

THE POWER OF TWO

Thierry and Bernadette Sevilat

By Roxanna Erickson-Klein

Thierry and Bernadette Sevilat of Nantes, France bring together an intense respect for one another with a passion for advancing the professional work they share. Both active in the *Milton H. Erickson Institute of Rezé*, and they have sustained a common interest in supporting their psychotherapeutic practices with a broad foundation of knowledge. Practicing independently -- Thierry a psychiatrist and Bernadette a psychotherapist -- at the *Interdisciplinary Center for integrative Therapy (CITI)*, they share an office suite, which is relatively new and all part of a natural progression that began many years ago.



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When their relationship first began, Bernadette was an opera singer interested in psychotherapy, and Thierry was a psychiatrist interested in music. The harmony of their personal and professional interests interlocked and led to a long and happy marriage, blessed with two young adult sons. From the earliest times in their relationship, Thierry appreciated Bernadette's natural instinct about his professional work. Their personal journey as a married couple with a family led to a deeper understanding of working together and learning in times of happiness and times of struggle.

Early in his career, as Thierry became interested in the horizons beyond psychoanalysis, Bernadette encouraged his exploration into the direction that now fully defines his practice -- an integrative perspective embracing a critical examination and exploration of a multitude of tools. When Thierry took an interest in the work of Milton Erickson, he and Bernadette studied the literature together, sharing observations, understandings, and insights. As Bernadette's interest grew she returned to school for a degree in psychology. Never fully leaving music behind, it now is a shared pastime. The couple's home and office have a fresh, welcoming ambiance that creates an atmosphere for generative reflection, relaxation, and deep thought. Small origami sculptures handmade by Bernadette create an understatement of the detail in the surrounding beauty; the richness of their lives together at home enhances their work in the office. They each freely admit that initially they questioned whether or not spending both their professional lives and personal time together would work smoothly. Now in their third year with this arrangement they both express that it came together even more delightfully than anticipated.

Both are aware of one another's strengths: Thierry is phenomenal at networking, while Bernadette is gifted with insight as to the deeper nature of problems. Together they share a rich interest in hypnosis and its expansive potential for creative thinking in the treatment of physical and mental health problems. This mutual direction as a psychotherapeutic instrument led to the establishment of the *Milton H. Erickson Institute of Rezé* where they both hold leadership roles. With the energy that each contributes, and enthusiasm for ongoing learning, they are able to attract other resources to carry their work together even further.