

## Book Reviews Section

The journal has received the following books for review and readers are invited to email the Book Reviews Editor if you would be interested in writing a review.

Phil Beadle and John Murphy: *Why are you shouting at us? The dos and don'ts of behaviour management*. Bloomsbury.

Fiachra Long: *Educating the postmodern child. The struggle for learning in a world of virtual realities*. Bloomsbury.

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# Mindfulness for Life

Edited By Stephen McKenzie and Craig Hassed

Exisle Publishing Pty Ltd, 2012, 304 pp., \$29.99 (AU paperback), ISBN: 9781921966033.

doi: 10.1017/edp.2013.3

*Mindfulness for Life* is an engaging and informative book that describes first what mindfulness is, then why and how mindfulness can be applied to many of life's challenges. In this 'self-help' style book, McKenzie and Hassed introduce mindfulness to the reader in a tangible, charming and calming manner, providing many practical examples, easy to understand research findings and a little bit of humour.'

The book is organised into four parts: (1) Mindfulness: What is it and can it help?; (2) Medical and pre-medical conditions that mindfulness can help with, and how; (3) Mindfulness and personal development; and (4) Mindfulness and spiritual development. While not every section may be relevant to every reader, the first is essential reading for those interested in mindfulness. This section provides an interesting overview of the history and development of mindfulness (it's not new) and how to actually do it (it's not easy). Helpful for directed or time-poor readers, the following parts of the book have clearly labelled chapters and subsections, allowing easy navigation. Each chapter in parts 2 to 4 are concluded with 'Take home tips' for quick reference (especially helpful if life interferes with 'mindful' reading).

The authors acknowledge that while mindfulness is a simple concept, 'The practice of paying attention' (p. 6) is a skill that needs to be learned and practised regularly to provide the most benefit. They also acknowledge their own difficulties with staying mindful and recognise that readers may struggle to remain mindful even while reading. References to manifestations of mindfulness and non-mindfulness in philosophy, history, literature, poetry, pop culture, and religious teachings, as well as the relaxed and encouraging tone of the authors make *Mindfulness for life* more interesting reading than other how-to texts.

The research presented in this book seems to clearly point to mindfulness as a useful treatment for anything from a stubbed toenail to PTSD; however, the authors (refreshingly) do not offer mindfulness as the only solution and discuss how mindfulness can be used alongside other theories and therapies. They present mindfulness as a therapy that makes 'common sense', but also has the empirical support to hold its own with other evidence-based therapies.

If you are looking for an impersonal, statistics-laden text, describing randomised control trials of mindfulness in a purely clinical setting, then this is not the book for you. This book provides much more than research methodology and results, and in an arguably more digestible manner. However, if you are interested and relatively new to mindfulness and its many applications, then you may well get something out of *Mindfulness for Life*.

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