



Family Stress Management: A Contextual Approach

By *Pauline E. Boss*



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Why do some families survive stressful situations while others fall apart? Can a family's beliefs and values be used as a predictor of vulnerability to stress? And most importantly, can family stress be prevented? In this **Second Edition**, Pauline Boss continues to explore both the larger context surrounding families and stress and the inner context, which includes perceptions and meanings. The author emphasizes the need for a more general contextual model of family stress that may be applicable to a wider diversity of people and families as well as a wider variety of stresses and crises than other models. The goal is to provide a framework for students and professionals engaged in helping families learn how to manage their stress.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Pauline Boss, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota; a Fellow in the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), the American Psychological Association, and the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. She was visiting professor at Harvard Medical School (1994–95) and the Moses Professor at Hunter School of Social Work (2004–2005). She is former president of NCFR and a family therapist in private practice. In 1988, Dr. Boss wrote the first edition of *Family Stress Management* with a subsequent edition in 2002. For the third edition, she invited Chalandra Bryant and Jay Mancini to be her co-authors. Each edition has considerably advanced the Contextual Model of Family Stress.

With groundbreaking work as scientist-practitioner, Dr. Boss is the principal theorist in the study of family stress from ambiguous loss, a term she coined. Since then, she has researched various types of ambiguous loss, summarizing her work in the widely acclaimed book, *Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief* (Harvard University Press, 1999). In addition, *Loss, Trauma, and Resilience* (Norton, 2006), presents six therapeutic guidelines for treatment when loss is complicated by ambiguity. These guidelines are based on her years of work with families of the physically missing during the Vietnam War, after 9/11, and in Kosovo, as well as in clinical work as a family therapist. For families, Dr. Boss wrote the book, *Loving Someone Who Has Dementia* (Jossey-Bass, 2011), which outlines strategies for managing the ongoing stress and grief while caring for someone who is both here and not here, physically present but psychologically absent. For more information, see her website, www.ambiguousloss.com.

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