Behavioural Social Work

Also by Barbara L. Hudson

Social Work with Psychiatric Patients

Behavioural Social Work
An Introduction

Barbara L. Hudson
and
Geraldine M. Macdonald

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For Kenneth and Ezra Macdonald

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Preface

Behavioural social work has much to offer from both an ethical and a practical standpoint. This is not to suggest that behavioural theories and methods will suffice to cope with all of the issues and tasks that confront social workers. We need a wide range of knowledge from the contributory disciplines besides psychology, and from psychology we need other knowledge, such as an understanding of normal development and abnormal functioning. And we require additional skills, such as obtaining material resources and finding our way through the maze of bureaucracy and political power structures. Nevertheless, a behavioural approach can help with a large chunk of our day-to-day work, from assessing situations and writing reports to intervening with individuals and groups and seeking to modify the behaviour of other people who exert an influence on our clients' lives.

This book will give you a basic understanding of the theories from which behavioural procedures have been derived, and of how the procedures are applied in practice. In the latter part of the book we illustrate some of the uses of behavioural procedures with several client groups and problem areas taken separately. We hope to demonstrate the applicability of the behavioural approach to the breadth of problems encountered by social workers. Some areas are not covered in any depth, such as the work of hospital and residential workers, as this book is aimed primarily at those 'in the field'. However, many of the interventions discussed, and the chapters on learning theory and assessment, should be useful to social workers in all settings.

A word about our use of references. Since this is an introductory text, we have not cited references for every statement for which there is research evidence available; in the main we have given key

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references on important topics and references where statements in the text may give rise to controversy.

In order to avoid accusations of sex discrimination, *and* to avoid the clumsiness of 'she/he', etc., we have used male and female pronouns randomly to denote workers, clients and others.

University of Oxford

BARBARA L. HUDSON
GERALDINE M. MACDONALD

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University of Oxford

B.L.H.
G.M.M.