



THE
MURRAY
BOWEN
ARCHIVES
PROJECT

PROJECT UPDATE

October 2017

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The interviews illustrate Dr. Bowen's ability to provoke individuals to think, to see things differently – and change themselves so they could effectively alter their participation in family and social systems. Their experiences with Dr. Bowen changed their lives.

– Andrea Schara,

The Murray Bowen Archives Project

Extending theory: Understanding Dr. Bowen's relationships through oral histories

Thanks to a generous donor, the Oral History project has received funds that allowed for eight more interviews to be transcribed. More interviews still need to be transcribed. The Murray Bowen Archives Project is grateful for the donation, and pleased to have more interviews from this rich, long-term project ready to post on our website. A total of sixty-one interviews were recorded, twelve of which have been posted. Additionally, there are a number of individuals yet to be interviewed. The intent of the project is to fill in the historical record of Dr. Bowen's odyssey as fully as possible.

Towards the end of his life, Dr. Bowen noted that he had only scratched the surface of systems knowledge. It would be up to coming generations to expand his theory. How he lived theory, how he interacted with and influenced people, and how they extended theory into their own lives and families, then, would help the theory evolve.

In 2002, to document Bowen's research efforts in time and place, Catherine Rakow interviewed Dr. Robert Cohen, the head of the National Institutes of Mental Health who brought Bowen there in 1954 the year Dr. Bowen's Family Study Project began and Dr. Warren Brodey, who worked under Bowen 1956 -1958 on the project.

In 2006 Priscilla Friesen interviewed G. Mary Bourne about her early experiences with Bowen. Ms. Bourne was the director of the Minnesota Institute of Family Dynamics

in Minneapolis. In 1983, she invited Dr. Bowen to participate in the training program. He said that he appreciated this consistent opportunity to teach away from the Georgetown Family Center, where he could think more clearly outside of his "home" environment. He used Minnesota as a forum to develop his ideas during the mid 1980's.

Then, in 2007 Andrea Schara began the effort to interview those involved with Bowen, believing that these stories would give profound insights into how Dr. Bowen both communicated and lived theory.

Coming in 2018: More content from the archives at the National Library of Medicine

In 2018, The Murray Bowen Archives Project will add to the website more material from the L. Murray Bowen Collection at the National Library of Medicine (NLM). We will continue to post the oral history interviews and the videos of Dr. Bowen, which have been our focus in 2017, along with Clarence Boyd's book, *Commitment to Principles*. The last segment of this book, as well as a pdf of the entire book, will be posted in November of 2017.



Dr. Bowen communicating ideas through speech and drawings. At right is Dr. Walter Toman, whose research on sibling position was incorporated into Dr. Bowen's theory, making it one of the concepts. Handwritten on the back of the photo: "Erlangen, June 1978".

Progress on the Williamsburg Collection

The Bowen family continues to work with NLM to define the processing plan for the Williamsburg Collection. Since her retirement from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation last December, Joanne Bowen has been able to work consistently to organize and inventory Murray Bowen's personal property, as well as to work with Rebecca Warlow, NLM's Head of Images and Archives Section, to develop a plan to prepare Murray Bowen's professional papers and family letters for their eventual access at NLM. When this plan is completed, TMBAP will support the project with human and financial resources to take the next steps towards making the Murray Bowen Archives available to the public.

The Murray Bowen Archives Project is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) Virginia Non-Stock Corporation. Donations are tax deductible.

Members of the web team will visit NLM in 2018 to research new content for the website which, depending on the amount of information they are able to locate, may include topics such as conflict/war, the environment, and Dr. Bowen's use of diagrams. After that trip, the team will sort, transcribe, redact, write, edit, review, proof, scan, enhance, design, format and, finally, begin posting new material in the latter part of the year.

As a non-profit organization, The Murray Bowen Archives Project relies on donations to accomplish our vision to make the archives available to people around the globe. Your donations help us add more of Dr. Bowen's writing, photographs, manuscripts, etc. on our website. Thank you.

Revised vision and mission statement

As organizations mature, they may revisit their vision and mission statements from time to time. Prior to developing a 2018 Strategic Plan, the Board reviewed these statements to ensure they encapsulate all the work that the organization aims to accomplish. The revised Vision and Mission statements are on the Mission page at murraybowenarchives.org/mission-statement.html

Vision Statement

Murray Bowen's archives will be available to the world to advance the understanding of his theory of human behavior, its development and integration with the natural sciences.

Mission Statement

To obtain the resources for our efforts and create the required conditions to fulfill the vision, to advance scholarship, and enhance public knowledge of these archives.