

Book Review

Title: *Gateways to Psychotherapy – A practical and structured approach to talk therapy*
 Author: *Michael Hegarty*
 Published: *June 2022*
 ISBN: *978-1-80068-950-3*
 Price: *€20*
 Reviewed by: *Mary Lynn (MIACP)*

“Throughout these pages I advise students against sectarianism and suggest a therapeutic pluralism in which effective interventions are drawn from several different therapy approaches”

(Yalom, *The Gift of Therapy*)

Like many therapists I can easily recall the acute feelings of excitement and trepidation having completed my psychotherapy training with ICPPD. I couldn't wait to start working with clients and to help them on their journey of self-discovery. College training arms us with a variety of comprehensive and honed skills, but there is a transition where a therapist is finding their feet. There is a feeling of uncertainty as at the beginning of any journey. It takes time, dedication, exploration of what works and what doesn't to find your own style. We emulate and borrow from theorists, colleagues, supervisors, tutors, people we admire, our own life and from our clients, in becoming the therapist we are meant and want to be.

I was delighted to recently discover Michael Hegarty's book “Gateways to Psychotherapy”. The book provides a practical guide from starting a practice to working with clients, to using integrative techniques that can be used to help clients with their own process in understanding themselves more.

At the start of the book the author explains that he wanted to write about his personal style of therapy which he has developed over the years, but also drawing on his previous career in the financial world. This gave him a structured way of working with clients. The author provides many practical insights

which will help to enrich the therapeutic process. He highlights the importance of having structure and organisation, in particular at the beginning of the therapy process to make it a safe space for clients.

The book will be a great asset for practitioners providing a resource they can dip into, especially in those awkward sessions where both client and therapist become stuck in the process. There is a flow to the book and the content in each chapter follows logically from beginning to end. The reader can also dip in and out of chapters and choose to come back to chapters when working with clients and integrate relevant therapy techniques into practice as and when required.

I believe the most important element in therapy is the relationship between the client and the therapist where trust is the catalyst for change. The author offers integrative techniques to therapists to help clients become more curious about themselves and enable growth and change.

I have found some of the exercises in the book easy to implement in therapy. I would have loved if this book had been available to me when I first qualified, as it would have greatly helped, guided and reminded me of many interventions that I had studied but also acquainting me with new ones.

This a great book for trainees, new therapists and for established therapists who want to add to their personal and professional tool kit.

However, Michael Hegarty's book is more than a tool book to use within therapy. He has also shared his own personal story and his vulnerabilities to show that really all human connection is about being loved and to be loved. The book is dedicated to his beloved partner Brenda who sadly, passed away last August, aged 54. May she rest in peace.

I can see this book being used in various training colleges as a guide to good clinical practice. I have no problem in recommending it.

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