
Book Review / Compte rendu

Carty, Laurie & Rosenbaum, Janet N. (1993). *Youth Life Career Planning*. Toronto, ON: Guidance Centre. 54 pp. \$9.95.

Reviewed by: John Stewart, University of New Brunswick.

This book presents activities and information for six workshops in a group, psychoeducational counselling format using peer facilitators. The first two workshops focus on group building and deal with Interpersonal Skills and Trust and Interpersonal Communication. The next four workshops focus on self-development helpful in life-career planning: Self-awareness and Identity, Self-image and Your Career, Learning From Failure, Team Work for Career Development. This material is developmental and focuses on life skills suitable for individuals who are in their early teen years.

The content of each workshop follows an organized format: Stimulus to present the topic or concern being addressed; Evocation to express feelings related to the topic; Enquiry/Skill Practice to allow for relating new knowledge to questions raised and to practice new skills; Application to real-life situations, and Evaluation by leaders to assess progress and future planning.

The information presented for each workshop is well-organized, clearly written and presents theoretical support for the issues addressed in the workshops. However, the materials are a restatement of existing published materials which use the music as a metaphor to open and close each workshop. Additionally, the materials do little to help students begin making plans regarding the world of work.

These workshops, while complete with information and activities for participants are lacking in as a group counselling resource. For example, while the first two workshops deal with trust building there is little evidence of activities which help to facilitate the group through the transition to the working phase. Also, there are no specific closure exercises which help to facilitate termination of the group experience. The literature covered in the beginning of the publication deals with a variety of problems facing youth but the workshops do not address any of these issues in a specific way. While the use of music is an excellent idea for this age group, the suggested music comes from a variety of periods and may not always be known by this age group. A leader would need to choose music which was popular with a specific population. If group counselling activities should indicate what materials, for whom and under what conditions, then this book contains only part of the puzzle.

The materials were piloted with Grade 9 students from the regular school system. The manual does not indicate whether these students volunteered, were referred or recommended, whether screening took place, whether parents were involved. While the workshops are directed at a Grade 9 student population, there are no indications to which sub-population(s) of Grade 9 students would be best suited for this experience. For example, would these materials be suitable for students who are potential school drop-

outs? These are some issues which need to be resolved before consumers can make professional decisions about use of the materials.

This book would be useful to teachers and counsellors who do developmental group guidance work with junior and/or senior high school students. The workshops are useful as topical themes and are appropriate for this age group. The workshops can be used in sequence or individually which is a plus for the professional who is looking for materials to use in a specific instance. As a group counselling resource, the book needs further development to answer crucial questions before it would be of practical use.