

**Core Competencies in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy:  
Becoming a Highly Effective and Competent Cognitive-Behavioral Therapist**

Cory F. Newman

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*Core Competencies in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy* is one of the rare psychotherapy texts that cuts across theoretical and disciplinary lines to be relevant for anyone practicing in the field of mental health. More a discussion than a checklist, this masterful volume goes beyond what to do in session, covering a range of significant aspects of clinical work and professional development including ethics, cultural competency, and developing expertise in CBT. It deftly straddles the line between how to and why, and highlights that *how* interventions are delivered is as important as *what* core competencies are used. General clinical competencies, important therapist attributes, and key treatment methods such as case conceptualization and treatment monitoring are identified and modeled through clear descriptions and expert sample dialogues.

Dr. Cory Newman brings to this volume his decades of experience as a master CBT clinician and supervisor, evident in both the breadth and depth of knowledge presented. Through an empirically supported description of the core competencies, Newman presents a rationale for CBT, from the theoretical to the practical. With each competency, Newman provides an example of what a highly skilled CBT clinician would look for, do, or say, providing a role model for the newer CBT therapist and a comparison for the more experienced, self-reflective clinician. For the clinician who views CBT as formulaic or robotic, Newman demonstrates the artistry involved in the skillful execution of interventions such as sharing the case conceptualization with the client to collaboratively plan treatment, role-playing to build skills, and using homework judiciously to both increase compliance and improve treatment outcome. Newman encourages the reader to integrate his or her own inherent clinical skills and competencies with the delineated CBT best practices, affirming that even manualized CBT is enhanced by the therapist's personal style.

*Core Competencies in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy* is well organized and clearly laid out. Theoretical and clinical concepts are illustrated throughout the book using predominantly one case, a young man named Joey, allowing the reader to view the various competencies in practice throughout a course of treatment. Interventions are demonstrated with sample session dialogue, and Newman provides various helpful forms, including a detailed Treatment Update Plan (TUP), for therapists to use in treatment. In addition to clinical competencies, many chapters further address important, related supervisory competencies, often with sample supervisor-trainee dialogue for edification. Each chapter ends with a list of "key points to remember" that nicely summarizes what was covered and provides a quick review.

Of note in this handbook is Newman's focus on CBT supervision. It was a nice surprise to see significant attention paid to supervision, because so few psychotherapy texts address it. Newman's extensive experience as a trainer of CBT supervision is evident as he weaves discussion of supervisory issues into his exploration of general clinical and CBT competencies. For example, after a detailed review of specific in-session CBT interventions such as guided discovery, he then models giving a trainee constructive feedback on the use of these techniques; when he discusses therapeutic termination, he then addresses termination of supervision, etc. This approach, used throughout the book, feels seamless and reflects the multiple roles of many practicing clinicians.

I highly recommend *Core Competencies in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy* to anyone interested in, practicing, or teaching CBT. This volume is the next best thing to being trained directly by Dr. Newman. For the novice therapist, this is an evidence-based overview of the essence of cognitive behavioral treatment. Non-CBT practitioners will value the accessible, comprehensible account of CBT, the emphasis on general clinical competencies, and the importance placed on the therapeutic relationship. Seasoned CBT clinicians will benefit from advanced topics such as the use of imagery reconstruction, dealing with resistant clients and therapy interfering behaviors, and avoiding therapist mistakes. In a tone that is empathic, supportive, and conversational, Newman humbly encourages the reader to strive for excellence in the delivery of both therapy and supervision. In short, Newman has produced an excellent, comprehensive, evidence-based, reader-friendly guide to competency in cognitive behavioral therapy.

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