
Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Janzen, H., Peterson, J., & Blashko, C. (1989). *That's Living*.
Edmonton: Three Pears Publishing.

Reviewed by: Anne Saunders, University of Victoria

That's Living is based on a radio program of the same name. The intent of the authors, program hosts, is to provide more in-depth information on popular program topics in the areas of medicine, psychiatry and psychology. The target audience includes individuals of all levels of education and experience, as well as all ages. Therefore, the authors have presented the topics in a readable form arranged in order of increasing seriousness and complexity. Some of the topics (for example, self-concept, love and marriage, and human sexuality) will be of interest to the majority of readers; other topics (such as alzheimer's disease, addictions and post-traumatic stress disorder) may appeal to a more select group of readers.

According to the authors, *That's Living* is not intended as a self-help book — rather the aim is to expand the reader's insight and understanding. However, several chapters offer concrete suggestions either for maximizing potential or for identifying and alleviating problem areas. For example: the chapter on self-concept includes a section on strategies for developing a positive self-concept; the discussion on love and marriage offers a method for balancing dependency in a relationship; the chapter on psychosomatic medicine offers suggestions for managing chronic headaches; and the chapter on education includes specific techniques for increasing memory retention.

The information presented tends to be easy to understand (consistent with the authors' intentions) but, due to space limitations, is generally limited in scope. Thus, the usefulness of the information will depend on the reader's current level of knowledge — more educated readers may wish to pursue additional sources. The bibliography, conveniently arranged by chapters, may be helpful in this regard although the number of sources varies widely across subject areas: for the chapters on psychosomatic medicine and psychiatric hospitalization, only one reference per chapter is included; for the chapters on education and fears and phobias, many more references are included. Some of these references are popular works, while others are more academically oriented.

In addition to the authors' interpretation of the scientific and popular literature, information is derived from the authors' clinical experience. Due to the nature of these two sources, information contains some personal views — at times explicitly stated, but often implicit. Specifically, in the discussion of sex roles in the chapter on love and marriage, although an attempt is made to represent males and females as equal, bias is occasionally evident. For example, the author of this section advises that, if a wife desires employment outside the home but the husband objects, the wife might compromise by seeking volunteer work or part-time employment. Implicit in this sugges-

tion is the belief that the husband has a right to full-time employment while the wife has a right to full-time employment only if the husband consents.

The authors note their decision not to seek assistance from a publishing company in the writing of this book, a decision which, in retrospect, was viewed with some regret. In regard to this issue, restatement of phrases and entire sections is frequently used to highlight important points. For example, in the section on strategies for developing a positive self-concept, the phrase "picture yourself positive" appears at the end of each of the ten strategies. Due to space limitations, an alternative method of establishing emphasis may have been more economical and may also have been less tedious to read.

In summary, *That's Living* provides general, easy-to-comprehend information on a variety of medical, psychiatric and psychological topics. The topics vary in seriousness, complexity and interest to individual readers. The discussion an alzheimer's disease, in particular, may be of interest to a more select group of readers. This discussion is enhanced by the introduction of conversations which highlight behaviours typical of alzheimer's patients. With respect to content, the discussions are generally limited in scope and the more knowledgeable reader is urged to seek additional sources. Depending on the specific subject area, the bibliography may be of some assistance in this regard.

Mahrer, A. (1989), *How to do experiential psychotherapy*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.

Reviewed by: William J. Hague, University of Alberta

I want to review this book for what it appears to be, and for what it promises and then for what it actually gives. I want to review it from the point of view of the range of potential readers. To set this range, imagine, if you will, two prospective readers, one a beginning psychology student, the other an experienced therapist.

What it appears to be is a "how to" manual for potential practitioners of experiential psychotherapy. It promises to tell how to do this therapy, but does not tell why. It does not explain the psychological and philosophical foundations of the therapy or which clients would benefit from it or which may be harmed by it. The book does not promise any ethical guidelines for the use of this therapy, nor any encouragement for the potential practitioner to take over-all responsibility for his or her client. It promises, while claiming to be "complete of itself," only to tell the reader how to *do* experiential psychotherapy "and requires no special background or training in experiential psychotherapy." This is a narrow promise.

Potential readers, including naïve, beginning counsellors with little philosophy and still less experience, shopping for a therapy, will read these promises on the back cover: ". . . an intensive and powerful approach that offers the patient an opportunity to undergo deep-seated personality and