

Review of

Embracing non-directivity:

Reassessing person-centered theory and practice for the 21st century

Edited by Brian E Levitt

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Counselling and Psychotherapy

This book is a must-have addition to the library of anyone interested in the person-centred approach. It brings together an impressive international collection of person-centred writers, in a comprehensive, well-organised, easily accessible and very readable way.

The book addresses the topic in great detail, yet neither assumes a level of prior knowledge nor patronises its more experienced reader. As such it will appeal equally to the student counsellor and the seasoned practitioner. Contributors include Jerold Bozarth, Barbara Brodley, Garry Prouty, Nathaniel Raskin, Lisbeth Sommerbeck and many more.

The book brings together 20 pieces of work that look at aspects of non-directivity and its importance in person-centred theory and therapy. In her introduction, Barbara Temaner Brodley sets the scene by defining non-directivity as an attitude rather than a behaviour and – relating it to Carl Rogers' core conditions – asserts that it is 'in the bones' of his theory and practice.

Embracing Non-directivity is a big read and a book which I can see myself referring to many times. For this reason I was pleased to find it so well organised into logical sections. The chapters are divided thus: historical and theoretical perspectives, the non-directive attitude in individual psychotherapy, and ethics and applications beyond individual psychotherapy. This is followed by a historical afterword by Nathaniel Raskin looking at the wider applications of non-directivity in areas such as assessment and education.

The style of writing is varied and lively, with many chapters containing plenty of case studies, transcripts and vignettes, to demonstrate the writers' processes.

The comprehensive collection of material assembled here so effectively will do much to help readers embrace that notion that people do not have to be guided into change but will bring about change themselves when they are truly accepted as they are, wherever they may be in their process of development.

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