E. Veronica Bliss and Genevieve Edmonds: A Self-Determined Future with Asperger Syndrome: Solution Focused Approach

Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London, UK 2008, 160 pp, ISBN: 978-1-84310-513-8-51895, \$18.95 (paper)

Oren Shtayermman

Published online: 18 July 2012
© Springer Science+Business Media, LLC 2012

If I thought I knew a thing or two about treatment and about individuals diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome or on the spectrum, “A self-determined future with Asperger syndrome: solution focused approach” made me pause and self-reflect about what I truly knew. Aside from being a unique piece of professional publication that is written from the therapist perspective and the patient perspective, this book has done to me something that other books in the recent past were not able to do, and that is: back to basic! Much of what individuals on the spectrum are presented with in their daily lives has to do with managing the everyday life. This book brings the daily living to the front and center of attention of the discussion.

The authors of the book were able to fantastically focus on individual solutions that fit a particular person rather than present information that focuses on the diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or the symptoms associated with that diagnosis. Although much of the information in this book is presented from an authority based perspective of treatment, the consistent mentioning and concentration on skills, abilities and strengths, present to the reader how the patient/client lead as the therapist pace them. This is truly refreshing to read! The solution focused approach is a “non- problem talk” which is a positive lens to view life circumstances. Throughout the book, the authors provided ample examples of solutions focused technique that may work with a person on the spectrum. This allowed the reader see the treatment “in action.”

Aside from the approach abovementioned, the authors of the book presented examples of particular skills to be used in treatment with individuals on the spectrum (e.g., the miracle question, paraphrasing and scaling 0–10, etc.). The book is easy to read, funny and takes the reader straight to the point with sarcasm that I personally appreciate. The authors have captivated my attention in three ways: first, the authors have done a remarkable work in allowing the reader to have a better understanding of the daily challenges individuals on the spectrum experience. Second, the authors described the philosophy associated with solution focused treatment. And lastly, they brought it all together and presented how to implement everything with a client.

Perhaps one of the most important chapters of this book is the one which provided the lens of using solution focused treatment with everyday life. Recent professional literature has shown an increase interest in vocational and employment related services for individuals on the spectrum. The authors have made an effort emphasizing matters for considerations of employers as well as employees on the spectrum. Moreover, both E. veronica Bliss and Genevieve Edmonds discuss the daily living issues of education and relationship in a simple, easy to understand language. This brings the book a full circle to the beginning with the discussion about the tasks of life and its influence on individuals on the spectrum.

This book is a must for every therapist currently working with individuals on the spectrum or one who have desire to do so. Much if not all of the information in this book is very useful for education of employers who are considering adding an individual with an ASD to their workforce. The firsthand experience of the authors is entrancing as well as provides certain level of credibility for me that cannot be accomplished by reading the traditional evidence based practice literature.

O. Shtayermman (✉)
Department of Interdisciplinary Health Sciences,
NYIT School of Health Professions, Kenneth Riland,
Room 349, Old Westbury, NY 11568-8000, USA
e-mail: oshtayer@nyit.edu