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D'Cruz, H., Jacobs, S., & Schoo, A. (Eds.) (2009). *Knowledge-in-practice in the caring professions: Multidisciplinary perspectives*. **England: Ashgate Publishing. 256 pages. Paperback.**

I was attracted to this book because I am unsure whether I believe in multidisciplinary practice. This may sound like a silly thing to say because good teaming presumably allows

for the application, and the coordination, of multiple professional skills; and it surely means that the client/patient/service user does not have to navigate between agencies. Moreover, service integration seems to make sense as a response to increased demands for services. A problem, however, is that the various professions do not necessarily relate very well to each and, as the editors of this book say, there are histories of turf disputes between obstetricians and midwives, clinical psychologists and psychiatrists, physiotherapists and orthopaedic surgeons, nurses and social workers, and occupational therapists and social workers.

Multidisciplinary practice has some of the significant challenges of a marriage or civil union, such as coping with inherent differences and with dominance. The differences across the caring professions typically include the client population and their contexts, the nature of the assessments and interventions that are used, the professional language that is spoken, the amount of time spent with clients and the types of relationship that are established with them, the place of technology in what is done, and how risk, accountability, and liability are determined. The power differences among the caring professions are vested in hierarchical positions and in the authority of the knowledge that is used.

The editors and chapter authors of *Knowledge-in-Practice* pay considerable attention to the forms of knowledge in professional practice and a major attraction of the book is gaining an inside understanding of the thinking processes of various disciplines (e.g., midwifery, nursing, psychiatry, physiotherapy, occupational therapy) and that are associated with particular arenas of practice (e.g., chronic health conditions, drug abuse). All of the caring professions are responding to demands to use evidence-based practices while endeavouring to understand the role of intuition and experiential sources of knowledge in decision making. Several of the contributors to the text 'work' cases (child protection, stroke patient) to show how disciplinary knowledge is likely to be used in real life circumstances.

D'Cruz, Jacobs, and Schoo are hopeful for multidisciplinarity and their book does provide suggestions for enhancing coordination and cooperation, and included here are shared vision and values, and having common understandings of what each discipline is capable of contributing to the team. This optimistic message clashes, however, with much else that is in the text, and with many of my own casework experiences, which have been made difficult by the pervasive dominance of the medical profession and the biomedical model. While the multidisciplinary approach undoubtedly works better in some areas of practice than others, it is contrary to the spirit of the age, which emphasises diversity and consumer choice, and to the aspirations of the newer caring professions that are seeking recognition and autonomy. Perhaps it is time, in children's services at least, to consider moving to transdisciplinary approaches, and to a single agency, and away from the separate constituencies of health, education, and welfare that prompt the present calls for teaming across disciplines.

Peter Stanley, PhD.

Hird, M.J. (2002). Engendering violence: Heterosexual interpersonal violence. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing. ISBN 0-7546-0916-2.

Family violence has certainly been on the agenda since the second wave of feminism. During the 1960s and 70s, the issue of personal safety within the context of heterosexual relation-

ships emerged from behind closed doors into the public gaze. From no intervention by the State back then, to 2010 when the New Zealand Police recorded 52,408 incidents of family violence, the emphasis on protecting family members has been an investment by successive governments. However, despite our best efforts, we have only seen a 3.1% reduction in arrests for family violence incidents over the past year (Boshier, 2011). This book, while a 2002 publication, comes at a good time as we see major theoretical shifts in gender and interpersonal violence theories. Drawing from a number of post-structural and post-modern theories, this book adds to the discourse around there being an essential masculinity. It argues that behaviour is more likely to be configured by social, political, and cultural discourses, rather than biology.

Hird supports her argument that we have slipped into an unhelpful binary that establishes a bi-polar configuration in relationship to male and female identities. This creates a fertile ground for heterosexual interpersonal violence to exist. As she articulates by framing males as violent and females as passive, the complexity of human behaviour is overly simplified. Violent behaviour within gender is therefore ignored while differences across gender are exaggerated. She goes on to argue that we end up in a tautological bind: violence occurs in society because males are violent, and males are violent because they are male. This binary also silences women's reality and defines women who are violent as aberrant and deviant rather than being able to exert agency.

The thesis behind this book is that gender is a significant marker in society. The world is divided into male and female and small gender differences are represented as large, irreconcilable differences. This discourse of 'us' and 'other' also establishes a bind for women. Women who engage in abusive practices are perceived as either resistant to male power (and by assumption not responsible for their own behaviour) or on the other hand more masculine (dangerous) than other women (femininity linked to passivity). Foucault's notion of compliance and resistance to power is evident in Hird's writing.

I found this book a good read in relation to exploring at a more complex level the issues that present in the lives of clients every day. The only difficulty I had with this book was its writing style. The target audience is clearly an academic one and in that regard it stands up well to the rigor of academic scrutiny. To really understand the text it presupposes a high level of understanding of sociological terminology. However this book does invite us to explore further many of the cornerstones of existing conceptualisation of heterosexual interpersonal violence. I agree with Hird that the answer to stopping interpersonal violence is more attention to similarity rather than difference and that our construction of gender maintains heterosexual interpersonal violence.

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Ken McMaster
Hall McMaster & Associates Ltd.

Shaw, I. (2011). *Evaluating in practice* (2nd ed.). Aldershot: Ashgate.

This is an excellent book for all involved in social work practice for three reasons. Firstly, it clearly demonstrates how the use of qualitative evaluation and inquiry can enhance practice.

Second, it emphasises the importance of methodologically-based practice, and, thirdly, it promotes evaluation as a dimension that occurs throughout social work practice.

The main argument presented in this book is for the use of 'research' as a model for practice, rather than as the source for practice. For Shaw, the most significant contribution of research for practice is its methodology rather than its results. In other words, the book is concerned with implementing an evaluative form of practice, rather than the application of research results to practice problems.

Shaw's qualitative approach also is juxtaposed with that taken by the empirical practice movement and most commonly utilised in single system designs, with Shaw arguing that the qualitative approach is more human and akin to the relational and interactional nature of practice.

The first chapter, 'Keeping social work honest' states the case for evaluation in practice through use of qualitative methods and introduces the range of methods discussed later in the book. Chapter 2, explores the relationship between practice and research. It successfully illustrates the synergies between practice methods and qualitative research approaches and sets up the discussion of evaluation from the practitioner's perspective that follows in the next chapter. This discussion highlights how, for practitioners, evaluation is a problematic discourse that sits below the surface and is understood differently by service users.

Chapters 4 and 5 present a framework for evaluation in practice and methods of good practice in evaluation. Taken together these chapters integrate and make clear linkages between the practice literature and methods of evaluating in practice.

Chapters 6 and 7 examine how evaluation methods may be used in social work assessment, planning and intervention. Chapter 6 is focused upon how narrative, ethnography, visual methods, simulation and observation may be translated into social work assessment and planning. Chapter 7 is concerned with the application of personal and practice texts, life stories, narrative, focus groups, ethnography, arts-based and visual methods, in the formative evaluation of social work interventions.

Having explored formative evaluation in practice process, in Chapter 8, Shaw turns his attention to the summative evaluation of practice outcomes. In this chapter, the author reinforces the connective and integrative nature of practice and notes that outcomes are derived from complex relational and interactional processes that occur between people. In short, Shaw's approach is one that is grounded in the human recognition of change through critical reflection upon epiphanies, outcome narratives and participatory reminiscence work.

The book concludes with a reflection upon the implications evaluation in practice has for social work education programmes and a review of the kind of writing that evaluation in practice necessitates.

Overall, this is a book for 21st century practice. It is well written, logical and passionate. Shaw's agenda to improve social work practice through continuous evaluation of practice clearly aligns with that of the social work community of practice. I recommend this book to

you and urge you to read and discuss it with your colleagues, as well as include it as part of your continuous professional development log.

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Maluccio, A., Canali, C., Vecchiato, T., Lightburn, A., Aldgate, J., & Rose, W. (2011). Improving outcomes for children and families: Finding and using international evidence (1st Ed.) London: Jessica Kingsley Publications. Hardcover, 240 pages.

The book is divided into three parts: evaluating outcomes and improving the evidence base, methods for finding and using evidence, and evaluating outcomes in the real world from community-based practice. Research and case studies are taken from the UK, USA, Italy, Belgium, Israel, New Zealand and Australia.

The book speaks of the necessity of cross-national research and collaboration on outcome evaluation of child and family services in order to help improve the wellbeing of children and families. Some collaborative strategies discussed include: replication of successful programmes across countries, sharing knowledge of methodology and approaches that can be adapted, and conducting parallel studies in various countries regarding the outcomes of diverse approaches to similar problems.

Practitioners might improve their evidence base, improve outcomes and promote best practice by adapting the following methodology:

1. By utilising empowerment approaches for evaluation through promoting collaboration and participation of all stakeholders in order to promote agency buy-in that contributes to quality assurance, an increased sense of ownership and long-term benefits in service improvement,
2. By using a comprehensive approach that includes process and summative evaluation that is based on a developmental design where a continual input for programme improvement is possible,
3. By making use of contextual matters as evidence to create and shape programmes,
4. By clarifying the usefulness of evidence from science to practice and to recognize the evaluator's role as an advocate to transform theory and evidence into practice,
5. By choosing the right paradigm for evaluation practice matters so that evaluators might have a range of paradigms to choose from,
6. By acknowledging that evidence and evaluations can be utilised as pathways to promoting change, and
7. By collaborating with researchers from other disciplines and from other countries to share and compare information.

Adapting the principles of systemic review to the field of child welfare may offer a useful means of assessing research evidence, based on an appraisal of the relevance, design and quality of studies. Research reviews may help to negotiate a path through evidence from numerous studies conducted in different ways and addressing a variety of research questions with varying degrees of rigour. In a complex and rapidly shifting social world,

research evidence is likely to be situational. Although non-experimental studies may be of limited value in assessing the effectiveness of interventions, they may provide valuable evidence on other aspects of services and outcomes in the complex field of child welfare. In an early chapter, the process of programme evaluation is demystified. Important points to note include: the involvement of staff in the evaluation process, and conducting a process evaluation in addition to an outcome evaluation to understand what programmes do, as it helps link practice to outcomes.

The advantages of utilising qualitative methods are highlighted and it is particularly insightful as it allows the practitioner to hear from the client's perspective on what worked / did not work about their transition from foster care to adulthood and independent living. This allows practitioners to better comprehend the discrepancies in the service gaps between those crucial transitional periods.

The New Zealand case discussion emphasised the uniqueness of blending cultural practice, community involvement and whanau support into casework. In addition to that, it also highlighted the importance of sensitised practice which is described as multidisciplinary in nature and avoids confining families to particular service lines like counseling, early childhood or family preservation. Instead, sensitised practice seeks to fit interventions around families, drawing from a broad spectrum of professional expertise in a tailored fashion and it requires culturally competent practice which understands in depth the ways in which culture shapes understanding. It also promotes high levels of user involvement in determining the nature of the helping relationship and in organisational decision making (Hess et al., 2003). The approach is holistic, synergistic and integrates the Whanau Ora concept and strengths-based practice. The case study with unique New Zealand social work concepts ('whanau' and 'whangai') would offer a fresh basic introduction to new foreign social workers who have just started practice in New Zealand.

In conclusion, the articles in the book are a collection of research and journal articles from international academics. The targeted audience of this book would be the practitioner who is keen to embark on research or the worker who wishes to read more about international evidence from other countries. The chapter on the macro perspective on the prevention of child abuse and neglect has been an interesting read but some parts of the book have significant statistical and quantitative references and may prove difficult for practitioners who are not trained in statistical analysis. However, there are some interesting policy perspectives from other countries which practitioners might consider advocating in the New Zealand context with the hope that such policies might improve the wellbeing of children and their families.

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Fernandez, E. & Barth, R. P. (Eds.) (2010). *How does foster care work? International evidences on outcomes*. **London: Jessica Kingsley. Hardcover, 320 pages.**

Working through this volume felt like doing a giant crossword puzzle. At first the task at hand seemed daunting, but painstakingly it fills the gaps, clue by clue. Some answers complement each other, simplifying matters, whereas others contradict your preconceived

ideas and bring much needed correction. Through it all the reader gains valuable insight into the complex field of foster care. As a result a coherent picture emerges of how foster care works… and often how it should not work. Fallow areas for future research emerge, and policy makers would be wise to heed the wisdom meticulously gathered into this one volume. This is a must-read for any social worker who desires greater understanding of the theoretical principles and empirical evidences that undergird foster care today in a number of developed countries.

As June Thorburn provides the reader with an international overview of foster care in the first chapter, the complexities of cross-national comparisons becomes clear. This sets the tone for the rest of the book, with various international researchers enhancing the reader's understanding of how foster care works in their respective country or jurisdiction. Each contributor highlights the legislative and policy backdrop impacting upon foster care in their specific setting. The reader's insight grows as the rationale and methodology of the research, and its theoretical underpinnings and key results are expounded. The theoretical knowledge-base of social work grows and valuable empirically-based direction is given to practice and policy. Each chapter in this book is followed by commentary from a different contributing scholar from another country, often providing valuable reflective insights and much food for thought.

A thorough examination of the contents of this collection is beyond the scope of this review. Suffice to say that any practitioner with an interest in foster care will delight in the panorama of contributions from America, Canada, the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland and Australia. To whet the appetite, may I highlight some key aspects.

In the second chapter Richard P. Barth and Christopher Lloyd, writing from an American perspective where permanency planning was for many years the guiding policy, found that returning a child to the home of the biological parent and adoption were associated with the most positive outcomes for a child. This study underlines the risks associated with prolonged stays in non-kinship foster care.

Fred Wulczyn and Lijun Chen address the complex issue of placement stability in the next chapter. The data clearly demonstrates the need for foster families to receive substantial support in the first six months of placement, as this appears the period when the children placed in the home are at their most vulnerable.

A study by Johan Strijker in the Netherlands described in Chapter Four, elaborates on the theme of placement stability. As it is not possible to adopt a foster child in the Netherlands, it becomes even more important to work towards successful long-term foster care when children are unable to return home. Another interesting finding is the role of the child's biological parent and the frequency of visits to the parent's home. According to the Dutch findings placements broke down more often when the parent disapproved of the child being placed in care, and when frequent visits to the parental home occur. Interestingly, the frequency of visits between parent and child at a location other than the parent's home was not associated with placement breakdown.

Elizabeth Fernandez and Paul Delfabbro then focus the reader's attention on children's return to their birth families. The two Australian studies cited show that the probability

of returning home decreases, the longer children remain in care. The critical role of early intervention and support for families when their children come into care are evident.

In Chapter Seven Harriet Ward and Emily R. Munro put the spotlight on the vulnerability of infants and young children in care, with specific reference to the impact of legal and policy frameworks undergirding practice in the United Kingdom. In his commentary on Ward and Munro's contribution, Peter Pecora reiterates that it is impossible for the Children Act of 1989 governing child welfare practice in England and Wales to be universally positive for every child under every kind of circumstance. When it comes to the very young child, some aspects of the Act need to be re-considered and the needs of these children planned for differently.

In the next chapter Elaine Farmer examines the plight of foster parents who have adolescents in their care whose difficulties and needs demand enhanced parenting skills, greater support for the foster carers and specialist help for the fostered teen. In the following chapter Peter J. Pecora and his team place the young person who transitioned out of care into independence in the forefront, whereas Ian Sinclair examines the reasons why some foster placements are more successful than others in Chapter Ten.

The international focus broadens with diverse insights from studies in Sweden (Chapter Eleven), Denmark (Chapter Twelve), Ireland (Chapter Thirteen), Canada (Chapter Fourteen) and Australia (Chapter Fifteen).

Richard P. Barth and Elizabeth Fernandez bring this anthology to an end with a synthesis of the research findings and a cursory exposition of the direction it gives to policy, practice and further research. The authors conclude with the hope that the findings which are reflected in this volume have the potential to bring a greater understanding of the complex interplay of those factors that nurture or impede the well-being of children in care. They anticipate that it would impact positively on care planning, the provision of services, the development of policy and future research. We know that foster care works. This book may very well make it work better.

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Lang, N.C. (2010). *Group work practice to advance social competence: A specialized methodology for social work.* **Columbia University Press. ISBN 978-0-231-15137-5.**

I wrote in a chapter some years ago that, 'Being a member of a group, like our gender, class, or ethnicity, is such an integral aspect of our lives that we often take for granted how much time we spend in groups or groups within groups' (McMaster, 2008). I went on to argue that our very first experience of group is our family, whānau or ingoa. In these early sites of socialisation we learn the skills to manage life and how to operate alongside others. For those of us in social work we know that when families are multi-stressed, their ability to deliver on physical goods (housing, food, engagement), values and practices that allow skills of social participation to develop, is severely impeded. We also know from the vast literature on attachment theory that the early years set the template for adult relationships.

What I therefore liked about this book is that the author argues from the assumption that when people come into social work as clients that they may not actually have the necessary skills to engage in group. Lang goes on to argue that social competence is a fundamental pre-requisite for readiness to engage in social change groups. This thesis resonated so well in terms of my experience of running groups for the past 30 years. When we look at attrition from programmes in particular, while this is often put down to individual characteristics of participants such as age, employment, ethnicity, etc., a varying perspective might be to assess wider issues such as experience of being able to engage in a group setting.

According to Lang, social competence is:

…the capacity to engage effectively and appropriately in social interaction and, by extension, to navigate the social world successfully, to hold a functional place in the society and the culture, and to be accessible to ongoing socialisation through life.

By taking a developmental perspective, Lang identifies predisposing factors that are required for social competence in the adult world.

The book is well laid out in three distinct sections that take the reader from the definitions of what is social competence and social non-competence, an exploration of small group work and life in social work practice. After exploring two distinct models of social work with groups, the broad range model and mainstream model, Lang then describes her own specialised practice methodology for socially unskilled populations. Part three, which relates to the practice of building social competence, was rich in description and very applicable to those of us engaging with people who have dropped through the system. This book will be a useful resource for those working in group work where the ability to engage with others is a real challenge.

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Ken McMaster
Hall McMaster & Associates Ltd.

McBride, T. (2011). *Exploring the presence: More faith patches.* **Wellington: McBride. 160 pages. Paperback.**

We are reminded that women need to tell and celebrate their stories, that 'if women's stories are not told, the depths of women's souls will not be known' (Carol Christ).

Once considered the domain of ethnic groups, spirituality is now thankfully recognised as being at the core of human existence calling out for nourishment, development and connection. Despite the fact that the author leads us to the depths of her spiritual journey traversing diverse perspectives and the accompanying challenges, if in fact St Teresa of Avila prayed to be kept free from gloomy saints, then we might see Trish doing the same, because there is nothing gloomy about this book.

She sensitively conveys the depth of meaning associated with her Catholic and subsequent Charismatic experiences through to her 'Kiwi spirituality', portraying the beliefs and

rituals which have provided meaning for her at each stage of the journey. Her definition of women's spirituality is that which connects, creates, has beauty, shapes, nurtures, gives, loves and tries to make sense of life being lived. This has translated into activities including those of quilting, beauty and giving gifts of warmth and comfort. Trish shares a number of meaningful rituals throughout her journey which will be helpful to readers seeking to create space for this.

We are reminded how women as individuals need to be supported in valuing their lives and the book includes helpful historical vignettes of mentors; those sometimes invisible and undervalued women of the past, including Hildegard von Bingen as 'healer, prophet, composer, writer and celebrant of the Sacred in and through everything.' This woman wrote at least 390 extant letters to abbots, kings and popes revealing to modern day readers of the power of feminine encouragement in 'pointing in different direction'. The reader is left in no doubt that in the dual activity of contemplation and action that the divide between sacred and secular disappears and soul-mending for ourselves and each other, becomes a sacred task.

This book will challenge those of us holding grand metanarratives. The author's evolving view of the Divine as Goddess and Mother Earth will be disturbing to some, yet the pluralism of her approach will not surprise others. It is a reminder that whatever one's perspective on life is, that life goes beyond static standards to the spirit behind.

This book will assist a general audience in their understanding of not only how expressions of spirituality may or may not meet spiritual needs but how those needs are understood in an age of postmodernity.

Jaanine Harris
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Iwi, K. & Newman, C. (2011). *Picking up the pieces after domestic violence – A practical resource for supporting parenting skills.* **London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 144 pages. A4. Paperback.**

Kate Iwi and Chris Newman run their own training company in the UK called Parent Abuse Consultancy and Training. They both work individually and with groups, specialising in domestic violence. The authors state that they have drawn on their experience of working with 'the thousands of men – and a few women – referred to our agencies because they have used violence in their intimate relationships'. The authors also state at the conclusion of the book that it is based on training sessions that they have run with hundreds of professionals over the past 10 years.

The book is aimed at providing 'workers' with tools to help parents develop safe and protective ways of caring for their children in the aftermath of domestic violence. The authors caution practitioners to be selective and to 'only try out techniques with clients where they feel able and clear about a given approach'.

I tried very hard to remain positive as I read through and reviewed the content of the book, but found myself feeling quite agitated and sometimes annoyed with the content.

This book simply fails to live up to the promise in its title.

It covers a range of issues for parents/caregivers. However, the authors state very briefly that if 'you' are looking for specific services for children, your local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service can provide therapeutic services. They then contradict this statement in the chapter covering assessment and management of risk where they state that 'this session is ideally done as a family, but can be with a child or parent alone'. It includes some basic interview questions which might be used as a template for a beginning practitioner and a lovely two-page strength-based worksheet for parents to fill out for each of their children. Sadly, there are no corresponding worksheets for children to fill in and the opportunity for some joint healing to begin has been lost. Parents are encouraged to think about goals for themselves, but again, children are not included in this future planning.

Child discipline covers basic parenting skills that may be recognised by some readers from the Incredible Years Parenting programme or the Triple P Parenting programme, but unfortunately, without the finesse of these two programmes that are so widely used in New Zealand.

Chapter six looked very promising – 'Helping parents understand their children's development'. There is an attempted break down of developmental stages. However, the authors recommend for the developmental stage between zero and two to 'keep rules to a minimum. Long speeches of explanation are completelyuseless. Because I said so! Should be enough'. This statement may have the effect of reinforcing the message to children that adults are always right and may inadvertently teach them to 'obey' without question!! Similarly, the authors recommend in the seven to 11 year developmental stage that 'you can appeal to your child's tit for tat thinking – 'I did this for you, now you can do this for me' or 'if you want some privileges, show some responsibility''. In the section aimed at 12 to 16 year olds, the authors appear to be covertly homophobic or perhaps confused about how or when any individual identifies their sexuality when they state:

> … teenagers are gaining a sense of their own maleness or femaleness. Curiosity about sexual matters begins. They begin having sexual feelings centred around their own bodies rather than developing their sexual relationships with the opposite sex.

The authors continue to use value-laden and emotive language throughout the book – for example 'out of control behaviour' when describing some child victims of domestic violence. They omit to mention the anxious, passive child who may well have absorbed the domestic violence in the house.

In the section 'Is it my fault?', parents are asked to score themselves and their partners on how they have influenced their children. The authors ask parents to score 15 separate issues but the explanation of how the scoring works is so complicated that I had to read it numerous times to understand how it might work. Later, the authors state that:

> … this is definitely not a measure of good or bad parenting … If it seems that you don't have a lot of influence, this may mean that your child lives an active, interesting life or has a strong personality, not that you are unimportant.

I was left confused why the measure was to be used at all or whether the measure was for positive or negative influences.

In the chapter headed 'Therapeutic parenting following domestic violence', the authors suggest that 'repairing breaks in communication' can include avoiding 'out of control anger. Use quick-focused anger instead', and:

> … deliberate anger – appropriate and in scale for major violations like hurting people – 'stop that! That behaviour is outrageous! I am angry because in this house every thing has to be safe.

The authors suggest to make anger quick and loud but fail to mention that the child whom the loud anger is directed at could be suffering from PTSD or at least traits of it and the so-called safe house isn't safe because Mum (or Dad or perpetrator) is acting in a similar way that Dad (or Mum or perpetrator) did!!!

The book does have some redeeming features, such as the layout; the attempt to address the impact of domestic violence on children and adult victims; how to build strengths and set goals and how to plan for safety. It states that the book sets out to provide some tools and techniques to help to move parents back into the zone of 'good enough parenting' It recognises and speaks about child-to-parent violence using an adapted model from Eddie Gallagher's 'Who's in charge' programme and also material from a programme developed in Ontario called 'caring dads'. I am not familiar with either of these programmes however, so cannot comment on the way it has been adapted by the authors.

In short, I found this book to be mostly unhelpful. It seemed contradictory and not written from a strength-based perspective as promised. I will not be using this book as a resource in my own work and would not recommend its use.

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Muller, R. T. (2010). *Trauma and the avoidant client: Attachment based strategies for healing.* **London: W. W. Norton. Hardcover, 204 pages.**

This book was a practical, useful and empirically based guide for those working with clients who use avoidant strategies to either minimise or block traumatic experience. Although I work predominantly with children I found the book to be both insightful and relevant to all age groups. This book was easy to read and I would definitely recommend it.

Muller is a registered clinical psychologist and associate professor based at York University. His vast experience in working with clients who have been exposed to prolonged trauma was clearly demonstrated throughout this book. He used a number of case studies, point summaries and easily implemented therapeutic methods to guide practitioners working with these clients. Each chapter was sensitively written. Muller identified behavioural and emotional patterns that clients used as defence mechanisms throughout the therapeutic process and suggested possible therapeutic techniques to minimise these defences. I found these examples helped the reader to recognise these different defence mechanisms and how to respond empathetically.

This book has been divided into eight chapters. The first chapter used attachment theory and current literature to examine the defensive and interpersonal patterns seen by these

clients. Defence mechanisms examined in this book included intellectualised speech or activity seen by clients using cognitive rather than emotional experiences of the event, and talking around the trauma. Chapter two guided the reader in how to work with these clients and therapeutic strategies identified by current literature to best challenge these avoidant defences. Muller explained that activating detachment and challenging avoidance was vital to helping the client develop effective coping mechanisms and understand and accept what had happened to them. Possible challenges experienced by the therapist during this process were examined with possible solutions.

I found chapters three to six to be highly informative as Muller examined the therapeutic process. Chapter three guided the therapist through the initial stages of therapy and techniques in which to help the client begin to tell their story. Chapter four focused upon detachment and how to guide this process so the client began to tell their story and grieve. Chapter five considered the therapeutic relationship including potential challenges when trying to relate to the client empathetically, how to address such challenges and how to best use this therapeutic relationship to help the client. Chapter six examined counter transference and therapist feelings when working with such clients. Muller illustrated potential difficulties when the therapist reacted to such challenges during the therapeutic process and possible solutions. Muller used a case study in chapter seven to illustrate the various therapeutic components when working with such clients which, was highly practical and insightful. Muller skilfully used chapter eight to help the reader consider the process of therapy termination and strategies in which to minimise the possibility of early termination.

I consider this book to be an insightful and practical guide for all social workers working with these clients across the lifespan and definitely recommend it.

Michelle Fleming

Dyregrov, A. (2010) *Supporting traumatized children and teenagers: A guide to providing understanding and help*. **London. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. Paperback, 240 pages.**

The preface to this book describes its intent to be a helpful tool for both 'specialists and lay people' in understanding and responding to children and young people who experience trauma. It is an ambitious task to articulate complex concepts in a manner which covers a spectrum as broad as this. It is, however, one that the author has done a reasonable job with. Whilst there are aspects which make this heavy reading (the subject matter, translation from Norwegian, discussions wander at places and some repetitive content) there are others which make it very engaging; the primary one of which is the illustration of key messages through the use of actual examples and the narratives of children and young people themselves.

The book is structured in 11 chapters covering topics such as defining and understanding trauma, the after-effects and long-term effects of trauma, gender differences in responses, factors that contribute to resilience, helping methods and therapeutic approaches. The book finishes with a thoughtful chapter on looking after those who work with traumatised children. The way the book is written and structured really requires reading from cover-to-cover. Good guides allow you to go directly to areas of interest. If this is your preferred reading style then you may find it difficult to follow the reasoning and flow of information in this book.

Dyregrov introduces a range of evidenced-based approaches to therapy for young people with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), in particular cognitive-behaviour therapy and eye-movement desensitisation and reprogramming. However more usefully (particularly for adults who may work with young people with trauma although not be therapists) Dyregrov highlights practical ways in which people can be of assistance and how parents, teachers, healthcare workers (and for this audience social workers) can complement the work undertaken by trained psychotherapists or child psychologists. Many of these practical tips are presented in ways which if learnt, are good on-going self-help techniques for young people dealing with the emotional impacts of trauma.

This book has not been written specifically for social work practitioners and almost all of the examples and practices are in the context of helping children and young people from Norway so they are, in many ways, culturally bound. This is partially reflected in the interesting omission, when discussing protective factors, of a strong identity and connection to one's culture.

The Ministry of Social Development's green paper for vulnerable children indicates that concerns about suspected abused and neglected children in this country have more than doubled in the past five years. Understanding and helping children who have repeated exposure to this type of trauma will be required by us all if we are to create a country where children can thrive, belong and achieve. This book is a suitable place to start, however illustrations that are closer to home will be much more likely to resonate.

Ross Phillips,
Pathways.