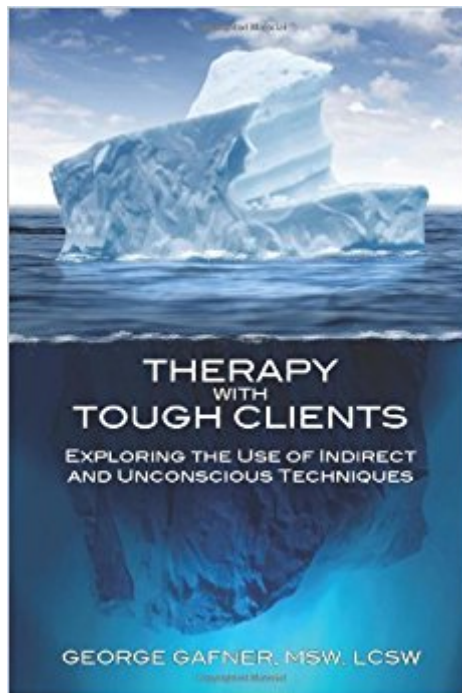




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Therapy With Tough Clients: Exploring The Use Of Indirect And Unconscious Techniques



Synopsis

Whether you're fairly new to therapy or if you've practiced for many years, no doubt at times you've found yourself stumped with certain clients who leave you feeling perplexed and discouraged with that "I-just-don't-know-what-to-do-next" feeling. George Gafner has been there and that's precisely why he wrote this book. Faced with the reality that today's cookie-cutter treatment mentality either a) presupposes that all people with, say, depression, can be treated essentially the same way, or b) that these approaches virtually ignore the established fact that a good deal of a person's mental functioning is governed not by conscious choice but instead by automatic, or unconscious, forces that lie outside of voluntary control. The author believes that all therapeutic approaches should be adapted to the unique needs of the individual client, and that the unconscious needs to be heavily considered in any therapy approach. Centered around two fascinating case studies, Gafner discusses concepts and techniques seldom addressed, including the therapist's use of voice, subtle vocal shifts, the pause, the strategic interval of silence, seeding as well as the application of hypnotic techniques within standard talk therapy. He makes the case for integrating ego-strengthening in therapy and advocates ego-strengthening as a "shovel-ready project" and incorporates the use of healing metaphors in therapy. As a strong supporter of evidence-based treatments, he believes that in much of real-world mental health treatment we can't simply follow a manual. We must adapt treatment to the unique needs of the individual, and the more skills and tools we can bring to bear, the better for both us and our clients.

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Customer Reviews

George Gafner, MSW, LCSW recently retired from the Southern Arizona Veterans Affairs Medical Center where he was director of family therapy and hypnosis training. For the past two years he has worked part-time as a mental health counselor at a local prison which holds 2,000 inmates. He is the author of five previous books on clinical hypnosis as well as numerous journal articles.

Gafner does a good job of introducing the reader to Ericksonian approaches, particularly the creative use of stories. I was disappointed, however, with his lack of concrete Ericksonian approaches to PTSD, my main interest (or at least new approaches to PTSD that may have gone undefined in the literature). Anyone with basic experience treating PTSD will be familiar with Gafner's dissertation on PTSD. Also, a bit too much space devoted to reminiscing about cases that seem to bear no clear relationship to the book's thesis or that would be advantageous to the experienced psychologist looking for an edge with "Tough Clients".

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