

depending on their research background, readers may be either bored and critical, or frustrated. While the collection of readings is interesting, the very nature of the book means that it will

be dated in a few years so that if the editors wish to maintain their original stated purposes, they will have to update the material with a new edition every few years.

*Responsible Assertive Behavior: Cognitive/Behavioral Procedures for Trainers*, A. J. Lange and P. Jakubowski, Champaign, Ill.: Research Press, 1976.

Reviewed by:

J. Beaubien  
Department of Educational Psychology  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton, Alberta

Lange and Jakubowski have achieved a rare balance. They manage to present an excellent description of assertive training procedures without getting caught up in the glib, "everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask," syndrome.

The authors define assertion within the framework of a humanistically oriented value system. They seek to increase personal freedom by fostering direct, open and appropriate interpersonal communication.

By so doing, they avoid two of the major limitations inherent in many of the current approaches to assertion training, namely, the tendency to encourage assertion at all costs and the tendency to equate assertion with winning.

Advocates of "assertion at all costs" suggest that assertive behavior is the desired norm and should be practiced at all times. Unfortunately, they do not realize that assertion thus becomes another form of what Ellis describes as *musturbation* in his book *A New Guide To Rational Living*. This is further complicated by the fact that assertive responses are not always the most

appropriate form of behavior. For example, being assertive with a traffic policeman may lead to a ticket instead of a warning.

For those who equate assertion with winning, assertion training often becomes a boot camp for interpersonal guerrilla tactics. Individuals who adhere to this approach can frequently reel off long lists of their assertive victories.

The authors counter this belief by the basic respect for humanistic values incorporated into their material. In fact, they point out that some of the so-called assertion skills, such as broken record and fogging, can be extremely destructive because of their potential for use as manipulative ploys.

On the practical side, the book provides adequate explanation of basic assertion training concepts and practices. Both the cognitive and behavioral aspects are described and some 20 structured training exercises are explained in detail. Procedures for organizing training programs are outlined and a variety of theme oriented groups, suitable for use in different settings or with different populations, are discussed. Assessment procedures are also outlined.

The only shortcoming is the lack of a subject index. This is offset somewhat by the comprehensive table of contents.

This book will be of value to professionals who want to lead assertion training groups as well as those who are trying to keep abreast of current trends in therapeutics. I highly recommend it.

*Helping People Change: A Textbook of Methods*, F. Kanfer and A. Goldstein, Pergamon Press Inc., 1975.

Reviewed by:

Marv Westwood  
Department of Counsellor Education  
McGill University  
Montreal, P.Q.

*Helping People Change* is a refreshing addition to the counsellor's library. Essentially, this text is a compilation of readings put together to give the practitioner a useful summary in the methodology or techniques of various coun-

selling approaches. The areas included are behavioural, cognitive, phenomenological and group process.

The chapters are devoted to a major set of procedures for helping people change. Each procedure is clearly explained and illustrated with counselling examples to highlight the principles or theories. For instance, the section on desensitization by reciprocal inhibition is laid out to the last detail, including identification of the exact steps for Jacobsonian relaxation. Each chapter includes a useful bibliography of the procedures as well as related research.