

## Book Reviews

### **Staying Well After Psychosis: A Cognitive Interpersonal Approach to Recovery and Relapse Prevention**

Andrew Gumley and Matthias Schwannauer

Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 2006. pp. 308. £24.99 (pb). ISBN: 0-470-02185-3.

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This book describes a novel therapeutic approach to recovery and relapse prevention in psychosis. It advances our understanding of psychosis and relapse by describing interpersonal factors, in addition to cognitive processes, that are central to the disorder. The book is divided into three sections: theory, an overview of the therapy, and specific therapeutic strategies.

Part I covers a variety of factors that are relevant to relapse in psychosis. Although the chapters appear diverse, they are linked by this common thread. Chapter 1 presents current views on relapse, including the authors' cognitive behavioural model of early warning signs and relapse, with which many readers will be familiar. Chapter 2 discusses attachment theory and relates this to later psychopathology and psychosis. I would guess that many clinicians do not consider the attachment styles of their clients, but these are very helpful in understanding patients' engagement with services. Thus, more secure attachment is associated with better compliance with treatment. Chapter 3 reviews the psychological and social factors that contribute to the risk of relapse.

Part II presents an overview of cognitive interpersonal therapy. It outlines the important factors to cover during assessment, plus the format and style of therapy. Readers will recognize the familiar cognitive behavioural elements, such as a problem list, formulation and rational thinking. The chapter also highlights the importance of the compassionate mind and the therapeutic relationship. Ways of promoting engagement and developing case formulations are related to attachment theory and processes.

Part III, which is the largest section, presents specific cognitive, behavioural and interpersonal strategies used in cognitive interpersonal therapy. The chapters cover interventions for working with loss, paranoia, trauma in psychosis, interpersonal difficulties, core beliefs, and fear of relapse. As in the previous sections, there are familiar cognitive behavioural techniques, together with strategies couched in the context of attachment theory. The chapter on fear of relapse is particularly helpful: it highlights the importance of assessing clients' appraisals of psychotic experiences, and altering catastrophic beliefs about relapse. The authors point out that CBT for psychosis does not seem to affect relapse rates unless the intervention focuses specifically on relapse prevention.

Overall, the book is clearly written and generally easy to follow. It is very well referenced, and includes summary tables displaying the results of previous studies. The authors have made good use of case examples throughout the book to illustrate clinical formulations and particular strategies. While I enjoyed the theoretical background, some readers may prefer to go straight to the chapters on therapy. The book has been arranged in such a way to allow this,

but I would recommend that readers do not skip Part I, which is relevant to the later chapters. The authors state that Part III is not a prescriptive treatment manual, and that treatment does not necessarily reflect the order of chapters in this section of the book. Therapists should use interventions based on the case formulation and the developmental context of the individual.

Many existing books on CBT for psychosis tend to focus on the purely cognitive aspects of the disorder. This book's inclusion of interpersonal factors and, in particular, attachment theory extends our understanding of psychosis and ways of working to reduce the likelihood of relapse. It will be extremely helpful for therapists working with psychotic patients who are at risk of relapse, including first episode patients and those who have experienced repeated psychotic episodes.

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**Praxis CBT Distance Learning Package. Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland NHS. CD-ROM and course folder. £250.00 for a single user. Full details on Praxis CBT website: [www.praxiscbt.com](http://www.praxiscbt.com)**

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In the light of Lord Layard's call for 10,000 more CBT practitioners and the NICE recommendations for CBT interventions, Praxis is one way of disseminating training to large numbers of mental health staff. Praxis is a fully interactive, skills based, CD ROM training package, derived from an accredited course running at Northumbria University since 1997. It is backed up with comprehensive notes and includes training and support for clinical supervisors and an information line.

The quality, clarity and ease of use of the package are excellent. It is a very comprehensive basic introduction to CBT and is engaging and entertaining. It uses a range of media, such as video and audio clips of actual treatment sessions and factual text, summarized at the end of each section. Learning points are "tested" and reinforced through exercises, such as "drag and drop" interactive multiple choice questions, and self-analysis. The task bar at the top of the screen allows all notes and sections to be viewed, and it is easy to navigate and choose the section required. Each section also contains references for further reading. There is an emphasis on supervision points and an acknowledgement that this is an important part of the learning process.

The entire package takes between 7 to 9 hours to run through from start to end, but is broken into sections with elements to put into practice with clients or on the student, at each stage and supervision points. Section one gives a background of CBT, with a very clear explanation of the levels of cognitions, essential to the understanding of Beck's (1967, 1976) model. There is an overview of CBT in the treatment of depression, (using the Beck model) and panic, using Clark's (1986) model. Two case studies showing these conditions are used throughout the package.

The Assessment Section presents the aims of assessment, gives a useful points list of elements to be elicited and outlines the process by which this is done. It then explains how