

Group Therapy for Schizophrenic Patients

by Nick Kanas, M.D.; Washington, D.C., American Psychiatric Press, 1996, 157 pages, \$29

James A. Marley, Ph.D.

This relatively brief book presents a thorough analysis of the integrative model of group psychotherapy for individuals with schizophrenia. Dr. Kanas has published extensively on his model and ably distills his years of clinical and research experience into a highly readable and intriguing book. While many new publications about schizophrenia focus on the neurophysiological advances in research, the author reminds the mental health professions about the role and importance of empirically based psychotherapeutic interventions.

In general, the text is well organized. The first three chapters present an overview of schizophrenia, a historical analysis of the use of group therapy with individuals with schizophrenia, and the theoretical perspective of the integrative approach. An especially useful component of the historical analysis is the review of the research on effectiveness of interventions. The tables provide an excellent summary of the overall outcome of various group strategies. Dr. Kanas includes a detailed discussion of other major theoretical views, the educative, the psychodynamic, and the interpersonal approaches. He demonstrates how his model builds on these approaches while differentiating its particular strengths.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 examine the integrative model. Chapter 4 addresses the issue of group format. Of particular interest to new group leaders will be the sections on setting treatment goals and inclusion-exclusion criteria. Chapter 5 reviews treatment strategies used with the model. The case vignettes are very useful in showing how group leaders can deal with such aspects as hallucinations and delusions.

To me, the most illustrative chapter

in the book is chapter 6, on group process. Dr. Kanas discusses in detail topics such as group developmental stages, curative factors in group therapy, and cultural issues and their impact on the integrative model. He closes this chapter with detailed considerations of training and supervision and the cost-effectiveness of group therapy.

The empirical base for the integrative model is provided in chapter 7. Dr. Kanas reviews a series of inpatient and outpatient research studies designed to evaluate the model's effectiveness. The data are presented in a very readable format, and several tables are used to summarize the studies and their findings. The author concludes with a chapter summarizing trends in group therapy, the goals of developing an integrative group therapy model, and future research issues.

One shortcoming in an otherwise excellent book is the use of the term "schizophrenic patients," both in the title and in the text, which is irritating and unnecessary. It is no longer just an issue of semantics but one of showing respect for individuals with serious mental illnesses. One hopes this shortcoming can be remedied in future editions.

There are still many reasons to highly recommend *Group Therapy for Schizophrenic Patients*. Dr. Kanas has written a very readable and well-referenced book. The tables and vignettes used throughout make the information highly accessible. Mental health professionals of all disciplines who are new to providing group therapy to individuals with schizophrenia will find it a particularly useful text. More experienced clinicians may find some of the information overly basic. However, the empirical research component of the book should be must reading for clinicians who want to see a model of empirically based psychotherapeutic intervention.

Akathisia and Restless Legs

by Perminder Sachdev; New York City, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 444 pages, \$69.95

Sheldon Benjamin, M.D.

Forty years after the advent of the neuroleptic era, the etiology of akathisia remains a mystery. Arguably the most common extrapyramidal side effect of neuroleptic agents and an often-cited reason for patient noncompliance, the subjective and objective restlessness of akathisia has nevertheless seldom been the subject of scholarly investigation. Perminder Sachdev, from the Prince Henry Hospital and the University of New South Wales, is well positioned to write this first-ever monograph on akathisia and restless legs. Akathisia has been among his primary research interests, and he has published widely on the subject.

Psychiatrists often adopt the narrow view that akathisia and drug-induced akathisia are synonymous. Few are aware that the term was first used by Haskovec (1) in 1902 to describe a condition known since the 17th century. Sachdev begins by tracing the history of akathisia and of restless leg syndrome to put drug-induced akathisia in context. (A translation of Haskovec's hard-to-find original 1902 description of akathisia is included as an appendix.) To set the stage for discussion of the restlessness and dysphoria of akathisia, Sachdev then reviews the various causes of motor restlessness and the phenomenology and theories of neuroleptic-induced dysphoria.

The heart of the book is a review of what is known about the epidemiology, phenomenology, possible pathophysiology, differential diagnosis, and treatment of drug-induced akathisia. After painstakingly defining acute drug-induced akathisia, the author discusses the sometimes muddy concepts of chronic, tardive, and withdrawal akathisia, proposing research diagnostic

Dr. Benjamin is affiliated with the department of psychiatry at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester.

Dr. Marley is assistant professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.