

Preface

There are certainly several books that address the topic of interpersonal communication in the healing context, from a theoretical as well as pragmatic perspective. The peculiarity of the present manual is that it deepens the process of communication in the specific setting of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). In psychotherapy the ability to explore and share meanings through a masterful use of communication skills is the main tool in the hands of the clinician. Specific therapeutic strategies such as *debating* or *cognitive restructuring* are effective insofar as the clinician shows proficiency in illustrating and applying them through a proper patient centered language.

The main aim of this handbook is to provide to the reader a comprehensive overview of the core issues regarding patient–therapist communication in CBT, moving from the basic assumption of inter-correlation between research, teaching and clinical activity. Indeed, for several reasons that widen from economical to ethical aspects, an evidence based clinical practice is strongly advocated by patients and healthcare providers. This brings to the need to overcome the methodological difficulties that historically discouraged research of communication in psychotherapy and to promote the development of methods capable to capture the complexity of this multifaceted process. Nevertheless the available clinical evidences and the knowledge collected up to now, have to be spread out to experienced and inexperienced healthcare providers, applying updated teaching methods based on adult learning models.

For this reason this book has been written by many different hands, since I have brought together a number of experts in psychotherapy, teaching and research coming from various backgrounds. Therefore the reader will be asked to navigate through the heterogeneity of styles that characterizes each chapter, in order to grasp the common denominator that integrate and collapse all contributions together. Nonetheless each chapter is intended as a stand-alone, not necessarily connected with the previous or the following, for the purpose of prompting answers to highly targeted and specific questions, without implying the reading of the whole book. Hopefully according to this aspect, the volume will be useful to a variety of users, ranging from statisticians or researchers interested in methods of analysis

of therapist–patient communication, to faculties involved in the teaching of psychotherapy as well as of course to all those approaching at different levels of expertise and title CBT (psychologists, psychiatrists, counselor, nurses, etc. . .).

The book is divided into three main sections, introduced by a general synopsis where the main background theories in interpersonal communication and a selection of the existing systems of analysis of communication in psychotherapy are presented. *Part 1* focuses on the core verbal and non verbal communication (Chap. 5) skills applied during the consultation with patients, according to the three main functions of a clinical encounter, which are data gathering (Chap. 2), relationship building (Chap. 3) and information giving (Chap. 4). *Part 2* shifts the focus from the general description of communication skills in clinical setting to the analysis of their application in the three main disorder areas: mood disorders (Chap. 6), anxiety disorders (Chap. 7) and psychosis (Chap. 8). Finally, *Part 3* collapse together teaching and research insights, offering an outline of the existing methods and evidences. Chapter 9 contains a detailed description of learner-centered techniques that can enhance teaching in psychotherapy. The last chapters treat the theme of how to analysis the communication process in CBT following two different approaches: quantitative (Chap. 10) and qualitative (Chap. 11).

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