



Contemplative Psychotherapy Essentials: Enriching Your Practice with Buddhist Psychology

Karen Kissel Wegela

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A basic guide for all therapists to incorporating simple Buddhist principles for optimal therapy effectiveness.

Both Western psychotherapy and the Buddhist spiritual path are journeys toward increased self-awareness, understanding, and well-being. By drawing on the Buddhist psychological teachings, Contemplative Psychotherapy provides a deeper, richer approach to client work, one that can greatly enhance and expand a clinician's therapeutic repertoire.

While much has been written recently about mindfulness in psychotherapy and the underlying theory of Buddhist psychology, no book has yet been written that explains to therapists how to apply these teachings in their day-to-day clinical work with clients.

This book will answer that need.


Karen Kissel Wegela, a leading practitioner and teacher of contemplative psychotherapy, eloquently walks readers through the foundational concepts of this approach and its specific clinical practices, providing lucid guidance on what Buddhist psychology means in the context of therapy work and how to practice it.

As Wegela explains, five basic competencies underlie all that a contemplative therapist does: (1) being present and letting be, (2) seeing clearly and not judging, (3) recognizing and appreciating differences, (4) connecting with others and cultivating relationship, and, finally, (5) acting skillfully and letting go. Having a personal mindfulness-awareness practice helps therapists to develop these competencies, and this book offers a step-by-step description of how to establish such a practice.

The book explores the nuances of contemplative therapy practice, beginning with creating genuine therapeutic relationships and learning how to recognize "brilliant sanity"—not only psychopathology—in our clients, and goes on to consider sowing the seeds of mindfulness, making skillful use of mindlessness practices, investigating emotions, cultivating compassion, and working with anger.

Filled with client vignettes and practical guidance in an eminently wise, openhearted tone, *Contemplative Psychotherapy Essentials* makes the increasingly popular pairing of Buddhist psychology with traditional therapy accessible for any clinician, putting readers and their clients in better touch with the present moment—their bodies, emotions, and minds—for more enduring change.

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