

Cognitive Therapy of Substance Abuse. By AARON T. BECK, FRED T. WRIGHT, CORY F. NEWMAN and BRUCE S. LIESE. New York: Guilford. 1994. 354 pp. US\$35.00 (hb).

Given the obvious need for a short-term, cost-effective approach to substance abuse, this book is very timely. As with many books in the Guilford series on cognitive therapy, the authors begin with an overview of the problem and present a clear rationale for the use of cognitive therapy in the treatment of alcohol and drug-related problems. The cognitive model described in this text draws heavily on Bandura's social learning theory and Marlatt's self efficacy model. Most importantly, the book gives a precise account of the phenomena of craving and the urge to take various substances. It also highlights that the delay between the experience of craving (wanting to take the drugs) and the implementation of the urge (the doing) provides an important interval for therapeutic interventions to be made. Particular emphasis is placed on teaching specific techniques for controlling and managing urges and reducing the intensity and frequency of the urges by undermining underlying beliefs. The book emphasises that cognitive therapy goes beyond simply avoiding or coping with high-risk situations because it also identifies core underlying and addictive beliefs.

The book emphasises that interventions should be made according to the cognitive formulation derived in the assessment sessions. As well as detailing specific techniques to help overcome the acute problems, there are highly relevant chapters on the recognition and prevention of relapse, and excellent additional chapters on the therapeutic relationship, how to deal with crises, and an overview of dealing with more chronic life difficulties. Issues such as depression, personality dysfunction, low frustration tolerance and anxiety within the context of someone with substance abuse problems are also comprehensively described.

This multi-author book has a consistent style, and follows the successful formula previously used for these manuals in being accessible and offering a practical how-to-do-it guide. Importantly, it shows how cognitive therapy is evolving, and the possibility of deriving a formulation of the onset and maintenance of substance misuse problems extends the potential use of this therapy further.

This book will be of value to specialists, but will also become an important text for those with an interest in cognitive therapy or in primary or secondary alcohol or drug misuse problems. Most trainees will probably not be able to afford a personal copy, and so it would be a useful addition to psychiatric or general medical libraries.

I was sad to hear that the second author of this book recently died. Fred Wright was an excellent cognitive therapist, and was Director of Training at the Centre for Cognitive Therapy in Philadelphia for nearly ten

years. It is fitting to acknowledge his major contribution to a textbook which offers a ray of hope to many young professionals working with this difficult-to-treat group of individuals.

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The Management of Alzheimer's Disease Edited by GORDON WILCOCK. Petersfield: Wrightson Biomedical Publishing. 1993. 220 pp. £33.00 (hb).

With the increase in numbers of the population living into old age, there is a need for guidance for those involved with cases of Alzheimer's disease. This book is of relevance to professionals who work in the field of care for sufferers from this illness, and updates current thinking on treatment and research.

The book is divided into five sections dealing with epidemiology, assessment and diagnosis, management, the social impact of the disease, and current research and prospects for new treatment strategies. With several chapters in each section, there is inevitably some overlap and repetition, and not all the authors stick rigidly to their chapter title.

The section on epidemiology would benefit from the inclusion of tables of prevalence from the different studies quoted, and the chapter on the political context is quite short. There are useful chapters on diagnostic imaging and on treatment, but I found that on early recognition rather superficial, and the neurological testing not relevant to use in clinical practice.

It is refreshing to find a chapter on a role of the GP in management, and this is a particularly useful contribution, as are the chapters on drugs and depression. Many of the papers, such as that on respite services and the later chapters on new treatment strategies, are research-based, but others such as that on care in a nursing home are more practical. The contributor from the Alzheimer's Society shows compassionate understanding for the sufferer and carer and has something to say about the results of government policy.

What this book lacks seems to be a clear vision of what it is setting out to achieve. The individual articles are of interest, but it could not claim to be a comprehensive textbook on management: for instance, the legal implications are dismissed in a few short lines. However, it is well laid out and easy to read, and could be recommended to those who want an overview of current thinking about a disease which will be of increasing significance in years to come.

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