

The Cooper's

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Brief Description of the Cooper Family

For this project I have chosen the Cooper Family seen in the television shows *The Big Bang Theory*, *Young Sheldon*, and *George & Missy's First Marriage*. Throughout these shows we consistently see Meemaw, the grandmother who is just striving to live her life to the fullest after the passing of her husband and to help her daughter with her family. Meemaw's daughter Mary is the mother to three kids, a complicated relationship with her husband George Sr., and a devout Southern Baptist. For the longest time, George Sr. was the breadwinner of the family as a football coach at the local highschool but after some financial difficulties, Mary also sought out a job at her church as a secretary for the extra income. Georgie or George Jr. is often depicted as the troubled child, not doing too well in school that ultimately leads to him dropping out. At seventeen, he got his girlfriend pregnant, which opened up new struggles with the family. Then we have the twins, Missy and Sheldon. Missy is the middle child and often is not the focus of any authority figure. As she gets older, she starts to act out in retaliation for her feelings of being left out. Now Sheldon is the youngest child and often gets the full attention of the adults. He is intellectually gifted in a town that has a hard time accommodating his learning abilities with parents not too sure on how to help either. Despite being intellectually gifted, Sheldon has a harder time socially so he often can get taken advantage of.

Family Strengths

The family is a strong unit, despite the troubles that they face, they face them together. All three generations look at each other at different times within the show. Meemaw is an exceptionally good character because while her daughter may be giving more attention to Sheldon, she is seen supporting the other two children and makes them feel special. Though

Meemaw does have her moments of tension with Mary and George Sr. She does love living on the wild side, ultimately just wanting to be able to provide a good life for her and her family, including helping out her children and grandchild when financial troubles may arise.

George Sr. loves sports and for a time finds a connecting point with sport to all of his children. Missy starts playing baseball and he is an avid supporter, he is the coach of Georgie's football team, and when Sheldon dips his toe in the sports realm as an analyst he fully supports him and actively seeks out his advice.

Mary as I mentioned above is a very religious person, finding the solace of religion after a close call in losing one of her children. She not only makes close friends with other members of her congregation, but brings her children along as well. While they may not be as believing as her, the children often choose to go with her to show their support of her and make some friends out of it too.

Georgie is a very driven individual, he is not afraid to work hard for what he wants. In fact, he makes the decision to leave football to be able to work, then he ends up leaving high school before he graduates to be able to work more hours as well. He starts off working at his grandmother's boyfriend's shop earning commissions with the sporting equipment he was able to sell. Shortly after, he goes into business with his Meemaw in slightly illegal work running a laundromat that also has a gambling ring run out of the back room. When the two get in trouble with the law, he goes to work for his wife's dad in the tire business. It is hard work for him, but he strives to work hard for his new wife and baby. Later, he also seeks to go and get his GED to be a better dad for his little girl.

Missy is very strong and she evolves into a very mature young woman as the show continues, though I am not too sure if it is done in the best way. She really struggles with boys

and finding friends as well as comparing herself to her twin brother. But as time goes on, she finds herself more confident in herself, she is able to separate herself from her siblings.

Oftentimes she is seen reading *Cosmopolitan* magazine and loves to read the fashion articles.

Sheldon is very smart, he loves computers and Professor Proton. He also loves his comics and stating his opinions. In terms of education, he seems to be a sponge, willing to research multiple topics to ascertain his own opinions based on his educational findings.

Family Needs, Concerns, and Problems

The Cooper family is recommended to seek guidance after Missy decides to steal her father's truck and run away from home after feeling neglected by her family. She has also started to skip school and not worry about graduating high school. To help the family restore their dynamic and get on an even ground throughout the generations to ensure that nobody is feeling ignored or neglected. There is also the concern of Mary losing her job after her son Georgie got an older woman pregnant out of wedlock. Meemaw is also in trouble with the law after operating an illegal gambling ring out of her laundromat business.

Statements of Family Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Missy and her parents have conversations about what their plans are for the week

The first objective of Missy and her parents opening up and having more fluid conversations is to reduce the feeling of ignorance of her parents onto herself. Hopefully, this conversation will open up a channel for her to share what is going on instead of her running away, putting her life at risk.

The second objective is that hopefully the more attention she receives from her parents will motivate her to continue on with school and finish out her high school years to be able to

graduate. While she may not go to college, her parents both ultimately want the best for her and a high school diploma will open up more avenues in the workforce than not graduating will.

Goal 2: Missy, Georgie, and Sheldon have a discussion about their interests

The first objective of the three siblings to have a discussion together is to find common interest with one another and to no longer feel isolated within their family unit. To be more united as a generation.

The second objective of a conversation between the three is for the entire family unit to be stronger. With less tension throughout the family unit, and a stronger support system, they can all face a lot together and come together in the face of adversity.

Methods and Interventions

The therapist will meet with all members of the family separately and in group sessions where they can address each other and listen to one another. One group could be the siblings together with discussions on how their dynamic can be stronger. Another group could be between Missy and her parents. The last group that I was potentially thinking about is a group session with Mary and Meemaw, discussing better communication techniques and how to improve their relationship.

Target Date for Objectives

I believe a good target date for the objectives is three months, especially for the first goal. For the first month meeting once a week, seeing how the dynamic is between Missy and her parents and offering support through the process. After the first month a biweekly meeting seeing how the process is continuing on as more time passes by. Finally in the last month only meet once to just establish if the plan is working out.

For the second goal, it could be a bit more difficult to implement so I would say closer to six months to see if the plan is progressing. Because there are more personalities, I would want to see it a bit longer to ensure that all of their feelings are taken into account. Again, the first month meeting once a week, then going to a biweekly meeting during the second and third month. For the later months, I would meet with them once a month and make sure at the last few meetings, the foundation is strong so that they are able to in the future have effective communication.

Plan Limitations

For this family, I do believe that it could work with this family. I believe that if the siblings were honest with each other and laid everything out, for the most part, a lot of misunderstandings would be cleared up and communication would be better between the three. I do believe that there is still a bit of immaturity that will be there because they are so young but if they were able to put everything that they were feeling on the table, they would get more of an understanding with each other and it may improve the relationships dramatically.

For Missy and her parents, I do think that them having an honest conversation will help their relationship. If she were able to tell them how she is feeling and she felt actually heard and knew something was going to be done about it, I do believe she will stop skipping out on school or running away. She wants to be seen and having her parents have a conversation with just her could make a big difference.

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