

*Misunderstandings of the Self*, V. Raimy, San Francisco: Jossey-Base, 1975, 199 pp. + xiii, References and Index, \$12.50.

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Ever since Hans Eysenck questioned the efficacy of psychotherapy in 1952, a number of investigators have attempted to offer evidence that psychotherapy is effective and have theorized about the mechanisms responsible for its success. Some practitioners boldly assert that their specific therapeutic technique underlies the effectiveness of all forms of therapy. For example, Joseph Wolpe, in *The Practice of Behaviour Therapy* argues that whenever a person benefits from psychotherapy, it is because the therapist (usually inadvertently) evokes responses which reciprocally inhibit anxiety.

Subtitled "Cognitive Psychotherapy and the Misconception Hypothesis", *Misunderstandings of the Self* offers a refreshing look at factors potentially responsible for therapeutic change.

Raimy suggests that before psychotherapy can succeed, the therapist must help the client detect and modify those misconceptions, or faulty beliefs, that are central to the presenting problem. Probably the best known advocate of a "Misconception Hypothesis" approach is Albert Ellis, but Raimy's theoretical system encompasses more than Ellis.

The book begins with a detailed discussion of the misconception hypothesis which is stated as: "If those ideas or conceptions of a client or

*Why be Lonely?*, Edward Ford and Robert Zorn, Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1975, 165 pp. \$2.25.

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The authors describe their book as "an attempt to popularize and explain 'reality therapy' ". From this assertion one may assume that the writers intend that the *Why Be Lonely?* would be useful to the general or popular reader.

In my opinion, this book is not likely to be read, or, if read, to prove useful to very many

patient which are relevant to his psychological problems can be changed in the direction of greater accuracy where his reality is concerned, his maladjustments are likely to be eliminated, (p. 7). Raimy then goes on to describe four major techniques the therapist can use to help him uncover client misconceptions (explanation, self-examination, self-demonstration, and modeling). Another chapter is devoted to "repeated cognitive review", or ways in which the client can actively modify faulty beliefs. The approach here is eclectic: as Raimy says, "One of the major theses of this book . . . [is that] there is no one best way to discover and to change misconceptions in psychotherapy" (p. 167). To buttress this point, the book offers an extensive synthesis of Raimy's cognitive approach with that of other theorists as varied as: Du Bois, Adler, Combs and Snygg, Ellis, Freud, Rosen, Perls, Berne and Bandura.

Of special interest to the clinical or psychiatric practitioner may be the chapter outlining clusters of misconceptions found to be prevalent in various diagnostic categories including reactive depression, obsessive-compulsive neurosis, hysteria, phobic reaction, and the psychoses. Raimy also identifies two misconceptions which have previously attracted little attention: phrenophobia (the fear that one is losing control of his mind), and the special-person misconception (the belief that one is superior to everyone else, suffers more pain and frustration than anyone else, and must be in complete control of all phases of life). For the busy reader, the last chapter provides an excellent summary of the previous 184 pages.

Because of its heavy theoretical input, *Misunderstandings of the Self* is not recommended for the novice. It is a stimulating sourcebook for the well-read, experienced practitioner.

popular readers. (Its usefulness to the professional would seem to be even less apparent.) Briefly, my reasons for doubting the utility of *Why Be Lonely?* for the popular reader are as follows.

First, the format of the book is unattractive. The title is printed so that the initial impression of the title is WHY BE? rather than why be LONELY? The text is not supported by illustrations of any kind. There are twenty-one figures scattered throughout the text. However, I found them to be in small, difficult to read print and, more importantly, not helpful in clarifying the text. For example, figure 14 purports to schematically show how "Building Depth or Strength Into Relationships Works". Besides the fact that

a naive reader might simply be puzzled over the chart, there is the highly questionable maxim that to build strength into a relationship "you do something to please the other *regardless of what the other is doing*". Come now, what experienced counsellor/therapist would fail to recognize that piece of advice as highly suspect — reinforcing neurotic interaction as frequently as rewarding positive interaction. Hurt me again while I please you!

Chapter three, "Changing the Way We Live" has potential benefit for the reader, especially the "Do" plan. Similarly with Chapter six on "Time and Money". While the treatment of action planning, time and money is not well-developed, these are self-help topics which the popular reader can frequently get benefit from reading and self-analysis.

Chapter ten on "Sex and Loneliness" is a disaster. Trivia and advice-full, it seems to me to be more mis-directive than guiding.

There are a number of advice formulas which are open to serious questions. Two examples are: "the greatest thrill in sex is when you work to give your partner enjoyment" (p. 116), ". . . both the man and woman should withhold sex initially to see if they are willing to develop the commitment in the relationship" (p. 122). My guess is that the counsellor/therapist who has counselled clients of varying ages and from various value-systems will find more reasons *not* to offer such advice than could be found to offer it.

In my estimation reality therapy offers a valued approach to the field of helping and autonomous living. While one may wish for an attractive and useful translation of the precepts and practices of reality therapy for the general reader, in my opinion *Why Be Lonely?* is not such a translation. It appears to be a hasty compilation of do's and don'ts which may confuse the reader and trivialize reality therapy. I do not think this book belongs on the counsellor's shelf of useful bibliography materials.