

BOOK REVIEW

*Giblin N., & Bales, B. (1995).
Finding Help: A Reference Guide
for Personal Concerns. Springfield,
IL: C. C. Thomas.*

Mental health providers are forced with trying to address the increasing needs of their clients and inquiring individuals for supplemental information and literature in a variety of personal and social subject areas (e.g., grief and bereavement, specific mental illnesses). To keep, Giblin and Bales have compiled key references in the subject areas of Stress/Coping, Divorce/Parenting/ Remarriage, Aging, Sexual Problems, Emotional Problems/Sleep Disorders, Physical and Mental Disabilities, Life Threatening Diseases/Problems, Violence/Abuse, and Death/Dying.

Mental health providers are often expected to be able to "streamline" information and treatment options for such consultation purposes, and to maintain libraries or bibliographies relatively idiosyncratically tailored to their particular clientele. What Giblin and Bales attempted to do, however, was to compile a list of references in the above areas with the expectation that other clinicians and clientele alike would be able to access this information more expeditiously. Though a valuable concept, it is limited both by the biases inherent in the particular experiences of these authors and by attempts to make selections from the vast range of resources available in most of these areas, plus other not reviewed in this book (e.g. substance abuse/addictions and dysfunctional families).

One immediate issue is that Giblin and Bales do not sufficiently describe how they researched and selected the materials included in each subject area. It would be helpful if they described the criteria by which their selections were included or excluded, other than that they were available in libraries or bookstores. A second issue is whether known or recognized experts in the various fields were consulted for their choices of materials that they found particularly helpful or relevant for their colleagues or clientele. For example, this reviewer has extensive experience working with deaf people, and would undoubtedly have had different suggestions about which materials would offer the most comprehensive and/or balanced perspective(s) on dealing with deafness.

Many of the references used are a bit dated (e.g., 1980), when it is known there are more recent books on the subject (again as an example, there are several publications on the psychology of deafness that were in press as recently as 1995). This issue reflects primarily the difficulty of staying current with new data or treatment options relevant to these topics, and points out the limited value of bibliographies and reference books for other than primarily literature research purposes. Perhaps colleagues and consumers would be better served by direct consultation for appropriate materials, referrals to libraries and data base sources for assistance with their own search for materials to read or review. In this way, their self-determination would be enhanced and they would be more likely to access the more current materials.

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