

The Family Life Educator: An Important Piece of the Family Life Education Puzzle

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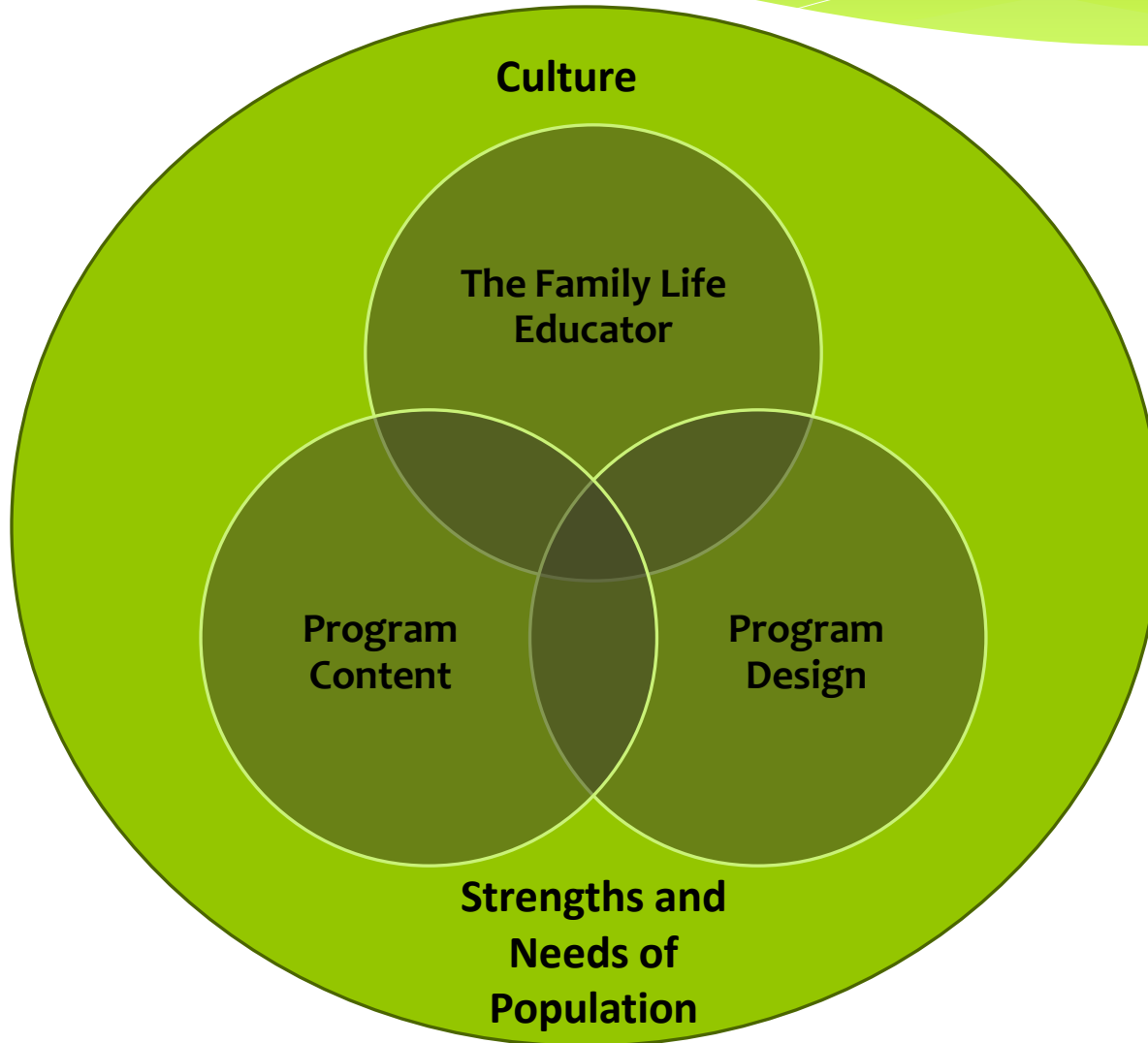
March 17, 2017





"I'M LOOKING FOR RELATIONSHIP ADVICE.
I'M IN LOVE ... WITH A FLEA ... AND SHE'S MARRIED!"

Framework for Best Practices in Family Life Education



Evidence-Based Programs are Changing the Conversation



Strengthening Families Program



PREPARE  ENRICH
• building strong marriages •

Domains of Family Practice

Question	Family Life Education's Responses	Family Therapy's Responses	Family Case Management's Responses
Why? <i>Purpose & goals of work with families</i>	To increase knowledge & develop skills so families may build on their strengths to function at their optimal levels	To ameliorate relationship problems & mental or emotional disorders to achieve stable, long-term, emotionally enriching family relationships	To help families negotiate systems, understand & comply with legal & regulatory requirements to increase family safety, permanence & well-being
What? <i>Content base & foundation</i>	Family & life-span theory & research in the 10 FLE content areas; learning, pedagogical or andragogical & educational philosophies & methodologies	Family & relationship theory & research; therapy-focused philosophies & methodologies	Case management theories & methodologies; research & information about social systems, resources, & policies; information about family dysfunction
When? <i>The timing of work with families</i>	Deal with current family needs & challenges to prepare for & improve current & future family functioning	Cope with past & current family problems focusing on past causes & patterns to improve current & future family functioning	Deal with current problems & immediate crises
For Whom? <i>Target population for services</i>	Any individual or family willing & able to function in an educational environment & committed to learning	Individuals, couples & families who have been diagnosed with functional difficulties who are willing to participate in a therapeutic environment	Families identified as being at risk or who demonstrate a need for assistance in meeting legal & societal regulations
How? <i>Techniques & methods used</i>	Assess family-related educational needs; set goals based on family needs & strengths; can occur in a variety of settings; teach about knowledge, attitudes & skills; families--individually or in groups -- are active in the learning process	Diagnose family problems; identify a treatment plan guided by particular theories or philosophies; occurs in private settings; establish a therapeutic alliance with one family at a time; families have input but little or no interaction with other families	Assess family functioning; set goals to fill gaps in family functioning; occurs in the field; coordinate community services while monitoring compliance, difficulties, & successes; families (may include extended family) participate in services but rarely interact with other families

Figure 1: Why

Family Life Education

Help families build
knowledge and skills

Family Therapy

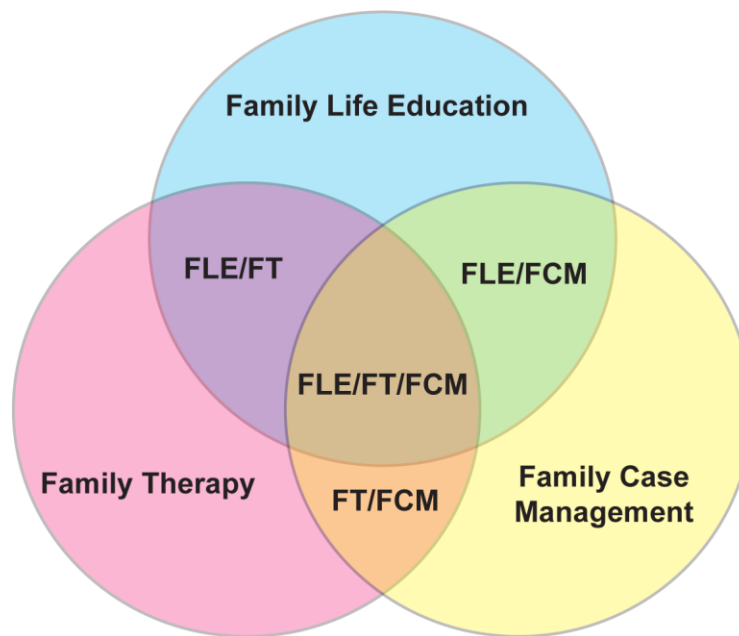
Help families repair
relationships and functioning

Strong, healthy
families

Help families comply with
legal and policy systems
and locate resources

Family Case Management

Figure 2: What



FLE:

- FLE methodology
- Normal, healthy functioning
- Broad, inclusive knowledge base
- Education/prevention focus

FT:

- Therapeutic intervention
- Assessment and diagnosis
- Psychotherapy

FCM:

- Coordination of services
- Family advocacy
- Focus on meeting family needs

FLE/FT:

- Interpersonal relationship skills
- Healthy sexual functioning
- Life course perspective

FLE/FCM:

- Family resource management
- Family policy

FT/FCM:

- Focus on family problems
- Intervention techniques
- Treatment goals/methods
- Management of client records
- Closure of cases

FLE/FT/FCM:

- Family Systems Theory
- Sensitivity to diversity
- Research-based practice
- Ecological context
- Values and ethics

Figure 3: When — Timing of Services

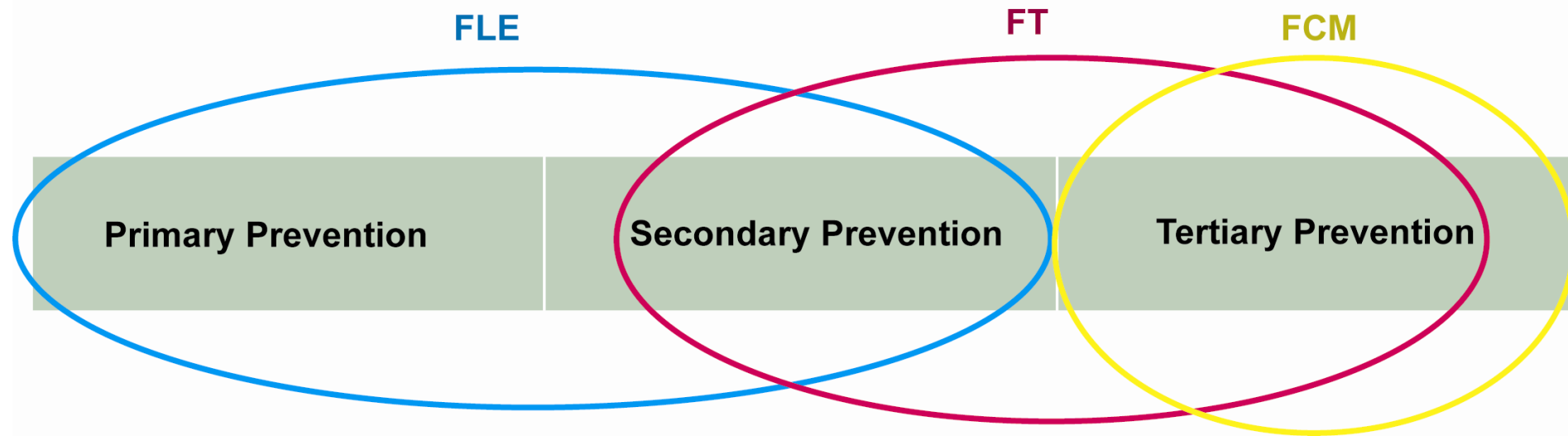


Figure 4: When — Time Orientation of Services

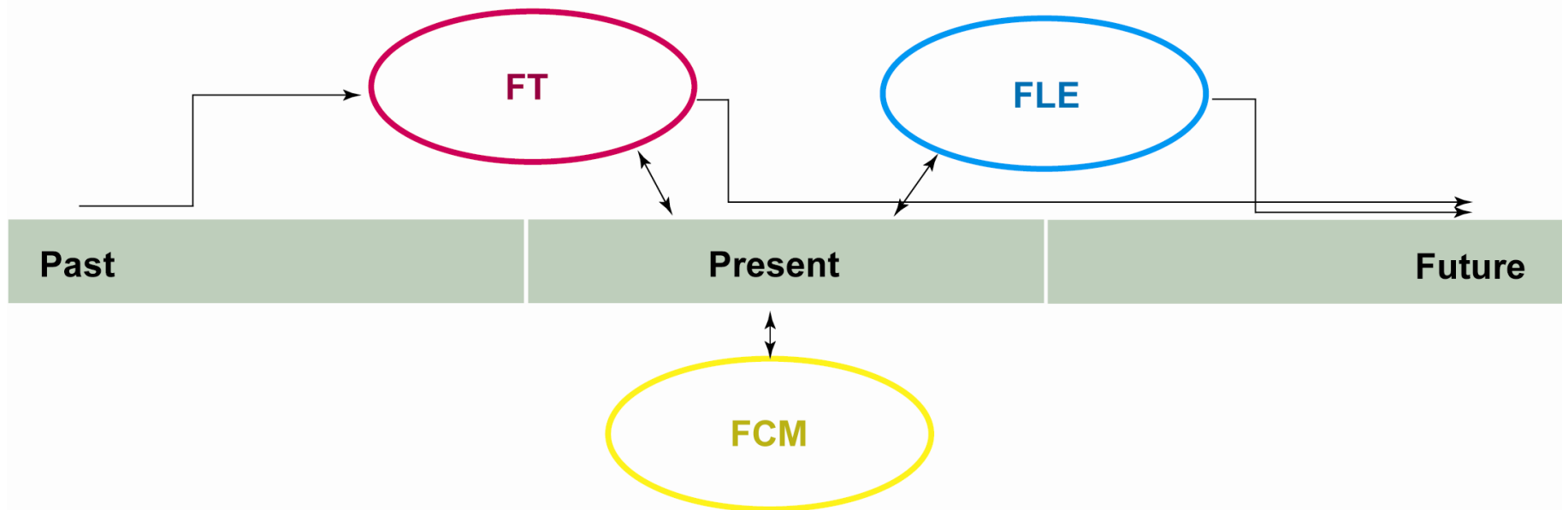
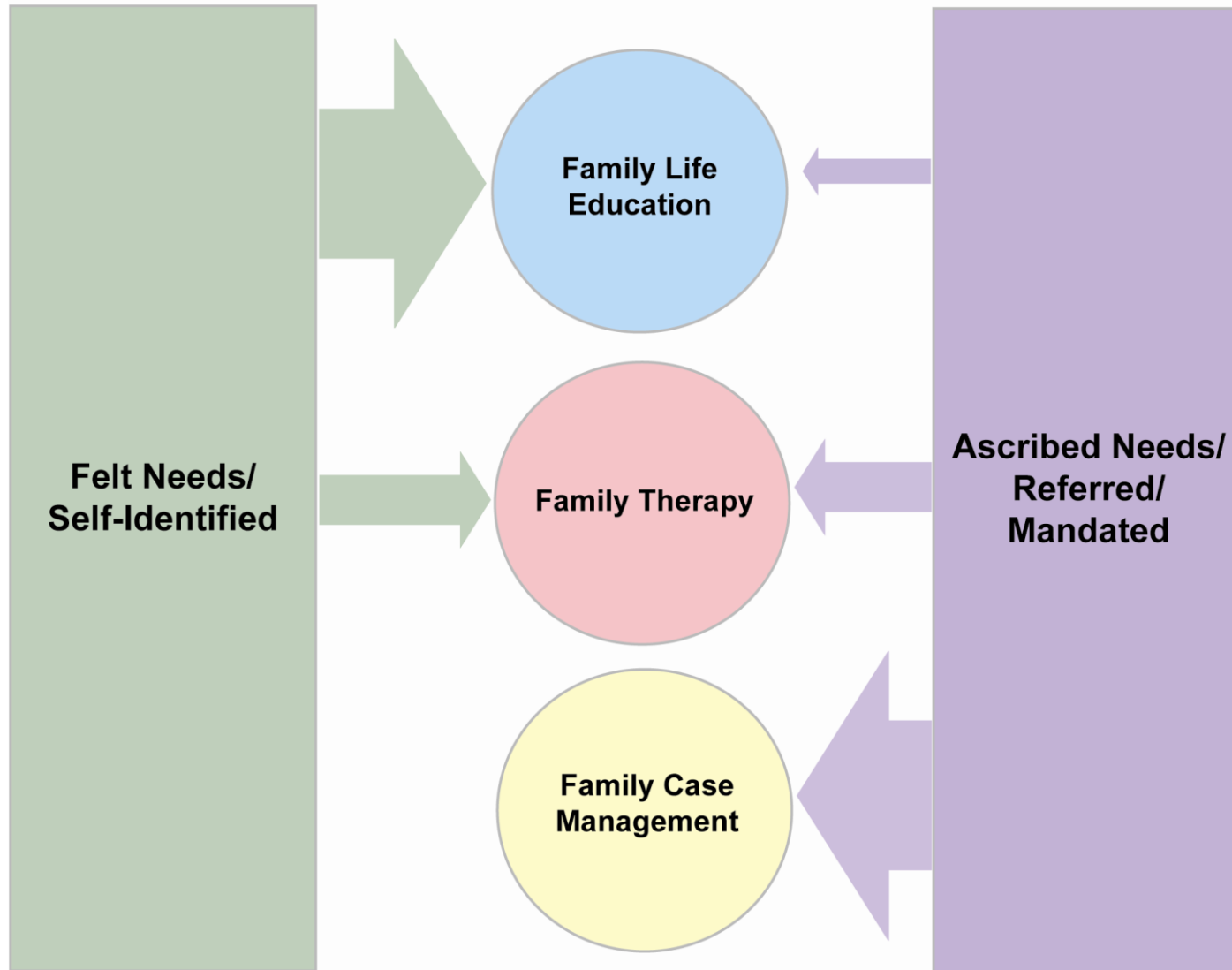


Figure 5: For Whom



How?

- * “Answering the How? question is in many ways the culmination of efforts to define and differentiate the fields of family practice, because it addresses the actual processes that family professionals use when working with families”

(Myers-Walls, Ballard, Darling, & Myers-Bowman, 2011, p.366)

So as family life educators, what do we do? How do we achieve change?

A word cloud featuring various terms related to family life education. The word 'ENGAGE' is the largest and most central, rendered in a bold orange font. Other prominent words include 'STRENGTHEN' and 'DISCUSS' in purple, 'TEACH' in green, 'INFORMATION' in yellow, 'ASSESS' in red, and 'KNOWLEDGE' in green. Smaller words include 'LEARN', 'GOALS', 'SHARE', 'GUIDE', 'ACTIVE', 'TECHNIQUES', 'STRATEGIES', 'NEEDS', 'SKILLS', 'STRENGTHS', 'SUPPORT', 'EMPOWER', and 'ENRICH'. The words are arranged in a roughly triangular shape, pointing downwards, with varying colors and sizes to create a dynamic visual effect.

LEARN GOALS SHARE GUIDE
ACTIVE KNOWLEDGE INTERACTIVE
ASSESS STRENGTHEN DISCUSS
TEACH INFORMATION EMPower
TECHNIQUES ENGAGE ENRICH
STRATEGIES NEEDS SKILLS STRENGTHS
SUPPORT

HOW?

- * How are specific needs determined?
- * How are services delivered?
- * Settings and modes
- * How are families involved in the services?

A Few Key Ingredients

- * Relationship-Building
- * Cultural Competence (Allen & Blaisure; 2009)
- * Self-Efficacy
- * Practical Wisdom (Small & Kupisk, 2015)
- * Heart (Goddard & Marshall, 2015)

Traits, Skills, & Abilities Needed for Family Life Education

- * Works well with diverse audiences
- * Engages in ethical decision-making
- * Exhibits professionalism and maintains appropriate boundaries
- * Problem solving skills
- * Overall skill in educational methodology, (e.g., needs assessment, planning, implementing, & evaluating curriculums or programs)
- * Interpersonal communication skills
- * Public speaking skills
- * Written communication skills

Traits, Skills, & Abilities Needed for Family Life Education

- * Works well one-on-one
- * Works well with groups
- * Awareness of one's own personal attitudes & cultural values
- * Accepts & integrates constructive feedback
- * Emotional stability and maturity
- * Empathy
- * Self-confidence
- * Flexibility

FLE Philosophy

- * Family and the quality and nature of family life
- * Purpose of family life education
- * Content of family life education
- * Process of learning

So What Does all this mean?



Preparing Family Life Educators

- * Philosophy of Family Life Education
- * Self Efficacy
- * Knowledge about Evidence-Based Programming

Research

- * The educator as a variable
- * CFLE as “evidence-based provider”
- * Cost effectiveness of using CFLEs as opposed to large scale program-specific training

Moving Family Life education forward

