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**Family Emotional Process,  
Epigenetics, and the Emotional  
System in the Adoptive family**



This presentation will explore the relationship between family emotional process and epigenetics in the adoptive family.

Family emotional process defines the flow of emotional process or patterns of emotional functioning in the nuclear as well as multi-generational family. Bowen Theory posits that this process is governed by the same laws that govern all living things throughout evolutionary history.

Epigenetic research includes cross-fostering studies in the human as well as in other species. These studies demonstrate the plasticity of gene expression. In non-human species, results have pointed to how a shift in the environment impacts genetic expression in the emotional unit. In the human adoptive family, a natural cross-fostering study of its own, the family emotional process intersects with the birth family emotional process of the adopted child.

While the gene expression is affected, the adoptive family emotional process significantly impacts the development and differentiation of the adopted child.