

they are vital in therapy and not enough literature addresses these from an emotional perspective. I particularly liked the emphasis on self-awareness and discovery and found it an interesting read and very well written. Cozolino does acknowledge that not all therapists will feel comfortable with this journey and prefer a more directive and structured approach, which for me is an important point to make for those reading the book.

Finally in support of the book I think there will always be a need for this type of literature to help a new therapist, trainee or assistant. It enables them to learn about therapy settings and the inner journey it is necessary encounter to make.

Kirsty Ashby

The WHICH Guide to Counselling and Therapy

Mike Brookes and Shamil Wanigaratne (2003). London: Which Books/Penguin.

Asking for and giving directions is an experience that many of us are familiar with. Sometimes we encounter the equivalent of a human A-Z, more often though it is the well meaning, but geographically illiterate, whose directions we woefully follow. When it comes to giving directions within the field of therapy the majority of practitioners I know play it safe. Generally they will provide excellent directions within their own therapeutic field, but express little confidence outside this. In other words, as therapists we are quite good at giving directions as long as people want to go in our direction.

The *Which Guide to Counselling and Therapy* is a useful attempt to provide a map of rather wider scope, which it does rather well. Indeed, most of the questions that come up again and again are covered, as well as specific resources for individuals to follow through. Those familiar with the WHICH guides will not find star ratings and best buys, but rather a measured overview of what psychological counselling is and how to go about accessing it. Written by two experienced practitioners in the field, the book has two expressed main aims. Firstly, to ‘help make people aware of the potential pitfalls of seeking out a practitioner of talking treatments’ and secondly, to help people ‘get the most from engaging in an episode of counselling or therapy.’ I think that this sells the book short to some degree, since the coverage is much greater than these two aims would suggest.

Chapter 1 raises the entirely appropriate question of why to see a counsellor or therapist at all. Beginning with a review of David Smail’s work on power networks from the ‘Pursuit of Unhappiness,’ the work highlights the role of non-professional resources which we can all draw

upon: material resources, personal resources, home and family and social life. Refreshingly then, therapy or counselling is not sold as the only answer to the experience of human difficulty. The chapter goes on to examine the areas in which therapy could be of benefit, focusing on its roles in assisting with both personal distress and personal development.

The second chapter provides an admirable summary of the different theoretical approaches to talking treatments. It is both accurate and up-to-date covering, along with the main psychodynamic and behavioural schools, Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT); Interpersonal Therapy; Solution Focused Brief Therapy; Existential Therapy and Multimodal Therapy. Chapter three then examines the different formats of therapy (group, one-to-one, family work, self help networks) and where to get the help from.

I think the authors have quite rightly left the issue of mental health services until chapter 4. This serves both to normalise the experience of distress and follows a model of distress introduced in chapter 1 whereby distress can be located at different levels (surface, deeper and core). While private talking treatments may be seeing clients at all three levels, current mental health services tend to work at the more serious end of the spectrum. As many working in the field know, the term 'mental health service' can sometimes act as an enormous disincentive for individuals seeking help and treatment.

Chapters 5-9 fulfil the aims of the book by focusing on issues of common concern, practical considerations, trouble shooting and safeguards. There is also a chapter on whether counselling and therapy work. This is a useful review of the evidence, although it does sit somewhat uncomfortably between the chapter on 'Common Concerns and Practical Considerations' and 'Preparing for Your First Session.' This latter chapter, although brief, should prove not only useful to clients in a practical way, but also serve to remind us that the therapist is at the service of the client and not the other way round.

Chapter 10 looks at specialist areas of counselling and therapy including substance misuse problems, sexual health problems and learning disability services. This chapter was probably the most disappointing, both because of its brevity and by putting together three quite distinct areas where there are different needs. In relation to addiction, I think that the authors may have missed an opportunity here for, as the prevalence of addiction rises, so do the numbers seeking help. For many, a book such as this will be their first port of call and a separate chapter, or indeed a separate guide, devoted to the problem of addiction would fulfil a wide public need.

Chapter 11 focuses on culture and difference and is an extremely helpful reminder of the role that expectations play in help seeking behaviour and treatment.

The final chapter deals with non-talking therapies, medical, creative and complementary. The authors provide clear descriptions and summary reviews of what is known about their effectiveness.

Sadly, the book does not have a concluding chapter although it does have three appendices which serve to function as a tool for assessing which type of therapy may prove to be the most useful for an individual. This is a rather neat way to end the book, albeit slightly proscriptive. As one would expect, there are also detailed resources and contact details for the therapies discussed in the book.

Minor quibbles aside, I think this book is an excellent resource for therapists and clients, fulfilling the requirements of impartiality and expertise, upon which the WHICH guides are founded.

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