

BOOK REVIEWS

Person Centred Dementia Care: Making Services Better

Brooker, D.

ISBN 1843103575

Jessica Kingsley Publishers

This is a very readable book and one I would recommend to health care chaplains of all kinds. It should not be seen as a book that is only relevant to those working with people with dementia.

Dawn Brooker has had a long experience of working with and thinking about dementia care. She worked with Tom Kitwood the inspirational originator of the idea of person centred dementia care and dementia care mapping. It is his work that forms the basis of her own. This book is an extension of a report on VIPS framework piloted in UK and USA and based on person centred care developed by Kitwood (Kitwood, 1997).

A review of the different definitions of person centred care prompted Professor Brooker to try and simplify the definitions and link them to practice. She does this by identifying the core elements of person centred care. These are; valuing people, individualised care, looking at the world from the perspective of the person with dementia, and providing a social environment that supports psychological needs. This amounts to the VIPS framework.

She takes the reader through each of these elements drawing on the work and examples of different authors including Bryon's work which written from her own point of view as a person with dementia (Bryden, 2005).

In the first section of the book she introduces the idea of the malign social psychology first discussed by Kitwood. Malign social psychology (MSP) undermines personhood by reducing the opportunities for human relationships to occur. MSP dehumanises by inattention rather than malice. She makes this point carefully. This is not deliberate cruel or evil behaviour. This behaviour is a result of carelessness and being casual with vulnerable people's communication. It is endemic in organisations.

She takes some considerable care in the book to show how this can occur and to offer suggestions as to how this MSP can be reduced. She does this by posing questions to the organisation about its arrangements to make sure that VIPS is pursued. She argues that the effect of small inconsiderations which in themselves are of minor importance can cumulate so that they become the triggers for challenging behaviour.

Dementia Care Mapping is the empirical testing of person centred care. She gives a very helpful table showing how it is the spirit not the letter that is so important in getting the balance right in person centred care. For instance she looks at the social environment in which dementia care is given. She suggests that under emphasis of the importance of the social environment results in poor communication and lack of dementia aware interpersonal skills by staff. The organisation emphasises safety and aesthetics. On the other hand overemphasis on this element without balancing it out and, frankly, applying common sense, results in slavish following of techniques possibly without understanding their purpose and meaning. It also results in frequent changes in direction as latest techniques are tried and discarded. She argues that each of the elements of VIPS have to be constantly monitored and reflected upon.

The second part of the book explores the framework as a tool which can be used at three levels. Firstly it can raise awareness of person centred care across the organisation. Secondly it can be used for evidence collection and benchmarking. Thirdly it can be used for action planning and improvements. This is a helpful tool for those involved with training and development.

Much of what is described in the book applies to provision of an appropriate environment in which spiritual care can flourish although the word spiritual does not appear in the book. The book is about staff as well as people with dementia and can apply in any setting. It is probably an important book for health care chaplains, particularly those who see themselves as chaplain to the organisation. This book shows how difficult it can be to provide per-

son centred loving and appropriate care in organisations. It also gives the direction of travel for health care chaplains who are chaplains to the whole organisation.

I would highly recommend this work.

KITWOOD T (1997) *Dementia reconsidered: The person comes first*. Buckingham Open University Press

BRYDEN C (2005) *Dancing with Dementia: my story of living positively with dementia*. London. Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Harriet Mowat, Managing Director, Mowat Research.

Theological Reflection and Education for Ministry

Paver J. E.

ISBN 0-7546-5754-X

Ashgate

I was invited to review this volume at the 10th Edition Conference following the keynote speech by Professor Anne Ulanov whose holistic vision of people making links in the face of loss, gathering meaning from fragments and scraps, and allowing unity to emerge within the particular resembles Paver's approach in this latest addition to the Ashgate series, 'Explorations in Practical, Pastoral and Empirical Theology'.

An Australian Uniting Church minister, Paver has been a professor of ministry and director of field education in Kentucky and Melbourne. Open to feminist and aboriginal perspectives, he is sensitive to students and colleagues who might question his insistence on a diversity of sources, including contemporary culture.

Dismissing the simplistic dichotomy between theory and practice, which reduces practical theology to the application of 'academic' theology, Paver regards all the theological disciplines as interrelated and interdependent. His book is a manifesto for pastoral supervision as a vehicle for theological reflection, and for theological reflection as a method of integration with its own body of knowledge.

He supports his argument with a critique of three theological models, preferring the third 'transcendental method' - which begins from experience, especially life's critical moments - illustrated by a case study of his own theological reflections after being diagnosed, first with cancer of the prostate and then cancer of the bowel. Here the biblical themes of strength in weakness and the broken body emerge from a searing spiritual appraisal of his self-deception and lack of authenticity. Hence his passion for congruence between learned images of God and the ones we actually operate with, and his belief that life's breaks and disjunctions represent points of growth and theological insight.

Pivotal to effect curriculum change Paver was unable to implement his theories in his theological college (the proposals are included as an appendix) beyond his highly respected Theological Reflection Seminar where students were encouraged to discover their own theological method. He attributes this to his commitment to listening to all sides of the issue, and because the church, like other cultures, is affected by power structures and fear-driven resistance. This was not the only passage in this wise, humane book that shed light on the current crisis in the Anglican Communion.

Christina Beardsley, Church of England Chaplain at Chelsea & Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, London

The Man Who Lost His Language: A Case of Aphasia

Hale, S

ISBN 139781843105640

Jessica Kingsley Publishers

One of the questions this book raises for me is the thorny briar of whether the greatness of a gift makes greater its loss. There was a recent television drama entitled 'Recovery' starring David Tennant in which he suffered a brain injury and lost social inhibitions as well as a much milder aphasia than John Hale's.

The instinctive use of language by the builder depicted in the play may be less academic, less pure, less beautiful, than the command of English lost by Hale, but in both cases the pain of loss is felt most keenly by the wife or partner and I do not think there can be a comparison of the loss that they felt, or that

every carer for a brain injured person must feel; loss which is personal and immeasurable.

The assumed lack of self comprehension of the brain injured is also questioned by Sheila Hale. When people suggest to her that John is happy, she responds, 'He is not happy. But he has an enlarged capacity for enjoying small pleasures.' (p.178) Which reminds me very much of John Bayley's view of Iris Murdoch's self-knowledge of fading memory in his biography, *Iris*.

Sheila Hale's own grief is clear. It emanates from every word, each one tinged with unalleviated longing for a lover and friend. Chaplains may read this as a work about a medical condition, or a biography of a great man, but its deepest threads are a story of grief and loss.

Read this book as a cry of hurt and wonder from a wife looking into the darkness of a world stripped of words, which she had known, glimpsed, lived beside; a lost renaissance garden where once the nymphs of poetry and prose danced in the light of one man's intellect.

Janet Foggie, Mental Healthcare Chaplain, Dundee

Counselling for death and dying: Person-centred dialogues

Bryant-Jeffries, R

ISBN: 1 84619 079 7

Radcliffe Medical Press

Counselling in modern health-care often gets a bad press, which means that in the palliative-care setting, with its focus on death, dying and bereavement issues, counselling is sometimes viewed as inappropriate and unnecessary. This book will help redress the balance and will do much to assist in clarifying the usefulness of counselling techniques and skills in our approach to end-of-life care.

The key is the person-centred approach (PCA). The author, Richard Bryant-Jeffries, is a person-centred counsellor/therapist with a particular experience in substance misuse. From his wide experience he is able to offer insights into the needs and emotional pressures of those who are facing their mortality and dealing with the loss of a loved one. The PCA is described at some length in the first section of the

book, emphasising the key relationship between client and counsellor. The question asked is "What happens to a person emotionally, psychologically and spiritually when confronted by the reality of the death of a loved one, the impending death of someone close to them, or their own death?" The PCA allows a relationship to be established which begins to answer this question. Therefore it is possible that a "therapeutic empathy" can be created which is, in a climate of trust, "a response that emerges out of connection, relationship, a genuine entering into the world of the client..."

It should always be recognised that there are other techniques – such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) - which are equally applicable in the palliative care setting. However, in this publication the PCA is well explained and underpinned with good theoretical explorations, so that it can take its place alongside other appropriate therapeutic interventions.

As with the other volumes in the *Living Therapy* series, *Counselling for death and dying* contains excellent – and very real - fictitious case-studies - dialogues between clients and counsellors as well as between the counsellors and their supervisors. Into these dialogues are woven the reflective thoughts and feelings of the clients, counsellors and supervisors, offering useful engagements with issues raised in the context of supervision as well as the counselling sessions themselves.

There is much here which can usefully impact on the work of experienced counsellors and trainees as well as other health-care professionals in palliative and end-of-life care settings. The unfolding stories will demystify what can occur in therapy, and provide useful insights into techniques and approaches which can be of benefit to us all.

"Points for discussion" are raised at the conclusion of every chapter, and the text is regularly punctuated with boxed comments on the process and references to person-centred theory, thus allowing further opportunities for reflection on the events and the issue enshrined within them. The book concludes with a section of useful addresses, contacts and web-sites for further exploration of bereavement and PCA issues, and has an excellent index.

This book is accessible and useable, both for personal study and as a tool for group training and discussion. It does not claim to be inclusive, but it is, none the less, a publication which offers valuable insights into the person-centred approach to counselling in the important and demanding field of death and dying.

Tom Gordon, Chaplain, Marie Curie Hospice, Edinburgh

Dealing with Death: A handbook of Practices, Procedures and Law (Second edition)
Green, J. and Green, M.
ISBN 1843103818
Jessica Kingsley Publishers

This is a completely updated and expanded version of what has for 14 years been a most useful handbook for chaplains, and other healthcare professionals as well as for those in the funeral sector and those dealing with legal aspects of death and dying

The new edition follows Alder Hey and Shipman, and the consequent revision of the law in England, and reflects the changes in both law and practice. It is unfortunate for us in Scotland that, while the independence of the Scottish Legal System is acknowledged, there is little detail of the way our system has responded to issues around Post Mortem and Organ Retention.

The section on bereavement would have benefited from the same attention to revision that has been given to the legal matters. Much recent research on what helps and what does not help bereaved people, and the developing understanding of response to traumatic deaths has been omitted – and while the one new reference is to a useful leaflet (from the Watch Tower and Bible Tract Society) there are many other up-to-date resources which could have been referenced.

Nevertheless the authors offer a huge resource of practical advice on legal and technical aspects of dealing with death, wide guidance on care for the dying and their relatives, and a final section on religious, ethnic and cultural aspects of death and dying

which on its own would make the book a good buy for anyone interested in Spiritual Care in the health service.

John Birrell is Lead Chaplain in Perth and Kinross, NHS Tayside

Writing Works: A resource Handbook for Therapeutic Writing Workshops and Activities
Ed. Bolton, G., Field, V., and Thompson, K.
ISBN 13:9781843104681
Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Worry
Ridden
Introversion
Turns
Into
New
Gift. A

Well
Ordered
Revolution of
Knowledge &
Skills

This is an excellent book full of good resources and useful exercises. It is practical, which is much appreciated, and well written, which means the purposeful optimism of the authors flows confidently from the page. Any chaplain could use the basic warm-up exercises explained here in a one to one session with a nervous client. I have tried the acrostics with both clients and staff and they were very successful. Equally, I defy anyone who writes, whether for this journal or elsewhere, not to find the exercise ‘Critic Tango’ by River Wolton helpful as there isn’t an academic or creative writer for whom the inner critic does not inhibit as well as inform. For the academics amongst us the redrafting exercise, ‘Who Wrote This’, by John Hilsdon, is illuminating and humbling, demonstrating to each of us what we actually express when writing to be read, and what we omit. In short, this book comes highly recommended, get a copy, and use it.

Janet Foggie, Mental Healthcare Chaplain, Dundee