

BOOK REVIEWS

As well as having more reviews than usual in this issue, we continue with the venture of 'pairs' that we started in issue EA 18.2. In this issue we have 2 sorts of pairs. Firstly we have a unique book entitled *When Death Enters the Therapeutic Space: Existential Perspectives in Psychotherapy and Counselling*, reviewed by 2 reviewers. Secondly we have two books with almost the same title, *Addiction is a Choice* and *Addiction: a Disorder of Choice* reviewed by the same person. Other reviews include books on rarely covered subjects such as supervision, therapy training and child development.

When Death Enters the Therapeutic Space: Existential Perspectives in Psychotherapy and Counselling.

Laura Barnett (ed.) (2009). London: Routledge.

This fine book should be read by all students and practitioners of existential approaches to therapy and also by therapists of all orientations who work in situations where '*death enters the therapeutic space*'. It contains a treasure trove of clinical wisdom, mainly from an existential perspective, for clients facing death and other 'givens' of existence. I found the interweaving of theory and practice particularly pleasing. Each contributor introduces his/her own theoretical stance and also situates him/herself in relation to the issues which emerge in his/her therapeutic interactions, often also giving his/her reasons for choosing to work with their particular client group.

The great merit of the Editor's introductory chapter on the philosophical roots of existential therapy lies in her personal engagement with the work of the philosophers (principally Heidegger) about whom she writes and also the dialogue in which she engages between what her clients tell her and what the philosophers say; she allows the two to inform each other. Her theoretical points are often illuminated by a personal anecdote or by the experience of one of her clients. She writes with rare clarity on the concepts of Heidegger which she feels are relevant to her practice of therapy, but she does not baulk at addressing his relationship with Hitler and National Socialism. More briefly, she addresses the contributions of other thinkers and clinicians whose work informs the practice of existential therapists and she has useful sections on the relation between existential thought and psychiatry in general and the diagnosis of PTSD in particular. Her chapter offers a handy review of this topic.

There are also pithy summaries of existential concepts scattered through the book, though it's not always clear how each relates to the chapter which follows it. Laura Barnett concludes the work with a summary of her