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Sherwood's "Creative approaches to CBT: Art activities for every stage of the CBT process" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Sherwood, P. (2018). *Creative approaches to CBT: Art activities for every stage of the CBT process*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 126 pp. \$27.95. ISBN 9781785925085

In this book, Patricia Sherwood provides a range of creative and artistic approaches to accompany Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). This is not an introduction to CBT and assumes some level of general knowledge of this therapy approach among readers. Yet it is a very accessible, concise, and clear book. As a counsellor and psychotherapist, Sherwood has used CBT in her work but observed a lack of tangible and creative exercises for clients to engage in during their therapy. This book fills such void and provides a holistic approach to CBT by presenting a range of specific art activities for all ages and every stage of the therapy.

Chapter one is an introduction to creative approaches to CBT and the benefits of this. Chapter two covers the diagnostic processes which include a sensory method and is particular useful for “clients who are reserved or reluctant to talk” (p. 13). The author includes a specific section on working with children at this stage and how the use of colors can be especially useful. Chapter three addresses self-regulation and relaxation. Specific exercises are provided to promote self-regulated emotions and a sense of well-being.

The author focuses on visualization and guided imagery in chapter four. This includes the use of positive imagery and the imagination to transform “negative cognitive perceptions” (p. 65). Chapter five examines a creative approach to social skills training and behavioral experiments. Chapter six addresses cognitive restructuring and reframing so that the client can identify, analyze and reject distorted thoughts. Exposure and desensitisation is outlined in chapter seven, which specifically looks at overcoming phobias and fears. In the final chapter, the author covers relapse prevention and reinforcers. Also included is a helpful reference list at the back of the book for those who would like to do further research in this area.

Each exercise in every chapter contains visual pictures, step-by-step instructions, and explanatory information on the purpose and aims of the activity. This is intended to be a “toolkit” for therapists and counsellors, but would also be very useful for students in related fields. The unique, holistic approach that Sherwood presents here should merit a place in academic libraries.

Reviewer

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