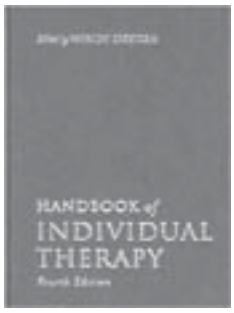
Handbook of Individual Psychotherapy:

Fourth Edition.

Edited by Windy Dryden.

Sage, pb. £24.99



One of the less understood effects of the drive to regulation of psychotherapy and counselling is that the development of new forms of work becomes extremely difficult. How is a new school of therapy to attract sufficient trainees, given that they have no guarantee of official certification? What already exists, then, is likely to be all we get, at least on a large scale. The new edition of the Handbook of Individual Therapy lets us examine what this is.

This is the first edition I have looked at since the first one (1984); and it has developed a good deal over the intervening years. As presently constituted, the Handbook consists of thirteen chapters on different schools of therapy, written by thirteen of the great and the good (a coven!), and top-and-tailed by three overviews of different aspects of the field. The thirteen schools covered are as follows: two psychoanalytic (Freudian and Kleinian – why no Independent Group?); one each of Jungian, Adlerian, Person-Centred, Personal Construct, Existential, Gestalt, Transactional Analysis, and Cognitive Analytic (a new entry); and no less than three chapters on different varieties of cognitive-behavioural therapy, including the inevitable Rational Emotive Therapy (well, Windy Dryden did edit the book).

Two questions occur. In what sense is this a handbook? And in what sense is this list representative? Certainly it includes most of the leading modalities practiced in the UK. It is unclear, though, whether they have been selected for numbers of practitioners and clients, or for presumed intellectual respectability – or some intended balance of the two. Apart from the Independent Group of psychoanalysts, who would seem to meet both of these criteria at least as well as some of those included, there are no body psychotherapies; no process-centred therapies (Process Oriented Psychotherapy, Hakomi, etc); no transpersonal therapies (Psychosynthesis); and, very strikingly, no representation for integrative therapy. In the absence of editorial material, we

can only speculate as to why this is. Perhaps Dryden wanted to reserve some of these for other books he edits – for example, Innovative Therapies; after all, as I suggest above, there won't be many new candidates for inclusion. But all these are a bit long in the tooth to be innovative.

At the same time, some of the therapies which are included are definite minority interests. I am ready to be enlightened on this, but how many readers have ever met an Adlerian? And if Emmy van Deurzen, heaven forefend, were to be knocked down by a bus, would there be any existential therapy in the UK? Similarly perhaps for Windy Dryden and RET. I am joking (mostly), but it does seem that several of the therapies off the list have at least as good a claim to inclusion as some of those on it. A reasoned justification of editorial policy would have been a useful addition.

The chapters are on the whole interesting and useful, especially some of the case histories (all new to this edition). The level of copy editing is unfortunately very low for a reference work, leaving errors of both fact and syntax in place. As examples of the first, it is stated that when Jung split with Freud he was the only non-Jewish analyst (Jung led a number of Gentiles out of the psychoanalytic camp; and Sandor Ferenczi's name is spelt 'Ferenezi' in two of its three appearances. As examples, of the second, one author is allowed to retain their belief that 'immolation' means 'isolation' rather than 'sacrificial killing'; while several sentences lack crucial elements like subject, object or main verb. This is all the more surprising when we read that all chapters have been updated or completely rewritten'.

The three top-and-tail chapters are very interesting. One wonders whether the editor knew what he would be getting when he commissioned David Pilgrim to write about 'The Cultural Context of British Psychotherapy'. What he did get, besides a good but brief history of the field, is a swingeing attack on many of the orthodox assumptions at the top of the training hierarchies. Currently, Pilgrim states, 'credentialism burgeons, an obsession with registration continues and relatively simple communicable models … have become elaborate hierarchies of graded exclusive competence, defined by longer and longer training periods'. He argues that psychotherapy faces a 'legitimation crisis', fuelled in part by the profession's 'opportunistic and cynical' response to client dissatisfaction. Amen. Michael Barkham contributes a ferociously erudite and thorough survey of psychotherapy research; Mark Aveline, a chapter on therapist training and supervision which, for all its 'credentialist' assumptions, does privilege the personal qualities of practitioners above any instilled techniques or theories.

Finally, one small but niggling point. The chapter on Gestalt makes a familiar complaint, which I have heard many times, that people tend to identify Gestalt with the work of Fritz Perls rather than with its more contemporary theorists. Have Gestalt therapists never asked themselves *why* this might be the case?

Nick Totton

Love and Hate: Psychoanalytic Perspectives.

Edited by David Mann.

Brunner-Routledge, £17.99 320 pp. 2002.

David Mann wrote a very influential book called *Psychotherapy: An Erotic Relationship* (1997), restating for a particular generation the lost-and-found truth that, as Freud puts it, 'the cure is effected by love'. He then edited *Erotic Transference and Countertransference* (1999), a largely unimpressive collection of clinical contributions on the same theme. This new collection, using several of the same contributors, broadens the topic to include hate as well as love.

The weakest aspect of Mann's thesis was always his implication that no one knew about the importance of eros in psychotherapy; and he continues to bang the same drum here. 'Love is a problem on which analysts and psychotherapists have difficulty focusing' (p. 3) – and, as Mann reasonably points out, if you can't think about love you can't think about hate. But is this really such an unpopular topic? A quick search of my invaluable CD Rom of psychoanalytic papers yields 34 items with 'hate', 'hatred', 'hating' etc. in the title, many of these from the last decade or so; while there are no less than 181 papers with some variant of 'love' in the title. This is not conclusive, but it does suggest that Mann exaggerates his own originality (but see below).

More important, though, is the quality of the material assembled here. It must be said that a lot of it is unimpressive. All of the main analytic schools are represented; uniquely so far as I know for a mainstream analytic collection, there are also two papers by analytic body psychotherapists, a situation very much to be welcomed. It is only a shame that the two body-oriented papers are so weak (one being so badly translated from German that it is hard to tell what is being said), so that an opportunity to present this orientation in a wider context is largely wasted.

However, the body psychotherapists are not alone in this: most of the other papers are also quite weak. There is little sense of most contributors being set on fire by the theme, or having much to say about it. A notable exception is Martin Stanton's fine paper 'The love/hate couple in the primal scene': Stanton, always a creative contributor to analytic theory, has thought deeply about love and hate in psychotherapy and in life, and illustrates the theme beautifully with a case history of couple work and with reference to the film *The Sixth Sense.*

Why is it, though, that most of the pieces here assembled are to a greater or lesser extent turgid, dull and unoriginal, when

the topic is so central and exciting? In his introductory essay Mann makes a claim which seems to me (and to him) quite extraordinary. He says that several of those whom he approached as potential contributors responded that love and hate had never been an issue in their clinical practice.

Love and hate *never an issue*. How can this be? What severe disturbance in analytic psychotherapy is represented here? Would the same thing happen if humanistic practitioners were asked a similar question? I find it hard not to think that this response – and, perhaps, the dull technicality of many of the papers which were finally assembled – has something to do with the current climate of regulation and standardisation in psychotherapy. Love and hate are not very available to regulation. They tend – and I am not talking of anything damaging to clients here, though 'dangerous' might certainly be an appropriate word – they tend to push through the boundaries of normal, average psychotherapy, and to insist on a deep, heart-to-heart encounter between two human beings who both have to acknowledge their embodied presence. Perhaps, in 2003 Britain, this is no longer acceptable?

Nick Totton

The Supervisory Alliance:
Facilitating the Psychotherapist's Learning Experience.
Edited by Susan Gill

Publisher: Jason Aronson, Northvale, New Jersey, London (2001) £28.00

In this excellent volume, a group of experienced practitioners and authors come together to present a series of articles on psychoanalytic supervision. The book is divided into two parts. Part one with nine chapters examines in depth the whole experience of supervision and how it is often a source of anxiety for supervisees especially for those at the beginning of their training as therapists. Part two focuses exclusively on working with transference and countertransference and contains some fascinating and illuminating case studies.

Chapter one offers an introduction to psychoanalytic supervision. Recently there has been a shift from an authoritarian didactic model to a more relational one. It is true that there is a body of knowledge to be taught and learned in supervision but it is now universally acknowledged that supervisees also learn a great deal from examining and understanding their feelings about, and reactions to their patients, their supervisor and the supervision itself. The supervisor is now no longer seen as the detached observer and interpreter of what goes on in the patient, the all-knowing teacher who communicates wisdom to the less experienced novice. Rather, the

relational model of supervision stresses that all 'the participants in the therapeutic relationship impact upon one another in a variety of ways, which in turn influence the course of treatment'. (p.5). With this democratisation of supervision, there is a change in the balance of power and supervisors are now more open to acknowledging their part in contributing to difficulties in the supervisory relationship.

The remaining chapters in this first part address supervisees' vulnerabilities in supervision and how these can be responded to in the interests of supervisees' learning and the welfare of their patients. Supervision in itself is an anxiety-provoking activity. Supervisees are required to expose their work to the judgement of another and if they experience a gap between their ego ideal and experienced self, they may feel further exposed to emotions of failure and humiliation, which require sensitive handling by supervisors. The evaluative function of supervision can have a regressive-inducing impact on supervisees evoking memories of past relationships with parents or teachers that may have been hurtful or shame-filled.

The supervisory situation contains factors that fan perfectionism – another source of vulnerability in supervisees whose self-esteem is based on standards that are harsh and highly exacting. Such individuals fear making errors and this leads to a kind of paralysis in sessions with patients. There may be a blocking of attunement to self, a reduced ability to make interventions and, in supervision, difficulty in recalling and presenting the session for fear of the supervisor's judgement. Supervisors can manage this by creating a space that is free of judgement and therefore of perfectionist strivings, by communicating that perfection always inevitably eludes us and by being open about their own limits and mistakes.

Chapter four looks at the anxiety of beginning therapists and the author emphasises the need to create a learning alliance where the supervisory approach is tailored to each supervisee's needs. Three models of supervision are discussed: patient-centred, therapist-centred and process-centred. With some students anxiety may be reduced by a more didactic approach while others may require empathic holding.

A moving personal account of a supervisee's anxiety is presented in chapter five with an emphasis on the need to dilute the transference so as to limit negative superego projections from the supervisee to the supervisor. Chapter six likens the supervisee's experience to stage fright or performance anxiety where 'conflicts around exhibitionism, genital inadequacy and loss of control produce the affect of shame'. (p.83).

I found chapters seven and eight particularly profound and stimulating. Chapter seven considers the emergence of superego issues in supervision and how, if they are not addressed may result in failure to form a successful supervisory alliance. It was useful to revisit the origins and functions of the superego, look at how and why superego issues are prone to develop in supervision and discover ways of handling them.

Chapter eight, using a self psychology approach, reflects on the supervisory dyad as a selfobject experience. Kohut (1984) taught that in the process of the development of a sense of self, a person experiences recurring needs for people (called selfobjects) who will furnish mirroring experiences, serve as idealised imagoes and satisfy alter ego needs for belonging. Supervisors, by their empathic stance seek to provide a selfobject experience for the supervisee thus contributing to the enhancement of the supervisee's sense of self as a practitioner. Wolf (1994) adds three special selfobject needs that accompany specific life tasks and are particularly applicable to the supervisory situation. These are: adversarial selfobject experiences (the selfobject continues to be supportive while allowing the supervisee to be in active opposition); efficacy experiences (the supervisee acquires the experience of efficacy as a result of evoking a response in the other) and vitalising selfobject experiences – the result of experiencing empathic attunement. (p.109)

The last chapter in this first part of the book looks at learning in supervision and the results of a study suggest that it is not the theoretical orientation of the supervisor that is paramount but rather the manner and personality of the supervisor and the ability to create an optimal learning environment.

The chapters in part two stress that priority should be given to working with countertransference in supervision. Unless supervisees are enabled to contact and put into words their feelings, including, and perhaps especially, negative ones, about the patient, the supervisor and the supervision, then both the supervisory and therapeutic processes will suffer. Supervisees can develop intense transferences towards their supervisors and may act this out with their patients in a kind of reverse parallel process. Working with countertransference minimises this risk to patients.

The last chapter presents a good summary. Supervision is about creating a safe space for reflection on everything that can impact on the work with patients. Listening from within the perspective of the supervisee is advocated – an empathic, 'experience - near' (p.218) mode of perception that contrasts with more traditional approaches and which, as the authors of this book argues, is highly effective.

This book makes a major contribution to the literature. It is a scholarly, thoughtful and comprehensive exploration of a relational model of supervision with its theoretical underpinnings and clinical implications. It is eminently readable and the many clinical vignettes enrich and illuminate the issues. It is a valuable resource for all involved in the work of supervision.

Gemma Corbett

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The Dance of Connection

Harriet Lerner

Piatkus Books. 267pg. £9.99 Pb.

The title of this book attracted me. I'd come across the idea of relationship as a dance already in the work of Nick Duffell and Helena Loevendal (Loevendal and Duffell 2002) and this book held similar promise. On the other hand, my experience of books written for the US market (see previous reviews) made me wary of the American pre-occupation with structure and cure.

Being in a committed relationship that remains alive with the possibility of growth and transformation is possibly the most confronting and challenging work two human beings can undertake. This is especially so in the West, where the couple is left to sort it out by themselves, or quit, when the going gets rough as it inevitably does. A book, which explores and acknowledges the difficulties of being in a relationship stands in the place of an extended family or tribal community to which a couple may once have been able to turn (See Some 1999). It is therefore immensely valuable. However, it is important to steer a course between normalising the difficulties of being in a relationship, which could lead to cynicism or despair, and adopting a 'This is how to do it' approach.

In walking the tightrope referred to above, Harriet Lerner tends to wobble towards the 'How to do it' side, but the book does have some valuable points.

In the first chapter, Dr Lerner acknowledges the limitations of assertiveness training and the improvement of communication approach. She also acknowledges the possibility of growth and transformation in relationships. Two other positive aspects of this chapter are her revelation that she is also an author of fiction, which makes her prose a pleasure to read, and her involvement of her own family history. These both bring life to the book.

The second chapter focuses on her father's 'loss of voice', which seems to be a major theme of the book and which is about losing the ability/motivation to speak authentically. Dr Lerner's ability to get to the heart of what happens, when we betray ourselves in relationship by not finding a voice, without diagnosing or resorting to analytic jargon is a positive feature of this chapter.

The third chapter explores the role of family and culture in creating the pattern of 'accommodating silence' described in chapter two. Dr Lerner again uses examples from her own family and from her therapy practice.

Chapter four looks at the opposite of accommodating silence – what happens when we speak our vulnerability and pain. There's a lot in this chapter that could be explored more fully, such as issues of dependency, the use of 'openness' as a defence etc. However, I did find the discussion of habitual over and under functioning at the end of the chapter very useful in terms of the type of pattern which often 'dovetails' in a relationship.

The title of the next chapter 'In Praise of Pretending' started to ring alarm bells for me especially as part of a book that emphasises the virtue of authenticity. I was relieved to find that the concept could be better construed as playing with possibilities and reflected that change *can* sometimes feel artificial. I was uncomfortable, though, with the idea of sitting down with a client to prepare a script for their next encounter with, say, their estranged husband although I do recognise that there are practitioners who work this way.

However, in the next chapter, this trend continues, to the point where there is an emphasis on 'practising' difficult conversations with parents, partners etc. Here we're definitely moving into 'This is how to do it' territory, at the expense of exploring 'What makes it difficult for me to have this conversation?' -land!

The problem of what to do after the 'honeymoon period' is over has been challenging couples since Adam and Eve (See Loevendal & Duffel 2002 Ch three for a good account of this). Dr Lerner, in chapter 7 'Love Can Make You Stupid', explores working arrangements, tolerance and awareness of one's 'bottom line' as means of coping with the differences which arise in couples after the 'falling in love' phase is over. This theme occupies the next two chapters and definitely falls into the 'This is how to do/cope with it' category. True, Dr Lerner does emphasise the value of openness and love in the strategies she recommends. However, what gets left out is the potential deepening which could result from the recognition of the degree of projection involved in both the 'honeymoon period' *and* the 'falling out of love' phases of a relationship.

Chapter ten contains some useful hints about negative relationship patterns, drawn from Gottman & Silver (2000), but again, in following these authors' recommendation of having a ration of 5:1 positive to negative statements in a relationship without looking at *why* there are so many negatives seems to me to be a missed opportunity for growth. The idea of 'warming things up' in a relationship is lovely and a certain amount of artificiality is inevitable when changing relationship patterns, but there is a considerable danger here of self-conscious control.

The rest of the book deals with issues which arise in relationships and ways of handling them. These are useful as structures within which to explore the issues. The 'Ten do's and don'ts of coping with criticism' are, for example, undoubtedly better than some of the patterns some couples adopt. Ultimately, however, the focus of Dr Lerner's strategies is on changing behaviour rather than exploring its purpose, direction and pattern. This may well limit their potential as agents of growth and transformation.

Having read 'The Dance of Connection,' I have gained some useful tips or strategies which I can imagine myself applying, both to my own relationship and to my work with couples. However, I also hope to use and to provide opportunities for growth and transformation which I believe relationships contain and which seem to be beyond the scope of this book.

Finally, I am left with a question for Dr Lerner. 'What happened to the Dance mentioned in the title?' Apart from a brief mention of a 'Two-step' on page 77, most of the book seems to be about speaking!

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