

The authors state, "The modern approaches to the problem [obesity] are first to achieve the weight loss and second to maintain the lower weight by reinforcing the resolve of the person through periodic intervention in the form of supportive psychotherapy." My experience is that this rarely works. If desired weight changes are to be lasting, psychotherapy needs to precede these changes or to be an integral part of the process. In addition, Abraham and Llewellyn-Jones include suction lipectomy as a treatment option for obesity, even as they acknowledge that it is a cosmetic procedure and not a treatment for generalized obesity. This seems irresponsible, and indicates to me that the writers have no understanding of the meaning that weight and food and body image can have, especially for women. Perhaps the book is such a patchwork of contradictory facts because it is not grounded in a cohesive philosophy.

In general, the book has little to offer a counsellor who is looking for deeper insight or for useful ways of working with clients who have disordered eating. There are better books on the market, such as those by Geneen Roth or the handbook by Garner and Garfinckle. I would be especially reluctant to recommend this book to a novice practitioner who might be unable to discriminate the helpful information from the questionable.

Sinclair, Carollyne. (1994). *Looking for Home—A Phenomenological Study of Home in the Classroom*. Albany, NY: State University of New York. 168 pp., \$14.95 us, pb.

Reviewed by: Gerald R. Guest, University of Victoria.

With brilliance and sensitivity Carolynne Sinclair offers teachers and counsellors a thought-provoking, emotional journey. Her purpose is to illustrate how a deeply caring teacher can help to create a classroom world for children which fosters a sense of home. Sinclair's construct of home is "where we learn about self and others"—about an ever-expanding world.

The author suggests "home" has different constructed meanings for each of us. "Home is where you start from," declared a greeting card that one of my grateful daughters offered to her mother. Robert Frost, in *The Hired Man*, tells us that home is ". . . Something you somehow haven't to deserve." Sinclair suggests that, "Home, then, is that which provides us with the sense of communion with others that helps the individual self emerge." It's a place, suggests the author, where each of us can lie down with our loved ones in silent communion, in safe security. Home nurtures and nourishes. Home also provides a safe form in which to learn the breadth and depth of human emotion and the complexities of human behaviour.

Sinclair achieves that sense of classroom home as she illustrates a series of themes via classroom vignettes (stories) which serve as windows through which we readers are privileged to witness the intimacy and moving emotional journey of this remarkable sole teacher and two classes of third to fifth grade souls. Examples abound as in John's angry starvation for

simple, caring relationships, Judd's name-calling, Cristina's sense of humour, Deanna's decision not to dress up as a Hallowe'en hooker, Amy's way of grieving her father's death, Perry's racist cheating, Sylvana's dead pet. The author weaves her work with universal themes—caring, relationship, risk, loss, violence, inclusion, maturity, celebration, trust—by way of stories from her classroom and recollections and memories of her own childhood home. Thus Sinclair's autobiographical journey is linked to the self-development of her students. A reality of self is co-constructed through memory and present experience.

It is their intimate exchanges, teacher and children, that help to make them both fully human for the reader. Through remarkable rapport and mutual caring and listening, these human persons learn the reciprocity of respect. They learn to nurture and tend to each other's needs. It is the social exchange that provides perhaps more valuable learning than simply the "who am I" of personal psychology. Social constructivists such as Kenneth Gergen now suggest that instead of trying to discover a stable essence of "me," we need to immerse ourselves fully in relationships, and accept the fact of multiple selves—different personas in different relationships.

Many teachers encourage psychological learning in their classrooms. British Columbia's Learning for Living in the '90s and the antecedent confluent education movement of the '60s and '70s encouraged this. But it's not an easy task for some teachers. To dive fully into the waters of psychological education requires maturity and balance—a personal confidence in one's ability to guide others' growth from a knowledge that one's own self is constantly evolving, that the journey is never-ending, and that personal vulnerability is not only permissible, but essential. Some teachers won't be able to do what Sinclair has done with her classes—won't even come close. Some might criticize her work because it's getting too "touchy-feely," too self-disclosing.

But it is crucially important for teachers and counsellors to capture the power of the affective element in teaching and learning; children in our families, schools, and communities need such experience now more than ever. For counsellors especially, Sinclair delivers an important message. Hers is an illustrative reminder that children enter school with feelings—an essential part of them that demands encouragement and validation.

When Carollyne Sinclair works her magic with children, she has an uncanny knack for invoking the power of myth and legend in her stories—the power of ritual in their celebration—the power of trance in the evolution of the unconscious. This is a search for knowing one's several selves—that's what counsellors need to do too. As it is for teachers, so it is for counsellors, a life-long task. *Looking for Home* helps to make the task easier by reminding us why we are teachers and counsellors, and this volume should be on every bookshelf.