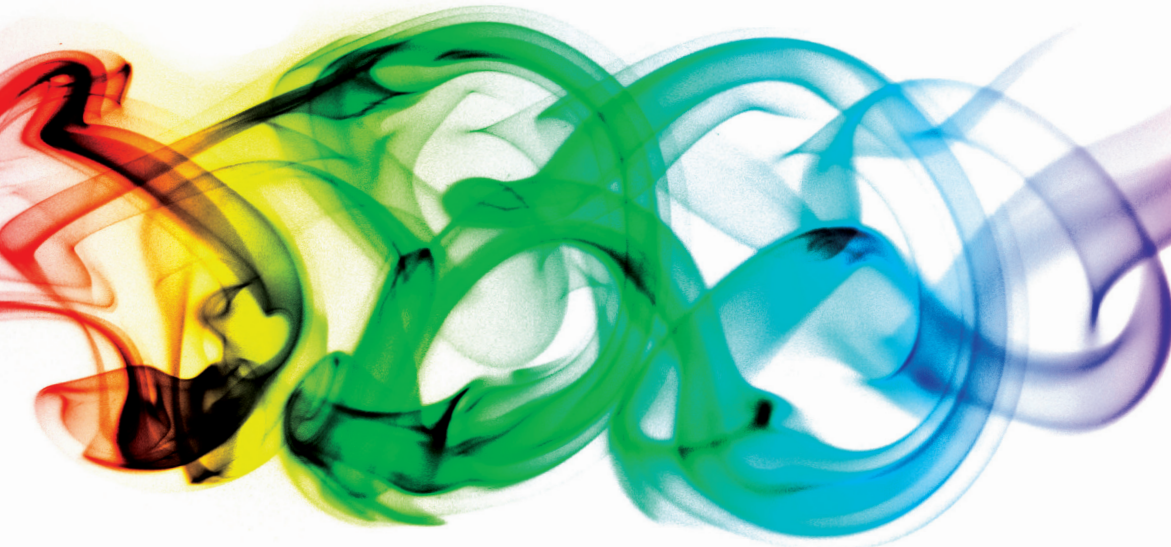
Integration in Counselling & Psychotherapy

2nd Edition



Phil Lapworth & Charlotte Sills

Integration in Counselling & Psychotherapy

Praise for the Book

'Scholarly, dynamic, thought provoking. The multidimensional framework provided by Lapworth and Sills continues to engage successfully with the paradox of integrative work: a highly personal approach to therapy, resting on the integrity and judgement of the individual practitioner – and, at the same time, the way of working most likely to enable us to remain true to our values and ethics whilst managing the huge collective political and regulatory challenges our field faces in the years ahead.'

Professor Andrew Samuels, University of Essex

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Second Edition

Phil Lapworth and Charlotte Sills

SAGE

Los Angeles | London | New Delhi
Singapore | Washington DC

First edition published 2001, with Sue Fish
Reprinted 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008
This second edition published 2010

SAGE Publications Ltd
1 Oliver's Yard
55 City Road
London EC1Y 1SP

SAGE Publications Inc.
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320

SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd
B 1/I 1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area
Mathura Road
New Delhi 110 044

SAGE Publications Asia-Pacific Pte Ltd
33 Pekin Street #02-01
Far East Square
Singapore 048763

Library of Congress Control Number: 2009928240

British Library Cataloguing in Publication data

A catalogue record for this book is available from
the British Library

ISBN 978-1-84860-443-8
ISBN 978-1-84860-444-5 (pbk)

Typeset by C&M Digitals Pvt Ltd, Chennai, India
Printed by MPG Books Group, Bodmin, Cornwall
Printed on paper from sustainable resources

Dedication

This book is dedicated in loving memory of our dear friend and colleague
Sue Fish (1946–2001)

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

We are delighted to have the opportunity provided by a second edition to reappraise and update our thoughts on integration and to acknowledge the developments in the field that have taken place since the turn of the millennium. Increasingly the boundary walls between the different approaches to counselling and psychotherapy have been and continue to be examined and questioned, not in a spirit of competition but rather of co-operation and exploration. Research has failed to demonstrate that, in general, any one approach, whether behavioural, psychodynamic or humanistic, can be regarded as more effective than another (Lambert et al., 1986; Luborsky et al., 2002; Wampold, 2001) and practitioners have become more willing both to acknowledge the limitations of their own singular approach and to meet the needs of their clients by exploring the possibilities of other approaches outside of their own. This trend has led to an increase in the emergence of integrative approaches – as we describe in our Brief History in Chapter 1.

This openness is refreshing and exciting, but it also has potential problems. On the one hand, there is a danger that integrative psychotherapy may develop into its own 'school' (or 'schools') with equally rigid boundaries and the concomitant lack of communication with other approaches that has been seen in the past. We have experienced this to some extent in our supervision of students from various integrative training courses where allegiance to a particular integration of theories has been evident (and, in our view, restricting). Indeed our supervision has sometimes been viewed as heretical! On the other hand, given the plethora of approaches to counselling and psychotherapy that already exist, there is a danger of being over-inclusive and thus overwhelmed by theories and practices which may or may not be easily or usefully integrated. It is our belief that integration needs to remain open, exploratory and creative while at the same time being contained and theoretically consistent if it is to withstand the test of time.

There are, and will continue to be, many integrative approaches to counselling and psychotherapy and any one integrative approach cannot answer the diversity and complexity of being human and dealing with human suffering, problems, change and growth, whether as a therapist or a client. We believe also that integration is inevitably a personal affair and, as such, likely to be more effective than a rigid adherence to a

template into which practitioners struggle to 'fit' themselves (or their clients). Any individual practitioner's life experience, professional training, temperament, personal style and theoretical range and understanding will be unique to him or herself – and so too their clients'.

This is not to suggest that there are not already in existence some useful, specific integrative models and approaches which may be adopted (or adapted) to positive effect. We acknowledge some of these existing integrations in the Recent Developments section of the first chapter. However, it is not our intention to present these models in any great depth within this book. These are better served by their own exponents in the books dedicated specifically to them.

Our aim here is to discuss and demonstrate the creation and development of overarching frameworks for integration which, we believe, are necessary to the feasibility of philosophical, theoretical and pragmatic integration. Our intention is not for practitioners to adhere to the ones presented here, but to create and develop their own personal frameworks and procedures for integration according to their own beliefs and theoretical background as well as their stage of experience and personal style.

In our experience as trainers and supervisors of students of integrative approaches from a variety of courses, we have found that there is often a lack of understanding of 'how to' integrate and a common complaint is the lack of literature addressing this issue. We hope this book provides some assistance. However, we also hope that we can address the needs of more experienced practitioners and supervisors for theory and discussion into which their own creativity, theoretical acumen and experience may be brought to bear.

Throughout this book we use the term 'integration' to describe the bringing together of parts into a whole in the service of our work. We have noticed in the literature the many and various attempts at definitions concerning, in particular, eclecticism and integration. At the same time, we notice that books and articles whose titles specify 'integration' sometimes contain the same material as those whose titles specify 'eclectic' psychotherapy – often whole chapters, perhaps with minor changes, lifted from one to the other! In this book, we prefer to employ the word 'integration' as an umbrella term which includes eclecticism, pluralism, transtheoreticalism, and so on. As will be seen, we also refer to different strategies for integration which distinguish one level of integration from another. We provide Framework Strategies for theoretical level integration, Procedural Strategies for technical level integration and refer to Generic Elements which, though they may vary slightly according to different values and assumptions are commonly integrated within and across various approaches (integrative or singular) when working with clients. We believe that whatever the level of integration there is a quest for making whole. Even at the technical level (which some would prefer to call eclectic) some consideration of this wholeness is taken into account when choosing an intervention. This technical level is, therefore, as equally deserving of the term 'integration' as considerations at the theoretical level.

As this book is aimed at both counsellors and psychotherapists, for the most part, we refer fully to both except where the repetition becomes too cumbersome, in which case we use the terms 'therapists' or 'practitioners' to include both counsellors and psychotherapists.

We are grateful to those clients who have kindly given us permission to include case material as examples and illustrations in this book. For reasons of confidentiality, we have endeavoured to disguise any identifying details and have also used composite material derived from our own work with clients and supervisees as well as the work of others.

The book is divided into three sections. Part I concerns the theory of integration, starting with a brief history of its development from Freud to the present day (including short descriptions of some recent integrative models), then moving on to the identification of those generic elements of counselling and psychotherapy (and also training) which we believe should inform an integrative therapeutic approach and, concluding this first part, two suggestions on how to integrate by using the Framework Strategy for Integration and the Procedural Strategy for Integration.

Part II presents an exercise in integration. In these three chapters, the authors explore and develop their own theory of human beings to assist them in developing their own multidimensional integrative framework, which is then illustrated by a client example.

Part III presents other examples of framework and procedural strategies for integration as illustrations of the development of personal integrative approaches.

Integration in such an essentially fragmented field as psychotherapy is no easy task. Our experience in preparing, researching and writing this book has confirmed to us the difficulty of such a project. Where we have widened our conceptual scope we have sometimes lost the depth provided by a more intense exploration and where we have narrowed our view we have sacrificed the excitement of divergent paths. Perhaps this is the nature of integration and the flowing between convergence and divergence a necessary part of the process. Our hope is that we have provided some practical guidance, as well as useful points for discussion, which will assist counsellors and psychotherapists in grappling with their own personal approach to integration, finding integrations not only within those approaches which share the same parental school but also across the at one time rigid and heavily defended boundaries of behavioural, psychodynamic and humanistic/existential schools.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the trainers, supervisors and psychotherapists who have instructed and inspired us over the years towards our own psychological integrations: these include David Boadella, Petruska Clarkson, Hans Cohn, Lois Johnson, Claudius Kokott, Helena Hargaden, Irv and Miriam Polster, Brigid Proctor, Andrew Pullin, John Rowan, Christine Shearman, Diana Shmukler and Nicholas Spicer.

Thanks are also due to our 'peer nourishment' group: Michael Carroll, Bill Critchley, Jenifer Elton Wilson, Dave Gowling, Jenny McKewn, Carole Shadbolt and the late and much missed Fran Lacey and Val Magner. These people have been a source of support, encouragement and expertise and have provided rich discussion and learning over the years.

A special thank you most go to our expert reader Jenifer Elton Wilson who is always so generously willing to share her breadth and depth of knowledge and experience and to Laurie Lapworth for patiently and meticulously producing the diagrams for us.

We are indebted to Alice Oven, our Editor, for her interest, support and advice through each stage of the production of the second edition of this book and to Rachel Burrows and everyone else at Sage from whom we have received similar encouragement. Their efficiency and availability have enabled this process to run smoothly and enjoyably.

Our Multidimensional Framework for Integration (Chapters 5 and 6) is original in the form in which it stands. However, it is in itself an integration, a compilation which owes its existence and development to the work of other integrationists who, in turn, have built upon the work of previous theorists (such is the nature of integration, as we discuss in Chapter 1). In particular, we would like to acknowledge Petruska Clarkson, Jenifer Elton Wilson, Richard Erskine, Maria Gilbert and Arnold Lazarus for their valuable perspectives on working with troubled people and upon whose contributions to the field of integration our framework is based.

We are grateful for permission from Taylor and Francis Publishers to reproduce the modality profile and table of techniques and ingredients (in Chapter 8) from Arnold Lazarus' 'Multimodal Therapy' in *The Handbook of Eclectic Psychotherapy,* published in 1986 by Brunner/Mazel.

As with the first edition, Charlotte would like to acknowledge and appreciate Phil for his role as lead author. Your combination of industry, clarity and poetry, Phil, is a joy.

Last, but by no means least, we would thank our clients, trainees and supervisees for all we have learnt from and with them in our mutual endeavour for integration in all its meanings.

PART I

INTEGRATION: CONTEXT AND CONCEPTS

1
A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTEGRATION AND SOME RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

If we were writing a complete history of integration, we would need to devote not just one chapter but several volumes to the subject, for the history of integration is the history of psychotherapy itself. We might well begin with Freud, who within his own developing psychoanalytic frame attempted to integrate influences from his medical and psychiatric studies, from academic psychology, and from his collaborative work with Joseph Breuer, as well as from his neuropathological lectureship under Professor Charcot whose work using hypnosis suggested the power of the unconscious, the phenomena of attachment between patient and doctor and a link between sexuality and neurosis. We would then go on to describe the works of the next generation who broke away, diverged, incorporated, yet always in some ways integrated concepts from and into the structure of psychoanalysis. Even as early as 1932, Thomas Morton French, addressing the American Psychiatric Association, suggested similarities between the psychoanalytic concept of repression and the behavioural concept of extinction (French, 1933) and Rosenzweig (1936) was exploring common factors across various approaches.

By about volume 10, we would still not have done justice to the many and various alternatives that have developed from those early beginnings, converging, competing or reforming neo-Freudian and non-Freudian strands and developments as they proliferated into the hundreds of approaches that now exist. Needless to say, therefore, this developmental integration over the century will only be covered generally here, our purpose being to show that integration is not a new phenomenon and to explore, in its historical context, the more recent thrust of integration which seems to be of a different order to that of the past.

Within the general development of psychology, psychotherapy and counselling, there have been, and still are, distinct and separate models of counselling and psychotherapy. These models are based on different theoretical and philosophical

foundations which are supported and furthered by the respective training organizations and professional associations to which they belong. The different models are normally divided into three distinct, though often overlapping, schools or traditions of theoretical approach which have informed the practice of counselling and psychotherapy. The first, already referred to, is the psychodynamic (or psychoanalytic) school with its roots in the theory and methodology of Freud, characterized by the unconscious conflict brought about by instinctual drives and repression. The second is the behavioural tradition with its roots in the experiments of Pavlov and Skinner and characterized by conditioned learning. The third is the humanistic/existential tradition with its roots in the works of such pioneers as Moreno, Maslow, Rogers, Perls, Berne, May, Boss and Binswanger and characterized by a belief in self-actualization and choice. Recently, some therapists have begun to identify a 'fourth force' of thought and practice, which has grown in strength perhaps as a response to the ills of the twentieth century and is characterized by a transpersonal element and a focus on the spiritual path of human beings. Its forebears are such theorists as Assagioli, Brazier and Wilbur.

These schools, though claiming a distinction from each other, have spawned a proliferation of approaches to counselling and psychotherapy not only within their own school of thought but also across the four schools. These various approaches, though seemingly unique, can often be traced back to early beginnings in one or more of the schools. For example, Perls, in his Gestalt therapy, developed across schools by integrating Gestalt psychology, Freudian psychoanalytic theory, the theories of the 'interpersonal psychoanalysts' such as Fromm, Adler and Rank and 'radical analysts' such as Reich, as well as existential philosophy, Zen Buddhism, phenomenology, field theory and psychodramatic techniques as developed earlier by Moreno (see Sills et al., 1995). Transactional analysis, although basically an object relations theory that integrates elements of cognitive behaviour theory and social psychology, is considered humanistic because of its philosophy and value system (see Lapworth et al., 1993). Self-psychology (Kohut, 1971) originally integrated elements of drive theory and object relations while centralizing the importance of empathic understanding (traditionally associated with person-centred practice) in the healing of a damaged self. Intersubjectivity theory (Atwood and Stolorow, 1984) has developed from a psychoanalytic root, especially the empathic immersion of self psychology, yet centralizes the co-creativity of experience more usually associated with Gestalt, person-centred or constructivist approaches. Relational psychotherapy integrates exploration of unconscious, intrapsychic dynamics whilst prioritizing the co-created, authentic relationship as the central vehicle for change.

From psychoanalysis there have been many offshoots. Some examples of these are analytical psychology, ego psychology, object relations theory, self-psychology and, most recently, intersubjective and relational psychoanalysis. The behavioural school has led to cognitive behaviour therapy, constructivist theories, assertion trainings, neuro linguistic programming (NLP), solution focused therapy and dialectic behavioural therapy. Within the humanistic school, the offshoots have been so plentiful that it is sometimes difficult to keep track even of the names, let alone their theoretical slant. Among the more established humanistic or existential approaches such as psychodrama, person-centred counselling, existential psychotherapy, Gestalt and transactional analysis, there have been