CREATIVITY IN PSYCHOTHERAPY: REACHING NEW HEIGHTS WITH INDIVIDUALS, COUPLES, AND FAMILIES, Carson, David K., and Kent W. Becker. Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Clinical Practice Press, c2003, 237 pp., ISBN 0789015781.

Generating a comprehensive and historical literature review of creativity in psychotherapy is an extraordinary venture. Compiling the various ways that creativity has been historically defined is an equally exhaustive effort. There are simply too many facets of creativity and too many valuable contributors to the field of creativity in psychotherapy to include in one source. Still, Carson and Becker provide a highly relevant and comprehensive overview of the literature on creativity in psychotherapy, providing a much needed reference guide to the mental health community. Especially helpful is their discussion on creativity within the context of therapy, with particular attention given to the role of creative thought, qualities of a creative therapist, creative interventions, creativity development, and blocks to creativity.

Creativity in Psychotherapy is filled with interesting, practical information for both novice and seasoned professionals. Rich in information on both marriage and family and counseling practices, this book provides numerous concrete examples of interventions used by counselors and therapists. In the techniques section, each chapter begins with an incubation exercise and readers are given an opportunity to experience creativity in action. The authors include sections in the book that discuss the role of humor, play, drama, music, metaphor, divergent thinking, possibilities, ritual, and more.
It grounds creativity in theory, including sections on Psycho-
dynamic, Cognitive-Behavioral, Strategic, Systemic, Solution-Fo-
cused, Narrative, and others. Missing from the theories section was
Feminist, Relational-Cultural, and Multicultural Theories. Information
on how creativity is used in these contexts would be useful and relevant
to contemporary readers. Still, within the supervision section, the book
discusses creativity within the perspective of power and culture, bring-
ing voice to very important issues for the counseling professional. A
welcome addition to the field of creativity in counseling and psycho-
therapy, this book has much to offer and would be an excellent resource
for practitioners, counselor educators, and students in training.

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CELLULAR WISDOM: DECODING THE BODY’S SECRET
LANGUAGE, King, Joan C. Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts, c2004, 270
pp., ISBN 1587611880.

Written by Neurophysiologist, Professor Emerita of Anatomy and
Cellular Biology at Tufts University, and Life Coach, this book offers
an intriguing look at how we can lead our lives more congruently and
authentically. In this book, the author describes how essential truths for
living a meaningful and rewarding life are coded within us chemically
and energetically. Two important concepts emerge. Just as a single cell
has a nucleus at the core, we too have a core we must get to know and be
in tune with if we are to live fully and authentically. At the same time,
just as cells must connect with other cells to reach their greatest poten-
tial, we, as human beings, seize our greatest opportunity for meaning as
we invest in and deepen our important relationships.

The author describes how the functioning of our bodies has much to
teach us about how to live our everyday lives. For example, if we en-
gage in remembering old events or rehearsing the circumstances of his-
torical pain, our neurons fire repeatedly to bring memories and related
emotions into our awareness. As a result, they are not able to respond to stimulation and provide avenues for new learning.

At the same time, she also describes that by denying the impact of our memories or associations, we are not able to realistically and genuinely move forward in our lives. Simply put, when we engage in denial, we block the flow of information from our core being, so we no longer express ourselves from our true nature. Denial results in a shutting down of possibilities, and eventually limits our access to situations that could be pleasant or fulfilling. I perceived this message to say that in these cases, we may make our choices from a position of resolve rather than from a reflection of our core values.

The author talks about our need to understand our core beliefs and values so they can be reflected in our behaviors. For example, if having personal integrity is a core value, we do not take advantage of other people and then justify our behaviors by making reference to loopholes that can “get us off the hook” or by distorting the other person’s behaviors so we feel better about how we have behaved. Rather, we examine our core values in context and refrain from rationalizing or justifying our actions; as such, we are not only accountable but also congruent, and ultimately exercise genuine choice in how we live.

Interestingly, this book also offers perspective on how our body parts function and communicate with one another, serving as an analogy for how we connect and communicate on a personal, relational, and spiritual level. It presents a new way for readers to consider emotional healing from the position of flexibility and choice, and as a consequence, to generate alternative possibilities and new life options.

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