



The Couch and the Stage: Integrating Words and Action in Psychotherapy

Robert J. Landy

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This book is intended to explore how action approaches to psychotherapy grew out of Western verbal methods and even traditional shamanic practices, eventually coalescing into a theory and practice that is creative and holistic. As the central concept in the book, action refers to the therapeutic application of drama, play and non-verbal expression in the service of engaging the body, mind and emotions of clients in a process of healing. The action psychotherapies featured in the book primarily include Gestalt therapy, psychodrama, and drama therapy, although the focus will be upon the latter two. The main purpose of this book is to make a case for the inclusion of the action psychotherapies into the mainstream of psychotherapy, mental health counseling and clinical social work. This perspective is well supported by the addition of action psychotherapies within recent mainstream anthologies in play therapy, counseling and psychotherapy, and by current research in neuroscience, pointing to the holistic nature of the brain and its dramatic networks, such as the mirror neurons. Action approaches will be seen as especially valuable for mental health professionals who conceive of their work within a holistic, creative and relational framework.

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