

## Benefits of Marriage and Family Therapy

This area of practice known as **Marriage and Family Therapy** is a *distinct mental health discipline* earned through a high level of **Supervised Training** (over 1000 hours of systemic therapy with individuals, couples, and families supervised by an RMFT Approved Supervisor); **Education** (graduate level education —Master's or Doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy or in another mental health discipline *with* equivalent coursework in marriage and family therapy); as well as **Experience** in the field. Often, the process of becoming a Marriage and Family Therapist begins *after* one meets the basic requirement for becoming a generalist therapist/counsellor and after gaining beginning experience in the role.

RMFTs are qualified Relationship Professionals specifically educated and trained to work with the complexity of issues faced by individuals, couples, families, and groups, and to keep life's most precious relationships resilient and strong as they encounter life's challenges.

The profession of MFT prioritizes relationships and is always conscious of those family members NOT in the room.

In this distinct mental health discipline, a systems framework facilitates collaboration with individuals, couples, families, and groups. It is understood that most (if not all) couples and families encounter challenging episodes in life, and sometimes these episodes become ongoing/chronic conflicts and negative interpersonal dynamics that require assistance outside the walls of home. RMFTs use a non-judgmental approach that values and allows the voices each partner, and each member is encouraged to<sup>1</sup> share his or her

perspective, and the RMFT helps them explore how individual behaviors affect relationships between individuals, couples, families, and groups, and how interpersonal dynamics affect individuals. They learn how to recognize how situations and conditions contribute to 'the issue', and how they can apply a strengths-based approach to overcome challenges and to reconcile differences.

In Marriage and Family Therapy, whether working with individuals, couples or families, other family members often attend one or more individual sessions to help in working toward the goal of a positive outcome for all.