

Cooper's aim was 'to try to describe something of what that elephant might be like: to articulate a common framework – and vocabulary – for counselling and psychotherapy that can support the integration of understanding and methods from across orientations, help to improve communication and collaboration between the schools and bring greater clarity and cohesion to the field' (p 5). Reading this, I see parallels with the ScopEd project currently being undertaken by the UKCP, BACP and others (I write in mid-2019) which, to my mind, is trying to bring 'everything' under one roof as though a singular roof is better than inhabiting different houses. Recently, I have studied at the Minster Centre. Early on, our group collectively realised that each of us have different starting points on our responsibility for or towards the client. Everything else comes after that, and that is in a group of eleven psychotherapists. Quite how Cooper hopes, or why he desires, to bring the 'field' together, I am not sure.

I have struggled to work out how I would end this review as I had a very vivid reaction. Over the course of two months, I battled with the reading, taking me back to when I was eight. I had been quite a precocious reader until that point, and was able to read the 'set texts' at school quickly enough to encourage my parents to let me read whatever I wanted at home. That is, until I hit a book about a chicken that flew to the moon. I could not read this book, I did not want to read this book, yet by dint of being in that primary school I was not allowed to progress to another book until I had read it. It took me two terms to read that book as I dug my heels in, because I could not see the benefit of reading about the chicken's experience of the moon. This was similar. I have no doubt, and the reviews on the inside flap convey this, some will find this book interesting and insightful. I, on the other hand, feel more confused than before I read the book. I did not feel an affinity with its aims nor do I believe that its aims were realised.

Ben Scanlan

Ecotherapy in Practice: A Buddhist Model

Caroline Brazier (2017), London and New York: Routledge

While still on the peripheries in terms of training curricula and mainstream therapeutic discourse, there is increasing interest within the growing field of eco-psychology, which carries a varied range of definitions and practices, including 'ecotherapy', 'environmental therapy', 'nature-based therapy' and 'wild therapy'. Where these definitions commune, however, is in extending therapeutic practice beyond the interiority of a consulting room and into outdoor environments – be they urban or rural. The motivations for taking therapeutic practice outdoors range from the simple, well-established premise that being outdoors positively impacts

personal wellbeing, to the biophilia hypothesis – that humans have an innate tendency to seek connections with nature and other forms of life – towards the more nuanced, embodied recognition of our interconnectedness with all sentient beings we share this life on Earth with, while acknowledging the deep post-industrial disconnect that has developed between humans and the natural world and the subsequent toll this is taking upon our psyches.

As both a Zen practitioner and psychotherapist whose own practice and thinking is increasingly shaped and informed by ecological enquiry, Brazier's latest book *Ecotherapy in Practice: A Buddhist model* sparked interest in terms of both supporting my continually evolving integration as a therapist and in its potential contribution towards existential psychotherapy's currently limited enquiry into the ecological dimensions of human existence. I would argue that existential philosophy mostly occupies a position of ontological anthropocentrism that locates itself firmly within human, not other-than-human, concerns; this is one of the distinctions we encounter between existential and Buddhist philosophies of existence. Brazier's own background is framed by a long-term commitment to the Buddhist tradition; a writer of six previous books on Buddhism and psychotherapy, she is the Course Leader of The Tariki's Trust training programme in psychotherapy and ecotherapy. Her intention for *Ecotherapy in Practice: A Buddhist model* is to provide a blue print for a Buddhist-informed ecotherapy that is 'primarily a tool-box of method, theory and practice from which those working in different spheres can draw upon' (p i.x.). Brazier invites the reader to 'forage in this material' (ibid) for ways that might support out practices in whatever settings are appropriate to our work. Brazier does not restrict herself to working with individuals; in fact, much of her own experience has formed through working in groups and within community.

The book's structure is shaped around The Ten Directions Model (these provide the framework for The Tariki Trust's ecotherapy training programme) which Brazier explores within five sections through both theoretical discussion and practical exercises. These are:

1. The therapeutic container (embodied presence and sacred space)
2. The theoretical base (therapeutic triangle and object related identity)
3. Personal process (conditioned view and encounter)
4. Collective and cultural frames (myth and ritual and creativity)
5. Global context and wider horizons (vibrancy and embedded living)

The influence of Carl Rogers' person-centred philosophy and practice features heavily in Brazier's thinking, for example,

Those of us in therapeutic professions like to believe we make a difference. We facilitate processes of psychological change and growth. More truthfully, though, at best we can be gardeners,

offering the soil in which the spirit of actualization can work and human potential can grow. We create conditions, not outcomes.

(p 3)

Brazier, however, extends Rogerian theories on cultivating therapeutic conditions for self-actualization by proposing that being outdoors is therapeutic in itself and provides the necessary conditions for change. Her opening chapter 'Conditions for change' draws heavily upon both Rogerian and Buddhist perspectives on propagating appropriate conditions in order for life to flourish. She reminds us that 'the mind is conditioned by the objects of attention. We become what we are as a result of the things with which we engage' (p 6), poetically stating, 'the land is the therapist and the outdoors is our consulting room' (ibid). In working outdoors, the therapeutic relationship is no longer a dyadic encounter between therapist and client but becomes a collaborative relationship between client, therapist and nature. Brazier describes,

Nature is not concerned with isolation and the ecosystem functions as a whole, with different elements depending upon one another in different ways. Similarly, therapist, participants and the environment all work together in the therapeutic process.

(p 10)

Brazier guides us through what she has termed the 'other-centred approach', which highlights object-related identity, a notion based upon Buddhist teachings that suggest our sense of self is maintained and defined through processes of biased, or selective, attention. These processes enable our perspectival fields to support an individualised view of the world, something Brazier argues, working outdoors can disrupt. She considers how the early conditionings of childhood experiences and family dynamics, for example, can influence the construction of these perspectives. However, this is not a book for therapists whose own outlooks are firmly rooted in traditional therapeutic concepts. Brazier discusses the importance of working with myth and metaphor, drawing upon 'the rich human legacy of mythic, spiritual and shamanic traditions' (p 14) and includes welcome discussions on earth-honouring rituals, connecting to the seasons, menstrual practices and women's rites as therapeutic interventions.

Clearly Brazier is immersed in ecotherapeutic practice from a Buddhist perspective and this is conveyed in how she traverses Buddhist concepts with a skilful pragmatism, making them accessible to the reader. She is generous in the breadth and depth of experience she draws upon and provides a variety of earth-based practices to help contextualise and bring clarity to what being outside with clients might look like for the practitioner. At

times, the material can be repetitive and, in my view, could have benefited from more stringent editing. It is most definitely an introductory book – not a criticism but observation.

I appreciated Brazier not shying away from the socio-political dimensions of therapeutic work; in her chapter ‘Environmentally-based therapy in context’, Brazier addresses the devastating impact neo-liberal policies and commodification has had upon our ecosystem, asking us to examine whether ‘individual psychology can be seen in isolation from our inter-dependence with the planet and to look at ways in which therapeutic work can address the human malaise in the face of the karmic consequences of our behaviour towards the ecosystem’ (p 194). In my view, we cannot separate the practice of psychotherapy from this. I am writing this review at a time where my own involvement with the Extinction Rebellion (XR) movement has facilitated huge shifts in my own thinking and life practices; indeed a number of ecotherapists have told me they have been inundated with requests for ecotherapy since the formation of XR. Eco-therapy is becoming, in my view, an increasingly important therapeutic space for both grieving and taking responsibility. As Brazier suggests, psychotherapists would do well to familiarise themselves with the work of Deep Ecologists Arne Naess and Joanna Macy (I would throw Gary Snyder’s exquisite writings in here too). For existential therapists interested in extending their therapeutic practice into a triadic relationship between client, therapist and nature, Brazier’s *Ecotherapy in Practice: A Buddhist model* would be a good place to start.

Rebecca Esho Greenslade

Shoplifters

Dir. Kore-eda Hirokazu. 2018.

What an absolute delight Kore-eda Hirokazu’s *Shoplifters* is. The themes of family (and what constitutes them), secrets, society and poverty within Japan’s modern underclass are deftly and intelligently handled, and the film manages to steer well clear of over-saccharined sentimentality and cloying morality one can only imagine Hollywood would imbue such a story with. Yet its heart is undoubtedly warm, if, as it turns out, a little dark. Inevitably, perhaps, a happy ending to such a story is impossible, but it manages to maintain a feel-good vibe that a sense of belonging and love, however fleeting, can be found in even the most desperate of circumstances.

Testament to what a great piece of filmmaking it is, *Shoplifters* has been nominated for an impressive ninety-one awards (winning just over half of them, including the Palme d’Or at Cannes in 2018), to my mind well-deserved recognition.

Osamu Shibata (Lily Frank) is a casual (in all senses of the word)