

BOOK REVIEW

Book review: *Personal Consultancy: A Model for Integrating Counselling and Coaching*

Angie Alderman¹

Title: Personal Consultancy: A Model for Integrating Counselling and Coaching

Authors: Nash Popovic and Debra Jinks

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As its title suggests, the premise of the book is about the concept of the Personal Consultancy: a framework which integrates counselling and coaching, using different counselling and psychotherapeutic approaches, thereby creating an integrative approach to one-to-one talking practices.

Nash Popovic and Debra Jinks are credible authors and academics. The former has published and presented extensively on Personal Consultancy, and the latter is the Founding Chair of the Association for Integrative Coach-Therapist Professionals (AICTP). Together they offer an exciting and compelling proposition presented in a straightforward style making the content easy to assimilate. The

authors look to inform, without persuasion, therefore, encouraging the reader to make their own evaluation of the Personal Consultancy framework.

Nash and Jinks state that what Personal Consultancy looks to achieve is 'an integration that recognises a grey area but also some difference and between various disciplines' (p.35). They illustrate how the integration of coaching and counselling techniques such as Cognitive Behavioural Coaching, Solution-Focused Therapy, and Humanistic counselling enables the practitioner and the client to move through the surface work and go on to explore on a deeper level any psychological barriers that may be preventing the client from moving forward to their preferred future outcomes.

The narrative explores the Personal Consultancy model from a theoretical point of view while substantiating this with case study examples to illustrate how it can apply to different clients with differing needs.

The book is in three parts; part one provides a brief overview of one-to-one talking therapies before going on to explore the differences and similarities between coaching and therapy. This structure sets the scene before the authors provoke and answer a fundamental question, 'why personal consultancy'.

Nash and Jinks explain the foundation for the model for Personal Consultancy highlighting three essential components; the client, the practitioner, and the interrelationship between the practitioner and the client. They go on to describe the process of 'doing with the client' and 'being with the client' comprising of four critical stages of the relationship; 1) Authentic Listening 2) Rebalancing 3) Generating and 4) Supporting (p.68). The authors state that not all these stages are always necessary, however for the process to be effective, it is imperative not to overlook any of them. It very much depends on what the client needs at that moment. For this reason, these stages provide a template or 'map' of the areas to cover.

A major theme of the book is enquiry and debate; the authors successfully offer different voices and points of view on how the process works in theory and practice. The second part of the book includes guest contributors. These contributors are

respected industry practitioners who provide commentary from direct experiences of working with clients in various settings using an integrative approach. In this way, they offer essential empirical insight and data, touching upon ethics and boundaries highlighting these safeguarding aspects of the coach-therapist session need full cognisance to provide an integrative approach so that the work remains safe.

The third part of the book offers a further reflection from Gordon Jinks, a trusted professional and close ally of the authors. He shares a critical perspective of both the limitations and strengths of the process of Personal Consultancy as he views it at the time of the book's publication. The final chapter concludes with areas of development for the model, which include supervision, ethics, training, and professional bodies.

The book has achieved what is set out to do and is an invaluable resource for anyone curious about what Personal Consultancy is. It successfully illustrates how a pluralistic approach can provide a client with a flexible and unique service, by integrating coaching and counselling. Therefore, it is an essential read, for any coach-therapy practitioner, providing useful guidance on how to manage issues, effectively and safely. Furthermore, the narrative opens the opportunity for anyone interested in the advocacy of the Personal Consultancy to get involved with further discussion at this pioneering stage of its development. ■

Biography

Angie Alderman Adv Dip Coaching is an accredited Wellbeing Coach with a focus on life transitions. She runs her own business, Mandarin Gale Coaching, working in private practice and within organisations. She is a member of the International Society for Coaching Psychology and Association for Coaching.



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