

READINGS IN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Compiled and Edited by H. Altmann.

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This book consists of a compilation of 22 essays which have been organized into four sections: Philosophical Issues in Human Relationships, Helping and Human Relations, Group Interaction, and the Counseling Process.

Originally it was produced to be used in an introductory guidance course with a small enrollment. The purpose of the course was to introduce the students to some of the facets of guidance in education, placing much emphasis on discussions of human values, human relations, and techniques of communication.

Most of the better known names in these fields are represented: for instance, Allport, Rogers, Gazda, Carkhuff, Truax, and Maslow. Some of the selections by these writers are quite dated but still present valid views, allowing for much discussion and debate.

Gordon Allport's contribution, "Values and our Youth," was originally an address which he delivered at the Western Washington College of Education during the summer of 1961. In it he suggests the need to update our values for a new world, a third world, requesting an interplanetary view of world government. Allport reminds us that if our schools don't teach values, this has the effect of denying values. We had better look closely at such warnings and reconsider our own current positions, especially our attempts to be objective, be it as teacher or counselor.

In Carl Rogers's article, "Communication: Its Blocking and Its Facilitation," he defines the task of psychotherapy as helping a person achieve good communication within himself, through the special relationship with his therapist. He reminds us that good communication is always therapeutic and proceeds to give the reader some hints for acquiring this level of communication — listen, try to see the problem from the other person's point of view, don't evaluate or judge. He tells us of the difficulties of achieving this, and of the necessity of having courage. This article is a very basic, simply written introduction to the work of Carl Rogers. He is also represented by another essay, "Interpersonal Relationships: U.S.A. 2000" (1968) wherein he, like Allport, restates our need to assimilate change.

George Gazda and Robert Carkhuff deal with different aspects of the same topic: the need for the teacher or lay person to have training in human relations. Gazda in "Systematic Human Relations Training in Teacher Preparation and Inservice Education" (1971) talks about the need for teachers to have training to improve their ability to communicate, using the Carkhuff Discrimination and Com-

munication indices. Carkhuff, in the next article, "Helping and Human Relations: A Brief Guide for Training Lay Helpers" (1971), provides the reader with a most succinct statement of his approach to training for communications skills. His two page *Guide to Understanding Level of Conditions* is a valuable aid to anyone working in the human relations field.

The essays by "big names" are interspersed with the lesser-known individuals like H. Gordon Green, "Why Our Giant New High Schools Are Obsolete" (1972) and W. W. Purkey, "The Task of the Teacher" (1970). Purkey's article is the one which, though included at the end of the readings, appears to set the tone of the entire volume. A great number of practising counselors will find that they've read most of the material presented in the "Readings" somewhere during their academic career; teachers, however, may come to these ideas with new vision, and as Purkey presents the task of the teacher, the other essays appear to fall into place.

Most of the articles dealing with Philosophical Issues in Human Relationships are slanted toward youth and the schools. In Part Two, Helping and Human Relations, we again find some stress placed on children and communication, teachers, teacher-training, lay helpers, etc. Max Birnbaum's article, "Sense about Sensitivity Training" (1969), was originally published in the Education Supplement of *Saturday Review*. Its focus is on giving the uninitiated a broad overview of the field of sensitivity training, rather than presenting new ideas for the already practising group leader or trainer.

With more and more stress being laid on the need to open up human relations skills to the student-teacher, with the lack of money to hire fully qualified counselors at the public-school level, with the growing size of our large high schools coupled with the growing alienation of our secondary school students, with the continuing disintegration of the family unit, and the increasing need for personal contact within our secondary school "factories," as students move from teacher to teacher, from group to group all day long, it becomes imperative that our teacher training colleges train students not only in the methodology of imparting reading and math skills, but also the skills of human relations: how to remain a sensitive human being in the classroom, able to understand others and so provide for more effective learning. In this task, the collection of *Readings in Human Relationships* can be a valuable source of discussion material.