



# Relationship Enhancement Family Therapy

*Barry G. Ginsberg*

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## **Relationship Enhancement Family Therapy** Barry G. Ginsberg

"The effort to objectify and systematize the process that brings people to treatment, though admirable, flies in the face of the broad variability of human experience and behavior. In spite of the attempt to systematize the diagnostic and treatment process, our ability to predict how people will think and act remains imprecise. Instead of just struggling to uncover the 'truth' underlying psychological problems, it makes more sense to try to teach people the skills they need to effect ongoing change and gain the means to care for themselves." — Barry G. Ginsberg from Relationship Enhancement Family Therapy

Self-sufficiency should be the goal of any therapeutic undertaking. Pioneered by Bernard Guerney in the 1950s, and proven effective over several decades, relationship enhancement (RE) therapy aims at training clients in the skills they need to identify and resolve causes of stress and discord within the family for themselves. Strongly influenced by Sullivanian existential and Rogerian client-centered thinking, the RE approach is based on the "Four Pillars": empathy, language and relationship, emotion, and acceptance (of self and others). Time-limited, educational, and highly structured, relationship enhancement family therapy is eminently compatible with the exigencies of today's managed care system.

Authored by a senior clinician who trained under Bernard Guerney, Relationship Enhancement Family Therapy is the first comprehensive guide to the theory and practice of this valuable approach to family therapy. Dr. Ginsberg begins with a thorough review of the theoretical underpinnings of RE, followed by a delineation of the role of the therapist in RE. Bolstered by extensive case studies, the remainder of the book is devoted to providing clinicians with practical guidelines for applying RE methods. RE is inherently development oriented; it arms clients with the skills to forge and foster healthy relationships throughout the life cycle. Hence, this book is structured so as to clearly demonstrate how RE principles and methods apply at all stages of the life span. Chapters cover the use of RE to improve child/parent relationships, adolescent/parent relationships, and relationships between adults, young adults, and their families. Special populations, such as single parents, remarried families, and groups for single individuals, as well as applications to specific mental health and drug and alcohol disorder problems are also included. The book concludes with an insightful discussion of the role of relationship enhancement therapy in the age of managed care.

Relationship Enhancement Family Therapy is the first comprehensive look at RE theory and practice since Bernard Guerney's 1977 classic. As such, it is important reading for family therapists, clinical psychologists, social workers, and all mental health professionals.

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