

A Guide to Behavioral Analysis and Therapy. Robert Paul Liberman. New York: Pergamon Press, 1972. 342 + xv pp. \$9.50, Hardcover; \$5.50, Paperback.

With the increasing literature on behavioral amelioration of just about any problem in almost any clinical population, it is refreshing to see a clearly written book that does what it purports to do without jargonizing, academicizing, overtechnologizing, or oversimplifying. Liberman is a busy psychiatrist who has written a book for busy people—mental health professionals, students, teachers, parents, and individuals trying to deal with their own problems—people who want a quick but comprehensive introduction to what the behavioral approach is all about.

Part I describes the behavioral way of observing and conceptualizing psychiatric problems. It then introduces the basic learning principles from which the behavior therapies are derived. Reinforcement, satiation, extinction, shaping, punishment, and imitation are concisely described in clinical terms. Each is amply illustrated by brief, exceptionally well chosen, and lucidly presented vignettes which exemplify a range of clinical problems that readers themselves may have encountered both in their work and in their personal interactions with their families and friends.

Part II shows how the basics are developed into treatment procedures applied in a variety of settings to a variety of problems, including systematic desensitization of neurotic phobias; assertive training for expression of feelings; behavioral treatment of depression; token economy milieus that generate socially acceptable behaviors among institutionalized people classified as chronic psychotics, retarded persons, and juvenile delinquents; elimination of self mutilative behaviors and training of social responsiveness and verbal skills in autistic and schizophrenic children; and selective use of praise and attention by teachers to bring order to their classrooms and to develop peer interaction in severely withdrawn pupils. Behavioral treatment of marital and family problems is extensively illustrated in the appendix.

Readers who wish more intensive study and training will find an annotated bibliography, an address list of journals devoted primarily to pertinent research and applications, and some of the universities offering training in behavior analysis.

The use of space in the design of the book is appropriate for its semi-programed format—small concise packages interspersed with opportunities for the reader to check his understand-

ing by responding to multiple choice statements and receiving feedback on succeeding pages. The book is not another spoonfeeding, however. Liberman assumes that his readers are intelligent, curious, and capable of deciding whether they want additional information on a topic (found on the left-hand pages) or whether they wish to move on to the next topic (on right-hand pages). The author correctly describes the book as one that can be read completely in a few hours, but he encourages periodic reading of parts at a time, perhaps at the "bathside" or between appointments. This reviewer's only criticism is that it would have been helpful for the periodic reader to have some indication of which page he has come from when he opens to the top of any right-hand page.

Liberman's presentation is not condescending, argumentive, or proselytizing. He makes no attempt to skirt the domain of affect and the importance of the therapeutic relationship or, in other ways, to eschew his extensive psychiatric training. Rather, as one who is clearly experienced and comfortable with both behavioral and psychoanalytic parlance, he presents the behavioral approach as offering new dimensions to the treatment process, generating new awareness of how traditional therapeutic procedures may affect a client's behavior, and casting a new light on many psychotherapeutic practices often thought to be inconsistent with a behavioral approach. His book should provide refreshing insight for those who have insisted on the radical uniqueness of a behavior-analytic stance as well as for those who have been confused or offended by less explicit or less sensitive exposures.

This tightly organized, easy to read book reflects clear thinking, an uncommon breadth of direct clinical and research experience, and a sophisticated integration of both psychodynamic and behavioral approaches to the treatment of human problems. An introductory book for a broad spectrum audience is a difficult assignment. Liberman has ably met the challenge.

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