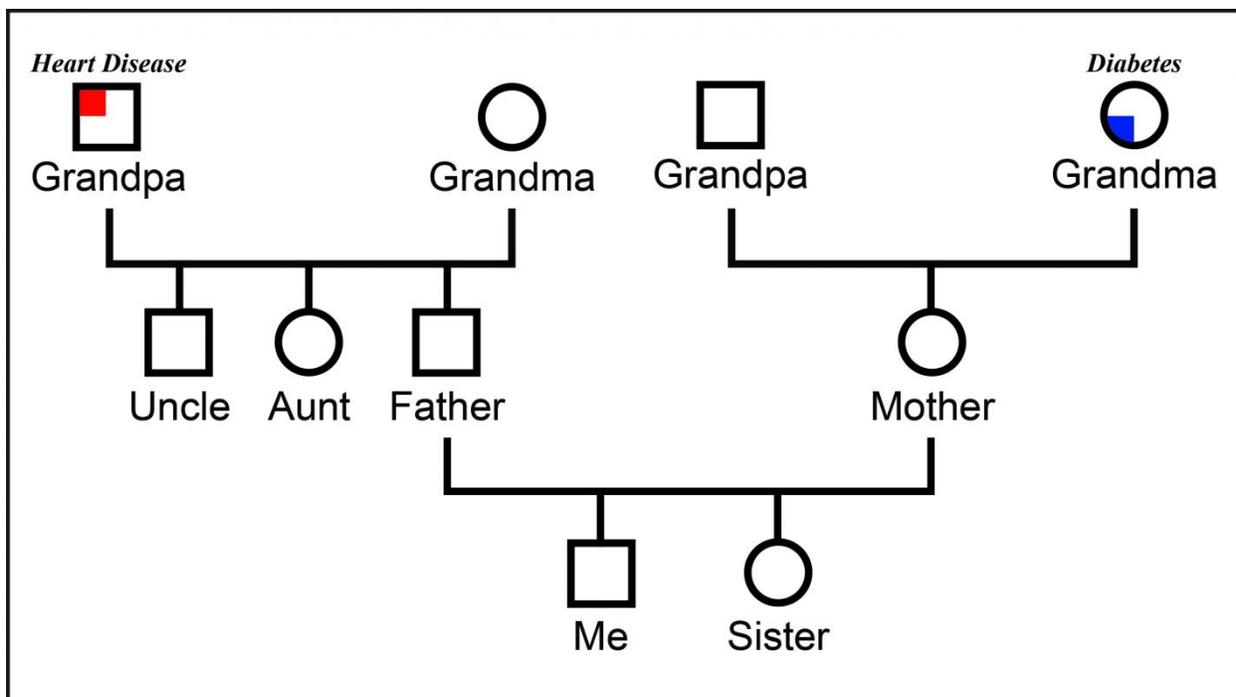


GENOGRAM

Abstract: This paper explores the Genogram as a tool some therapists use to uncover familial patterns that contribute to psychological distress in clients and the underlying truth of the deeper spiritual meaning behind what a Genogram can reveal.

The family tree takes on a whole new meaning and value once you understand it from an energy or Spiritual perspective. As a mental health therapist, I once thought of it as a useful tool to uncover the history of familial patterns of my clients from a psychological and health perspective. I used it to look at the various personality, health and functional characteristics of their immediate family members and significant people they have shared their journey with to date. It also showed significant events in clients lives that have shaped their perspectives on life overall. The point of using this tool was to help the client get a clear picture of the pattern of their choices and how they related to their past experiences with people and events in the present. At just this level, the genogram was and is extremely useful. However, as I continued my personal journey of healing my past as to not bring it into my future, I discovered a deeper process at work that the genogram reveals.

A Genogram is typically done on large craft paper held on an easel. With colored markers, I lay out the pictorial history of a client's family starting with their parents, siblings and grandparents. I list each person's name and current age (X denotes passed) using symbols to represent sex. Below is a basic example of the start of a Genogram:



Once this is laid out, I gather information beginning with the grandparents regarding the biological, psychological and social aspects of each of the people represented. As I work through each person's

biopsychosocial, a pattern emerges. I do my best to face the paper and gather the information without looking at the client, so the client can express their experience of each aspect of these people as an unfolding from a deeper place. Often, times it can take two-three hour-long sessions to gather enough of a picture. After, the client feels they have a fairly complete picture, I allow them to point out significant patterns, only asking questions versus directing them to what I see. I use a highlighter to show connections and flow of personality characteristics, behavioral issues, such as addictions, and health issues especially cognitive, such as ADHD, since this is my scope of practice versus medical conditions. This uncovering process has resulted in a great deal of psychological relief, as it is used to find flow of life choices, versus finding fault in life choices. As I journey further into the world of energy and Spirit, I have found a greater understanding of the power behind the Genogram (Steiner, 2013).

Rudolph Steiner helped me to see some of what is veiled from human view regarding how we come to be like our ancestors. In his book, *Disease, Karma, and Healing*, I found reference to an aspect of our human journey regarding our family heredity. The following is a quote from this book, so eloquently written that I choose not to paraphrase:

“Whenever someone incarnates he descends from the world of devachan and forms his astral sphere in accordance with distinctive nature of his individuality. This astral sphere merges with something intrinsic to the parents’ astral bodies, their drives, passions and desires, and thus a person acquires what his ancestors have experienced” (Steiner, 2013, p. 111).

Steiner goes on to speak more about the full meaning of what is passed on through generations, that is worth further exploration, yet this discussion is limited to the understanding that it is energy in Spiritual form...the Astral Body of the individual blending with that of the parents’ Astral Bodies at time of incarnation that sets the stage for their life. It is this passed on energy aspect of us that a Genogram begins to explore.

Steiner’s clairvoyant spiritual-science generated explanation of how we come to be replicas of our ancestors in many aspects of life provides a deeper meaning to what we receive from our ancestors. It expands the limited view that we are just the transmission of hereditary traits based upon the genes of our ancestors and current environmental factors. This explains further how races of people whose ancestors experienced trauma, such as slavery or mass murder, can still hold their pain even though they have no personal experience. This is the generational wounding that we see in our society today. Steiner’s Spiritual explanation lends itself to further exploring the conscious energy that is the Astral Body and its effects on the human journey.

As I dig deeper into the world of energy and how and what we are as human beings, I realize the deeper truth behind the Genogram. As a therapist, we are not taught that we are working with energy beings that have a Spiritual origin and an eternal existence. We are taught to deal with the aspect of purely physical human beings, which I thought for much of my life was the deepest level of us—the human mind or brain. We in Western Medicine are not taught to venture into the Spiritual arena for obvious reasons. As I was led to go deeper for personal and professional reasons, I came to understand the complexity of the human journey and the enormity of what is underlying the human journey—Spiritual Energy. I will continue to utilize the Genogram, as it does serve people well in their healing journey. Yet, I may at times explain Steiner’s clairvoyant insights to clients I deem ready to go beyond the human alone view—and into the world of Spirit and Energy.

Bibliography

Steiner, R. (2013). *Disease, Karma and Healing: Spiritual-Scientific Enquiries into the Nature of the Human Being*. East Sussex: Rudolp Steiner Press.