

Book Review: Emotion-Focused Therapy, Leslie S Greenberg, 2011.

If you want to get a broad overview of the main principles of Emotion Focused Therapy, (EFT), that is an easy read and not dense or wordy, this is the book for you. This book is part of a psychotherapy series by the American Psychological Association and they have paired the book with a DVD that shows how the theory can be applied. However, the book can be read on its own.

The introduction and subsequent chapters cover the history of EFT, placing EFT within the Humanistic framework and how it has grown from Person-Centred, Gestalt and Experiential Therapies. Greenberg then focuses more specifically on the theory of EFT, breaking that into sections on emotion schemes, emotion generation, dialectical constructivism, types of emotions, problems with emotions, self-process, regulation and so on. Don't be put off by some of the terminology; there is a useful glossary at the end of Greenberg's book to help the reader.

In chapter 4, Greenberg speaks of two main principles of the EF therapy process: the therapeutic relationship, and facilitation of the therapeutic work. Greenberg moves on to evaluate the model and shows how EFT is an evidence-based treatment in all aspects of the work. He finishes with an enticing chapter on future research, some of which is well underway. He also offers a small critique of EFT.

One criticism from this reviewer is that the transcripts that Greenberg uses show the therapist is leading the client/s (see pp.91-92), and that empathic conjecture as noted by Greenberg can be seen as leading the client rather than being client-centred. Another issue this reviewer (and practitioner) has is the limited amount of discussion topics such as gender, religion and culture engender in past and current EFT research. In particular for the former, the stereotype of males as more aggressive and females as more empathic continue to be played out in the examples given by Greenberg in this book.

The reviewer of this book is overwhelmingly positive about the way this book has been compiled with extensive references, an evidence-based approach, and in a reader friendly and accessible way to psychotherapy practitioners, that will leave the reader wanting to know more about Emotion Focused Therapy and its valuable contribution to the Humanistic tradition.

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