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Successful Private Practice in the 1990s

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Book Reviews

SUCCESSFUL PRIVATE PRACTICE IN THE 1990s

Joan Kay Beigel, M.Ed. and Ralph H. Earle, Ph.D.

with Lynn Fleischman and Ritalinda D'Andrea

Brunner/Mazel Publishers, 1990

\$21.95

224 Pages

Susan Marcel, D.O.

Thinking of private practice in psychiatry? Wondering how to make the transition from residency to the business of independent practice? Feeling a bit overwhelmed by the notion of starting your practice? In *Successful Private Practice in the 1990s*, Ms. Beigel and Dr. Earle have written a thoughtful and straightforward book answering these questions and providing a helpful guide on how to think like a businessperson and a psychotherapist.

In the first part of this book, "Personal Identity," the authors guide the reader in how to think about personal goals and qualities that affect the type of practice chosen, using a workbook format. In part two, "Public Identity," the authors take the reader through the maze of thinking about money, marketing practices, networking, institutional affiliations and negotiating contracts. In the last section, "Professional Identity," the focus is on what kind of a practice to choose, the business structure of that practice and the office planning, policy and procedures. The authors present many options from which a private practitioner can choose concerning billing, collection, third party payments, financial planning, insurance, and payroll taxes. The final chapter highlights the legal liability and protection issues that may face a mental health professional. The list of references and suggested reading, though useful, seemed quite small compared to the breadth of literature currently in print on private practice.

The scope of this book is broad and it is quite evident that the authors have a wealth of experience on which to draw, providing many vignettes to illustrate their points. This text is a map for any mental health professional who is beginning to chart the waters of private practice. It is written in a relaxed, conversational style, and its 224 pages are easily read in short sittings, especially suited for an on-call psychiatric resident. This book emphasizes that private practice in the 1990s is alive and well although practitioners must think about themselves as therapists and businesspersons. For these changing times in the mental health profession, this book is an excellent guide for both the new and established psychotherapists, and can help both think about and develop their practice style.