

Overview of the Developmental Model: Stepping Stones To Intimacy



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What Developmental Theory Solves

This is not a pathology model.

The Developmental Model theory enables us to view couples' struggles as part of the struggle for psychological growth and wholeness – not as pathology or illness





Think
Developmentally

Intervene Incisively

Life is a developmental process in which we as humans are continually challenged

- Couples relationships can evolve through a series of normal developmental stages. These stages parallel some of the stages of early childhood development
- Progressing through these stages promotes intrapsychic change and ego strengthening to face life's challenges



3 Main Reasons Relationships Fail

- Lack of Development
- Repetitive Re-triggering of Emotional Trauma without Repair
- Lack of Skills





The Problem

Many couples have little sense of their talents and strengths, much less the resolve or ability to build their lives around them.



The Problem

Instead, they increasingly become experts in each others weaknesses and spend their lives exaggerating these flaws, while their strengths lie dormant and neglected

Developmental Model Gives You A Way to Lead



You have the insight and ability to not only see the couple where they are....but to lead them to what they can become.

Your Leadership

- The tone you set from the very beginning is crucial.
- Do you see pathology or do you see developmental hurdles?
- Are you optimistic or pessimistic?
- Your style and what you pay attention to will determine the direction of the therapy
- Do you challenge your clients to develop themselves?



3 Reasons Couples Come to Therapy



Change-To Grow,
Connect and Develop



Dissolve the
Relationship

- Say goodbye
- Help with kids and parenting
- Resolve resentment so it doesn't fester



Make a
Decision

- Stay together or separate
- Have a child or not
- Move across country



Think
Developmentally

Intervene Incisively

Developmental Stages

Couple's relationships evolve through normal, predictable developmental stages.

Symptoms/problems arise when partners aren't able to progress through these stages.



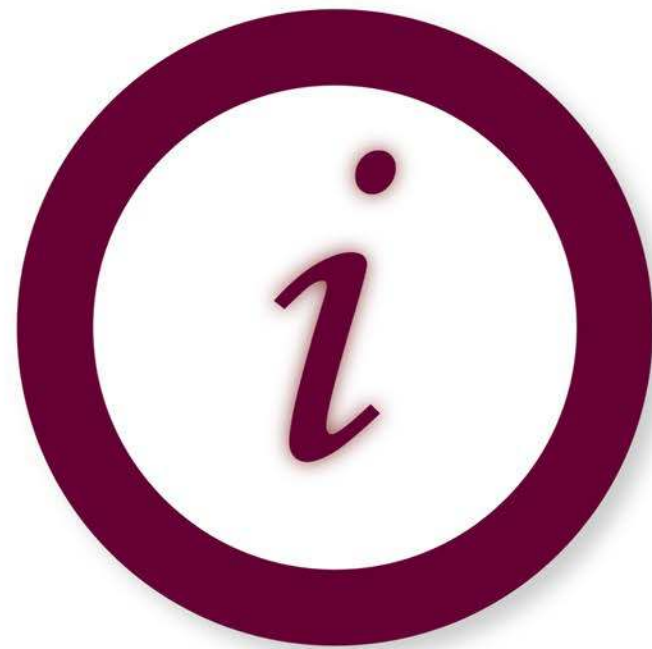
Developmental Stages

Individual development affects an individual's capacity to support healthy couples development while couples development results in an increase individual development.

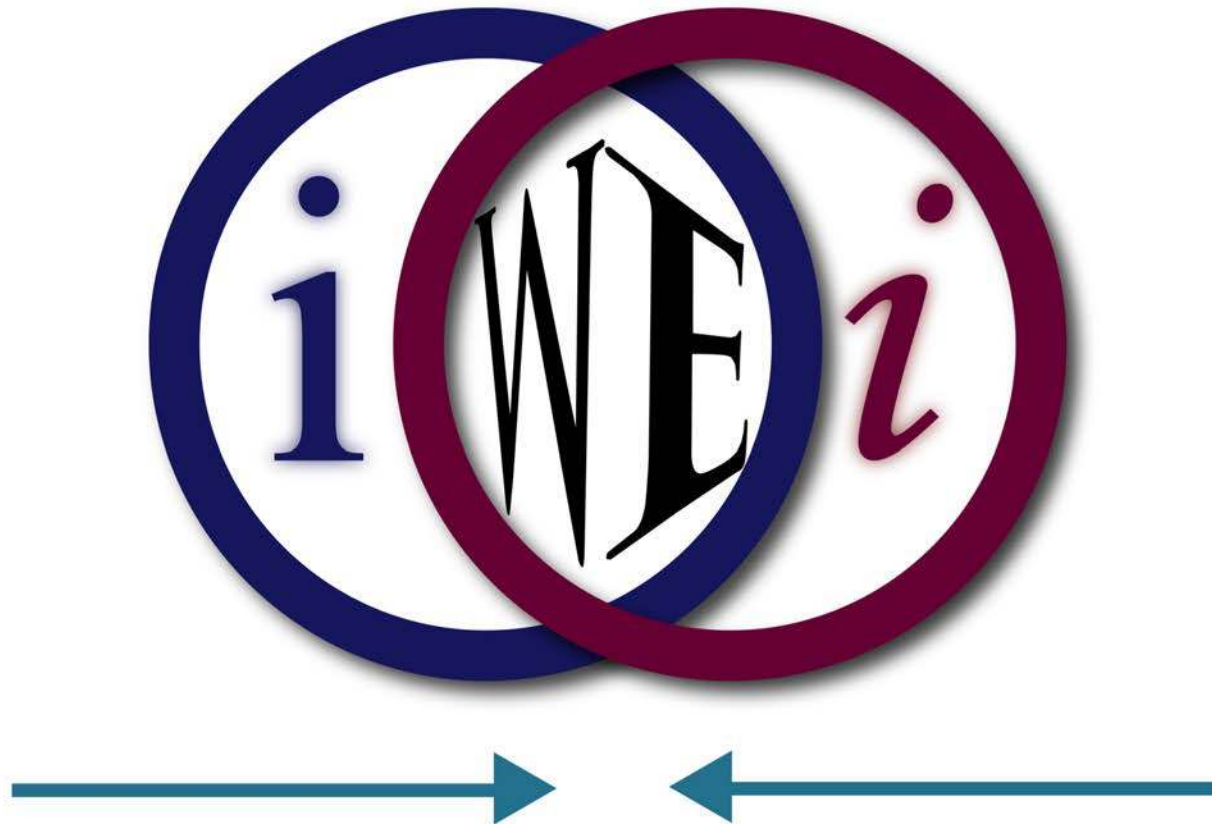
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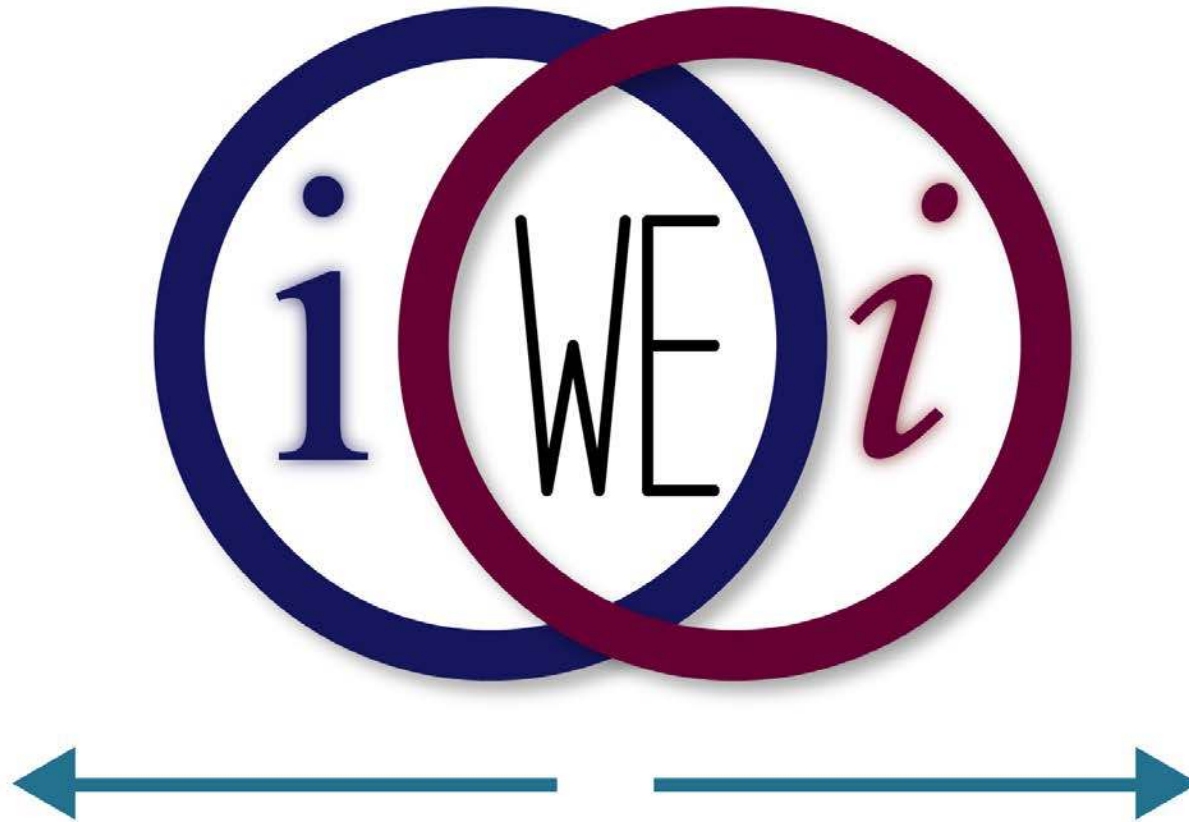
Separate
Selves
Before We
Meet



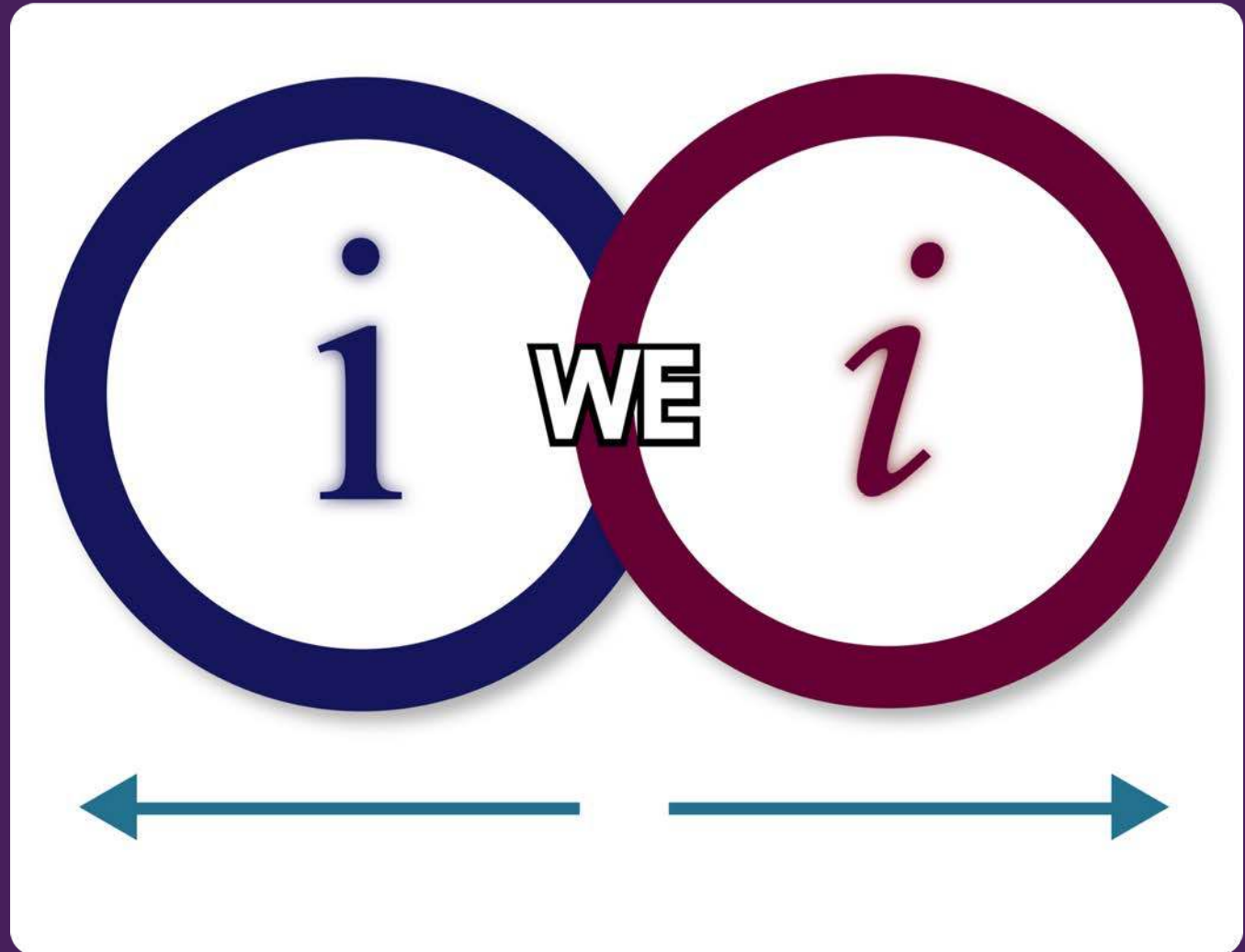
Symbiosis:
Exclusive
Bonding
Falling in Love



Differentiation
Managing
Anxiety Over
Differences



Exploration:
Moving
From “We”
Back to “I”



Re-Connecting:
Back and Forth
Patterns of
Intimacy



Synergy:
Independence
&
Interdependence



Common Adult Stages in Couples Who Come to Therapy



- Symbiotic - Symbiotic
Hostile / Dependent
Conflict Avoidant
- Symbiotic – Differentiating
- Symbiotic – Practicing
- Differentiating - Differentiating

Arrested Developmental Stage

- Symbiotic - Symbiotic

Symbiosis is an attempt to maintain attachment, handle the existential anxiety of being alone and comes from limited capacity to maintain self-esteem and manage emotional triggers.

Arrested Developmental Stage

- Symbiotic - Symbiotic
Conflict Avoidant
Are either friendly or tension-filled
- Hostile - Dependent
Either overt aggression or one partner is
very passive-aggressive
- Both result from chronic failed differentiation

Symbiosis:

They want you to improve the symbiotic functioning of the relationship. They don't want you to confront the underlying symbiotic structure and expectations.



Developmental Stage

- ✓ Where is the couple stuck?
- ✓ Where is their development arrested?
- ✓ What are the main sources of their pain and disappointment?
- ✓ How have they hurt one another?
- ✓ How far off course are they from what you would expect based on their ages and the time they have been together?



Understand the Problem

Cognitively and Affectively

The problems are always predictable based on...

Attachment styles

Developmental stages

Arrested Development



The chronic triggering of trauma that has gone unrepaired

How long the partners have been together