BOOK REVIEW

Informed Parents, Healthy Kids: Information You Need to Know to Find the Right Mental Health Practitioner
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Navigating and then negotiating the maze that is the mental health treatment system in this country is a significant challenge for many parents and families. Beyond the confusion of understanding what is happening to loved ones who are experiencing some mild, moderate, or severe intellectual, emotional, or behavioral debilitations, persons are then confronted with the often confusing circumstance of exploring avenues for help and assistance. Questions arise regarding what services to seek, who are the right personnel, what diagnosis best describes what is happening to a loved one or colleague, what treatment options to explore, what are the best evidence based protocols to utilize in addressing the concerns, and how to afford the prescribed treatment. The entire process can be anxiety provoking, exacerbating, and scary.

Just when many in the country were prepared to throw up their hands in frustration, along comes a resource that promises to be a beacon of light and hope in traversing the stormy seas of mental health care. The text is comprehensive, well outlined, and easy to understand. The sequential ordering of the chapters serves as a wonderful pathway to navigate the terrain that is mental health care and each question a reader might have in understanding the diagnostic nosology clinicians use and the diagnoses they render is covered in this magnificent compendium. In essence, the text serves as a verification check list if you will. It provides the reader with the latest information of an array of mental health challenges and what course of treatment that might be employed to address the elements present in a particular situation.

In my work as a scholar and clinician, I have clung to the belief that “ideas are the substance of behavior.” Essentially, I am suggesting that clinical and counseling interventions should be guided by a “conceptual template” of principles, protocols, and practices that inform the work that characterizes the therapeutic interaction between client and clinician. But, family must be involved as well, and this resource that is provided by Dr. Paniagua helps family members be the informed consumers that they need to be. This text is your template and guidebook to understanding the domain of mental illness and treatment and I am delighted to champion its arrival as another resource in the arsenal of mental health care.

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