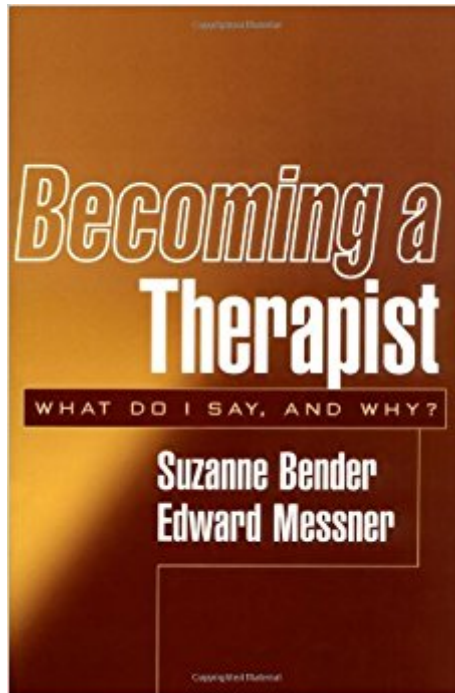




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Becoming A Therapist: What Do I Say, And Why?



Synopsis

This book provides students and novice clinicians with nuts-and-bolts advice about the process of doing therapy, starting with the first contact with a new patient. Suzanne Bender, at the time a junior clinician, and Edward Messner, a seasoned practitioner and supervisor, provide a unique, combined perspective on how therapy is conducted, what works and what doesn't work in treatment, and how to take care of oneself as a clinician. Organized around the treatment of one fictitious patient, with other case examples brought in as needed, the book speaks directly to the questions, concerns, and insecurities that beginning therapists typically face. Written with candor and empathy, it offers authoritative guidance for understanding and resolving common clinical dilemmas.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Becoming a Therapist is an exciting new text that has quickly made its way into the psychotherapy teaching curriculum for residents. The book provides practical advice and clinical case examples illustrating the evaluation of a patient, the first few sessions, managing common dilemmas in therapy, and so on. What makes this book unique is its combination of clear writing, the presentation of recognizable and concise case material, and commentary that further elaborates the concepts. Drs. Bender and Messner emphasize the strategies therapists use to make decisions and handle dilemmas, thus providing residents with both a thinking process and practical tools to help them negotiate the beginning practice of psychotherapy."--Everett Siegel, MD, Department of Psychiatry, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

As a practitioner and teacher of practice for a

quarter-century, it is easy to forget the initial terror of beginning as a trainee. This thoughtful and thoroughly engrossing book helps novice psychotherapists understand not only what to say, but also the theoretical concepts that undergird the words. The authors comprehensively cover assessment; the beginning, middle, and end phases of therapy; and how to establish a therapeutic alliance, maintain a frame, and use transference and countertransference. All of these concepts are discussed in an experience-near voice that conveys empathy and respect for clients. The authors skillfully integrate such treatment techniques as exploration, confrontation, and interpretation. They also provide artful coverage of legal, medical, psychopharmacological, and substance abuse issues. This generous work interweaves the contributions of a beginning therapist with the wisdom of a very experienced one. Beginning practitioners and teachers of practice will find it an excellent text."--Joan Berzoff, MSW, EdD, Smith College School for Social Work

"This book is a breakthrough, a true gem. A wise, kind and pragmatic master teacher and his gifted student have collaborated to distill the fundamental lessons along the path in the education of a psychotherapist. Many years in the making, the book makes complex concepts feel alive, personal, and elegantly simple. It is a new and valuable tool not only for mental health clinicians, but for any caregiver (or patient!) who hopes to learn better how to listen, and hear."--John B. Herman, MD, Director of Clinical Services, Department of Psychiatry, Massachusetts General Hospital

"This book is the result of a unique and creative collaboration between a young and insightful therapist who has been struggling with the complexity of psychotherapy, and a seasoned, well-reputed clinician who once served as her supervisor. Provided is a richly illustrated set of guidelines for better understanding and dealing with common dilemmas in therapy. For therapists in training, the book offers helpful strategies (and warns against less effective interventions) for handling nearly every kind of issue that arises between the first contact and termination. More experienced therapists will also benefit from the authors' clinical competence and wisdom, especially with regard to patients that are rarely mentioned in textbooks but who frequently show up at our office--those who, for example, arrive late to sessions, fail to pay their bills, or do not respond immediately to interventions. This noteworthy contribution will be of great interest to a wide range of clinicians."--Louis Castonguay, PhD, Department of Psychology, The Pennsylvania State University

"....this book is a must-read for every novice psychotherapist, as well as for psychotherapy supervisors and instructors. Even experienced therapists would likely benefit from the examples discussed in this book as a 'refresher' for practical examples of techniques to apply in common clinical encounters. I applaud Drs. Bender and Messner for writing such a relevant, practical, and needed guide for novice therapists." (Journal of Psychiatric Practice 2003-11-21)

"Drs. Bender and Messner decided to correct the lack of a good

teaching text for the beginning therapist. ...[Their] book clearly fulfils its goals to teach the basic steps, the nuts and bolts, and to be a guidebook rather than a cookbook. It is wonderfully written, comprehensive, detailed, yet very practical and useful. The wealth and quality of therapist-patient dialogues is a great feature....All practicing clinicians could benefit from reviewing issues presented in this volume. I also suggest that this book become a required reading in residency training programs." (Annals of Clinical Psychiatry 2003-11-21)

Suzanne Bender, MD, is a Staff Psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital and Clinical Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. Edward Messner, MD, is a Senior Psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital and Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.

Normally I am weary of reading books written by Psychiatrists because sometimes these books tend to be a little too technical. However, I have found this book to be quite practical with very good tips for how to approach a variety of clients and diverse psychological/psychiatric presentations.

This book has been tremendously helpful to me as a clinical social work intern conducting therapy. When I first started working with clients, I felt my classes and foundation year internship had prepared me well to "do" engagement and establish a therapeutic alliance. However, in spite of having studied several interventions, I felt fairly clueless as to how to move from the initial sessions into ongoing therapy. This book was an important part of finding that missing link. I like the examples of dialogues, and particularly the sections on issues such as therapeutic impasses and empathic failures, that help guide my own practice in tricky situations. I recommend reading this book as you are getting your feet wet doing therapy. I am not sure it would have resonated as much with me, or made as much sense to me, if I had read it before starting to practice. In the end, what will make you (and me) a good therapist is, along with key attributes such as empathy and active listening, sitting in that chair hour after hour and doing it. In the beginning, though, books like this one are an invaluable bridge between utter beginner and seasoned professional. I am grateful to have found this book.

This really helped me when I started my first job, even just as a mental health case manager providing intensive counseling services. It really helps you put into perspective what is most important - not necessarily what you say, but how you say it. There are also important ethical

discussions in the book, which is always good. The discussion between both authors (beginner and advanced) is seamless.

I've taught several courses for PhD students learning to do therapy, and there are some sections I think are potentially useful for beginners (e.g. what do I say the first time I call a client?). However, be aware that there is a strong psychodynamic bent to the book, so parts of it may be inappropriate if you are supervising from/learning a different theoretical orientation.

One of the harder parts of being a new professional is coming up with the script- the many things you have to say over and over again. This book gives great suggestions on where to start formulating your own script around the usual business practices of activities such as scheduling, missed appointments, finances, etc. I wish there was more on marketing on social media.

This was assigned for my Masters in Mental Health Counseling program and again in my doctorate program. This book taught me so much to the counseling side of psychology. I enjoyed reading it multiple times. It's perfect for budding psychologists!

This is a fantastic book for new therapists like myself. The authors' knowledge on the subject seems very comprehensive and simultaneously makes the information accessible to a broad audience.

I am going to college to become a counselor/therapist and have been searching for books to read up on how to deal with different situations and get my knowledge on. I first saw this book at borders but decided I should wait to see if sold it for less and they did. I was so happy!! I received it on time and in great condition. I have not been able to put this book down since I got it, it is informational and makes you feel like you are another therapist in training sitting there listening to scenarios and everything. Overall, VERY good purchase!! Would strongly recommend!

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