

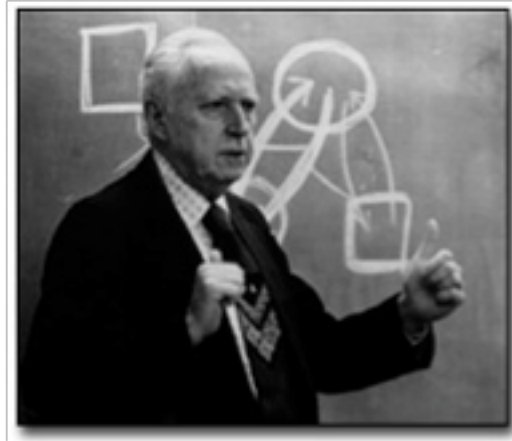
Observations of Change in One Family

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The Learning Space

www.ideastoaction.wordpress.com

Murray Bowen M.D. (1913- 1990)



“The kind of people we are is determined largely by the character of our relationship with others.”

Family Interactions

Influencing Behavior

- *Evolutionary mechanisms redistributing anxiety*
- *In family systems we can **observe** the way people interact, influences the brain's pathways*
- *Two systems for perceiving and behaving:*
 - *Automatic - fast track thinking – Reactive based on past sensitivities to experiences.*
 - *Examples: make the problem person behave, your are to blame, stop, do this.....*
 - *Slow track thinking - self regulate, stay separate...*

We see a Tree

But not the
forest or the
mechanism
for growth.



Bowen Theory Assumption: The Family is a System/Unit

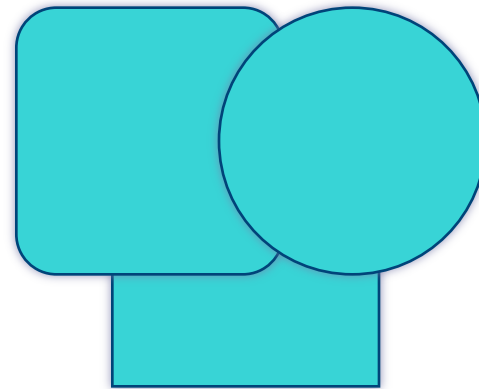
- Anxiety is redistributed in a system.
- One person absorbs more anxiety, or is more vulnerable:
 - This person has lost the ability to solve problems. Others or institutions begin to tell them what to do.
- Automatic mechanisms manage anxiety:
 - Reactive behavior - give up self by **fusing** with the other, fight, run, blame others, go crazy, or get sick.
 - **Define a self while staying connected to others.**

Observe and then Develop a Learning Space with Others

- 1) Fearful interactions can be toned down by focusing on self, using humor and reversals to create a space for the other.
- 2) NeurCare, after conversations, allows for integration of both cognitive and physiological information.
- 3) Videotape interactions keeps **observations** as the main point of research on self and understanding others.

Functions of Symptoms in the Relationship System

- Symptoms absorb anxiety, some do better and others become isolated.



- Reduce anxiety by having calmer contact
- Relationships can be thought of as people being on a fixed see saws.

Listening & Following or Be Out of Sync

- How to be a separate self while holding others responsible, and without telling them what to do?
 - Use of paradoxical statements and reversals:
Think outside the stimulus response world.
 - Holding people responsible.
 - “This is what I would do if I were you, which I am not, at least not yet.”
- Learn from mistakes have fun.

You can't control a whole damn family...

***but you can control you,
and anytime you can control you,
the family is a healthier organism.***

That is a reason to become a self.

***The more you can become a self, the more
to your advantage, and the families.***

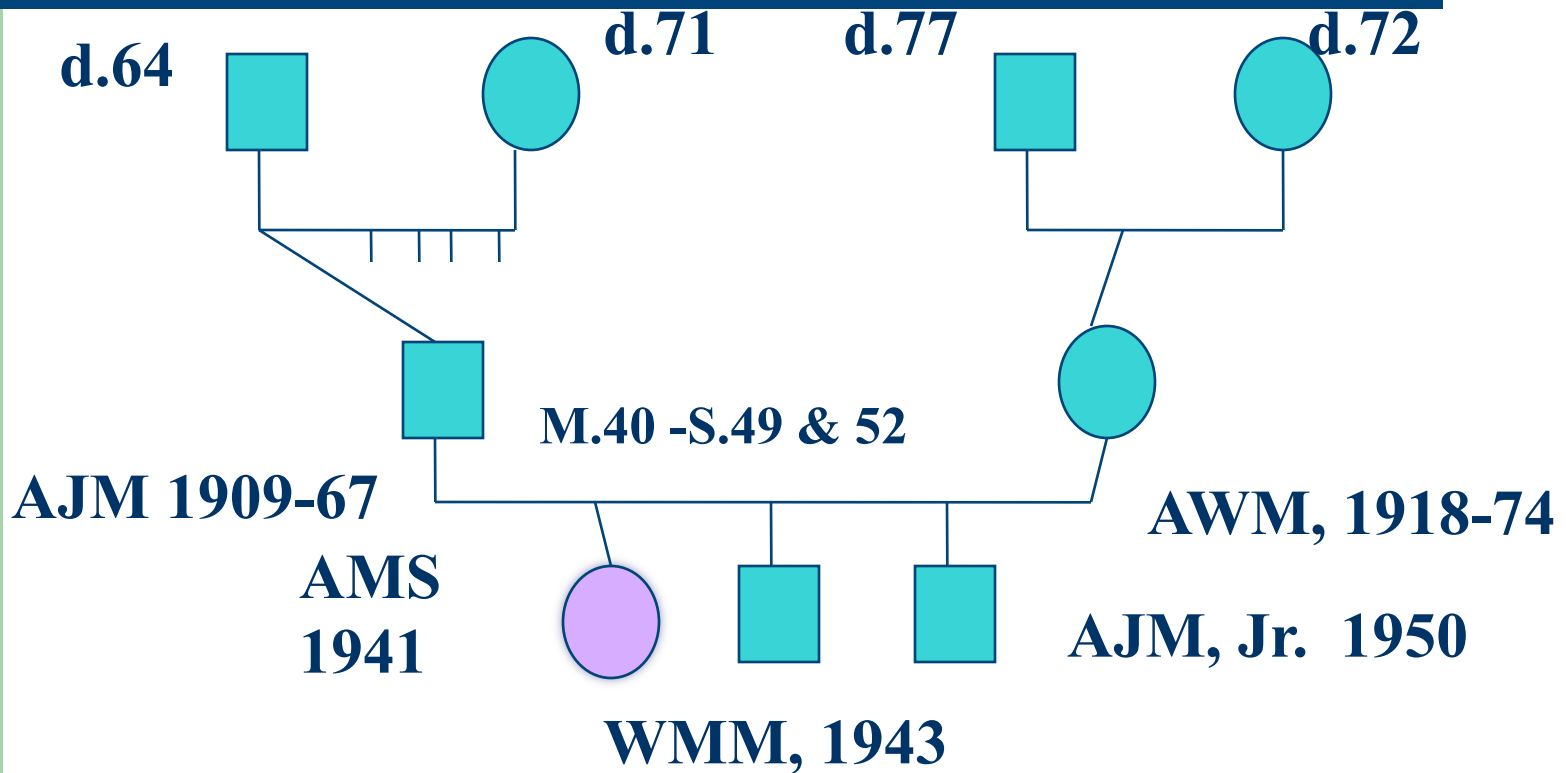
~ Murray Bowen, M.D.

Overview of Manic Depressive Diagnosis in Nuclear Family

- Diagnosis correlated with the serious illness or deaths of significant family members.
- 1972-74 Maternal grandmother and mother died and I was divorced and both my brothers were diagnosed with manic depressive symptoms.
- Problems seen on reflection:
 - cut off from the extended family
 - increasing anxiety in nuclear family
 - limited knowledge about family emotional process

One Small Forest- Family as a Unit

The Maloney- Maher Family



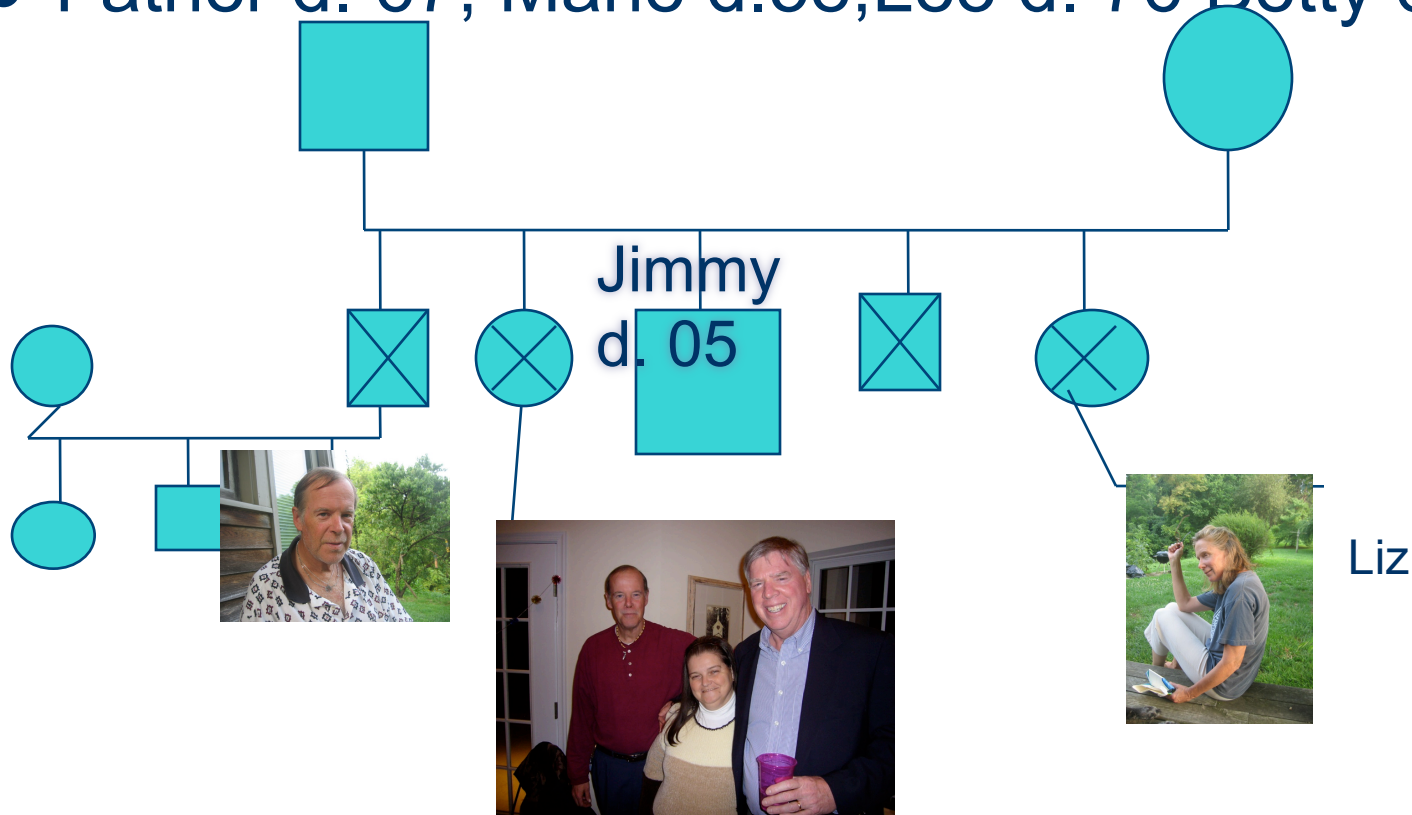
The Multigenerational Pattern

- 2005 Paternal Uncle Jimmy Maloney dies
- April 2006 Uncle Jimmy's birthday, Drew becomes manic
- Family members panic and call me to do something!

Generations



- Father d. 67, Marie d.58, Leo d. 76 Betty d.78



Initial Strategy:

- Contact family members to organize greater contact
- Two first cousins volunteered to help.
 - Charles Crone was in Williamsburg and believed in the medical model. He took responsibility to take Drew to physicians. Drew was hospitalized May, 2006.
 - Liz Eitt offered her family farm as a meeting place for Drew, his wife Margie and me, where we could begin to understand how to better deal with one another.

Breaking Pattern of Isolation

- Principle: 50/50 – You do something for me and I will do something for you.
 - Financial help for taking difficult action.
 - Move out of house, have teeth fixed, apply for disability,
 - We will buy you a trailer
 - Come to Liz's farm follow the rules:
 - no smoking in the house, shower, exercise, NeuroCare
 - We will pay bills until you get disability.



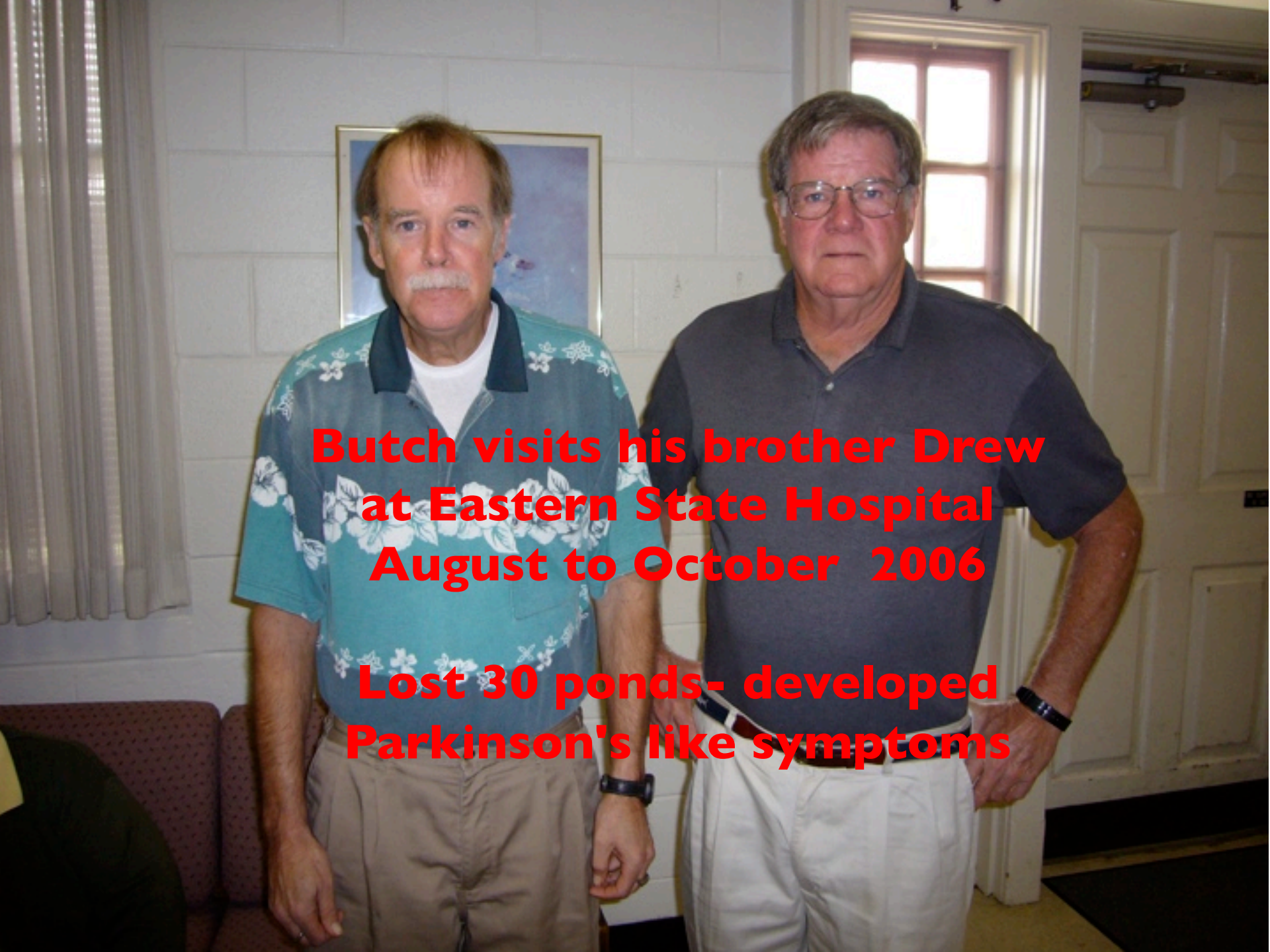


Breaking Patterns using NeuroCare

- Neurofeedback training breaks up chaotic, old patterns in the brain.
 - Interrupt - Every 20 seconds: Alert - Relax
- Feedback enables the brain to see its own functioning.
- Brain see association between chaos or non-awareness and awareness and relaxation.
- Brain itself seeks comfortable new patterns.

Pre Eastern State – 11 sessions 4 months - 2006

- 5/16 06, 5/17, 5/24, 5/25, 6/19, 6/20, 6/25, 7/14, 7/15, 8/15, 8/16
- Initial drug treatment did not clear up his functioning.
- Added Seroquel in June and his shaking began.
- Hospitalized 3 times for 3 to 5 days.
- Admitted to emergency rooms twice for drug reactions.
 - Eastern State Hospital - August till Oct 10,
 - Father died there 1967.



**Butch visits his brother Drew
at Eastern State Hospital
August to October 2006**

**Lost 30 pounds- developed
Parkinson's like symptoms**

Stage two - Drew is Released from Eastern State

- Letter to head of Eastern State
 - Noting possible drug issues
 - Drew's father had died at Eastern State in 1967 when he was about Drew's age
 - Developed aftercare plan by Liz and Mark
- 14 Zengar session after Drew stopped shaking for a moment involuntarily after the 10/12/06 session.
 - A profound turning point.

After Five Hospitalizations the Zen Farm Becomes a Learning Space

- After 5 weeks in the state hospital Drew came to Zen farm. He had two short Neurofeedback sessions per day while others had one.
- People surrounding my brother, including me, first had to learned to act as if we were not afraid for or of my brother.
 - Untrained people from the community were also involved.



Establishing warmth when there has been confusion and distance.



Stage three – 22 sessions, one year and 3 months 2007 and 2008

- Minor problems and consistent follow up
- Total sessions: 47 sessions
 - May and June 2008 Margie: uterus removed and knee replacement surgery.
 - Drew lost his job at the golf course.
 - Drew began to work part time at his brothers T shirt shop.

AMS Neurofeedback Training:

- 2005- 16 session - Ten sessions before purchasing the equipment in August 2005 and 6 session on my equipment.
- 2006 -11 sessions
- 2007 – 18 sessions 7 sessions on my equipment and ten on others.
- 2008 – 16 session
- total - 61 sessions



A woman with short blonde hair, smiling, wearing a white t-shirt and grey pants, standing on the far left of the group.

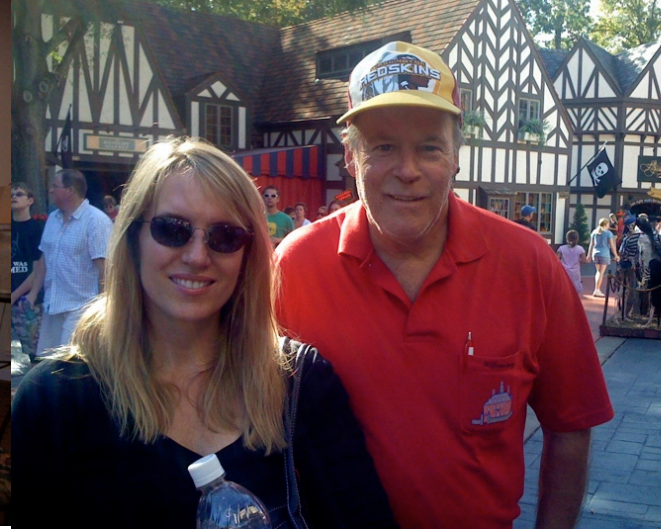
A man with short dark hair, smiling, wearing a white t-shirt with a large yellow eye graphic and dark pants, standing second from the left.

A man with short grey hair, smiling, wearing a dark blue polo shirt with a logo and khaki shorts, standing in the center of the group.

A woman with short brown hair, smiling, wearing a red t-shirt with three American flag hearts and the text "My Heart Belongs to America" and blue pants, standing on the far right of the group.

Evidence of Change

- Shift in alliances and less symptom focus.
 - Drew became more functional his wife developed physical problems.
- They have essentially remained free of emotional problems.
 - Drew remains on Deprocote, Lithium and Synthroid for a thyroid disorder



**The more rigid patters in a family system, the more disturbed.
Flexibility allows for individuals to change one at a time.**



Conclusions

- I was willing to take many unpopular stands based on my experience and my interpretation of theory.
- Neurofeedback enable people to interact calmly and to reflect on experiences.
- People reported being able to see their impact on others and how anxiety functioned in relationships.

The Zen Farm Could be a Model

- **Weekends with family members**

- Three generational patterns
- Emotional tone in interactions
- Ongoing issues

Neurofeedback for everyone

Reduce anxiety, cognitive restructuring, be more in the moment and aware.

