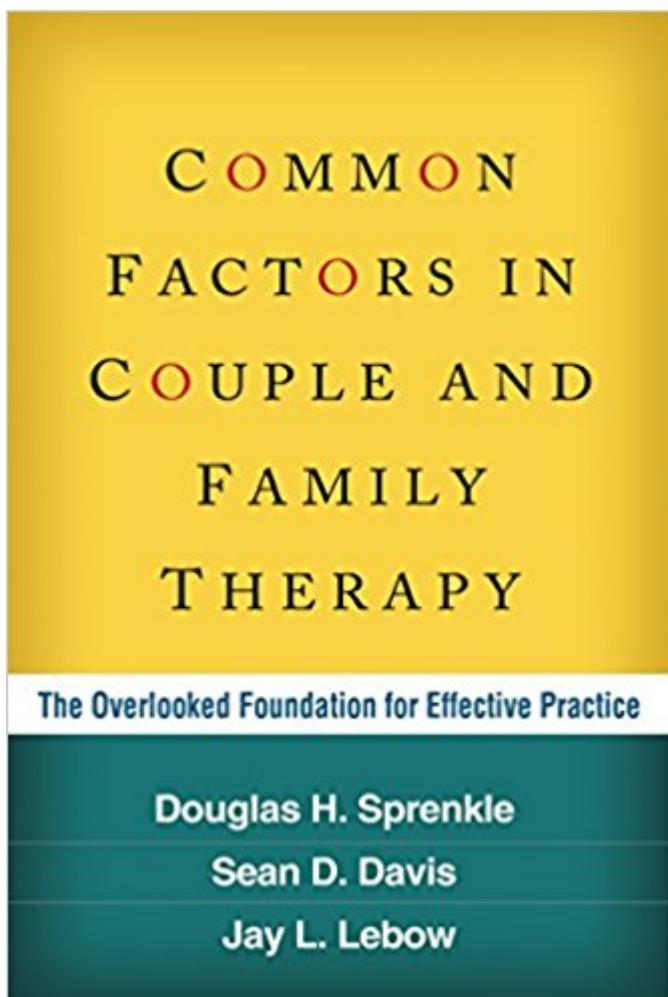


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# Common Factors In Couple And Family Therapy: The Overlooked Foundation For Effective Practice



## Synopsis

Grounded in theory, research, and extensive clinical experience, this pragmatic book addresses critical questions of how change occurs in couple and family therapy and how to help clients achieve better results. The authors show that regardless of a clinician's orientation or favored techniques, there are particular therapist attributes, relationship variables, and other factors that make therapy--specifically, therapy with couples and families--effective. The book explains these common factors in depth and provides hands-on guidance for capitalizing on them in clinical practice and training. User-friendly features include numerous case examples and a reproducible common factors checklist.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This thought-provoking book offers the reader an outstanding resource for identifying common factors that drive the change process in relational psychotherapies. As the number of available modalities grows with each passing day, students, clinicians, and researchers will find the paradigm presented here to be extremely useful in isolating what is specifically responsible for change and figuring out how to incorporate it into doing what we do best. A must read."--Frank M. Dattilio, PhD, ABPP, Department of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, and Department of Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine "A long-awaited, critically important contribution. The authors offer a guidebook for understanding and integrating the common factors that cut across distinct therapies, and also present an extraordinarily thoughtful and

nonpolemical examination of the strengths and weaknesses of the common factors strategy. This book will help advanced therapists better understand and sharpen what they do; will help intermediate and beginning-level therapists discover and utilize potent common factors that will enhance their effectiveness; will help theorists cast their ideas in a more generic and universally accessible language; and will help researchers integrate common factors into their hypotheses and research designs. A huge step ahead for our field--read it."--William M. Pinsof, PhD, private practice, Chicago, Illinois "Countering the stampede to find the best model--or silver bullet--for therapeutic change, Sprenkle, Davis, and Lebow, seasoned researchers and practitioners, draw out the common elements across models that facilitate effective change. Since no single model can best fit the broad diversity of clients and challenges in our complex and uncertain world, their practical approach is especially valuable for clinical training and practice."--Froma Walsh, MSW, PhD, Mose and Sylvia Firestone Professor Emerita, School of Social Service Administration and Department of Psychiatry, University of Chicago, and Codirector, Chicago Center for Family Health "The best antidote yet to technique-heavy approaches to couple and family therapy. This book restores appropriate attention to the role and the person of the therapist, and urges therapeutic flexibility and creativity. It is 'must' reading for anyone engaged in learning about systems-oriented therapy or teaching and supervising couple and family therapists."--Alan S. Gurman, PhD, Department of Psychiatry (Emeritus), University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health "Using research as a guide, the authors identify the critical skills that therapists need to be effective. This book is an excellent text for practicum classes in training programs because it helps novice therapists identify the critical skills they need regardless of their supervisor, clients, clinical site, and other variables that influence their training."--JoEllen Patterson, PhD, Marital and Family Therapy Program, University of San Diego "[Uses] well-written and accessible case examples, and provide[s] enough of an overview so that readers unfamiliar with either CBT or common factors will be able to benefit....Well-written, easy to read, and make[s] good use of clinical vignettes and case studies to illustrate concepts....Written for clinicians, although researchers new to either CBT or common factors would benefit from the thorough content. Best suited for post-graduate clinicians and educators....Provides a useful critique of the treatment-model paradigm....Highly recommended." (Families in Society 2009-08-12)

Douglas H. Sprenkle, PhD, is former Director of the Doctoral Program in Marriage and Family Therapy at Purdue University. He is Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy and Human Development and Family Studies, Emeritus, at the Department of Child Development and Family

Studies, also at Purdue. Dr. Sprenkle is past Editor of the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy and the author or editor of over 100 scholarly articles and six books, including Effectiveness Research in Marriage and Family Therapy and Research Methods in Family Therapy, Second Edition (coedited with Fred Piercy). He received the Osborne Award from the National Council on Family Relations, which is given biannually for outstanding teaching, and the Outstanding Contribution to Marriage and Family Therapy Award, the Cumulative Career Contribution to Marriage and Family Therapy Research Award, and the Training Award from the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). Dr. Sprenkle also won the Award for Significant Contribution to Family Therapy Theory and Practice from the American Family Therapy Academy. Sean D. Davis, PhD, LMFT, is Associate Professor at the Couple and Family Therapy Program at Alliant International University's campus in Sacramento, California, as well as an approved supervisor and clinical member of the AAMFT. Dr. Davis also serves on the editorial board of the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy. His research, clinical, and teaching interests focus on common factors and bridging the scientist-practitioner gap in marriage and family therapy. His dissertation on common factors won the AAMFT Graduate Student Research Award and the AAMFT Dissertation Award. Dr. Davis has published several journal articles and books, including, most recently, *What Makes Couples Therapy Work?* and *The Family Therapy Treatment Planner*, Second Edition (with Frank M. Dattilio and Arthur Jongsma), and maintains a private practice. Jay L. Lebow, PhD, is Clinical Professor of Psychology at the Family Institute at Northwestern University. He has conducted clinical practice, supervision, and research on couple and family therapy for over 30 years. He is board certified in family psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology and is an approved supervisor of the AAMFT. Dr. Lebow is the author of 100 book chapters and articles, most of which focus on the interface of research and practice and the practice of integrative couple and family therapy. His published books include *Research for the Psychotherapist* and four edited volumes, including the *Handbook of Clinical Family Therapy*. He is a past president of the Division of Family Psychology of the American Psychological Association and is involved in the Family Institute's Psychotherapy Change Project. Dr. Lebow is the current editor of *Family Process*.  $\ddot{\wedge}$

The authors have provided the field of systemic psychotherapy an important service in this volume. Common factors research has been around for quite a while, as they carefully point out. Their contribution is to put this in a systemic context, and that makes all the difference for couples and family work. The authors provide clear, carefully constructed and, to me, convincing arguments about the importance of their "moderate common factors" approach. In doing so, they have done a

real service to researchers and MFT educators in stimulating conversation and research about what makes for truly efficacious therapy. Yet this strength is, I believe, also a weakness and may perhaps explain some of the less than enthusiastic reviews. The authors seem to be writing to an audience of researchers and MFT educators. Those who are not steeped in a research culture could easily and understandably miss some of the nuances of the authors' arguments. I can easily imagine many of my masters degree students reading this and saying, "Yes, but what am I supposed to do with this client?" Common factors does, of course, give a cogent answer to that question, but without guidance, it is not an answer that most masters' level students are likely to grasp at first. That would be a great next step - to take this volume and give students a practical "how to do it" beyond the few illustrations the authors do include. Even so, this is well worth the read. Whether you agree with the authors or not, you will at least be given some evidence to consider, and that is, I believe, a good thing

The content of this book is excellent. I have some problems with the Kindle format of this book. There are many studies referenced, and if you accidentally touch one of the citations to the studies (while trying to turn the page) the book skips to the index, where that study is referenced. Then you have to figure out where you left off. This has happened to me at least ten times and it is super annoying and difficult to follow when it keeps jumping to the index. Otherwise a great book. I recommend the paper version.

My sister ordered this for grad school.

This book provided excellent examples of commonly used theories and how they can be applied to counseling. The. Explanations of concepts and how they all intertwine to provide the basic understanding of how to form the main relationship with all clients.

Great book on a forgotten theme in counseling and therapy. An in-depth look at an intuitive part of therapeutic counseling.

Excellent book. Well written, scholarly, very thoughtful. The idea that certain common factors are the core of individual psychotherapy has been established. This book generalizes this to couple and family therapy.

Great!

The book is great quality and came just in the time it said it would!

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