



The Therapist's Use of Self

By John Rowan, Michael Jacobs

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The Therapist's Use of Self By John Rowan, Michael Jacobs

This book deals with what is perhaps the central question in therapy - who is the therapist? And how does that actually come across and manifest itself in the therapeutic relationship? A good deal of the thinking about this in psychoanalysis has come under the heading of countertransference. Much of the thinking in the humanistic approaches has come under such headings as empathy, genuineness, nonpossessive warmth, presence, personhood. These two streams of thinking about the therapist's own self provide much material for the bulk of the book - but other aspects of the therapist also enter the picture, including the way a therapist is trained, and uses supervision, in order to make fuller use of her or his own reactions, responses and experience in working with any one client.

The book is aimed primarily at counsellors and psychotherapists, or trainees in these disciplines. It has been written in a way that is accessible to students at all levels, but it is also of particular value to existing practitioners with an interest in the problems of integration.

"Most therapists, regardless of theoretical approach, intuitively recognize that their sense of self intimately influences their work. Using this elemental truth as a launching pad, Rowan and Jacobs articulate the different avenues through which the self informs therapy, and how each can be used to improve therapeutic effectiveness. Along the way the authors provide a masterful exposition of transference, countertransference, and projective identification, throwing much needed light on topics that have long been mired in controversy and confusion. The book is a priceless resource for experienced therapists and those just beginning the journey."

- Professor Sheldon Cashdan, author of Object Relations Therapy and *The Witch Must Die: The Hidden Meaning of Fairy Tales*

"Outstandingly in the current literature, this book meets the conditions for integrative psychotherapy to fulfil its undoubted potential as the therapy pathway of the future. Much has to change in our field. First, people have to become better informed and more respectful of other traditions than their own, engaging with all kinds of taboo topics. Next, vigorous but contained dispute has to take place without having a bland synthesis as its goal.

Finally, the current situation in which 'integration' runs in one direction only - humanistic and transpersonal therapists learning from psychoanalysis - has to be altered. Rowan and Jacobs, each a master in his own field, have done a wonderful collaborative job. The book's focus on what different ways of being a therapist really mean in practice guarantees its relevance for therapists of all schools (or none) and at every level."

- Andrew Samuels, Professor of Analytical Psychology, University of Essex and Visiting Professor of Psychoanalytic Studies, Goldsmith's College, University of London

"There is no question in psychotherapy more important than the degree to which the practitioner should be natural and spontaneous. Would it be sensible to leave one's ordinary, everyday personality behind when entering the consulting room and adopt a stance based on learned techniques? This is the question addressed by Rowan & Jacobs in *The Therapist's Use of Self*, approaching it from various angles and discussing the relevant ideas of different schools of thought. The authors are very well-informed and write with admirable clarity, directness and wisdom and have made an impressive contribution to a problem to which there is no easy solution".

- Dr. Peter Lomas, author of *Doing Good? Psychotherapy Out of Its Depth*.



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Janice Smith:

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