

medication treatment by improving compliance and long-term outcome. The range of utility of psychotherapy is evident in chapters on schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, addictive disorders, eating disorders, and psychotherapy with older people. Studies on the effect of the therapist's training, experience, technique, and management of the therapeutic alliance add another dimension.

The authors highlight the need for more research in many areas, especially for widely practiced modalities such as psychodynamic psychotherapy that have a broad experience base but a paucity of studies that meet research criteria. The unique needs of children and adolescents and the fact that childhood disorders tend to per-

sist and inhibit development into healthy, productive adulthood also invite a high priority for research attention.

Throughout the book, the authors are mindful of economic considerations and the current evolution to organized systems in both the U.S. and their native United Kingdom. It may seem fanciful in today's profit-driven, competitive environment, but one may wish for the fulfillment of their final idealistic hope that continuously refined, evidence-based practice would be "predicated on researchers, clinicians, service managers, professional bodies, funders, and users of services working together for the ultimate benefit of the mental well-being of society."

Adolescent Suicide

by the Committee on Adolescence of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry; Washington, D.C., American Psychiatric Press, 1996, 196 pages, \$28

The Suicidal Adolescent

edited by Moses Laufer, Ph.D.; Madison, Connecticut, International Universities Press, 1995, 154 pages, \$28.50

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Adolescent Suicide underscores the central fact that suicidal adolescents can no longer bear their pain, that their isolation from others is complete, and that they lose hope and abandon the future. This book, the 140th publication of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry (GAP), provides a comprehensive overview of adolescent suicide.

The book covers historical, cross-cultural and sociological perspectives; the relevance of normal adolescent development and developmental deviations to suicide and suicidal behavior; current research into suicidality; and psychodynamics and psychopathology associated

with suicide. Also included are chapters on prevention, early intervention and ongoing treatment of suicidal adolescents; training issues; and medicolegal and public-policy aspects of treatment. The volume is well referenced, with more than 250 citations.

Adolescent Suicide also reviews the difficulty of predicting the completion of suicide by any particular individual, given the relative rarity of suicide and despite a great deal of knowledge about risk factors. Data emphasizing the importance of concurrent substance abuse and access to lethal means, especially firearms, are well presented.

The book does not discuss the concern that homosexuality in adolescence increases the risk of suicide. It also does not discuss the impact of managed care on reviewing treatment issues and medicolegal considerations. Relatively little case

material is presented to illustrate clinical points.

Nevertheless, *Adolescent Suicide* is a well-written and comprehensive but succinct text that provides as good an overview as exists in print. It is highly recommended, and it should be read by all mental health professionals who work with adolescents.

The Suicidal Adolescent, edited by Moses Laufer, is also a monograph written by a group: staff members of the Brent Adolescent Centre and Centre for Research Into Adolescent Breakdown, located in London. The first part is a collection of essays on adolescent suicide, and the second part presents the proceedings of a conference held at the Brent Adolescent Centre in 1993.

The chapters range from the danger signs for suicidality in the psychological development of adolescents to a general practitioner's experiences with suicidal adolescents and to a study of attempted suicide in adolescence that was carried out at the Brent Centre. Although the essays are far ranging and rich in clinical material, the parts are not organized into a cohesive whole, and the discussion is heavily biased toward a psychoanalytic perspective. Overall, the essays provide some practical insights into dealing with suicidal adolescents, with an emphasis on prevention of the problem as early as possible, and from the context of an outpatient treatment setting.

These two books complement each other well: the volume from GAP is comprehensive but relatively limited in case material, while the monograph from the Brent Centre is rich in case descriptions but eclectic and somewhat limited in the scope of its review. Anyone interested in an overview of adolescent suicide will benefit from the GAP monograph. Mental health professionals interested in a more psychoanalytic and clinically impressionistic view of suicide will find the Laufer text to be worthwhile reading.

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