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Edited by
Britt Couchman

Ways Forward

Progressive Approaches to Providing Therapy
with Autistic Individuals



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COGNITIVE SCIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGY

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“Ways Forward: Progressive Approaches to Providing Therapy with Autistic Individuals” presents a compelling representation of the best ways forward for therapy with autistic individuals that will prove vital to clinicians and many providing support to the neurodiverse community. The book presents autism as it is, a neurodiversity, a different way of being. It presents evidence and clinical insights from clinical researchers and individuals with lived experience. It has a focus upon strong, adapted therapeutic approaches to support and listen to neurodiversity with respect and empathy. I recommend this as a useful work for anyone who would support those with neurodiversity, and those who want to understand a person-centred approach to clinical work in mental health.

Prof. Dr. Mark A. Stokes
School of Psychology
Deakin University

Summary

‘Ways Forward’ is a groundbreaking text completely unique in its approach as it brings together the experiences of Autistic practitioners, research practices from the field and lived experiences. ‘Ways Forward’ offers progressive approaches and strategies for practitioners to better understand consumer needs. The text is designed to assist practitioners who work with Autistic individuals along with those who are completing undergraduate or postgraduate studies related to providing mental health support to Neurodivergent people. ‘Ways Forward’ is underpinned by research that notes the importance of the inclusion of first-hand accounts and co-researching within Autistic Communities. Reviews of this text have noted its importance in reshaping the landscape of therapy approaches for Autistic Individuals in that it is uniquely written by Autistic practitioners and can be employed in the field for the empowerment of Neurodivergent service users. Within the research, there is a call for more work of this nature to be increasingly present in an effort to inform therapists from a lived experience perspective.

About the editor

Dr Britt Couchman started her career as a teacher of Autistic students. She went on to complete research looking at behaviour approaches for Autistic children, which followed an action research approach and included parents as co-researchers. Britt then created her own unique consultation practice where she assisted parents and collaborated with allied health professionals to support Autistic individuals in a holistic sense. Britt also spends much time training and supporting inclusion specialists who work in schools with neurodivergent students. The next stage of her career has included providing psychosocial support directly to Autistic individuals to assist with developing independence and self-advocacy skills. Britt then went on to complete higher education studies in counselling and now offers neurodivergent clients a service to support them with healing, processing past events and developing additional strategies to achieve greater well-being. Britt is passionate about neurodivergent people being change agents within structures in society that have been limiting and oppressive. She is part of a network of neurodivergent practitioners who work hard to develop purposeful and tailored services to support neurodivergent community members. This network aims to combine lived experience with industry experience and research to improve accessibility, inclusivity and the culturally appropriateness of therapy services.

February 2025 | Hardback 236x160mm | 150 Pages | ISBN: 979-8-8819-0102-8

SUBJECTS Sociology, Cognitive Science and Psychology

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