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My Differentiation of Self-Assessment

Bowen's Family Systems Theory is an interesting one in that he not only uncovers events or issues that the family is experiencing and how they affect various members, he also explores the member's roles and the relationships between them. From my perspective his model is not one that is commonly practiced in regular family counseling or therapy. I say this because Bowen talks about the therapist not only teaching about differentiation but also taking on that role so those in therapy have a better understanding of how to be differentiated. Being differentiated is a process that will definitely take some time to adjust to and make a habit. I know that for me this process will take a lot of extra due to the fact that my emotions play a large part in decisions I make, how I internalize what is said to me, and how I respond to others. Even with the best of intentions to focus more on me, my response to circumstances instead of the people I have an issue; with didn't work well.

In Bowen's theory if an assessment was completed on me, I believe that I am currently in the "I" position with my nuclear family in dealing with Nodal events. Before school started I went through individual faith-based counseling in which the main objective was transformation of self. This framework was looking at self and the condition your heart to deal with issues, instead of the other person because we can't change them. I don't think I have placed myself in the I position a great deal but more than I used to, meaning that I have communicated my feelings and thoughts as my own decisions. Doing this I think helps the I person be more in or feel like they are in control of their actions without fear or external influence. A recent example

that comes to mind in relation to this is before I came to school. I was talking to my nuclear and family origin about attending Graduate school and I was stating the reasons why I didn't want to apply now and that I wanted to be a part-time student. Such statements like: "I want to wait until fall 2019 to start", "I believe that since I haven't attended school in two-years being part-time would be better so that I can adjust", and "I will take a few classes and work and then increase my course load if necessary" are examples of being responsible for my happiness and decision making.

A nodal event my nuclear family is experiencing right now is financial strain and job stress. My mother, sister, and I are enrolled in school and not employed, which leaves my father to provide for the family financially. This adjustment has not been easy and has caused anxiety, stress, and maybe a little fear. I will say that my father has done a great job taking on another level of being the head of the family and making provision. Bowen states that nodal events can result in "the family organism taking on qualities of greater openness, closeness, or to fly apart explosively" (p.5). I think my family has drawn closer to each other as we support and uplift each other during this transition. Communicating feelings and what is going on in our lives. We definitely could draw apart but I am glad we are becoming closer because of this nodal event. Reading Bowen's theory has been interesting and something I would like to see done in a professional setting or have done on myself so that I can become a better helping individual and know how to demonstrate it to clients.