

## **Dr. Michael E Kerr**

### **Importance of Theory to the Process of Differentiation of Self**



The major reason people have difficulty making progress on developing more “self” in their families and other systems is *observational blindness*, which inhibits systems-based theoretical thinking. The key is seeing the link between shifts in family context, such as periods of regression, and impairment in family interactions and associated dysfunction somewhere in the family. It is analogous to disturbances in bodily homeostasis manifesting in some localized disturbance in tissue functioning.

This idea will be developed by a descriptions of the author’s schizophrenic brother’s shifts in emotional functioning over his life span and anxiety-driven relationship disturbances in the family system or context. Recognition of the context-individual functioning relationship is central to gaining emotional objectivity and associated neutrality. Differentiation of self-results from emotional neutrality plus action guided by that objectivity and neutrality.