

Selecting and Implementing Evidence-Based Practice

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A Practical Program Guide

 Springer

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Foreword

After reading this well-written manuscript, my reaction was one of great appreciation to the authors for reminding the field that the scientist–practitioner model is not dead and is totally attainable and more important than ever for the provision of effective behavioral health care. The authors, both true exemplars of this model, have presented a clear, well-documented account of the background and current status of the use of evidence-based practice in the broad mental health field. I think this book will serve as a valuable resource for clinicians, administrators, students, faculty, and academicians. I would also recommend it to family organizations as a resource in their education programs for the families they serve. Families with children who are experiencing emotional and behavioral challenges must understand the critical need to obtain the most effective treatment available for their child. Why waste precious time on methods that do not work?

Bertram and Kerns have done an excellent job of blending hard science, clinical applications, and big picture issues into a very readable volume that will have valuable information for the diverse audiences mentioned above. They confront readers with some hard facts. We are living in a time of anti-intellectualism and antisense that has been justifiably compared to ancient eras. However, they bring home a very tangible and current result of this by noting that only 1 in 10 persons receiving behavioral treatment today are receiving an evidence-based practice. I hope that this will rally readers to examine their own practice and become advocates for change in this dismal situation.

A strength of the book is its organization and flow of information. As I read it, I thought of the different hats I have worn in my career: clinician, faculty member, researcher, program developer, and parent. Typically, a text will present material that will focus on one of those hats. In this text, Bertram and Kerns skillfully present material in a balanced fashion that will keep the attention of a diverse audience throughout the pages. Obviously, there are sections that are aimed at specific groups. Chapters 5 and 8 will appeal to faculty and program developers and administrators, but they are presented in a way that a clinician, whether new or seasoned, will appreciate the challenge-facing workforce developers. In these chapters, the authors have given us hope for the future. There are places that have

begun the process of curriculum improvement, and readers can use this information as a resource for their own efforts. Other chapters are clearly more universal with their content. Everyone needs to understand the terminology. The presentation in Chap. 3 gives a good historical perspective on the field and the debates that emerged. Beginning in this chapter and continuing in Chap. 4 on myths, I was impressed by the fair presentation of the controversial issues that challenge evidence-based practice. These issues have been hotly debated, and it is easy to skim some points to support your own biases. Bertram and Kerns have skillfully avoided this.

I think Chaps. 6–11 provide a core of knowledge that is critical for anyone who is a practitioner. There are very few resources to my knowledge that explain the extreme importance of the underlying components of evidence-based practice. Regardless of your role in the field, it is of the utmost necessity to be totally proficient in the value of treatment fidelity and documenting it, as well as in data-based decision making and the principles of implementation science. Sadly, these topics rarely receive the depth of explication that Bertram and Kerns present, and this contributes to the value of this book.

Chapter 12 is a bonus for readers. The experience and hard work of the authors are put to use in their presentation of very practical information. They go beyond theory and tackle the tough issues of curriculum reform, funding, insurance, and even offer suggestions for faculty grant writing based on the integration of the information in the preceding chapters—an excellent conclusion to a fact-based, clearly presented text.

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