



Leadership in Ministry

Noted Neuropsychologist Dr. Angelo Bolea Addressed Issues of Leadership and the Brain

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On occasion it's healthy to stop and confess that we take a lot of things for granted: good health, functional limbs, a sunny day, financial security, the people around us. It's in our nature, perhaps. Evidence of that is the fact that most days we don't even give a second thought to our heart, pumping away minute by minute to keep us alive, and that other organ, the brain, which allows us to have a thought in the first place. But after listening to Dr. Angelo Bolea's presentation on the brain, it's not likely that participants in the **Leadership in Ministry Workshop** will take their brains for granted any time

soon.

Angelo Bolea, Ph.D., a Bethesda, Maryland Clinical Neuropsychologist presented "Leadership Development and Brain Function" at the Spring workshop at Lost River, WV. Larry Matthews, Director of the **Leadership in Ministry Workshops** said, "I'm especially indebted to Dr. Bolea for providing an up-to-date physiological basis for some of the basic concepts of the theory—multigenerational neuronal formatting, the reasons why it takes so long to "think differently," the importance of connection and the effect of cutoff."

An engaging speaker, Dr. Bolea quickly moved from an



Dr. Angelo Bolea, neuro-psychologist, speaks at the Lost River workshop on the subject of leadership and the brain

overview of the physically complex organ that is the brain to applications for

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Fall Workshop Dates:

- LOST RIVER, WV

Workshop A Sessions

October 22-24

Workshop B Sessions

September 17-19

- BOSTON

October 15-17

- COLORADO SPRINGS

October 1-3

See our web site or call for registration openings.

Workshop Participants Challenged By Variety

Participants in the Leadership in Ministry Workshops have been challenged this year by the variety of workshop topics presented by the faculty. While each presentation dealt with applying Bowen systems theory to one's personal life, leadership

role, and ministry setting, each went beyond merely covering the basic concepts of the theory. Each faculty presentation gave evidence of creative thinking while taking the theory seriously.

One of the most challenging presentations was by

Dr. Angelo Bolea whose presentation on "Leadership and Brain Function" provided insight into the biological and neurological aspects of leadership. Elaine Boomer related the theory to spirituality in her "Self-differentiation: A Spirit-

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Faculty Profile: Elaine Boomer



Faculty member Elaine Boomer presents at the Lost River workshop

Elaine Boomer, M.S. W., is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice in Vienna, Virginia. Prior to becoming a therapist, she worked in the corporate marketplace as a Bank Marketing and Training Officer. Her first exposure to Family Systems Theory was through personal coaching from Ed Friedman from 1989 to 1991. After receiving her Masters in Social

Work in 1994 from Virginia Commonwealth University, she studied with Ed Friedman until his death in 1996. In addition to serving as a LIM Workshop faculty member since 1996, she often presents seminars and workshops on systems thinking to various community organizations.

As an overfunctioning eldest, her work in understanding emotional systems has "changed her life"! Elaine is a

favorite presenter at the **Leadership in Ministry Workshops**. Her workshop presentations include: "Why Do I Have to Do Everything Around Here?", "Anxious Adaptations: A Case Study", "Lessons from a Horse Whisperer", "The Complexity of Triangles", "Human Emotions—A Dilemma", "Self-differentiation and Loss" and "Can Emotional Systems Really Change?" ❖

Leading Systems Through Change, Richmond, VA

A leadership development program that applies Bowen systems theory to congregational life.

This four-level leadership development seminar is an excellent introduction to ministering to congregations as family systems. Designed by Larry Matthews for the Center for Creative Church Leadership Development, he and Dr. Robert Dale, the

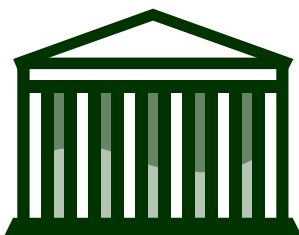
Director of the Center, are the core faculty. Open to all denominations, four three-day sessions are scheduled:

September 24-26 and November 12-14, 2001 and February 11-13 and March 11-13, 2002. ❖

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New Atlanta Area Leadership in Ministry Workshops for 2002!



Atlanta-area workshops will be offered in 2002!

Things look good for a **Leadership in Ministry Workshops** program in the Atlanta, GA area for 2002. The workshops are tentatively scheduled at the convenient Calvin Center a Presbyterian conference center (south of Atlanta,

about 25 minutes from the airport).

The dates for the Atlanta workshops are April 15-17 & October 14-16, 2002. This training program will follow the emphases on applying Bowen systems

theory to leadership and will follow the same effective format of our on-going leadership workshops. Contact us for more information or to register. ❖

A Family Systems Perspective

By Victoria Harrison, MS

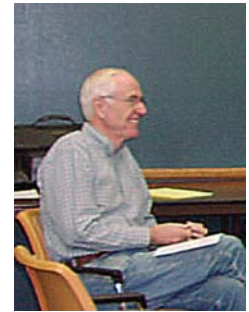
The Reverend Larry Matthews, D. Min. was guest speaker at the annual "Partners in Ministry" program held by Samaritan Counseling Center and Perkins School of Theology in Houston, Texas on Tuesday, February 20, 2001. An audience, rich in diversity and in number, filled the auditorium of St. Luke's United Methodist Church to hear this focus on family systems as the basis for leadership in ministry. It was an extraordinary opportunity for clergy, pastoral counselors, therapists, and chaplains to hear theory integrated through the life and work of a minister and dedicated student of family systems.

Dr. Matthews grounded this presentation on leadership in a history of his own contact with Bowen's family systems theory, first through Edwin Friedman and then later with Michael Kerr and the faculty at Bowen Center for the Study of the Family (formerly Georgetown Family Center). He described his own path of learning as he outlined components of working on differentiation of self as the

basis for leadership. He illustrated the effort "to develop a sense of where you end and where other people begin, to work on one's own reactivity, to define a belief system and express one's beliefs to others, to stay connected and maintain integrity, to become responsible for oneself and responsive to others" with examples in his own family and life and ministry.

The enormous contributions of Murray Bowen, Edwin Friedman, and Michael Kerr were evident in the day's presentation. At the same time, Larry Matthews distinguished his own hard-earned thinking. His discussion of anxiety and differentiation of self were particularly noteworthy. "Bowen theory is about anxiety. It assumes that the basic human issue is anxiety. It comes with human life. It may belong to all protoplasm. Basic to the process of self-differentiation is the task of consciously working at regulating one's anxiety. This includes acknowledging anxiety and regulating one's reactivity to it. This is hard, daily work. It is never done in the sense of being finished."

Dr. Matthews, one of the few clergy who take a serious interest in science as well as scripture, referred to his work with Dr. Angelo Boileau, a gifted psychoneurologist who works with neurofeedback and teaches about the brain in Washington, DC. Knowledge about the brain allows students of family systems to appreciate that "working through redefinition of self in the most important relationships changes neuronal patterns, reprograms the brain." The challenge in changing patterns of thought is built into the brain itself. The emphasis placed upon the necessity of coaching for work in one's own family, combined with ongoing study of Bowen theory and with contact between those who are working on differentiation of self seemed realistic in light of what scripture and science teach about human nature. The time it takes to begin, an estimated 4 to 6 years, according to Larry Matthews, did not seem to dampen the interest of an audience aware of the challenges of leadership in ministry. ❖



Lawrence Matthews, Director, Leadership in Ministry Workshops, leads a small group at the Colorado Springs workshop.

This article first appeared in *The Family Systems Forum*. Harrison is Director of Houston's Center for the Study of Natural Systems (www.csnf.org) and a faculty member of the Georgetown Family Center. Reprinted by permission.

Workshop Participants Challenged, cont'd

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tual Journey." Rev. Ken Hurto's metaphorical "Be A Lighthouse, Not A Bulldozer" was informative and fun. Dr. Mahan Siler presented "The Interplay Between Two Systems Thinkers: Murray Bowen and Walter Wink." At the Boston workshop Margaret

Marcuson presented "Finding A Voice: Spiritual Maturity and Self-differentiation" while Elaine Boomer spoke on "Adaptation or Differentiation?"

Larry Matthews reflected on the impact of the theory on his personal life in his presentation, "Back to My Future: A

Personal Pilgrimage."

At Colorado Springs Matthews presented "Reciprocity in Relationships: Overfunctioning and Underfunctioning" and "Back to My Future: A Personal Pilgrimage" while Boomer's topic was "The Complexity of Triangles." ❖



Small group work is an important part of the Leadership in Ministry Workshop learning process.



LEADERSHIP IN MINISTRY WORKSHOPS

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Family Systems Theory offers a way of thinking that affects every aspect of leadership in ministry and integrates administration, preaching, teaching, and counseling through the concept of self-differentiation.

Participants in *Leadership In Ministry Workshops* learn how the concepts of family emotional process can be applied to ministry and explore the theological implications of these concepts.

WE'RE ON THE WEB:
LEADERSHIPINMINISTRY.COM



Leadership in Ministry Newsletter
Israel Galindo, Editor



The brain is a natural systems organ.

Bolea, cont'd

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brain-based leadership functions. Throughout the presentation, one thing became clear: the brain is a natural systems organ. Participants did not have to strain to see the connection between Bowen systems theory and how the brain functions.

Bolea's presentation on how the brain functions goes beyond popular notions of "left-brain/right-brain" information processing. His three-brain model is in contrast to the one familiar to students of systems theory: reptilian brain, mammalian brain, and cerebral cortex. Bolea's triune

brain consists of the inner brain (the seat of the "real self") and the right and left cortex lobes.

Healthy brain function means connectivity, says Bolea. All neurological problems (schizophrenia, MS, Hoskins, etc.) stem from some form of "disconnect" within the brain.

Bolea explored with the workshop participants leadership and theological implications from brain research: the seat of "being," the source of "evil," where faith comes from, and how we perceive and create reality. ❖