Child Psychotherapy: Integrating Developmental Theory into Clinical Practice

All too often children are diagnosed and medicated without the consideration that their symptoms may actually be a healthy response to stressful life events. This integrative guide for mental health practitioners who work with children underscores the importance of considering the etiology of a child’s symptoms within a developmental framework before making a diagnosis. Providing advanced training and skills for working with children, the book guides the therapist, step-by-step, through assessment, case conceptualization, and treatment with a focus on the tenets of child development and a consideration of the impact of distressing life events.

The book first addresses child development and the evolution of child psychotherapy from the perspectives of numerous disciplines, including recent findings in neurodevelopmental trauma and neurobiology. It discusses assessment measures, the impact of divorce and the forensic/legal environment on clinical practice, recommendations for HIPAA compliance, evidence-based best practices for treating children, and the requirements for an integrated treatment approach. Woven throughout are indications for case conceptualization including consideration of a child’s complete environment.