Supervising Psychotherapy: Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Aspects.

Mary Banks, Christine Driver and Edward Martin.

(Eds.). (2000).

Sage. London. £19.99

In my experience, a big gap in the training of counsellors is the lack of education in supervision. It seems to me that students are rarely instructed on what exactly supervision is, whom it is for and how to use it so as to derive maximum benefit from it. Many trainees may see it as something imposed; to be endured often unwillingly; evidence of their inexperience and novice status in the profession and to be dispensed with as soon as they have qualified. They soon become aware however that regular on-going supervision is an ethical requirement for all professionals no matter how experienced they may be. Some therapists question this mandate. (Feltham. 2000: 15) There are certainly many questions being asked about supervision and the growing literature dedicated to the topic attests to the recognition of the importance of supervision and the need to study it in all its complexity.

This book is an important addition to the field. In the opening chapter Christine Driver gives a very succinct and comprehensive overview of the book which contains four main sections. These are: The Supervisory Relationship consisting of four chapters; Learning in Supervision which has one chapter; The Setting and Supervision with three chapters and finally Generic Issues in Supervision comprising three chapters about Ethics, Supervision of Supervision, and Ending in Supervision.

The four chapters of the first section explore the 'intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics in the supervisory relationship and in the processes of supervision' (p.3). Supervision is more than a form of didacticism. Just as the therapist's emotional response to the patient within the analytic situation represents an important tool in the work, so too the supervisor's countertransference feelings in relation to both the material and the supervisee are essential elements in

the whole therapeutic endeavour. The supervisory relationship is a triadic one 'in which the unconscious patterns of the clinical work are reflected in the supervisory process', allowing understanding of the patient's internal world to emerge. Supervisors are not the source and dispensers of all knowledge, but rather they construct with their supervisees what becomes known. They, like therapists, are wounded healers who use their experience of suffering in the service of others. But if we can heal, we can also do harm, and Mary Bank's chapter on the personality traits of therapists and supervisors offers a useful examination of our 'blind' or 'dumb' spots. In particular as supervisors we need to avoid falling into one or other of two extremes – control or collusion. 'Both attitudes involve two-person relating, and thus ignore the person of the third, either the supervisee when controlling, or the client when colluding and abdicating responsibility'. (P.39)

In the second section, I found John Stewart's chapter on 'The Interface between Teaching and Supervision' original and profound. Learning is a biological imperative, essential to survival. Our early experience of being cared for is critical for our learning. We develop a capacity to learn and to hold things in mind through our experience of having been held in mind. Stewart discusses four different individual types of thinking and learning and maintains that it is an important part of the supervisory function to understand and adapt to the unique manner in which each supervisee learns. I was interested in the reference to anxiety and organisational pressures as blocks to learning (p. 77). This is an important topic that was touched on only too briefly and merits more extensive exploration.

The setting for supervision is all-important. The chapters on group supervision and the supervision of short-term work are especially practical and helpful. The supervision of short-term work mirrors the therapy session itself and the 'supervisory style needs to be flexible and focused.' (p.104). The third chapter in this section looks at the interface between the process of supervision and the organisational context in which it exists. In order to function in a healthy way, the organisation needs to interact with the environment and adapt where necessary. This is known as an open system of functioning. Failure to interact – a closed system of functioning - means death. It is the supervisor's role to ensure that 'what they do in supervision functions as an open system'. (p 108) Stewart uses Kleinian concepts and Bion's model of Basic Assumption groups to look at unconscious manifestations of organisational dynamics to which the process of supervision is subjected, and to further explore the idea of a 'functioning position' - the goal of both therapy and supervision.

The last section has three chapters. One deals with ethics - in particular the complex question of confidentiality. Edward Martin uses the metaphor of theft to focus on the ways in which confidentiality can be breached in supervision. The question of supervision of supervision is raised. For how long should experienced practitioners be expected to be in supervision? What is its value for our learning? Gertrud Mander's rationale for regular supervision of supervisors fails to convince me – it provides 'a loftier view and a better space for thinking' (p.132). And what happens if there are difficulties between the

supervisor of the supervisor and the supervisor? 'Will the supervisor's supervisor then need consultations with a supervisor of supervision of supervision?' (p.134). What a tangle! I wonder if there is a 'Great Unsupervised One' somewhere out there. I find myself in sympathy with Feltham (2002:27) when he comments that 'supervision is an institution in which we are at risk of infantilisation'. In this chapter Mander suggests some alternatives for the experienced practitioner (p.142) and they do make a lot of sense.

This book is thoughtful, scholarly and very well written. The content is well set out in separate sections making it eminently readable. It is solidly based on psychoanalytic theory highlighting the transformational impact of a supervisory process that is embedded in the dyadic relationships formed by the supervised patient - supervisee and the supervisee - supervisor. This book has greatly enriched my understanding of the supervisory process and the organisational life in which it transpires. It will be a richly informative resource for all involved in supervisory work.

Gemma Corbett

References
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Short Term Therapy for Long Term Change

Edited by Marion F. Solomon

W.W. Norton and Company, London.

The challenge which faces most of us in the helping professions, is that of responding to the psychological distress which is being increasingly recognised in our society. There are any number of possible responses to this challenge from pharmacotherapy to meditation, all of which have their own validity. This is not a problem. The fact that they are all in competition with each other is sometimes difficult in its own way, but is also not in itself insuperable. The real problem, which is highlighted by a book such as ***Short Term Therapy,*** is that of choosing the 'rules' according to which the competition is to be decided. This is not a minor matter, since success or position in this competition determines funding and

ultimately livelihood. It also makes a difference to the way one reads this book.

Short Term Therapy assumes that the 'rules' are those of the scientific/ medical establishment. Psychological distress is seen as an illness requiring a cure; health being seen as a state of being problem free. This approach may be problematic for the humanistic reader who may have other beliefs about the nature of psychological distress.

The atmosphere of the competitive market, as well as forming the context for the book, is also a feature of it. There is a sense of the various authors 'setting out their stalls' and establishing 'brand names' for their variations on Davenloo's original model of Short Term Dynamic Psychotherapy. This involves, as with the development of any 'brand identity', a considerable amount of 're-packaging'. This is evident in the first chapter where Robert Neborsky describes the development of Davenloo's model. The key features of this model are the systematic analysis of resistance right from the start of the therapy, an insistence by the therapist, that the client's material is presented with affect and a concept of defensive layers surrounding intense core feelings. This, to anyone who has read Reich's *Character Analysis,* sounds rather familiar, but there is no acknowledgement of Reich.

Neborsky's, and by inference Davenloo's, medical terminology and aggressive style of intervention may well be alienating to the humanistic reader, as it was to some of the therapists Davenloo tried to train. However there *are* positive aspects of Davenloo's approach. Firstly, he goes beyond the focus on symptom reduction and problem solving adopted by some other models of brief psychotherapy, and embraces the notion that events in childhood have a significant impact on recent trauma. Secondly, he emphasises the importance of holding the client in the uncomfortable (sometimes) here and now of their transference feelings. The US therapeutic style, which seems to be based on the notion of the therapist as an infallible expert, might cause the UK reader to squirm a bit. But maybe we need to look at this. Perhaps we Brits *do* have a tendency to apologise for ourselves more than we should?

Leigh Muculloch, author of the next chapter, re-packages psychodynamic conflict as 'Affect Phobia'. Like most of the concepts in this book, this seems to me to be a useful idea , but I wouldn't like to let it become the entire focus of my therapeutic style. It may well be that many therapists, by creating an environment in which affect is encouraged and expected, are unwittingly (or unconsciously!) desensitising their clients to their perceived distress in this area. However, they may also be rewarding affect by *sensitising* their clients to the increased capacity for pleasurable contact with themselves and others which affect brings.

Accelerated Empathic Therapy (AET)*(The book is full of irritating initials and acronyms!)* draws most of its basis from Rogers' work although, once again, Rogers is not acknowledged. The techniques described by Michael Alpert will therefore be familiar to the humanistic reader with the possible exception of videoing the sessions and then reviewing them with the client! I'm not sure which I would find

the most problematic - the intrusion of the camera or finding the time to carry out the reviews.

Francine Shapiro's account of her Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing technique forms one of the most interesting and original chapters in the book. It not only reports effective results, but is also interesting in that she acknowledges her own transition from a cognitively based approach to one which emphasises the importance of early childhood dynamics.

Marion Solomon's chapter on couples work presents a model based on characterological diagnosis of each member of the couple according to a linear hierarchy of early disturbance. This may well be more or less useful, but she neglects to make it clear how this model is more short term than any other dynamic method of working with couples.

She collaborates with Robert Neborsky in writing the next chapter which examines the role of early attachment in the development of bonding patterns. Surprisingly, Bowlby *is* credited, but the attempt to tie up complexity theory, neuroscience and the short-term dynamic approach (I refuse to use initials!) is confused and confusing. Perhaps some reference to the work of W.J.Freeman and colleagues (Freeman 1991) which connects up strange attractors, neural networks and memory, might have been useful here.

David Malan's conclusion to the book, which draws together all the loose threads and outlines areas for future research, comes as a breath of fresh air. At last here's a man who's prepared to acknowledge the limitations of his work and who isn't trying to sell me something. Malan being British, I wonder whether I'm identifying a culture clash here.

One of the greatest difficulties in this book lies in the practical application of the techniques and models it describes. Those used by Francine Shapiro are very specific and you would have to think more in terms of undergoing training than of incorporating them into your existing work. More crucially, short term, in Davenloo's model, seems to mean up to 40 sessions of indefinite duration. For a British therapist involved in Employee Assistance Programmes where the normal contract is for 6 50-60 minute sessions, this would seem something of a luxury. If we add to that the selectivity both Davenloo and Malan apply to their work one wonders just how applicable this book is to the British market.

Short-term therapy is an expanding market. Whether this should be so is another matter, but increasing numbers of therapists who want to combine it with working at depth would benefit from the guidelines promised by a book such as *Short Term Therapy.* Unfortunately, whilst containing some interesting ideas, *Short Term Therapy* fails to live up to this promise and is, at best, a book to borrow from the library rather than to buy.

Geoff Lamb

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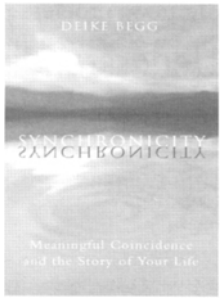
Synchronicity

Deike Begg

Thorsons, 2001. £8.99.



Deike Begg has a knack of attracting dramas into her life - narrowly avoiding death in cars, misreading air-ticket times, losing important documents, or waking to find a threatening intruder in her home at night. Unexpected signs and portents enable her to retrieve apparently dire situations miraculously, with the help of her highly developed sixth sense. Her first book *Rebirthing; freedom from your past*, also contained such personal inspirational anecdotes and in this one she again reveals her talent for being in the right place at the right time, avoiding danger and finding people to help her wherever she goes.

She writes in the style of a personal journal, full of amusing and strange incidents; but I am in the uncomfortable position of the 'hanged man' of the tarot card who is suspended by one leg, upside down, described by the author as hanging in a threshold between inner and outer worlds. I too, am uncomfortable as I try to suspend my disbelief throughout this book, and enter the world of synchronicity and intuition, the author's normal habitat. Her life sounds fun, as she tunes into her inner child almost every moment of her life. My own inner child finds it fascinating and surreal to live like this, but the rational part of me questions the whole subject and wants explanations.

Deike Begg is well under Carl Jung's influence, while Astrology has also cast a spell on her, leading her to create an alchemical mixture of thinking and feeling in the text. This book is about the mystery of the collective unconscious and the 'Otherworld' where you can expect synchronistic happenings. While it has a serious message for readers, it is also lively and amusing. She refers to the work on synchronicity by Jung and his collaborators, who described the existence of a 'vaster world not perceived in the usual way', and explains that we can cross the rainbow bridge between inner and outer reality, guided by intuition, meditation and dream analysis.

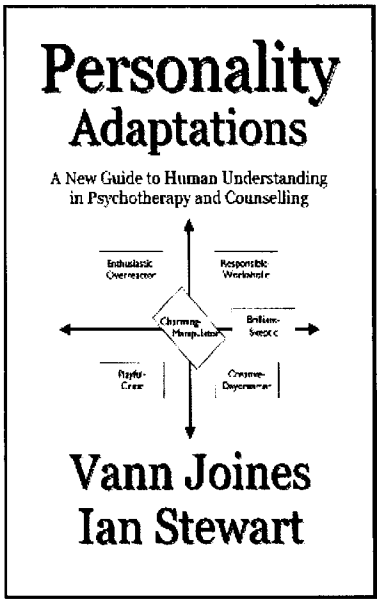
The author has a background as a qualified astrologist, psychotherapist and rebirther, so she draws on these areas of knowledge throughout the book. Chapters on the importance of dreams, astrology, gambling, the use of the I Ching, Tarot cards, and how to access angels, are laced with personal experiences followed by serious interpretations This makes for fascinating and perhaps disturbing reading for those not yet true believers. The author gives many examples of how she is guided successfully into personal relationships by both dreams and synchronicity, including finding her present husband in this way. Readers may learn from her "how to listen to the voice of destiny and ultimately to find your true vocation and purpose" as the blurb on the cover promises. She gives practical advice about how to develop intuitive abilities which are worth trying out.

Vivienne Silver-Leigh

Personality Adaptations; A New Guide to Human Understanding in Psychotherapy and Counselling

Vann Joines and Ian Stewart

Lifespace Publishing, 2002 £17.95



Personality Adaptations is a compendium. Its thickness of 419 pages belies the concise nature of the concepts contained inside it. Not a single word is wasted. Joines and Stewart obviously know exactly what they are talking about as there is simply no room spent gilding the lily. Despite its exacting nature, it is an absolute joy to read. Concepts are broken down piece by piece and delivered in bite sized chunks. The language, though imbued with jargon from TA (which is by nature pretty accessible), is down to earth and readily understood. Those familiar with their previous book, *TA Today*, will not be at all disappointed by its frank style, use of charts and graphs, or its clear 'cause and effect' approach.

When I picked up this book (being a great fan of *TA Today*) I made the mistake of highlighting and underlining all the important bits. I soon realised that I had practically been highlighting everything but the indefinite articles, such was the nature of the content of this book. The common sense character of the work along with its comprehensive description of personality type and adaptation compelled me to commit to memory all that I read. Alas, I am not a TA practitioner, and committing such parameters of human definition to memory is not really the reason I got into this work. I can assure you, however, it would only have added to my repertoire of therapeutic skill and knowledge.

Whatever your take on typology, an open minded read of *Personality Adaptations* would certainly produce within you a recognition of its described types with clients, mothers, fathers, and most certainly yourself. The model for *Personality Adaptations* arises from the work of Paul Ware.

This model, when drawn out, consists of six adaptations of which people usually show characteristics of two: a performing and a surviving adaptation. The names that Paul Ware chose to describe the adaptations were closely aligned with the DSM and therefore had an unintended negative and pathological association to them. Joines, however, has given colloquial names to them which don't have the same association with pathology. These types are (with Ware's types in brackets): Enthusiastic-Overreactor (hystrionic); Responsible-Workaholic (Obsessive-Compulsive); Brilliant-Skeptic (Paranoid); Creative-Daydreamer (Schizoid); Playful Resistor (Passive-Aggressive) and Charming-Manipulator (Antisocial). Each of these operate on several axes which increase in complexity, yet provide an enormous amount of insight.

The real power of the text is that it does not stop at being descriptive. It follows through each of these adaptations, to give the reader some diagnostic criteria, a developmental story, and best of all, doors through which to access each type. Each adaptation will also contain the classical TA PAC model and an illustration of the various drivers, behaviours, games, and rackets associated with that adaptation.

As I've mentioned before, I do not primarily work from a TA model, so the sheer volume of information would be difficult for me to assimilate and use in the way in which a Transactional Analyst might. Its conception of personality adaptations, however, has felt enormously helpful. I find it really comes into its own when I get 'stuck' with a client. *Personality Adaptations* is the first book off my shelf when this occurs. I use the book as a resource to find the general adaptation that I am working with, and use its advice to find the 'door' with which to access my client. I must say that it usually works.

For those of you who work more psychodynamically, you can easily adapt the information in terms of a transerence/contertransference framework. The 'trapdoors' can be read as countertransference reactions. For those of you who are more humanistic and existential; you may find the technical framework and sheer taxonomy a theoretical turn-off. I would urge you to try and overcome any initial judgements and take the framework as it is: a model for understanding our clients.

Vann Joines and Ian Stewart have done a remarkable job bringing a complex and intricate system of human understanding into one fine tome. Their use of case histories, snippets of therapeutic work, and crystal clear description provides readers with a powerful framework with which to facilitate work with their clients. I would highly recommend every word of it to therapists of all persuasions.

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Existential counselling and psychotherapy in practice (2nd edition)

Author: Emmy van Deurzen

Publisher: Sage 2002. £ 17.99 pb

We have been waiting for this book for some while now, and it is good to see it out at last. The original edition came out in 1989, and was highly regarded by many, but rumour said that the author was dissatisfied with it and planned a major revision. Now here it is and we can see for ourselves that there is in fact little change from the original. It does now speak of psychotherapy, while the original spoke only of counselling, and each chapter now has a summary of the main points, for the benefit of students. But it is staggering, the extent to which the author has ignored all the developments in existential forms of therapy since 1989, many of them due to her own work at Regents College. Indeed, her years at that institution, and the important work of her colleagues there over those years, might never have existed, apart from one brief mention in the Preface. In the Recommended Reading, only two books after 1989 are featured (apart from her own), and neither of these is mentioned in the text. This absence of even the most minimal updating even extends to America: for example, although Yalom is in the index, the only reference to him is to his 1980 book, and none of his more recent work is mentioned.

Similarly, all her minor putdowns of the humanistic approach are still there, in spite of the changes in the humanistic approaches which have taken place since 1989, some of them very important and noteworthy. It is as if she had learned nothing in the intervening years.

So this is definitely a book to buy if you do not have the earlier book, but there would be little to be gained if you do already have it. It is still a good introductory book, but I do feel that an opportunity has been lost to produce something more in tune with the existentialist world of today.

John Rowan