



# INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO CONSCIOUS FAMILY FORMATION THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MODELS AND ENERGY PRACTICES

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**Abstract.** *The article is devoted to innovative approaches to the conscious formation of a family through the integration of psychological models and energy practices. The purpose of the study is to analyze modern approaches to the formation of a family as a holistic dynamic system, taking into account psychological theories and spiritual and energy factors that influence the quality of partnership and marital relationships. In the course of the scientific study, general scientific methods of cognition were used: analysis, synthesis, comparison, systematization, generalization, interpretation, deduction and induction. The results of the study show that the concept of family in the modern socio-cultural context is transformed from a traditional institutional formation to a deeply personal space that provides conditions for the emotional, psychological and existential growth of the individual. The emphasis is placed on the fact that the family performs the functions of emotional regulation, support and security, forming an environment for the internal development of partners. This approach considers the family as a holistic, multi-level and dynamic system, within which emotional patterns, attachment experiences, individual life narratives, cultural influences and spiritual orientations of partners interact and form a common space of relationships. The methodological value of the FEIR-Method lies in the combination of classical psychological models (attachment theory, systemic and procedural approaches) with practices aimed at increasing emotional coherence, awareness and internal balance of the couple. Such an integrative vision allows not only to work with conflicts and maladaptive patterns, but also to activate the deep resources of the family system, creating a synergistic effect of interaction and ensuring the long-term development and stability of marital and family relationships. The practical significance of the study lies in the creation of a holistic integrative approach to the formation of healthy family relationships, which can be used in psychological counseling, educational programs and family therapy practices.*

**Keywords:** *family, psychological models, emotional coherence, spiritual practices, FEIR method.*

## Introduction

In modern society, the process of family formation is undergoing significant transformations due to social, economic, cultural and psychological changes. The growth of individualism, instability of the labor market, postponement of marriage and parenthood, the spread of divorces, as well as an increased level of psycho-emotional stress create a complex of systemic challenges for the sustainable development of family relations. According to sociological and psychological research, a significant part of families faces chronic stress and emotional alienation between partners, which,



as noted in the study by B. R. Karney and T. N. Bradbury [6], is significantly associated with a decrease in the quality and stability of marital relationships, as well as with difficulties in raising children and intergenerational conflicts, which, according to the concept of attachment by J. Bowlby [2], negatively affect the mental health of both adults and children.

Traditional approaches to family therapy and psychological support, although they remain scientifically sound and effective in many cases, do not always take into account the holistic nature of a person, in particular the relationship between cognitive, emotional, bodily and existential dimensions of experience. In response to this, there is a growing interest in integrative models in the USA that combine classical psychological theories (systemic family therapy, attachment theory, transgenerational approach) with energy-oriented practices aimed at self-regulation, awareness and restoration of internal balance. In this context, the concept of conscious family formation is gaining particular relevance. It considers the family not only as a social institution, but as a dynamic psychoenergetic system, in which the quality of interaction between its members is determined by the level of psychological maturity, awareness of their own internal processes and the ability to emotional and energy regulation.

### **Literature Review**

The issue of innovative approaches to conscious family formation with the integration of psychological models and energy practices is sufficiently covered in foreign scientific literature. A significant contribution to the disclosure of the topic is made by P.M. Crittenden and R. Dallos [4], who integrate attachment theories and a systemic family approach, which allows for a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of family relationships. The theoretical foundations of the attachment model are laid in the works of J. Bowlby [2] M. Main and colleagues [7], R.P. Rohner [9], B.R. Karney and T.N. Bradbury [6], J.M. Ross [10]. These studies are important for understanding psychological stability in marital relationships.

The innovative aspect of the study is provided by the works of Z. Akbulut [1] and Ş. Çetintaş [3], who introduce the concept of spiritual therapy in couples counseling, emphasizing narrative and spiritually oriented approaches. R.J. Fehring and colleagues



[5], R. Raesi et al. [8]. showed the connection between natural family planning and spiritual support for couples. In the process of researching innovative approaches to conscious family formation with the integration of psychological models and energy practices, a multidisciplinary methodology was applied, which includes both classical scientific approaches (theoretical analysis, comparative-analytical method, systematization) and elements of the author's empirical generalization. The approach to analysis was based on a systemic vision of the family as a complex dynamic structure that combines emotional, cognitive, behavioral and spiritual components. Theoretical modeling was carried out taking into account classical models of family psychology (attachment model, integrative family systems model, IPARTheory, vulnerability–stress–adaptation model), which are summarized in tables for clarity. Additionally, a longitudinal approach was used to study changes in marital relationships over time.

Publications in leading peer-reviewed journals such as *Spiritual Psychology and Counseling* [1], *Frontiers in Psychology* [10], *The Linacre Quarterly* [5] and others were used as expert literature. These sources provided relevant material on the integration of spiritual and psychological practices in the field of family therapy, which allowed supplementing the classical theoretical basis with modern empirical approaches.

***The purpose of the article*** is to analyze modern approaches to the formation of a family as a holistic dynamic system, taking into account psychological theories and spiritual-energy factors that affect the quality of partner and marital relationships.

### **Research Results**

In the modern socio-cultural context, the concept of family is undergoing a significant transformation, going beyond traditional institutional and utilitarian interpretations. The family can no longer be considered exclusively as a legally established union, formalized through marriage procedures, nor as a form of social partnership, driven by pragmatic considerations of mutual benefit, economic stability or optimization of everyday functioning. Such approaches, which dominated in the industrial and post-industrial eras, are increasingly less responsive to the demands of personal development and internal integrity of the individual. The family can appear



as a holistic development environment, within which conditions are created for the personal, emotional and existential growth of each member. It functions not only as a social unit, but as a dynamic space of mutual influence, support and self-regulation, where individual development trajectories are integrated into a coordinated system of common existence.

It is important to consider the family through the lens of neurobiology. As Bowlby J. [2] notes, from the point of view of the brain, the family is a system of mutual support and emotional balance. Strong relationships arise where partners are able to be attentive to each other's states, respond with care and create an atmosphere of security. In his opinion, strong family relationships are formed not only through words, agreements or shared values, but primarily through how people emotionally interact with each other. From early childhood, our brain "learns" relationships through the experience of closeness: a look, a touch, a tone of voice, a reaction to emotions. This early experience creates an inner feeling - whether we can trust loved ones, whether it is safe to be with another person, whether there will be support in difficult moments. In adulthood, it is these internal settings that influence how we build partnerships and families.

In healthy family relationships, partners naturally adjust to each other: they sense each other's mood, soothe each other in tension, support each other in stress, and share joy, which is consistent with the principles of attachment theory formulated by J. Bowlby [2]. Such emotional coherence helps to reduce tension in the body, gives a sense of stability and inner peace, which, according to empirical data by B. R. Karney and T. N. Bradbury [6], is closely related to the quality and stability of marital relationships. When emotional contact is lacking, tension, distance, or a sense of loneliness appear even in a couple, which, as R. P. Rohner [9] notes, is associated with the experience of rejection and a lack of emotional support in family relationships. Therefore, it is important not only to resolve conflicts, but also to maintain a warm, lively emotional connection, which is emphasized by P. M. Crittenden and R. Dallos [4] in the context of a systemic understanding of the family.

In order to transform the meaning of the family in modern relationships between people, specialists resort to various practices, among which the leading place is



occupied by psychological practice, which, according to the conclusions of Z. Akbulut [1], increasingly integrates the emotional, relational and spiritual dimensions of family life. The most widespread is psychological practice, which combines both public and private programs aimed at building strong relationships, which corresponds to the current trends in the development of marital and family therapy, described by Ş. Çetintaş [3].

Modern psychology of family and marital relations is characterized by the presence of multiple theoretical models that explain the processes of family formation, functioning and stability in different ways, which is analyzed in detail in the review works of B. R. Karney and T. N. Bradbury [6]. These models differ both in terms of the level of analysis (individual, dyadic, systemic, sociocultural) and in key explanatory mechanisms – from internal representations and early experience to interpersonal processes, stressors and cultural norms, which is summarized in the conceptual approaches of M. Main, N. Kaplan and J. Cassidy [7].

The absence of a single universal model has led to the development of a multi-vector theoretical field in which different approaches complement each other, which is confirmed by modern empirical studies by J. M. Ross et al. [10].

One of the fundamental ones is the attachment model, initiated by J. Bowlby [2] and developed by M. Ainsworth, and later by M. Main, N. Kaplan and J. Cassidy [7]. Within this model, the family is considered as a space for the formation of internal working models - stable ideas about oneself, significant others and the nature of close relationships. As M. Main, N. Kaplan and J. Cassidy show in their 1985 study, these representations are formed in childhood, but persist and affect close relationships in adulthood, in particular partnerships and marriages.

Further development of this direction is associated with the integration of attachment theory and a systemic approach. In the work of P. M. Crittenden and R. Dallos [4], a dynamic-motivational model is proposed that considers the family as a complex system of interconnected adaptive strategies. In this model, the behavior of family members is interpreted as a functional response to the context, threats, and the need for security. It is important that the emphasis is not only on a single plane or in a



single situation, but on multiple attachments, intergenerational transmission of interaction patterns, and the flexibility of the family system in the process of development and change. The interpersonal acceptance–rejection theory (IPARTheory), developed by R. P. Rohner [9], is another psychological model of family formation. According to it, subjectively experienced acceptance or rejection by parents or partners has a universal impact on psychological well-being, regardless of culture or social context. In the family context, this model emphasizes that it is not so much objective behavior, but its symbolic and emotional perception that determines the quality of relationships and the level of psychological safety.

A significant contribution to the understanding of the development of marital relationships was made by the vulnerability–stress–adaptation (VSA) model, proposed by B. R. Karney and T. N. Bradbury [6] and empirically tested in further research by J. M. Ross [10]. This model considers the formation and stability of the family as the result of the interaction of three groups of factors: individual vulnerabilities, stressful circumstances, and adaptive processes in the couple. Importantly, none of these factors is decisive in itself; it is the ability of partners to adapt, coordinate behavior, and maintain positive interaction that mediates the impact of vulnerabilities and stress on the quality of marriage.

The long-term (longitudinal) approach to the study of the family, summarized in the work of B. R. Karney and T. N. Bradbury [6], shows that family relationships are dynamic and change over time. The quality of marriage is not a constant characteristic, but is formed under the influence of life events, transitions (for example, parenthood), accumulated experience of interaction and the ability of the couple to jointly solve difficulties. Thus, the family appears not as a static structure, but as a process that is constantly developing.

To summarize the various psychological practices of family formation, we will compile a table summarizing the key factors that influence interaction (Table 1).

In recent years, new approaches to family formation have been actively developing, reflecting the general trend towards the integration of classical psychological theories with modern interdisciplinary models of family relations, as



evidenced by the review studies of marital stability and family development by B. R. Karney and T. N. Bradbury [6]. One of the author's approaches, which is actively promoted in the USA, is the FEIR-Method: Conscious Family Integration. This is the author's integrative psychological model of family formation and development, developed by Anna Polekhina. At the same time, the very idea of an integrative approach to the family as a complex dynamic system is based on the systemic vision of family relations, which was developed by P. M. Crittenden and R. Dallos [4].

**Table 1 – Psychological models of family formation**

<b>Type of psychological model</b>	<b>Key focus</b>	<b>Impact on family formation</b>
Attachment model (J. Bowlby; M. Main, N. Kaplan, J. Cassidy)	internal working models, emotional security	determines the ability for intimacy, trust, and stable partner relationships
Integrative model of attachment and family systems (P. M. Crittenden, R. Dallos)	behavioral functionality, systemic adaptation	explains flexibility or rigidity of family patterns and intergenerational transmission
IPARTheory (R. P. Rohner)	acceptance–rejection, “warmth axis”	shapes emotional security, self-esteem, and psychological well-being of family members
Vulnerability–stress–adaptation model (B. R. Karney, T. N. Bradbury)	vulnerabilities, stress, adaptive processes	explains the dynamics of marital quality and risks of destabilization
Longitudinal processual models of marriage	time, change, life transitions	present the family as a dynamic and evolving system

*Note: systematized by the author based on sources [2, 4, 6, 9, 10]*

The model is based on the understanding of the family as a holistic, dynamic structure in which individual emotional patterns and attachment experiences of partners interact and form a common space of relationships, which is conceptually consistent with the provisions of the attachment theory formulated by J. Bowlby [2]. Taking into account internal representations acquired throughout life and their impact on adult close relationships is also confirmed in the works of M. Main, N. Kaplan and J. Cassidy [7]. The methodological feature of this model is the combination of scientifically based psychological approaches with practices aimed at increasing emotional coherence and internal balance of the couple, which corresponds to modern trends in integrative and spiritually oriented family therapy described by Z. Akbulut [1]. The involvement of value and semantic dimensions in working with spouses is also consistent with the



approaches presented in the studies of Ş. Çetintaş [3].

Within this model, energy aspects are interpreted as subjectively experienced interpersonal resonance that enhances adaptive processes and reduces tension, which can be scientifically correlated with the ideas of emotional acceptance and support in family systems developed within the framework of the theory of interpersonal acceptance-rejection by R. P. Rohner [9], as well as with modern empirical models of marital adaptation to stress presented by J. M. Ross et al. [10].

Another direction of positive influence on family relationships is spiritual or energy practices. Although these practices go beyond the scope of scientific research, it can be argued that in the family context they represent a plurality of models that adapt to the cultural, religious, existential and value orientations of specific married couples and families [1,5,8].

Spirituality in the context of the family acts as a system-forming factor that determines the deep level of interaction between its members and goes beyond the normative social roles and external forms of coexistence, which is consistent with the approaches of spiritually oriented family therapy described by Z. Akbulut [1]. It forms a common value-meaning field within which life guidelines, ethical principles and behavioral models are coordinated, ensuring the internal integrity of the family system, which corresponds to the concept of integrating spiritual and psychological dimensions in work with spouses and families, presented by Ş. Çetintaş [3]. The spiritual dimension of the family creates conditions for a conscious choice of relationships, maintains a balance between individual development and collective responsibility, and contributes to the formation of a stable harmonious environment capable of withstanding external social and internal crisis challenges, which is empirically confirmed in studies of the relationship between parents' spiritual well-being and family motivation and resilience conducted by R. Raesi et al. [8].

Within narrative marital and family therapy, spirituality is viewed as a component of life stories that shapes identity, perceptions of partnership, parenthood, and the meaning of family life. As Z. Akbulut [1] notes, spiritual dimensions (immanent, transcendent, and integrated) function as internal resources through which family



members make sense of crisis events, reinterpret conflicts, and construct alternative, more supportive narratives. In this context, energetic aspects of family life can be interpreted as experiences of inner strength, hope, grace, or transformative potential that are activated through faith, symbolic stories, spiritual practices, and rituals.

The study by R. J. Fehring et al. [5] represents a religiously oriented model of spiritual practices in marital life, particularly in the context of natural family planning. In this approach, spirituality and marital “energetic” interaction are realized through the coordination of bodily, emotional and spiritual processes, the development of self-control, responsibility and dialogical communication. At the macro level, spiritual and energetic approaches to family formation are closely related to the concept of spiritual health, which is considered as an integrative dimension of the overall well-being of the individual. As Raesi et al. [8] show, the spiritual health of parents significantly affects their attitude towards parenthood, reproductive intentions and perception of the family as a space of meaning, responsibility and intergenerational transmission of values. In this context, energetic practices are manifested in the ability to achieve inner harmony, experience hope, overcome life crises and form a positive vision of the future of family life.

The generalization of the analysis results allows us to systematize the main factors of spiritual and energy practices that influence family formation, as presented in Table 2

As research shows, modern spiritual and energetic practices in family formation are implemented through a set of interconnected factors that influence family identity, marital relationships, and reproductive attitudes. Key among them are meaning-making and family narratives, through which spouses make sense of their own experiences, crisis events, and prospects for life together; spiritual values and faith, which perform a regulatory and motivational function, determining ethical guidelines, responsibility, and sustainability of partnership relationships; rituals and joint spiritual practices that contribute to emotional synchronization, enhanced communication, and a sense of unity; spiritual health as an integrative resource that provides inner balance, stress resistance, and readiness for parenthood; and the experience of transcendent meaning,



which shapes the vision of the family as a space of life calling, co-creation, and intergenerational continuity of values. It is worth noting that the outlined spiritual and energetic factors – meaning-making, family narratives, spiritual values, faith, rituals, spiritual health and experiences of transcendent meaning – in the modern practice of family work can be integrated into a single holistic model. It is such an integrative approach that is implemented within the framework of the above-mentioned FEIR-Method: Conscious Family Integration.

**Table 2 – Factors of spiritual (energy) practices and their potential impact on family formation**

<b>Factors of spiritual / energy practices</b>	<b>Potential impact on family formation</b>
Meaning-making and family narratives	development of a conscious family identity, rethinking of crisis events, transformation of negative scenarios into supportive life stories
Spiritual values and faith	strengthening of marital unity, formation of responsibility, ethical guidelines, and long-term motivation to preserve the family
Rituals and shared spiritual practices	deepening of emotional closeness, development of mutual support, improvement of communication and sense of partnership
Spiritual health and inner balance	increase in the family's psychological resilience, readiness for parenthood, ability to cope with stress and family crises
Experience of transcendent meaning	formation of a holistic view of the family as a life calling, reinforcement of intergenerational value continuity

*Note: systematized by the author based on the analysis of works [1, 5, 8]*

Within the framework of the FEIR-method, the family is viewed as a living, dynamic system, where the internal emotional and energetic resonance of partners interacts with their personal stories, attachment models, value orientations and level of awareness. Such a combination allows not only to work with superficial conflicts, but also to activate the deep resources of the couple, forming the effect of synergy «1+1=100», in which the union exceeds the sum of its individual components. As a result, energy practices within the FEIR-Method acquire applied significance as factors that enhance awareness, emotional maturity and stability of family relationships, contributing to the long-term development and harmonization of marital and family life.



## Conclusions

The review of modern psychological approaches gives grounds to assert that in scientific understanding the family appears not as a static formation, but as an open dynamic system, the functioning of which is determined by the level of emotional security, flexibility of interaction and the ability of partners to jointly adapt in stressful conditions. The theoretical frameworks of attachment theory, systemic and procedural models of marriage, as well as the vulnerability–stress–adaptation model converge in the understanding that the quality and stability of family relationships are formed under the influence of early experience, internal working models of the personality and current interpersonal processes that unfold in the everyday interaction of spouses.

At the same time, spiritual and conventionally energetic approaches shift the analytical focus from purely psychological mechanisms to the deep value-semantic dimension of family life. In these concepts, the family is understood as a space for joint creation of meanings, moral choice and intergenerational transmission of values, where spirituality performs the function of a system-forming resource. It is it that contributes to the strengthening of marital unity, the development of responsibility, increasing psychological resilience and readiness for parenthood. Religious, narrative and spiritually oriented models show that appeal to transcendent meaning, joint ritual practices and spiritual experience can perform a supporting and compensatory role in periods of crises, changes and life transitions, ensuring the integrity and viability of the family system.

Modern trends in the development of family psychology indicate a growing interest in integrative models that combine scientifically based psychological concepts with spiritual and value-semantic dimensions of human experience. In this context, the FEIR-Method: Conscious Family Integration, presented in the text as the author's integrative model of family formation and development, is indicative.

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