

The Dynamic Family, S. Luthman & M. Kirschenbaum, Palo Alto, California: Science & Behavior Books, 1974, 239 pp. \$7.95.

Reviewed by:

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The authors of *The Dynamic Family* describe their book as a study in the development of growth within the family, the techniques of family therapy, and the training of family therapists. As such, the book is designed primarily for practicing therapists and counsellors, and for educators and students who are interested in working with the family unit.

As former students of Virginia Satir, both authors pay tribute to her teaching and build upon the model of growth and interactional theory developed by Satir, Don Jackson, Gregory Bateson, and Jay Haley. On the basis of their experience as therapists, co-therapists, and teachers, Luthman and Kirshenbaum have added to the literature by presenting a realistic approach to family therapy.

With regard to content organization, by far the largest part of the book deals with basic interactional theory, change theory, and applied therapy techniques. The remaining forty or so pages include an open appraisal of male-female co-therapy, a brief discussion of the author's training program for students, and a short section on the concept of stress as a potential promoter of therapist development.

The concept of growth as the goal of family therapy, as well as the teaching and learning of effective interactional and communicative processes as the key to that growth, represents the authors' main thesis. According to Luthman and Kirshenbaum, growth is a dynamic process in which family members produce, create, and express differentness in ways that promote their individual health and well-being. At the same time, the healthy functioning of the family unit is promoted. An open family system which recognizes and supports the growth of its members becomes the objective of therapy.

My positive reaction to *The Dynamic Family* is generated by the authenticity of the authors' knowledge, skill, and value system. The reader senses that Luthman and Kirshenbaum have fully experienced the theory and therapy of which they write and have compiled the book as a means of sharing with others their understanding of family dynamics and their practice of family therapy. The style of writing, refreshingly free of jargon,

promotes easy reading. Methods of intervention are presented clearly, often with well-chosen examples to illustrate various points. Generally the link between theory and practice is evident although, from the point of view of this reviewer, more demonstration of the relationship between the concept of growth and the interventions chosen would be helpful, especially to beginning therapists.

A criticism offered in regard to this book concerns the lack of a bibliography following each chapter or major section. The dozen or so titles which appear at the end of the book seem inadequate in terms of the theoretical contrasts presented throughout the text. In this respect use of the book for counsellors in training, or students in related fields, could be enhanced with a handout indicating reading sources relevant to each section.

Overall, *The Dynamic Family* is a particularly readable account of family theory and therapy as practiced by two experienced therapists who apply the growth model within an interactional framework. While especially useful to established and beginning family therapists, including student practitioners, the book could serve as a valuable source to those in the helping professions who are interested in or who work with families.

The Cooperating Family: How Your Children Can Help Manage the Household For Their Good as Well As Yours, Eleanor Berman, Englewood-Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977. 166 pp. \$8.50.

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The Cooperating Family is a pleasant surprise; what appears at first glance to be the "Ladies Home Journal" approach, (that is, "No problem is too big to be handled by supermom") is definitely not in that style. It is obvious that Mrs. Berman has had considerable experience with household management from the professional woman's point of view, and her approach to the subject is a refreshing and useful source for the single parent. Mrs. Berman is not full of pat answers to serious child care problems nor does she recommend referral to unobtainable resources south of the border.

In the first chapter the author describes her original intention to keep the day to day lifestyle of her home as unchanged as possible following her divorce. Everything within the household was