

Book Review

Gambrill, E. (2019). *Critical thinking and the process of evidence-based practice*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

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The text's basic premise is that active open-mindedness is a decisive component of critical thinking. The author asserts that clinicians must attend to the process of analysis through a review of the research and its appropriateness for the client context. This evidence is paired with clinical expertise and attention to client values to ensure interventions selected are most likely to be successful. The process of applying evidence-based practice in treatment includes reviewing potential interventions by population, as well as comparing to a treatment alternative through the lens of desired outcomes. The role of the clinician's biases and limitations of knowledge are important considerations when approaching decision-making with active open-mindedness. The ethical obligation toward truly informed consent is a foundation for this practice; included within that obligation is the responsibility to be skeptical of research.

After the introductory chapters, the text is a comprehensive resource manual rich in explanations related to the challenges to critical thinking. The author comprehensively reviews the facets of critical thinking including appraising research, argumentation, and communication skills necessary for the clinician in practice. Considerations of misinformation related to evidence often are due to myths practitioners have that hinder the critical appraisal of research. Within each chapter's discussion of the issue are both thorough listings of factors to consider and strategies that can be used in the application of critical thinking. One could review the topical information as

needed when challenges arise in practice.

Attention to fallacies in our reasoning and conscious use of language, avoiding jargon, and labeling are all outlined as means to improve informed decision-making. Strengthening and reinforcing communication skills can be helpful in obtaining effective outcomes; a full chapter is devoted to the examination of strategies to improve communication and, in turn, decisions.

Throughout the various chapters, application of Socratic questioning and focusing other questions improves the likelihood of the intervention selected as successful. Some of the questions include what the literature outlines as effective and determination of validity of any assessment measures used, as well as theories underlying the approach. Listing of resources that can be accessed by the practitioner are included to examine research that has been broadly investigated. In all phases of the evidence-based decision process, it is necessary to examine barriers and obstacles to use and understand the challenges the clinician may contend with in determining whether the findings are relevant for the specific client.

Beyond individualized intervention, the author further discusses the need to have a correspondence between evidentiary status of practice and its application to policy. Gambrill contends that a lack of ethical sensitivity compromises quality of services to clients. Within organizations, practitioners must attend to the process of critical thinking through

active open-mindedness. Argumentation skills can be applied to the situation in remedying practices that do not adhere to ethical guidelines. Doing so may require courage on the part of the worker when the larger picture is not the focus; assertive communication using the skills outlined as strategies can help practitioners to be effective advocates.

While this book can be a helpful tool to practitioners, it could also be a resource in research classes emphasizing discussions of the critical appraisal of research. The critique of existing research through active open-mindedness is one that could well be adopted by those who create research as well as those who use those findings in practice. As noted by Gambrill, the process of evidence-based practice includes the best research evidence plus clinical expertise and attention to the unique client values and circumstances, as well as culture. As clinicians, researchers, or educators, we must keep these facets front and center in our work. This book thoroughly examines the topic.