it already owned and had first dibs on being proprietary of the communication medium implicit in human relationships. This interpretation is reached by judging the original academic provenance of contributors to its major publication (Greene and Burleson 2003).

Given this overlap, how does the discipline of communication differ from sociology, the study of groups? How does the discipline of communication differ from psychology, the study of individuals *in vacuum* and in groups, including the family? These questions are asked to indicate how communication theory and research overlap with both sociology and psychology in ways that will be nuanced in the rest of this review. Indeed, the book to be reviewed is emblematic of the questions raised by trying to differentiate (unsuccessfully) the field of family communication from family sociology and family psychology.

The is no question that this volume (Turner and West 2006) represents the best, up-to-date compendium of family communication available to advanced students in various disciplines, especially family therapists who desire a substantive background for their practices. There are extremely relevant topics that deserve the attention of family oriented scholars, researchers, and clinicians: two chapters dedicated to defining and interpreting the family, three chapters on theoretical and methodological considerations, a section on internal family dynamics with two chapters for each topic on storytelling, conflict, intimacy, discipline, and rituals; a section on external family frameworks with two chapters for each interface of the family with media, work, religion, school, and health care. Both the introductory (L. Edna Rogers) and concluding chapters (Mary Anne Fitzpatrick) were stellar and scholarly additions to an already comprehensive view of family communication.

A competing work on the same topic (Segrin and Flora 2005), perhaps designed for undergraduate classes, could serve as an introduction to this volume for readers who might find it too ponderous and too advanced, if not too expensive. On the other hand, the competing work contains a section on prevention and applied interventions not included in this reviewed volume, except for an admirable all-too-brief historical introduction by Edna Rogers, who traced the field of family communication to symbolic interactionism in sociology and the Palo Alto group in family therapy (Bateson et al. 1956). Admittedly, additions to prevention and applications would have stretched the size and cost of this volume beyond acceptable market limits. Interested readers at an advanced level, however, would find such applications and interventions in Greene and Burleson (2003).

Yet, since perfection does not exist in any published work, family communication theory and research, as demonstrated in this volume, suffer by two interrelated problems that would plague any family oriented discipline: (1) difficulties in defining the family; and (2) trying to find an overarching theory over a plethora of theoretical models applied sometimes ad hoc and sometimes systematically.

The difficulty in defining what a "family" is, even though considered at length in two chapters, colors the whole volume and is mentioned, sometimes redundantly, in practically every chapter. As already noted in Chap. 1 of the present volume, how is the family to be defined when only 25 % of the American households include intact families traditionally composed of two parents and two different sex children? Will unmarried same-sex couples with adopted or biological children, for instance, qualify as families? In addition, how can step-families, singles, and other compositions be called family when additional factors such as ethnic origin, race, and socio-economic background must be included? Given this difficulty, how is one to theorize and research on a topic that cannot be defined? As Gavin (p. 15) concluded in her review of family diversity: “The concept of family is changing visibly, invisibly, and irrevocably.”

Apparently, the notion of family is still present in a competing volume (Bengtson et al. 2005) developed by relationship science sociologists with a smattering of psychologists. Nonetheless, in spite of this difficulty, no one in this reviewed volume suggested doing away with this concept completely. This change has already occurred in quite a few publications, too many to cite here, by including and accepting more inclusive and encompassing constructs, such as close, committed, interdependent, and prolonged intimate relationships. Consequently, many excellent contributors to this volume seemed mired in this dilemma in ways that sometimes distracted them from pursuing fully their assigned topics.

An Abundance of Models and a Paucity of Theories: Is there an Overarching Theory of Family Communication?

Another positive feature of the volume being reviewed here (Turner and West 2006), also present in most communication theory and research, is the stress on theory and theoretical models that seem forgotten in psychological research (McHale and Grolnick 2002). This asset, as we shall see, might turn out to be a liability. An attempt is made in practically every chapter to consider the family qua family, as a group of its own, with its own specific organization, own proprietary rules, repeated rituals, and peculiar ways of bonding. A theory, on the other hand, is a speculative framework about a topic composed of many interrelated models defined by verifiable dimensions (L’Abate 1976). The topic of family communications, interactions, and relationships, therefore, needs an overarching theory. Such an attempt was made by Bryant and Bryant who recommended integrating and incorporating social network analysis with family systems theory. The outcome of this integration would consist of “multi-theoretical, multi-level models” (pp. 309–310). Rather than using single-models explanations of network this supra-ordinate theory would attempt to integrate various models and theories into one single framework. Yet, as Cooper, in a review of four major theories of family–school interface (Epstein, Comer, Lareau, Ryan and Adams) concluded: “The body of research in this field that has been developed over the past three decades has not been well-connected to theory” (p. 417).

In spite of the attempt by Bryant and Bryant, many contributors rely on specific relational models borrowed from sociological relationship science or family psychology. A list of these models illustrates how they were applied in various chapters (Sabourin pp. 43–60): (1) theoretical perspectives), symbolic interactionism, systems, Baxter’s dialectics, and developmental approaches; (2) commonly used models, Olson’s circumplex, Beavers’ systems, Hill’s Double ABCX, and Epstein’s McMaster; (3) promising models of family communication, such as, social relations, nonlinear mathematical family interactions, dynamic contextualism, and grounded theory. Yet, models in and of themselves do not a theory make (L'Abate 2013b).

The often-cited attachment model (Bengtson et al. 2005; Greene and Burleson, 2003; L'Abate 2003) is conspicuous by its absence. This omission is peculiar given the extensive empirical work supporting it. One cannot help wonder why this omission was not noted by editors as well as contributors. Could it be that attachment refers to family interactions rather than communications?

Issues of Reductionism

The presence of so many psychological and sociological models in this volume (Turner and West 2006) raises two issues about reductionism that family scholars need to confront: (1) interpreting the family as the ultimate unit of analysis, the family qua family, as suggested by Bryant and Bryant (pp. 306–307) and in many chapters in this volume; and (2) finding the roots of the family in the individual characteristics of its members. Can the family qua family be described and "explained" at its own level, without relying on the nature of its component members? Is family functioning (and dysfunctioning) the outcome of the family's own peculiar structural characteristics or the result of individual generational and developmental characteristics of its own members?

Of course, we accept that individual members are socialized originally by their families. However, the process is reciprocal: family members socialize each other. We cannot longer maintain, for instance, that parents effect their children unidirectionally without considering that this process is a circular and reciprocal two-way street. Children socialize parents. Yes, indeed families may be "described" at their own level of analysis and functioning. However, how can one "explain" whatever level of functioning is achieved without relying on the individual characteristics of its members? The answer, of course, would rely on what kind of explanation one desires. Family sociologists (Bengtson et al. 2005) may be satisfied to explain families qua families structurally in terms of their own peculiar characteristics. We psychologists may be satisfied by explaining how individual family members contribute in their own peculiar, circular, and reciprocal ways to the type and level of family functioning or dysfunctioning (McHale and Grolnick 2002).

If there is a theory of family communication and relationships to be had, what are the rules or links that integrate various seemingly disparate models? Without such rules or links, one would have a mish-mash of unrelated models, each trying to achieve hegemony over the others, as seems the case in the apparent solution found in the multi-theoretical, multi-level model mentioned above. As noted, a model in and of itself does not a theory make. Furthermore, while models may lend themselves to empirical evaluation, as well-done in various chapters in this volume, what kind of structure would such a theory, if any, have? If a structure is to be had, it cannot help but being hierarchical: starting from the general abstract premises to more concrete and specific models (Sabourin). Such a theory, if it did exist, in its bare bones would not be different from hierarchical tables of organization found in almost all human frameworks, be they business, industry, or military. Without such a hierarchy there would not be a theory but just a list of independent models competing to become theories (L'Abate and Cusinato 2007).

Conclusion

There is no question in this reviewer's opinion that this volume is a substantial contribution to the field of family communication. One could go as far as asserting that it constitutes a milestone in the evolution of theories, models, and research not only in the field of communication, but also in the sociological and psychological study of the family. Even family psychologists, who might usually overlook the discipline of family communication, would find in this volume a treasure trove of rich theorizing and substantial research. It might widen their thinking and possible applications about the family as a system of interacting personalities.

How does Communication Science account for Intimacy and Identity? The bottom line of this review needs to show that communication science pays attention and includes the two constructs under consideration in the present volume. Therefore, a selected number of communication science treatises and textbooks were reviewed to check on whether either or both constructs were considered as relevant to communication. This review was performed in Fig. 4.2.

Figure 4.2 shows a reversed trend of including both Intimacy and Identity found in previous Chaps. 2 and 3 of this volume. Indeed, most communication scholars and researchers did include both constructs more often than family, personality, and attachment theory publications.

Source	Intimacy	Identity
Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008	yes	yes
Bostrom, 1984	n/a	n/a
Buck, 1984	no	no
Daly & McCroskey, 1984	n/a	n/a
DeVito, J2011	yes	yes
Galvin & Cooper, 1996	yes	no
Greene & Burleson, 2003	yes	yes
Knapp & Miller, 1994	yes	yes
Nicotera and associates, 1993	yes	yes
Samovar et al., 2013	yes	yes
Segrin & Flora, 2005	yes	no
Turner & West, 2006	yes	yes
Whally & Samter, 2007	yes	yes

Fig. 4.2 Citation frequency about intimacy and identity in selected communication science publications

Relationship Science

As Fincham (2013) commented, the scientific study of close relationships is an interdisciplinary endeavor that has given rise to new professional organizations and several new journals specifically devoted to the empirical study of close or personal relationships (Berscheid 1999). This field is evolving into a separate discipline following the example of other interdisciplinary endeavors such as cognitive science and neuroscience. The emergence of this field is particularly relevant to family psychologists.

Unlike marriage and family researchers who have relied largely on legal and/or biological definitions of their subject matter, from its inception relationship research has grappled with the very definition of a "close relationship." With the National Institute of Mental Health recently defining families as "a network of mutual commitment (Pequegnat and Bray 2012)" family psychology has much to gain by fully embracing what the field of personal relationships has to offer. Apart from conceptual analyses of central constructs such as commitment, intimacy, and so on, relationship science draws attention to important but largely ignored phenomena such as forgiveness. Emergent research on prayer in close relationships further emphasizes what can be offered and speak to a behavior critical to the 68–84 % of the world population that professes a religious faith. Can family psychology be complete if it ignores this field?

How Does Relationship Science Account for Intimacy and Identity?

The answer to this question is found in Fig. 4.3.

The results are in favor of intimacy being cited in 25 of the 34 references but not in favor in Identity cited only in 13 cases out of 34 references. Relationship science, therefore, tilts in favor of Intimacy over Identity, a substantial difference that needs to be explained by the emphasis that relationship science pays to relational rather than to seemingly non-relational constructs such as Identity.

Conclusion

==

Source	Intimacy	Identity
Brehm, Miller, Perlman, & Campbell, 2002	yes	no
Burgess & Huston, 1979	yes	yes
Canary, Cupach, & Messman, 1995	yes	no
Duck, 1973	no	no
Duck, 1982	no	yes
Duck, 1988	yes	no
Duck, 1991	yes	no
Duck, 1992	no	no
Duck, 1993a	no	no
Duck, 1993b	no	no
Duck, 1994	yes	no
Duck & Gilmour, 1981a	yes	yes
Duck & Gilmour, 1981b	yes	yes
Erber & Gilmour, 1995	yes	no
Fletcher & Fincham, 1991	yes	no
Gergen, 1994,	no	yes
Gillath, Adams, & Kunkel, 2012	yes	yes
Gilmour & Duck, 1986	yes	no
Hartup & Rubin, 1986	yes	no
Harvey & Wenzel, 2002	no	no
Hendrick & Hendrick, 2000	yes	no
Hinde, 1979	yes	no
Hinde, 1997	yes	no
Kelley, 1979	no	no
Kelley et al., 1983	yes	yes
Knapp & Miller, 1994	yes	yes
Miell & Dallos, 1996	yes	yes
Noam & Fischer, 1996	yes	yes
Perlman & Duck, 1987	yes	no
Regan, 2011	yes	no
Sollie & Leslie, 1994	yes	no
Swensen, 1973	yes	yes
Vohs & Finkel, 2006	no	yes
Wright, 1999	yes	yes

Fig. 4.3 Citation frequency about intimacy and identity in selected relationship science publications

The concreteness and specificity of both intimacy and identity have been demonstrated in a review chapter by Kroger and Marcia (2011) that reported substantial, positive correlations between measures of both constructs. More specifically, Arseth, Kroger, Martinussen, and Bakken (2009) and Arseth, Kroger, Martinussen, and Marcia (2009) found interesting gender differences in the relationship between intimacy and identity statuses. Even more interesting was the finding that there was only one source in the whole volume that linked both constructs.

The bottom line here is whether the results from Figs. 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 support the thesis of this volume. Is a judgment call to be made? Can one find better, that is: More adequate and more verifiable constructs than Intimacy and Identity? Some of these questions and quandaries will be considered in the next two Chaps. 5 and 6 of this volume.

Chapter 5
Relational Competence Theory: Toward a Comprehensive Classification of Human Relationships

"The scientific requirements of a new theory are very exacting. A new theory must account for the known facts predict new facts following the new generalizations which in turn depend upon the new factors or structural assumptions introduced. The predicted new facts must then be verified empirically"
(Korzybski 1949 p xxix).

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the evolution and transformation of the systems paradigm from the 1950s and 1960s as already reviewed in Chap. 1 of this volume (Bateson, Jackson, Haley, and Weakland 1956; Magnavita 2012a, b; von Bertalanffy 1950, 1968). The reduction of seemingly abstract and general concepts and ideas to concrete and specific models has been called Relational Competence Theory (RCT). This is an empirically verified and verifiable hierarchical framework in which research with its clinical applications go hand in hand with mental health interventions in prevention, promotion, psychotherapy, and rehabilitation as sciences and as professions. RCT is introduced as an example of a hierarchical structure whose selected models with their dimensions have been evaluated empirically with newly created and validated instruments and methods. Models can be evaluated statically through newly developed test instruments and evaluated dynamically through distance writing, interactive practice exercises, and programmed workbooks derived from RCT models in self-help, health promotion, sickness prevention, psychotherapy, and rehabilitation (L'Abate 2011b, 2013a).

Originally, RCT was created to deal with individuals in their families (L'Abate 1976, 1986, 1990). Eventually, RCT was refined to deal more concretely and specifically with functional and dysfunctional relational personality characteristics (L'Abate 1994a, 1997, 2005, 2006). Finally, from a informal, linear theory, it evolved into a formal, hierarchical relational theory about effectiveness in human relationships (Cusinato and L'Abate 2012a; L'Abate 2003, 2006, 2013b; L'Abate and Cusinato 2007; L'Abate et al. 2010). In its evolution over decades, RCT attempted to satisfy most if not all the requirements for a unifying theory of human relationships (L'Abate, Cusinato, Maino, Colesso, and Sweeney, in press).

L. L'Abate, *Beyond the Systems Paradigm*, SpringerBriefs in Psychology,
DOI: 10.1007/978-1-4614-7444-9_5, © The Author(s) 2013

The Importance of Hierarchy in Theory Building

The importance of hierarchical frameworks is relatively novel in psychological theory building, considering that contents of most traditional theories in couple, family, and personality psychology and relationship science are couched in a linear fashion: one chapter after another versus theories couched according to a formal hierarchical framework. A formal theory follows the same pyramidal structure of any layered organizational chart or table of organization in any human enterprise in business, industry, military, or political structures, as discussed in Chap. 1 of this volume. That structure requires someone in command, a president, down to lower vice presidents, even lower managers, then supervisors, and bottom-line employees. This hierarchy is necessary for any organization to function properly, according to decision making from the top to the bottom or from the highest level of abstraction and generality to the lowest levels of concreteness and specificity. The lower level personnel carry out the responsibilities delegated by superiors (L'Abate et al. 2010).

Different instrumental functions are delegated at various levels ranging from generality at the top to specificity at the bottom, and from maximal responsibility at the top to minimal responsibility at the bottom. Decisions are made at the top, transmitted through medium level managers, and the carry out of those decisions in action is the responsibility of lower level, bottom-line workers, as shown in Table 5.1.

Harkness (2007, pp. 273–281) clarified and strongly supported the necessity and usefulness of a hierarchical organization in theory building and theory testing, differentiating between classical, traditional informal theories presented in a linear fashion, one topic after another, such as attachment theory, with sequential connections between topics but no differentiation of functions among topics versus hierarchical structures such as the one described here. This view raised a question about the nature of theories in psychological and relationship science. Does a theory need to be framed in a hierarchical structure to be called a *real* theory? The answer, of course, could be emphatically negative. However, if a theory cannot discriminate and distinguish among different functions of its component parts, how can it be evaluated? The answer is clear, a theory cannot be evaluated in toto, no matter its linear or nonlinear its nature. It can only be evaluated according to its piecemeal components, one component part at a time (Cusinato et al. 2008). Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to make this underlying theoretical framework clearly explicit and shows how an originally linear sequence was converted into a layered theoretical pyramidal framework, as summarized in Fig. 5.1.

Requirements of Relational Competence Theory

Almost any theory worth of serious consideration has to fulfill at least five requirements in order to be called a "theory". These requirements are: (1) verifiability, (2) applicability, (3) redundancy, (4) fruitfulness, and (5) longevity.

Summary of a Theory of Relational Competence in Intimate Relationships

Requirements			
Verifiability	Applicability	Redundancy	Fruitfulness

Meta-theoretical Assumptions about Relationships			
	Width[1]	Depth[2]	Settings[3]
Models	ERAAwC[1]	Levels of Interpretation[2]	Settings[3]
	Emotionality	Description	Home
	Rationality	Presentation	School/work
	Activity	Phenotype	Transit
	Awareness	Explanation	Transitory
	Context	Genotype	
		Generational-developmental	

Theoretical Assumptions about Relationships				
Models	Ability to Love[4]	Ability to Control Self[5]	Both Abilities[6]	Contents[7]
Dimensions	Distance	Control	Functionality	Modalities
	Approach/ Avoidance	Discharge/Delay	High/Middle/ Low	Being/Doing/ Having
DSM-IV	Axis II, Cluster C	Axis II, Cluster B	GAF* (100 to 0)*	Sexual deviations Driven Personalities

Normative Models of the Theory					
Models	Self-differentiation[8]	Relational Styles[9]	Interactions[10]	Selfhood[11]	Priorities[12]
Dimensions	Likeness Continuum	AA/RR/CC	Functionality	Importance	Survival/Enjoyment
a.	Symbiosis/ Alienation	Abusive/ Apathetic	Divisive	No-self	Vertical: Self/ intimates
b.	Sameness/ Oppositeness	Reactive/ Repetitive	Subtractive/ Static	Selfless/ Selfish	Horizontal: Settings
c.	c. Similarity/ Differentness	Conductive/ Creative	Additive/Multiplicative	Selfull	
DSM-IV	a. Axis I b. Axis II, Cluster B c. No diagnosis	a. Co-dependencies/ addictions b. Conflict high c. Conflict low	a. Below 39 on GAF* b. 69 to 40 on GAF c. 100 to 70 on GAF		

Clinical Applications of the Theory				
Models	Distance Regulation[13]	Drama Triangle[14]	Intimacy[15]	Negotiation[16]
Dimensions	Pursuer/ Distancer/	Victim/ Persecutor/	Sharing Joys, Hurts, & Fears	Structure/ Process

* GAF= Global Assessment of Functioning

Fig. 5.1 Summary of relational competence theory

Verifiability

Assuming that a theory is composed of models and models are composed by dimensions (as discussed in Chap. 1 of this volume), then the dimensions of a model must be empirically verifiable. If they are not verifiable the model is no longer a component part of the theory. Each model must be accountable for results along a dimension of functionality or dysfunctionality. As in any human organization, if the accounting is negative, the model is either revised or eliminated.

Applicability

The theory must apply to human relationships that include individuals (children, youth, and adults), couples and families as well as to ways and means to evaluate those relationships and help those that need help using replicable, therefore, written, instructions, and interventions (L'Abate 2013a, b). Furthermore, it must cover functional and dysfunctional aspects of relationships. No one model is exempt from this requirement except for Model[3] about settings, because physical structures are neutral in regard to their functionality or dysfunctionality. How people use those settings, however, is subject to functional and dysfunctional requirements. There are laws to protect people from driving while intoxicated on the road.

Redundancy

This requirement is necessary to describe and even explain multidimensional constructs according to different models of the theory. As shown below, multidimensional constructs, such as love, control, identity, and intimacy, for example, can be described through different models of RCT. This requirement speaks to the relationship among models, as emphasized by many pioneering systems thinkers covered in Chap. 1 of this volume. RCT models need to "get along" with each other, that is, correlate with each other in their overlapping functions. When a construct is not sufficiently covered by one model, love, for instance, will be covered additionally by other models of RCT. This is the case for resilience (L'Abate 2009e) and other theory-orphan constructs, such as self-esteem (L'Abate 2013a).

This requirement raises a question about differentiating between *descriptions*, what we see, hear, or touch, answering the questions What, When, and How? And *explanation*, trying to answer the question Why? For instance, a multidimensional construct such as love may be described by many different models, as noted above, but what does it take to answer the question Why? Will the explanation come from combining together different models or will it come from outside the theory itself (Teo 2012; Tryon 2012)? When one adds *evaluation* and *interpretation* the whole question remains open to further discussion.

Fruitfulness

A theory must produce novel ways to describe and evaluate relationships through the creation and validation of new instruments to evaluate and new methods of intervention to ameliorate relationships in need of help.

Longevity

A theory must last a long time because it takes time to evaluate it piece by piece.

Meta-Theoretical Assumptions

These assumptions refer to historical background of constructs necessary to develop practically any personality or relational theory. These assumptions encapsulate past knowledge that cannot longer be ignored and that lies at the ground of practically any theory about human relationships. No theoretical framework in existence can ignore the importance and influence of these constructs along two dimensions of specificity and concreteness and their immediate contexts where both dimensions occur. Within these assumptions there is also inclusion of a functional–dysfunctional dimensional requirement that involves the potential possibility that dysfunctionality be present in each component part of the theory. No model in RCT is exempt and free from this requirement, except, as noted, Model[3]: settings. In fact, how well each model covers and encompasses the functional–dysfunctional dimension is one way to judge its usefulness for the whole enterprise.

Therefore, this chapter will be devoted to summarize RCT citing research supporting the validity of its 16 models (Fig. 5.1). These studies were completed at the University of Padua under the leadership and mentorship of Mario Cusinato, Eleonora Maino, and Walter Colesso using Italian-speaking participants but administering English translations of well-known instruments already validated in the USA (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 24–29). A bibliography of how the models are related to secondary sources in personality, social psychology, and communication and relationship science (face validity) is available in L'Abate 2009a).

Meta-Theoretical Assumptions (Models 1–3)

These assumptions are relevant to any psychological theory, because they encompass already established and well-known constructs. This is why they go above and beyond RCT. Ideally, they should apply to any theory of human relationships.

Model[1] deals with human relationships horizontally, according to the width of a visually circular information processing following five original, overlapping components: Emotionality, Rationality, Activity, Awareness, and Context (Fig. 5.2). Finally, after its introduction years ago (L'Abate 1986; Cusinato 2012d, e), some authors have recognized the importance of context (Mesquita Barrett and Smith 2010; Shod, Corvine and Downey 2007), as discussed in Chap. 3 of this volume.

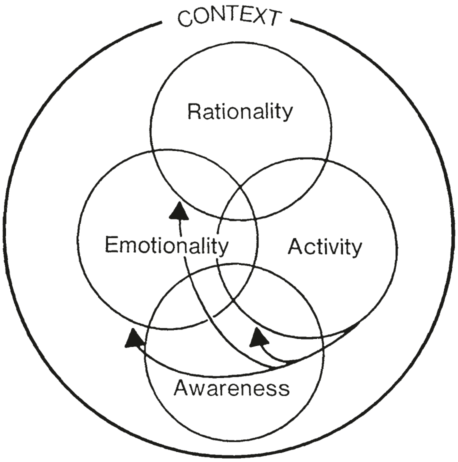

Fig. 5.2 An horizontal model of information processing

Each component has generated different schools of thought and therapy, each school with a large number of publications, fighting for hegemony over other schools of thought and of therapy (L'Abate 2005). Eight different studies (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 35–40) supported the construct, criterion, and convergent validities of this model. More recently, Cusinato (2012a, b, e, f) revised the Relational Answers Questionnaire (RAQ) created to evaluate this model that he originally developed and validated during the last decade with the help of Colesso and Maino (Cusinato and L'Abate 2012, Appendix A, pp. 309–311). This revision added two more components to the model: one on how emotionality is expressed after it is experienced, and another on how we are aware of our own awareness and whether awareness fulfills a corrective feedback function over other components of the model (Krantz 1978; Selman, Jaquette and Lavin 1977; Maino 2012) through two case studies, showed how scales of the RAQ related to measures of Alexithymia.

Model[2] deals with relationships vertically according to two levels of description and explanation (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 43–68). Description is subdivided into an impression management, self-presentational façade sublevel (Cusinato 2012d; Jones and Goethals 1971) that may occur automatically, out of awareness (Tyler 2012), and a pheno-typical sublevel: how we behave in the privacy of our own home (Cusinato and L'Abate 2012a, b, Appendix B, pp. 311–312). Explanation is subdivided into a genotype composed of Self-identity (Model[8]) and Selfhood (Model[11]) and their intergenerational and generational antecedents (Hooper et al. 2013).

The public versus private distinction has been emphasized by Collins (1973) about conformity. One could conform to social norms publically but not conform to those norms privately, as found in some addicts and alcoholics. By the same token, one could fail to conform publically but conform privately. This private versus public distinction is also relevant to Models[8, 9, and 10], where different degrees of conformity will be considered. What is relevant to the levels and sub-models of this Model[2] is the consistency, inconsistency, or contradictions among them. One may present oneself as a "nice guy" publically and behave as a bully in his own home. For instance, externalizing individuals may try to make a "good impression" especially to authorities, while internalizing individuals may tend to present themselves in a "bad" light, according to the way they feel about themselves.

Model[3] deals with settings where relational competence occurs (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 69–93). Contexts (Model[1]) are subjectively experienced and perceived relationships, while settings are objectively visible. A physical building may be called a house but it becomes a home when perceived in its nurturing aspects. Instead of generic and nonspecific terms, such as "environment" or "situation," (Shaver 1985), this model classifies four different types of settings; (1) home; (2) work/school; (3) survival; and (4) enjoyment. In addition to home, school, and work settings, this model also divides them into temporary transitory settings, such as barbershops, beauty salons, grocery stores, malls, etc., and lasting transit settings, such as airports, hotels, roads, theaters, etc. These settings interact with Models[7, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 15] (L'Abate et al. p. 70) and have been evaluated with a newly created instrument called RC-Eco-Map which was originally validated with encouraging results about its reliability and validity (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 75-93). More recently, this multi-setting instrument has been recalibrated, revised, and improved by Colesso (2012a) and Colesso and Garrido (2012).

Theoretical Assumptions Proper (Models 4–7)

These models are specific to RCT even though they are based on the previous meta-theoretical assumptions. However, they have not yet been verified empirically as yet because direct and indirect evidence to support them is practically overwhelming.

Model[4] defines the ability to love according to how we approach communally who and what we approach or avoid someone agentically according to a dimension of distance, how near or distant we are from somebody. If we love someone we want to be close to her or him. If we do not like someone, we shall try to avoid her or him if and when we can (Bing-Hall and Campbell 1981; L'Abate et al. pp. 97–108).

The multidimensionality of love was evaluated by Hegi and Bergner (2010), who defined it according to its various kinds, such as: romantic, parental, companionate, and altruistic. Ultimately, according to these researchers, love means an "….*investment in the well-being of the other for his or her own sake*"(p. 620). Reasons of space do not allow a greater expansion of this important research.

However, love as a multidimensional construct will be reframed differently as found in other models of RCT.

Model^{4}, therefore, is couched according to a dimension of distance in Space: how emotionally and physically near or distant one is toward someone else. This Model^{4} accounts for couple and family alliances, coalitions, collusions, favoritisms, and over-protections, whenever a family member approaches more often another member more than others and avoids another member at the same time. It is important to note that these processes occur completely out of awareness of those involved in them. In fact, many family members involved in these alliances and their variations deny violently being involved in them (Thomasgard and Metz 1993). These pathogenic processes are deemed to be at the base of a great many psychopathologies, as expanded in Model^{14} (Hooper, L'Abate, Sweeney, Gianesini and Jambosky, 2013). Extremes in this dimension are represented by dependent personalities at one end and avoidant personalities at the other end.

The multidimensional nature of love supports the need to rely on the requirement of redundancy to describe and perhaps explain a multidimensional construct like love according to different models of RCT. Love, for instance, can be defined by other terms in other models of RCT, such as communally and instrumentally Being Present and available to self and intimates, Model^{7}), how we identify ourselves (Model^{8}), what style is most prominent in how we relate with intimate and nonintimate others (Model^{9}), what kind of interactions we establish with intimates and nonintimates (Model^{10}), how we attribute and bestow importance to self and others (Model^{11}), how we set our own priorities in regard to self and others (Model^{11}), how intimate we are with others by sharing with them our joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt (Model^{15}), and how we negotiate and solve problems with them (Model^{16}).

Model^{5} deals with the ability to control and regulate self: how we discharge or delay agentically in responding to internal and external events according to a dimension of time (fast/slow) (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 103–108). This model covers impulsivity at one extreme (Brandtstandter 1989; L'Abate 2011c; Madden and Bickel 2010; Shapiro, Schwartz and Astin 1996; Weisz, Rothbaum and Blackburn1984), as shown by externalizing personality disorders, and by rumination and an inability to act appropriately, as in internalizing personality disorders (L'Abate 2006, 2013a). This Model^{5} is indirectly related to Models $^{13\text{ and }14}$ and directly related to Model^{16} about Negotiation, because that process could not occur without a modicum of self-control.

This dimension accounts also for a temporal perspective, how involved we are in our past, present, and future. Functionality means being able to recollect past and present positive over negative experiences, planning positively for the future but living in the present. Internalizing disorders, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) means being controlled and overwhelmed by past painful and traumatic experiences at the cost of being unable to function in the present and to plan for the future (Joireman, Shaffer, Balliet, and Strathman 2012; L'Abate 2011a).

Based on this perspective, Zimbardo, Sword, and Sword (2012) developed a highly recommended, successful, empirically based, short-term therapeutic approach replacing past painful and traumatic experiences with pleasant and pleasurable ones (www.josseybass.com/go/timecure).

Model^{6} combines both Models$^{4 \text{ and } 5}$ to produce three levels of functionality, ranging from functional, to semi- or borderline functional, and to clearly dysfunctional (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 109–114) where dependency is the most visible dependent variable: how autonomous or dependent we are from others. When there is a age-and stage-of-life appropriate balance within and between approach-avoidance and discharge-delay functions, functionality and interdependence are more likely to occur. When there are conflicts in approach–avoidance and discharge–delay there is likely either a denial of dependency at one hand or overdependence in the other hand, that is: borderline functionality, as found in most personality disorders. When there are extreme contradictions in approach-avoidance and discharge-delay functions, symbiosis or alienation may more likely occur, as in severe psychopathology (Manderscheid, Silbergeld and Dager 1976; Zwerling 1982).

Figure 5.3 summarizes different sources of both models derived from the two dimensions of distance in Space and of speed in Time, basic to Models$^{4 \text{ and } 5}$. Non-included in that Fig. 5.3 is Straus' (1964) dichotomy of power and support structure that will be expanded in Chap. 6 of this volume.

Two Factors Models of Intimate Relationships" Models $^{4 \& 5}$ respectively*

Space ←	→	Time
Distance	Source	Self-control
Affiliation	Leary (1958)	Power
Communion	Bakan (1967)	Agency
Communal	Clark & Mills (1979)	Exchange
Intimacy	McAdams (1988)	Power
Affiliation	Wiggins & Trobst (1999)	Control
Cohesion	Olson (1996)	Adaptability
Intimacy	Canary et al., 1997	Control & Power
Connectedness	Harter et al., 1997)	Autonomy
Nurturance	Fehr & Broughton (2001)	Dominance
Support	Franks et al., (2004)	Control
Warmth	Grolnick & Gurland (2002)	Control
Communion	Horowitz (2004)	Agency
Intimacy	Segrin & Flora (2005)	Power
Distance	L'Abate (1986, 1994, 1997, 2005, 2009; L'Abate & Cusinato, 2007; L'Abate & De Giacomo, 2003	Speed
Being		Doing & Having
Presence		Power
Love		Control
Proximity	Mikulincer&Shaver, 2007	Activation

Fig. 5.3 Two factors models of intimate relationships" Models $^{4 \text{ and } 5}$ respectively

Model^{7} includes the Triangle of Living derived from resource exchange theory (Foa and Foa 1974). While the three previous Models$^{4, 5 \text{ and } 6}$ were essentially processual, this model deals with the *contents* of relationships. This Model^{7} is composed of: (1) Being Present and available communally and agentically to self and intimate others by relying on self-other importance or status (Model^{11}) and intimacy (Model^{15}); (2) Doing or Performance, composed of Information and Services; and (3) Having or Production composed of Money and Possessions (Friedman 2012) Combination of Doing and Having defines a super construct of power (Guinote and Vescio 2010).

This model was validated in one study by Casellato with functional and psychiatric patients (L'Abate et al. pp. 122–123) and lead to a prescription to teach couples and families through written instructions on how to be present unconditionally with each other nonverbally without demands for Doing or Having (L'Abate 2005).

Developmental and Normative Models (8–12)

This section covers most developmental and normative models of RCT. These models are the most validated ones thus far.

Model[8] covers self-identity defined by a continuum of Likeness or Resemblance. Developmentally, self-identity emerges from a same/different dichotomy resulting in an increasingly curvilinear, dialectical differentiation (L'Abate 1976, p. 79).This differentiation occurs along a dimension varying from symbiosis, sameness, and similarity on the one hand, and differentness, oppositeness, and alienation on the other hand (Cusinato and L'Abate 2008), as shown in Fig. 5.4. This continuum is at the base of functional and dysfunctional relationships (L'Abate et al. 2010, p. 137). Sameness means requiring blind and uncritical conformity to one's demands and standards, no matter how outlandish, contradictory and inappropriate those demands and standards may be. Requiring uncritical and blind conformity tends to produce a rebellion in children, youth, and adults (as well at the cultural level) that is found in the counter culture of oppositional and externalizing disorders, where counter-culture standards themselves are ironically followed blindly and uncritically (Darley and Darley 1973).

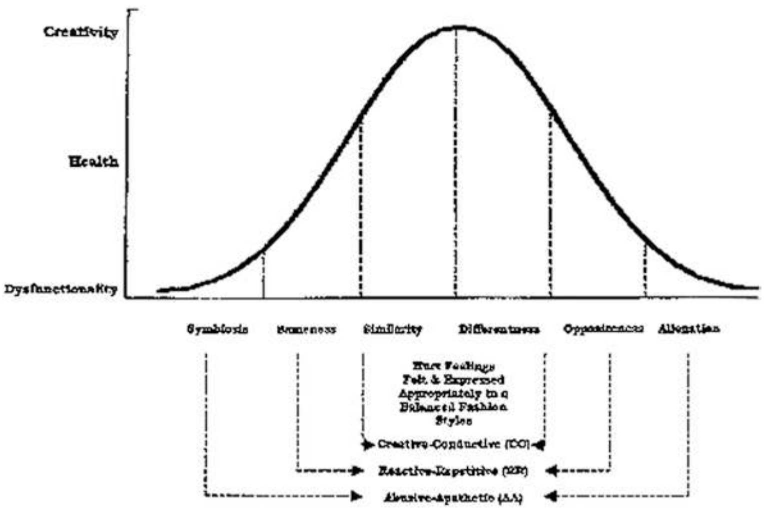

Fig. 5.4 A curvilinear, developmental model of identity differentiation (Model[8]) integrated with hurt feelings (Model[15]). Adapted from L'Abate 1976, p. 79

Research to validate this continuum was performed from the very outset (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 136–141; L'Abate and Wagner 1985, 1988) until Cusinato created and validated an improved instrument, the Likeness Profile that was validated in four different studies (L'Abate et al. pp. 142–146) demonstrating the progressive, developmental curvilinearity of this model. Additional and more recent evidence is available in Colesso (2012b), Cusinato and Colesso (2008), Cusinato and L'Abate (2008), and Colesso et al. (2013). The revised scale is available in Cusinato and L'Abate (2012a, b, Appendix C, pp. 312–314).

Model[9] is based on the dialectical nature of the Likeness continuum, producing three different styles. When Symbiosis is paired with Alienation, an Abusive–Apathetic and Neglectful style (AA) emerges. When Sameness and Oppositeness are paired a Reactive–Repetitive style (RR) emerges. When Similarity is paired with Differentness a Creative–Conductive (CC) style emerges (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 147–152). Cusinato and Colesso (2008) validated a newly created instrument that was also used in additional studies that supported the validity of the instrument created to validate this model (Colesso et al. 2013).

Model[10] expands on the six different degrees of sameness–oppositeness by creating a Simple Arithmetical Model (SAM) composed of multiplicative, additive, static positive, static negative, subtractive, and divisive interactions (L'Abate et al. 2010, p 153–161). Multiplicative interactions are characterized by: (1) maximum interdependence and reciprocity of Being, Doing, and Having; (2) minimum of conflicts and maximum of negotiation; (3) extreme intimacy as defined as the sharing of joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt (Model[15]); and (4) leadership in civil and community initiatives. Additive interactions share the first three characteristics of multiplicative relationship, except for not leading but following in civic and community initiatives. Positive static interactions are characterized by some degree of dependence on others and limited reciprocity, some conflicts and questionable skills in negotiating with intimacy limited to special occasions, such as funerals and marriages. Negative static interactions deny dependency while contradictorily being dependent with a minimum of reciprocity, practically no intimacy, and a maximum number of conflicts. Subtractive interactions are based on almost total dependency, no intimacy or reciprocity, extreme conflict, and inability to assume responsibility for one's actions. Divisive interactions represent the extreme inability to function except in a protected environment with total dependency, absolute lack of intimacy or reciprocity, and total dependence on the welfare or judicial systems. A validation of this model was performed by Colesso et al. (2013), as included in Table 5.1.

Four different criteria were used to validate this model: (1) ecological, (2) psychiatric according to the Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF, Table 5.1), (3) observational, and (4) psychometric. This model was evaluated and validated by Colesso et al. (2013) using log–logarithm method analysis (LM). One can evaluate the relationship between predicted percentages from the SAM model and those obtained empirically from the LM in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Predicted theoretical SAM distribution and obtained LM percentages with a small sample of participants (N = 130)*

SAM categories for interactions	Theoretical percentages of SAM categories predicted in a large population (L'Abate et al. 2010, p. 159)	LM categories for socialization	Obtained LM percentages N = 130
1. Divisive	5.00	1. Very poor	5.08
2. Subtractive	20.00	2. Insufficient	15.25
4. Negative static	25.00	3. Mixed	26.27
4. Positive static	25.00	3. Passable	30.51
5. Additive	20.00	5. Adequate	20.34
6. Multiplicative	5.00	6. Excellent	2.54
Total	100.00		100.00

*Adapted from Colesso et al. (2013)

Model[11] focuses on Selfhood, how importance is attributed, bestowed, and imparted to Self and Intimate Others (Cusinato and L'Abate 2008; L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 163–188). Here is where Model[4] about the ability to love becomes the direct base for the development of Selfhood. One can approach or avoid Self either positively or negatively. By the same token, one can approach or avoid Others (intimates and nonintimates) positively or negatively. Both approach and avoidance are based on how one views Self positively or negatively. When importance is attributed, bestowed, and imparted positively to both Self and intimate Others a propensity for positive relationships called *Selfulness* emerges. When importance is attributed positively toward Self but negatively versus and even against Others, a propensity for negative relationships called *Selfishness* emerges. In its extremes this propensity leads to externalizations, acting out, and murder. When importance is attributed negatively toward or against Self but positively toward Others a propensity called *Selflessness* emerges that may lead to internalizations, such as depression and in its extreme, suicide. This propensity is supported by the work by Naud, Lussier, Sabourin, Normandin, Clarkin, and Kernberg (2013) who found that excessive self-sacrificing is related to depression and to couple relationship satisfaction over time. When importance is attributed, bestowed, and imparted negatively toward Self and Others, a negative propensity called *No-self* emerges that in its extremes would lead to severe psychopathology, as shown in Fig. 5.5.

Fig. 5.5 Expansion of Model[11] to include functional and dysfunctional dimensions including and integrating psychiatric categories into one comprehensive framework

More than 20 studies were performed that attested to the convergent, criterion, predictive, and construct validities of this model. Cusinato has revised and revalidated the old version of the Self-Other Profile Chart (SOPC) into a more complex but more differentiated model (L'Abate and Cusinato 2011), adding more accurate evidence to support the validity of this model. Figure 5.6 integrates these four dynamic, relational models, and their dimensions in comparison with static psychiatric categories.

Relationships among four Models of Identity Differentiation[8], Styles[9], Interactions[10], Selfhood[11], and Psychiatric Classification

		Model[8]: Continuum of Likeness		
Symbiosis	Sameness	Similarity/Differentness	Oppositeness	Alienation
		Model[9]: Styles in Intimate Relationships		
Abusive Apathetic	Reactive Repetitive	Conductive Creative	Reactive Repetitive	Abusive Apathetic
		Model[10]: Interactions		
Divisive/ Subtractive	Static/ Positive	Multiplicative/ Additive	Static/ Negative	Divisive/ Subtractive
		Model[1i]: Selfhood		
No-self	Selfless	Selfull	Selfish	No-self
		Psychiatric Categories (DSM-IV)		
Axi *Axi* *Cl*		*agnoses*		*I* *xi*

Fig. 5.6 Relationships among four Models of Identity Differentiation[8], Styles[9], Interactions[10], Selfhood[11] and Psychiatric Classification

The seemingly short-lived presence of both relational propensities is especially visible in the sexual behavior of outstanding politicians and military leaders. Apparently, they need someone to adulate and confirm their essential Selfishness by betraying their spouses for momentary Selfless in being seduced by usually attractive women (Schlaes 2012). A revised version of the Self-Other Profile Chart is available in L'Abate and Cusinato (2011) and in Cusinato and L'Abate (2012a, b, Appendix D, pp. 315–318).

The importance of this model is visible in the edited work by Chang (2008). There is no question that both self-criticism and self-enhancement are two significant constructs in personality socialization. Whether they are two extremes of a dimension of self-presentation or impression management and whether they are positive or negative, conscious or unconscious, are certainly important aspects of any conceptual and empirical consideration. Every possible or imaginable permutation of whether both constructs are good or bad and whether they are related to positive or negative relational outcome are considered in *Self-Criticism and Self-Enhancement: Theory, Research, and Clinical Implications*. How both constructs are presented in combination or separately is amply covered.

After an introductory chapter by the editor offering a historical perspective of the topic at hand, this volume consists of four sections: Section I covers four chapters about whether self-enhancement is good and whether self-criticism is bad, two commonplace and popular notions that are amplified in detail. Section II covers four chapters about the reverse of the first section, that is, whether self-criticism is good and self-enhancement is bad. Section III covers in two chapters how self-criticism and self-enhancement are both good and bad. Section IV covers clinical implications of self-enhancement and self-criticism, with one chapter on psychotherapy to promote adaptive self-enhancement and a second chapter on adaptive self-criticism. A third, concluding chapter about the complexities of both constructs and possible future areas of research includes self-esteem and self-worth, which are constructs frequently interspersed in their relationships to self-criticism and self-enhancement in various chapters of this volume. As the reader can readily see, any possible permutations of both constructs are considered in detail, leading to a model of the relationship between both constructs and their adaptive ("good") or maladaptive ("bad") outcomes.

In addition to this model, other models and theories are included in various chapters, such as an interactionist model of self-criticism, Beck's cognitive model of depression in various pages, mediating and moderating models, self-insight models, self-regulation models, regulatory focus theory, cognitive adaptation theory, and cardinal utility theory. Whether a couple of dimensions deserve to be called a model and whether so-called theories composed of more than two dimensions deserve to be called theories or models are areas that deserve greater attention, as discussed below.

Three chapters caught my attention and need highlighting: (a) a chapter by Hamamura and Heine about the role of self-criticism in self-improvement and face maintenance among Japanese—what we would call public façade, self-presentation, or impression management but which is much more than that in the Japanese culture; (b) a chapter on the pathological costs of self-enhancement by Colvin and Griffo presenting two perspectives on self-enhancement and excellent conceptual definitions of it; and (c) a chapter by Sedikides and Luke on when self-enhancement and self-criticism function adaptively as "good" and maladaptively as "bad".

Of greater importance is an attempt by Colvin and Griffo at an operational definition of self-enhancement through self-report, objective criteria, and social consensus. Looking at the pros and cons of defining this construct, shared in other chapters about self-criticism, makes me wonder why researchers in this volume did not rely on a relatively easy computer analysis of readily available verbal reports and transcripts pioneered by Pennebaker and his collaborators (Pennebaker and Chung 2011; Pennebaker, Mehl and Niederhoffer 2003). That kind of analysis would go a long way toward solving issues of how to define self-criticism and self-enhancement directly from the horse's mouth, so to speak, rather than indirectly or laboriously from paper and pencil self-report tests. Even direct observations of the behavior have their problems because of the difficulty in defining both constructs.

There are various issues raised by the specific contents of this volume in particular and by the whole volume in general. One issue lies in the area of defining self-criticism and not differentiating it from what may be called simply self-reflection. Self-criticism implies self-blame and being a "bad person." Self-reflection instead focuses on the mistake or misdeed ("It was a stupid mistake. I should not have done it and I will not repeat it.") with implied forgiveness for one's imperfections without negative attributions to the self. By the same token, where does narcissistic self-enhancement end and a strong view of self begin? Without the inclusion of clearly defined prototypes of self-enhancement, it is difficult for one to answer that question. This lack of differentiation is a serious omission that pervades the whole volume.

A second issue that is conceptually misleading lies in the frequent and uncritical use of the terms *self-esteem* or *self-worth* as they relate to self-criticism and self-enhancement. As Sedikides and Luke explain in their excellent chapter, both constructs at hand need to be defined in their relationships to symbiosis, parasitism, and antisymbiosis within the contexts of neuroticism, perfectionism, and narcissism in their relational implications. Self-criticism and self-enhancement do not occur in a relational vacuum, as other chapters in this volume would lead us to believe.

Here is where self-esteem and self-worth come into critical being, raising the question of how both intrapsychic constructs fail to show that self-criticism and self-enhancement affect self and others, especially intimates. Neither self-esteem nor self-worth can be exchanged among intimates or nonintimates. This is why I continue to emphasize the attribution of self-other importance as the relational expression of internally intrapsychic and nonrelational constructs such as self-esteem or self-worth. We are continuously exchanging and sharing our attributions of importance to and with intimates and nonintimates, whether we like it or not and whether we are aware of this process or not.

A third particular issue deals with the two chapters on psychotherapy. Both chapters finally brought about a clarification of my long-standing distaste for presentations that attempt to satisfy editorial needs to include clinical applications for greater marketability of a product. Both presentations, for instance, are without any pre–post evaluation, without a minimal baseline based on a brief paper-and-pencil self-report test such as the Beck Depression Inventory or even a score on the Global Assessment of Functioning scale from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th ed., text rev.; American Psychiatric Association 2000). Of course, examples and vignettes are freely given, but without a direct or even contextual measurement of the symptom and of the personality and circumstances underlying the reason for referral. Perhaps someday we will be able to specify professional criteria and ethical requirements for presentations of this kind.

In this fashion, the already existing gap between empirical research and psychotherapy, well covered in this volume, continues to widen. No connection is made or can be made between research based on data and therapeutic practice based simply on words. Here is where a chapter on empirical research of both self-criticism and self-enhancement with a clinical population, rather than with just undergraduates, might have been helpful and might have connected research with psychotherapeutic applications.

Neither chapter on psychotherapy offers information that might help one evaluate nor the participants improved in dealing with self-criticism or self-enhancement. The missing link between inadequate evaluation and questionable treatment illustrated by both presentations brings to mind the question, What would it have cost either psychotherapist to administer any of the objective instruments that are included in this book by assigning it as a simple between sessions homework assignment (Kazantzis and L'Abate 2007)? This assignment could be preceded by these instructions: "Define (in writing) each term in this list [any of the descriptors of self-criticism or self-enhancement taken from instruments described elsewhere in the book] with the help of a dictionary and give two examples."

After this nomothetic assignment is completed, participants could then be asked to rank order in writing how and how much these terms apply to themselves. From this idiographic rank order, therapists would be able to develop a treatment plan that is much more specific than any unstructured approach solely based on the talk that they might have indulged in with their participants. This simple approach would link any model, with an objective evaluation stemming from that model, with treatment in ways that are not replicable as long as talk remains the only medium of communication and perhaps healing.

The volume in general raises an important and critical issue. After the authors have expanded two dimensions in all their possible permutations, relating them to various models or theories and to ubiquitous underlying causes such as self-esteem or self-worth, then what? We now have an incredible proliferation of dimensions, some of which are upgraded to the role of models and theories.

However, where is this chaotic, conceptually and empirically unmanageable proliferation leading? We now have two basic dimensions embedded in a hodgepodge of models and theories. How can we make sense of them all, and how can we integrate and link them all together? Which theory is available to describe, and even better explain self-criticism and self-enhancement as well as related constructs such as self-esteem or self-worth? This volume, as a key and positive contribution to the field of personality and social psychology, exemplifies well what is happening to our field conceptually and empirically, namely, the field is producing a chaotic plethora of dimensions, models, and so-called theories without an underlying conceptual framework or theory. Machado and Silva's (2007) recent contribution highlights this concern as well.

I am not alone in proffering this general criticism. Byrne (1976) and Baumeister and Tice (2001) proffered it in relation to sex and sexuality. Bergman, Magnusson, and El Khouru (2003) arrived at the same conclusion in developmental science. Omer and Dar (1992) reviewed 252 empirical studies published in the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* in the years 1967–1968, 1977–1978, and 1987–1988 and rated articles for their theoretical relevance, clinical validity, and methodology. These authors found a decline in theory-guided research and a rise in pragmatic, clinically oriented research. Jensen (1999) emphasized the need for linking practice with theory and research in clinical child psychology, adding that "evolving theories of behavior have several characteristics in common, namely that they are developmental, transactional, contextual, maladaptational, multilevel and multi-determined" (p. 553). More recently, Mikulincer (2007) added to this criticism in relationship science: "I look forward to a day when we have created a single theory or conceptual framework that provides a lingua franca for researchers from different disciplines interested in the study of personal relationships" (p. iv).

Notwithstanding the above criticism, *Self-Criticism and Self-Enhancement* are valuable additions to the literature, with no other books that I know of in competition. Who should read this worthwhile contribution? Certainly, scholars in personality and social psychology should be included, as well as graduate students in clinical psychology looking for a dissertation topic. The latter would find topics with a wide practical appeal to both empirical and clinical doctoral committee members. This volume needs inclusion in any reading list in personality and social psychology courses.

Model^{12} covers motivational constructs, such as attitudes, desires, goals, intentions, and plans according to their importance and consequent rank order, including perceptual judgments about the self (Pettit and Sivanathan 2012), that is: their Priorities (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 189–201). In addition to Model^{11}, where personal priorities in intimate relationships were evaluated, this Model^{12} deals with settings (Model^{3}): Is home more important than work? Is leisure time for entertainment more important than financial survival? What and who is more important within a given setting? The process of rank ordering, either automatic or willful implies a continuous comparison among choices we all must make about self, intimates, nonintimates, and settings where these relationships are more likely to occur. A major study by Casellato with 20 psychiatric matched with 20 nonpsychiatry participants using the EcoMap, the Intimacy Anxiety Scale, and the Satisfaction with Life scale found support for Models$^{3,\ 7,\ 12 \text{ and } 15}$. Therefore, this research tended to support the construct, criterion, and convergent validities of this model in relationship to other models (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 196–197).

Clinically Relevant Models (Models 13–15)

The models in this section deal with constructs and models that are more likely to be found in clinical practice but, that, nonetheless, build on all the previous models in one way or another.

Model^{13} builds on the two well-known dimensions of demand–withdrawal, that is: approach avoidance, by adding a third dimension (Fogarty 1979; McGinn, McFarland and Christensen 2009). Besides the roles of Pursuer (approach) "I want you…", and the Distancer (avoidance) "Not now… later…maybe… never.", there is a third role to complete this model, and that is: the Distance Regulator "Come here I need you…go away you disgust me". In absence of empirical research to support this model, a detailed clinical case study (L'Abate et al. 205–211) illustrated how this model is found in deviant relationships.

Model^{14} is based on the well-known Deadly Drama Triangle (DDT; L'Abate 2011a; L'Abate et al. pp. 213–221) composed of three roles: Victim, Persecutor, and Rescuer. This DDT is at the base of other pathogenic models of psychopathology, such as: Parentification, Parent Alienation Syndrome, Bullying, and Stockholm Syndrome (Hooper et al. 2013). These researchers have expanded from checklists for each model by converting them into esperimentai, specifically interactive practice exercises or workbooks to administer in a pre- or para-therapeutic homework assignments (Kazantzis and L'Abate 2007; L'Abate 2013b).

Model^{15} defines intimacy behaviorally by how we share joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt with our loved ones rather than through the large number of paper and pencil, self-report scales created to validate this construct (L'Abate 2011a). This model has been subjected to evaluation and validation in eight different studies that supported its convergent and construct validities (Cusinato and L'Abate 2012a, b; L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 223–220). In therapy, this model has been administered to numerous couples and families with the "Sharing of Hurts" prescription (L'Abate 1999a, 2013c) together with forgiveness of transgressions in self and intimates (Gordon, Hughes, Tomcik, Dixon, et al. 2009; L'Abate 1986; 2011a; McNally2010). The Scale for Unexpressed Hurt Feelings is available in Cusinato and L'Abate (2012a, b, Appendix E, pp. 318–319).

Concluding Model (16)

This final Model[16] about negotiation requires a modicum of functionality to obtain and reach a successful outcome. Furthermore, this functionality divides the process of negotiation and problem solving according to who has the authority to make decisions and who has the responsibility to carry them out. More specifically, it takes a certain level of functionality (ILL), abilities, and skills (SKILL) and, even when those two pre-requisites are met, the motivation to negotiate is also crucial to insure a successful outcome (WILL). Three studies tend to support the construct, convergent, and criterion validities of this model (L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 231–234).

Discussion

How does change occur in such a structure? Change can occur internally within each model, in the relationships between and among models, and externally when either conflict, loss, or stress occur on the negative side. Change can occur positively when there is recognition of malfunctioning within or among models and external help, such as new, different, appropriate, and adequate information, is included in the system, either verbally, nonverbally, or in writing (L'Abate 2002, 2005, 2011b, 2013a). For instance, malfunctioning in one model, i.e., Selfhood, is bound to effect negatively most other models, starting with Awareness in Model[1] and extending to the other models of RCT. Here is where the differentiation of Awareness into two different aspects in Model[1] is a critical key to change (Cusinato, 2012b, e, f). If either aspect of Awareness is inadequate and there is no desire to change, change will not occur, unless or until a catastrophic event may force the individual to take a look at oneself critically and is forced to ask for professional help.

Workbooks Derived from Models of RCT

When interventions are considered in writing, as in the Internet, they can be structured and therefore replicable or unstructured, mimicking in writing what has been done verbally face-to-face during the last century in a nonreplicable manner. The latter nonreplicable interventions are responsible for making talk-based psychotherapy the Tower of Babel it is (L'Abate 2013a). Writing can occur according to various, different modalities (L'Abate 2013b, c; L'Abate and Sweeney 2011). If clinical psychology and psychotherapy will progress in this century, they will need to follow professional and scientific canons of specificity and concreteness in conjunction with precision and specification. An IQ score may be precise, and concrete, but must be explained in its meaning and context (Fig. 5.7).

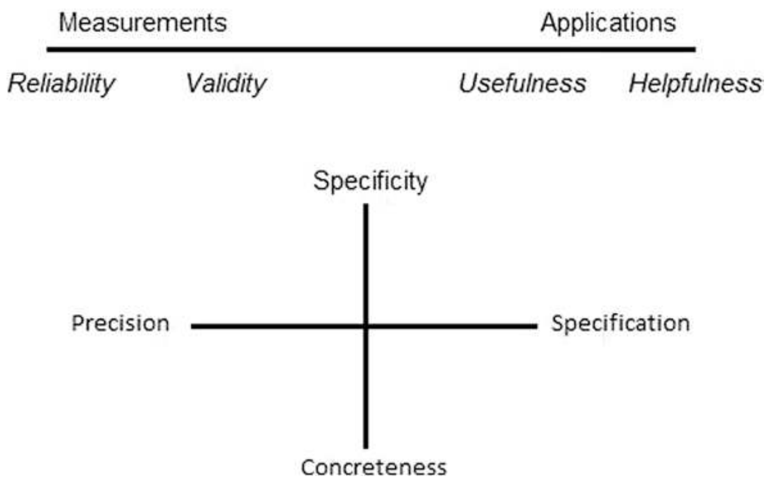

Fig. 5.7 Requirements for a science of clinical psychology and psychotherapy (from L'Abate 2013a)

The more structured modality is programmed writing, that has produced a variety of workbooks ((L'Abate 1986, 1992, 2003, 2011b, 2013a; L'Abate et al. 2010, pp. 235–259). Some workbooks or interactive practice exercises using writing in homework assignments cover practically all models of RCT, as in Planned Parenting, or selected models, such as Negotiation[16], Intimacy[15], and Selfhood[11]. In some workbooks, selected practice exercises are related to parts of certain models, such as Reactivity within another workbook (L'Abate 2013a).

A metaanalysis of 12 mental health and 6 physical health workbooks yielded an effect size of 0.44 for the former and 0.25 for the latter (Smyth and L'Abate 2001). Consequently, RCT can be evaluated with static test instruments as well as dynamically with interactive practice exercises in selfhelp (Harwood and L'Abate 2010), health promotion (L'Abate 2007), sickness prevention (Kazantzis and L'Abate 2007; L'Abate 1990), psychotherapy, and rehabilitation (L'Abate 2011b, 2013a).

The relationship between Model[11] (Selfhood) and workbooks is shown in Fig. 5.8.

		Self-Importance	
		High	*Low*
Importance of Others	*High*	*Functionality* Life-long learning exercises	*Cluster C Disorders* Depression Anxiety
	Low	*Cluster B Disorders* Acting-out Psychopathy Impulsivity	*Severe Axis I* Cluster A Disorders Mood Swings Schizophrenia

Fig. 5.8 Relationships among selfhood propensities (Model[11]) functionality, psychopathology (DSM-IV) and selected interactive practice excises (L'Abate 2011b)

The relationship between RCT models and workbooks is shown in Fig. 5.9. These tables show how it is possible to link theory with replicable interventions provided that those interventions are structured.

Model[1].
Emotional Problems in Youth (L'Abate, 2013, pp. 198-212); Awareness: Enhancing Self-awareness (L'Abate, 2011c, pp. 689-696). Symptoms and Psychosomatic Inventory (L'Abate, 2013a, pp. 243-279)

Model [4]. Depression in Couples (pp. 352-362);

Model [5]. Antisocial Behavior (pp. 227- 250) for Acting out, Aggressive, and Criminal Cluster B Personality Disorders; Arguing and Fighting in Couples (pp. 372-410); Procrastination (159-168); Lying (L'Abate, 2013a, pp. 219-223' Shyness in Children, pp. 233-236; Social Training, pp. 280-308; Stealing, pp. 309-313; Temper Tantrums, pp. 314-322; Time-out, pp. 323-328).

Model [8]. Who am I?: Aspects of Identity Formation (pp. 696-707).

Model [9]. Over-dependency (pp. 259- 295) see also Model [11]; Sexual Abuse (pp. 296-310); Binge Eating (L'Abate, 2013a, pp. 168-171; Domestic Violence/Child Abuse, pp. 192-197; Negativity, pp. 223-226; Sibling Rivalry, 237-242; Verbal Abuse, pp. 329-333).

Model [11]. Over-dependency (pp. 259-295); Self-Other Importance (pp. 579-585); Selfhood (pp. 462-463); Speak Up for Yourself! (pp. 707-716); Dissociative Experiences L'Abate, 2013a, pp. 172-182).

Model [12]. Priorities (pp. 618-623);

Model [15]. Hurt Feelings (pp. 499-526); Intimacy (pp. 475-499);

Model[16]. Negotiation (pp. 446-475). Divorce Adjustment in Children (L'Abate, 2013a, pp. 183-191; Planning Problem Solving, pp. 227-232)

Fig. 5.9 Matching models of RCT with workbooks or interactive practice exercises (L'Abate 2011b, 2013a)

More specifically, how are the workbooks or interactive practice exercises related to models of RCT? First of all, these workbooks are all printed out to make them completely replicable, as argued about psychological interventions as a science rather as an art (L'Abate 2013a). Second, workbooks were developed in how they were; (1) *theory independent*, completely developed from clinical practice and not based on or developed from any theory or model; (2) *theory related*, as for instance, workbooks developed from RCT models originally developed by others but included as being part of RCT, such as the Triangle of Living (Model[7]); and (3) *theory derived*, as found in workbooks on Planned Parenting, that includes practically most model of RCT, Negotiation (Model[16]), and intimacy as the sharing of hurts (Model[15]; L'Abate 2009c, 2011a), among others.

Additionally, two completely replicable prescriptions, developed over the years to be administered in couple and family therapy, are based on two models of RCT : Sharing of Hurts (Model[15]) and Being together physically through Hugging, Holding, Huddling, and Cuddling, the 3HC activity (Model[7]). Verbatim instructions to replicate both model-derived prescriptions are available in L'Abate (2013c).

Conclusion

If we want to move on and progress in psychology as a science and as a profession, we will need to give up cherished traditional constructs, such as family and personality that have lost meaning since the beginning of this twenty-first century. These constructs have served us well until now. However, the reality of conceptual and empirical changes requires new, verifiable concepts and constructs that relate to the interconnectedness of all human relationships.

Now it is up to readers of this chapter to consider whether RCT is a unifying theory of human relationships or a wishful fantasy. This judgment can occur according to how models of RCT stack against other theories or other models, especially attachment theory. Rating one model at a time could occur on a five-point Lickert five-point scale, varying on a great deal of evidence, some evidence, not too much, nor too little evidence, and no evidence at all would be acceptable. The sum total of these individual points for each model would represent impressionistically what RCT has accomplished empirically thus far. After this conclusion, we beg and challenge readers to see whether they can accomplish this judgment with any other comparable or compatible theory of human relationships including family, personality, and attachment theory.

Chapter 6
Conclusion: Identity as an Overarching Construct in Relational Competence Theory

Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

The purpose of this conclusive chapter is to argue that Identity, as differentiated developmentally by Model^{8} (Fig. 5.4), is the major supra-ordinate construct based on a combination of Communal Presence or Being and Agentic Power defined by Doing/Performance and Having/Production (Model^{7}). Identity, however, is preceded by all the previous models of RCT$^{1–6}$ and is basic to models that compose it, especially Models$^{12 \text{ and } 15}$ (Fig. 6.1).

Just to be sure we are on the same page, VandenBos (2007, p. 463) defined identity as…

> an individual's sense of self defined by: (1) a set of physical and psycho-logical characteristics that is not wholly shared with any other person and (2) a range of social and interpersonal affiliations (e.g., ethnicity) and social roles. Identity involves a sense of continuity: the feeling that one is the same person today that one was yesterday or last year (despite physical or other changes). Such a sense is derived from one's body sensations, one's body image, and the feeling that one's memories, purposes, values, and experiences belong to the self (and to no one else).

Notice that this definition still links identity to an undefined construct of self and is theory-neutral in the sense of not being included within a theoretical framework. For instance, recent popular and professional publications attest to the importance of identity as relevant to handicapped and disordered individuals and their families (Solomon 2012), memory (Van Bavel and Cunningham 2012), and to theory and model construction.

As Vignoles et al. (2011) argued: "…identity is one of the most commonly studied constructs in the social sciences (p. 1)." These authors discussed the same questions raised in Chap. 3 of this volume about the self: (1) A single identity or multiple identities? And (2) Self and Identity: Overlapping or distinct? The first question was answered in Chap. 3 of this volume by indicating that we indeed play

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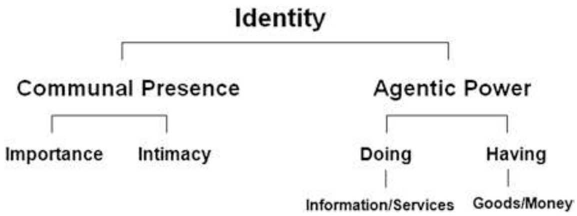

Fig. 6.1 Summary of the emerging constructs of identity and intimacy in relational competence theory

a variety of roles that define our identities. The second question is answered by relying on Model[11] about Selfhood as a specific and concrete relational construct clearly differentiated but overlapping not only with Model[8] but also with Models[9 and 10], as shown in Fig. 5.3 but also with Model[1] in terms of context.

Furthermore, identity differentiation, as shown in Fig. 5.4 of Chap. 5 of this volume has not been considered in either these (Schwartz et al. 2011a, b) or similar treatises about identity (Leary and Tangley 2012). Neither sources just cited produced an operational definition of Self in terms of the various roles we undertake according to settings (Model[3], Gaesser and Whitbourne 1985) and produced a workbook to be administered as a homework practice exercise (L'Abate 2011b, 2013a). Nonetheless, Brook et al. (2008) proposed:

> that the effects of multiple identities on psychological well-being depend on the number of identities, importance of those identities, and relationship between them. Specifically, this model predicts that when identities are highly important, having many versus few identities leads to greater psychological well-being if the identities are in harmony with each other—providing resources and expecting similar behaviors—but leads to lower psychological well-being if the identities conflict with each other—depleting resources and expecting incompatible behaviors. However, when identities are less important, neither the number of identities nor identity harmony should effect well-being (p. 1588).

Furthermore, these authors proposed that emotions corresponding to self-perceptions of actual/ought self-discrepancy mediate these effects, as predicted from Higgins' (1987, 2001) model. Their results supported the validity of the present model that has implications for well-being within the cultural context of increasing complexity in modern life. However, one issue with this excellent study (Brook et al. 2008), lies on the definition of "resources." What resources are necessary to define and refine identity? Here is where Foa and Foa (1974) resource exchange theory, as integrated in Model[7], comes into being. None of the above sources considered the identity change and differentiation that is occurring at the present time, under the influence of a writing technology rather than from talking as in the past (Luppicini 2013). We are changing from an ears–mouth verbal identity necessary heretofore to an eyes–hands digital identity necessary to survive in the present century (L'Abate 2013b). Whether this change will produce changes in hemispheric dominance remains to be seen.

Therefore, these shortcomings in the definition of identity shall be corrected during the remainder of this chapter.

Social Support for Communal Presence or Being

This component of one's Identity includes two resources: Importance, as viewed in the Selfhood Model[12] and Intimacy included in Model[15]. Both resources derive from Model[7] about the Triangle of Living, originally called Status and Love by Foa and Foa (1974), were changed to Importance and Intimacy, as discussed in the previous Chap. 5 of this volume. Each model will be expanded according to information not contained in this and previous publications.

The modality of Communal Presence or Being emotionally and instrumentally available to self and intimates is really not negotiable. One does not negotiate how one attributes, bestows, and imparts importance to self and intimates any more than one can negotiate how to share joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt with oneself and with intimates (L'Abate 2011a).

Support for Agentic Power

Both Importance and Intimacy become concrete and specific when defined according to Models[8 and 15] of RCT. By the same token criteria of concreteness and specificity making up Agentic Power include Doing composed of Information and Services and Having, composed of Goods or Possessions and Money (Model 6.2).

Doing or Performance = Information + Services

Having or Production = Goods or Possessions + Money

Power = Doing and Having

Power is very important to relational competence. As Guinote and Vescio (2010a) noted:

> Not only is power an omnipresent feature of social life, but it also has implications for one's ability to secure basic resources and desired outcomes… Some have considered power the fundamental concept in social sciences, in the same sense in which energy is the fundamental concept in physics (p. 1).

Of course, power is a multidimensional construct because it has been defined in many ways, including social influence and control, charisma, information and knowledge, including controlling the outcomes important to self and others. As Guinote and Vescio (2010a) emphasized, power means securing access and possession of "desired resources." Within the context of Fig. 6.1, this emphasis means direct access and ownership of Doing or Performance and Having or Production as defined, respectively, by resources such as Information and Services as well as Possessions and Money. Consequently, the rest of this chapter will cover research and thinking that would support the model in Fig. 6.1.

In line with the Agentic aspect of power, Guinote and Vescio paired power with action and goal pursuit: "…power leads to behavioral disinhibition and action"

(p. 5). Overbeck (2010), in line with this trend of thought added personal or institutional attributes to a list of resources (p. 22): “Power is indeed based on one’s balance of resources and characteristics” (p. 23). This position supports the view that Communal Presence or Being is one personal characteristic that composes one’s Identity at the same level as Agentic Power.

Consent and legitimacy are important aspects of power that relate to one’s identity in one’s ethnic, religious, or political group. Overbeck’s (2010) distinction between personal and social power seems to support a dichotomy of Communal Presence and Agentic Power (pp. 27–28). Dominance and control govern who and how one should have access and use both Doing and Having. Here is where Model[16] about negotiation comes into play because it separates authority, which makes decisions, from responsibility, which carried out those decisions about what and how to Do and Have.

Boehm and Flack (2010) proposed a hierarchical theory of power in line with the hierarchy included in Fig. 6.1 as well as the hierarchy included in RCT using supra-ordinate and subordinate levels of aggregation. When power is defined in terms of dominance and social rank order (Rivers and Josephs 2010) its relationship to health, assertion, and aggression is evident. Hence, varying between submission and dominance is another aspect of how power is demonstrated in social relationships. The personal motivation to use power (Winter 2010) is certainly an underlying factor in how power is contextually shown and shared appropriately or abused. Of course, motivation for power may vary from one gender to another, with men usually more motivated to show power in more direct ways than women. Power is also a function of the situation in which it is regulated selectivity, flexibly, and variably (Guinote 2010). These conclusions indicate the crucial role that Model[12] about Priorities plays in decision making: about how, when, and with whom Agentic Power is used or abused.

Power, of course, is not free from paradoxes (Keltner et al. 2010), whether it is used to advance the interests of the individual or of one’s group. The acquisition and amplification or diminution of power can be legitimate or illegitimate, used for good or for evil, to enhance one’s status or the status of others, responsively or unresponsively, sensitively or insensitively. One’s reputation can depend a great deal on how one’s uses power. Another paradox of power manifestation (Bugental 2010) lies in how perceived powerlessness can be used as an instrument of power for or against others. Power is also a function of how a culture perceives it (Russell and Fiske 2010).

Even more relevant to Model 6.1 is the relationship of power with social identity and legitimacy (Spears et al. 2010), especially in connection with status, defined as a “..valued social position (e.g., prestige, standing)” associated with various levels of analysis, such as intra/interpersonal, intergroup, or ideological (Spears et al. (2010, p. 253). Status within this context of power is “…a resource or control-based” resource to determine the outcomes of a group, legitimately or illegitimately. This definition of status if quite different from the change of this term from Foa and Foa’s (1974) original notion to the construct of importance in

Model[12] of RCT. Nonetheless, Spears et al. (2010) link power to social identity in a way that supports the relevance of this construct as a Model[8] of RCT.

Flynn (2010) proposed power as "charismatic leadership" referring, of course, to leadership in short-lived and adventitious groups dear to social psychology research. When this proposal is applied to intimate relationships, here is where *relational creativity* comes into being (Colesso and L'Abate 2012; L'Abate 2009d), the kind of leadership predicated by multiplicative and additive interactions of Model[10]. Kay et al. (2010) argued:

> …that there is a basic motivation function to defend, legitimize, and bolster the social systems within which people function—that is, the norms, rules, and policies under which people, at least for some extent, are forced to operate, and which hold the potential to influence people's outcome (p. 313).

This argument led its authors (Kay et al. 2010) to consider "powerful individuals" within the context of power hierarchies in the abstraction of an undefined "system" rather and within the context of intimate relationships. Other authors related power to racism (Henry and Pratto 2010), power and sexism (Vescio et al. 2010), immigration (Deaux and Bikmen 2010), and social class (Bullock and Lott 2010).

In conclusion, Vescio and Guinote (2010) argued that: "An elevated position in the social hierarchy protects individuals against stress and health problems" (p. 429). However, these authors as well as most other contributors in the volume they edited (Guinote and Vescio 2010) failed to define what resources were controlled by hypothetical individuals and groups favored by social psychologists instead of the power found in real-life intimate relationships, including the family in its many multifarious compositions.

Combining Communal Presence with Agentic Power

A combination of Communal Presence with Agentic Power leads to an equation such as this:

$$\textbf{\textit{Identity}} = \textbf{\textit{Communal Presence}} + \textbf{\textit{Agentic Power}}$$

From this equation we can derive another supra-model according to Fig. 6.2, where the same differentiation of full functionality, borderline functionality, and dysfunctionality add another way to view and evaluate them according to all the models of RCT.

Like all the models of RCT, each model covers the whole range from functionality to dysfunctionality. Full functionality is predicted from all the previous RCT Models[1–6] and would include a Creative-Conductive Style in Model[9], Multiplicative and Additive.

Interactions from Model[10], a Selfulness propensity from Model[11], and clear, flexible, and realistic Priorities from Model[12], avoiding the three distance regulations of Model[13], avoiding getting involved in the Deadly Drama Triangle of

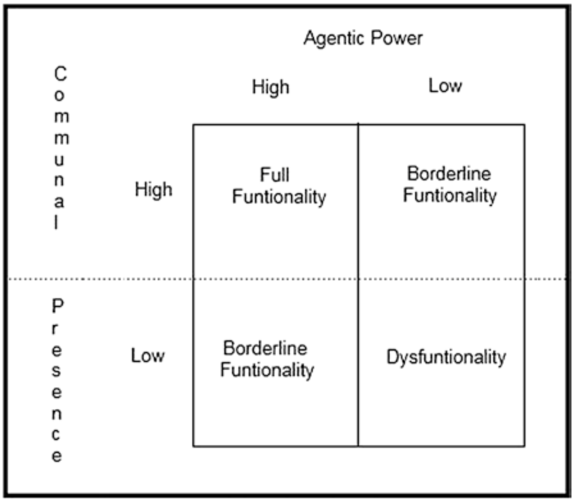

Fig. 6.2 Functional and dysfunctional outcomes of high and low communal presence and agentic power

Model[14], being able to share joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt with one's intimates in Model[15], and being able to negotiate successfully with intimates and non-intimates from Model[16].

Borderline functionality is predicted by the previous Models[1–6] of RCT and includes the Reactive-Repetitive Style of Model[9], Static Positive and Negative Interactions of Model[10], Selfish and Selfless propensities from Model[11], confused or mixed, inconsistent and contradictory Priorities from Model[12], involvement in distance regulation in Model[13] and in the Deadly Drama Triangle of Model[14], and, except for marriages and funerals, an inability to share joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt form Model[15], and inability to negotiate problem-solving from Model[16].

Dysfunctionality is predicted from each of the previous Models[1–6] of RCT as well as the Abusive-Apathetic Style of Model[9], Subtractive and Divisive Interactions from Model[10], a No-Self propensity from Model[11], practically non-existent Priorities from Model[12], extreme forms of distance regulation from Model[13], extreme involvement in the Deadly Drama Triangle of Model[14], complete inability to share any type of feeling, either joys, hurts, and fears of being hurt from Model[15], and complete inability to negotiation anything from Model[16].

Relationship Between Identity and Functionality

The functionality of one's Identity, as defined by Fig. 6.1, depends on the functionality of its components models. For instance, one must refer to the level of functionality not only of Models[7, 8, 11, and 12] but also to the functionality of all the remaining models of RCT. For instance, functionality would become the total number produced by summing the Creative-Conductive Relational Style in Model^{9} (let us say hypothetically 3 points) with multiplicative and additive Interactions of Model^{10} (3 more points) plus a Self-full relational propensity in Model ^{11} (3 more points) to obtain a total of 9 points. Using 3 points to indicate the highest level of functionality, now one can allocate 2 points for the Reactive-Repetitive style in Model^{9}, 2 points for Positive and Negative Static Interactions in Model^{10}, and 2 points for Selfish and Selfless relational propensity, to obtain a total of 6 points, indicating a borderline functioning. By allocating one point for Abusive-Apathetic style in Model^{8}, subtractive and divisive interactions in Model^{10}, and No-self in Model^{11}, one would obtain a total of 3 points indicating dysfunctionality, as shown in Fig. 6.2.

This quantitative process, of course, admittedly based on impressionistic evaluation, could be performed quantitatively, as done, for instance, by Colesso and L'Abate (2012). Furthermore, a similar process could be followed to evaluate the level of intimacy in Model^{15} as well as the allocation of points to judge how resources are allocated through negotiation and problem-solving in Model ^{16}. Another important issue, yet to be expanded, relates to the link between agentic power and communal presence with gender relationships (Rudman and Glick 2010).

Conclusion

The choice of Identity as an evolutionary construct to supersede past constructs, such as Personality and Self, shows how it can no longer be considered by itself as an orphan notion distinctly independent from any theory. Within RCT, Identity, as defined developmentally by Model^{8}, is an integrative model linked with practically most models of the whole framework. One model in RCT cannot exist and survive without being linked to other models of the theory, qualitatively and quantitatively.

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