

Bibliotherapy: An Adjunct to Care of Patients With Problems of Living

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Bibliotherapy, or the selected use of reading as an adjunct to the treatment of medical and psychological problems, has a long history in the library science literature. However, the use of bibliotherapy by practicing physicians has not been significant. Many patients who see family physicians are candidates for bibliotherapy as adjunctive treatment. In the past five years numerous well-written books that address various patient problems of living have been made available. The authors surveyed a variety of health care specialists in the Denver area to develop a reading list for people with life problems. These problems have been categorized under the following headings: dealing with life crises and transitions, parents and children, parenting, coping with illness and disability, death and dying, lifestyle modification, sexuality, and coping with feelings. The resulting annotated bibliography may be used as a guide for practicing physicians who feel that appropriate reading material may be beneficial to their patients with such problems.

The use of appropriate reading material for people with problems of living has a long and interesting history in this country. In 1802, Benjamin Rush stated that "all hospitals should include libraries with two types of books, those which provide entertainment and would be extremely exhilarating to convalescents and to persons confined by chronic diseases, and books which convey knowledge which should be on philosophical, moral, and religious subjects."¹ Since then, advocates for assigning reading to patients have recommended bibliotherapy for such diverse groups as children of stepfamilies,² the elderly,³ the hearing handicapped,⁴ schizophrenics,⁵ and medical

inpatients.⁶ In 1961, in an article entitled "Reading as Therapy," Dr. Karl Menninger stated,

If a doctor thinks only in terms of treating the disease, he thinks only of a library filled with medical reference books. If he is treating the patient, he will think of a library also filled with books to inspire, amuse, comfort, inform, and in any way help the individual patient.⁷

Despite this long association with the helping professions, bibliotherapy is not widely utilized and perhaps not well understood by most physicians, possibly because the concept has been developed and studied primarily within the library science literature. Nevertheless, the plethora of lay publications on self-treatment and health promotion testify to the public interest in the bibliotherapy concept.

Many definitions of bibliotherapy have been offered.⁸⁻¹¹ The following definition includes all of the significant elements of the concept and has been useful to the authors: Bibliotherapy is the use

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of any reading material recommended by a person with therapeutic intent as partial treatment for individuals suffering from problems of a medical, psychological, or social nature. The definition implies that the person recommending the reading material is intimately familiar with it and knows well the individual for whom the reading material is recommended. It suggests that the recommendation is being made to increase the likelihood that the patient will change in some positive way: by gaining knowledge, by modifying a belief or attitude, or by changing a behavior. Finally, the definition implies that bibliotherapy is usually adjunctive to the provision of specific medical or psychotherapeutic techniques.

Use of Bibliotherapy

Anyone who has read a book recognizes the ability of the written word to inspire, enlighten, relax, encourage, and clarify. In this sense, reading has universal therapeutic potential. More specifically, there are particular patients for whom bibliotherapy may be particularly valuable. Many patients who come to physicians with signs and symptoms of anxiety and depression are experiencing problems of living. Many of these problems have been addressed specifically in books written by individuals who have themselves experienced those problems. Certain patients may be experiencing a problem or challenge for the first time and need information on such issues as child rearing and discipline. Other patients need help dealing with life crises or life transitions such as divorce, chronic illness, and loss of a loved one. There are numerous patients for whom bibliotherapy is used as an adjunct to the management of lifestyle change. For example, people who wish to stop smoking, stop drinking excessively, lose weight, or change other self-defeating lifestyle patterns are excellent candidates for adjunctive reading therapy.

There are a variety of written materials that may have therapeutic potential. For the sake of simplicity, they may be divided as follows:

1. *Didactic self-help manuals*—These manuals are highly specific "how to" books promoting behavioral approaches to changing a variety of self-destructive behaviors. They address such issues as smoking, drinking, weight reduction, fitness, self-esteem, and getting along with others.

2. *Personal accountings*—These texts include emotional, didactic, and self-help aspects of dealing with common problems. They are commonly written by individuals who have experienced a problem such as divorce or chronic illness and are meant to describe the experience and reactions to it in a way that makes the experience more tolerable and understandable to the reader.

3. *Imaginative works*—These works include poetry, novels, short stories, and essays. The value is that they not only provide descriptions of shared human experience, but do so in such a way as to evoke an emotional response that is considered a requisite for meaningful change.

Whoever recommends reading material should be able to state specifically why he wants his patient to read that particular material. For example, are the reader's needs primarily for information, for promotion of personal growth, for modification of an attitudinal system, or for a desire to change a behavior pattern?¹²⁻¹⁴ The physician must be aware of the reading capabilities of the patient and the patient's ability to conceptualize and to learn from material having varying degrees of symbolism. His responsibility includes knowing the material well enough to tailor recommendations to an individual patient. With rare exceptions, the person recommending reading material should view bibliotherapy as adjunctive to other types of treatment such as personal counseling or pharmacotherapy.

Bryan¹⁵ has succinctly summarized the objectives of bibliotherapy as follows:

1. To show the reader he is not the first to have the problem
2. To permit the reader to see that more than one solution to his problem exists
3. To help the reader to see the basic motivation of people, including himself, involved in a particular situation
4. To help the reader see the values involved in the experience in human terms
5. To provide facts needed for the solution of his problem
6. To encourage the reader to face his situation realistically

Outcomes of Bibliotherapy

The efficacy of bibliotherapy is not well documented in the literature. In particular, there is little

evidence that fiction and other imaginative materials enhance personal growth and understanding. On the other hand, didactic materials such as self-help manuals have been to some extent critically evaluated. A therapeutic effect has been statistically documented for self-help reading addressing such issues as fear reduction,¹⁶ weight reduction,¹⁷ sexual dysfunction,¹⁸ assertiveness,¹⁹ and study-skills improvement.²⁰

Most of the problems associated with bibliotherapy occur when the reading selection is not adapted to the individual's needs. For example, the highly introspective person having trouble translating his thoughts into action may not benefit from a highly philosophical approach to his problem. A hypochondriacal patient may have an exacerbation of his symptoms after reading materials relating to his specific medical problem. An individual with a serious illness such as cancer may not benefit from reading about his illness until he is emotionally ready to do so. In this regard, it is essential that the recommending physician know how the author deals with the subject.

Another problem occurs when a patient misinterprets reading material and is not given the opportunity to discuss what he has read with his physician. Other errors include the selection of books that may be culturally, philosophically, or religiously at odds with the patient's background. For example, there are currently a number of excellent books on the subject of grief. These vary philosophically from books having a clear religious orientation to those that take no religious stance at all.

Adoption of Bibliotherapy in a Practice

The family physician who chooses to provide bibliotherapy must be motivated to understand his patients and the reading material prescribed in a way that will predict the patient's response to the material. If the physician is interested in employing bibliotherapy, but not particularly well read, an option would be to employ the services of a bibliotherapist within the community. This person is often a librarian or individual working in a reputable bookstore with a particular interest in the therapeutic value of reading. The authors have identified in the Denver area persons who, with no specific medical background, consistently make superb recommendations when an individual pa-

tient's problem is described to them. Other practical suggestions include the development of a lending library within the physician's office or an arrangement with a local library or bookstore to establish a section specifically oriented toward bibliotherapeutic use. For the interested physician not sure where to start, a number of bibliographies of readings with bibliotherapeutic potential may be found in the reference list²¹⁻²⁸ as well as in the Appendix.

The Appendix was devised by the authors to help the many patients coming to the offices of family physicians with "problems of living." The rationale for such a project was the belief that many patients experiencing reactive depression and anxiety are in fact undergoing the effects of the many life crises and transitions that might be at least partially approached through the judicious use of recommended readings.

The reading list was generated by developing a list of life problems and crises with which the authors had had experience with many of their patients. Also used were many of the life crises and transitions included in the Rahe and Holmes Social Readjustment Rating Scale.²⁸ This list of life crises and transitions was then sent to a variety of medical care providers in the Denver area, including family physicians, pediatricians, psychologists, psychiatrists, sex counselors, social workers, and therapists in such areas as marital counseling, adolescent counseling, death, dying, and grief, and lifestyle modifications including fitness, stress management, alcoholism, smoking, and weight reduction. These individuals were asked to list books they considered to be excellent references for people going through the variety of problems mentioned above. The final list of books was determined by tallying the scores assigned to books under these various topics and includes only those reading materials that were consistently rated as superior by specialists within that given area.

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Appendix

Suggested Readings for Patients With Problems of Living

Dealing With Life Crises and Transitions

General

Levinson DJ: The Seasons of a Man's Life. New York, Ballantine Books, 1979, \$5.95. This book deals with the developmental periods and tasks of adult men using both extensive anecdotes of the lives of men and a theoretical discussion of the adult life sequence including early adult transition, the settling-down period, and the mid-life transition period. The final chapter deals with the tasks and possibilities of adult development.

Sheehy G: Passages—Predictable Crises of Adult Life. New York, Bantam Books, 1977, \$3.95. This book is about the inevitable life crises of adulthood and a way to use life crises as an opportunity for creative change and growth.

Sheehy G: Pathfinders. New York, William Morrow Company, 1981, \$15.95. A sequel to *Passages*, the focus of this book is on the

successful negotiation of the various adult life crises. Pathfinders are people who successfully negotiate the normal predictable crises of living and who surmount life's accidents such as loss of a loved one, divorce, being fired, physical setback, and financial reversal.

Separating From Family of Origin

Halpern HM: Cutting Loose—An Adult Guide to Coming to Terms With Your Parents. Toronto, Bantam Books, 1978, \$2.75. This book is about separating from your parents in a way that not only is comfortable but also leads to greater fulfillment for the individual. It deals with the games parents play with their adult children including the use of guilt by mothers and continued despotism by fathers. It also deals with such issues as overly moralistic parents, unloving parents, and seductive parents.

Marriage

Rogers CR: Becoming Partners: Marriage and Its Alternatives. New York, Dell Publishing,

1972, \$4.95. The intent of this book is to help people decide whether they should marry and to whom. The chapters address various issues including the decision to marry, marital unhappiness, experimental marital relationships, and understanding why marriages do and do not work.

Choosing and Changing Careers

Bolles RN: What Color Is Your Parachute? Berkeley, Calif, Ten Speed Press, 1982, \$7.95. This book deals with many of the aspects of looking for a fulfilling occupation. Specific issues include dealing with rejection, understanding life satisfaction through work, and specific skills for obtaining the job you want.

Divorce (for Adults)

Weiss RS: Marital Separation. New York, Basic Books, 1975, \$6.95. The author collected his ideas for this book by interviewing hundreds of individuals going through a marital separation. The chapters deal with persistent problems such as continuing to

feel emotional attachment to the separated partner, emotional reactions to the loss of attachment, separation and identity change regarding relatives, dealing with friends, the effects of separation on children, starting over, legal matters, and new attachments.

Krantzler M: *Creative Divorce*. New York, Signet Books, 1974, \$2.95. This book deals with the feelings of men and women facing the need to build new lives in the wake of loneliness, guilt, anger, rejection, and failure. The author deals specifically with such issues as coming to terms with a previous marriage, the healing process of mourning, emotional traps, coping with realities of one's new life, and new ways of relating to people.

Divorce (for Parents)

Gardner R: *The Parents Book About Divorce*. New York, Bantam Books, 1979, \$3.50. This book describes for parents their child's perceptions regarding divorce: feelings, fears, ambivalence, and conflicts. It makes many suggestions for improved communication between parent and child and offers other advice on helping the child cope.

Divorce (for Children)

Gardner R: *The Boys and Girls Book About Divorce*. New York, Bantam Books, 1970, \$2.50. This book describes the feelings, fears, ambivalence, and conflicts that surround the process of divorce. It is sensitively written with suggestions for understanding and getting along better with parents.

Hazin BS: *Two Homes to Live In: A Child's Eye View of Divorce*. New York, Human Sciences Press, 1978, \$9.95. This book is more appropriate for the younger school-age child and preschool child. It has good illustrations and a simple text. It covers the process of divorce, the feelings, and means of coping.

Mayle P: *Divorce Can Happen to the Nicest People*. New York, Macmillan, 1979, \$5.95. The illustrations in this book are captivating; the text is candid and describes the common feelings and conflicts associated with divorce and methods of coping with life after divorce.

Aging

Kastenbaum R: *New Ways of Growing Old, Years of Fulfillment*. New York, Harper &

Row, 1979, \$4.95. This is a book of information and hope for the elderly. The author argues that society has done an injustice to older people by ignoring the wisdom of the elderly, their store of creativity, subtle judgment, untapped love, and energy. He describes in a straightforward way changes in body and mental functioning.

Montague A: *Growing Young*. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1981, \$12.95. The author discusses how American culture, schools, and families are in conspiracy against childlike traits: the need to love, to learn, to wonder, to know, to explore, and to experiment. The book is intended to encourage and teach adults to resist the temptation to think and act old.

Aging Parents

Silverstone B, Hyman H: *You and Your Aging Parent*. New York, Pantheon Books, 1982, \$8.95. The book addresses most of the emotional and practical issues related to dealing with and caring for aging parents, including feelings aroused in individuals. It discusses specific issues such as where elderly parents will live, money and its division, games that old people play, dealing with the loss of physical health, the loss of mental abilities, and helping aging parents deal with issues such as sexuality, widowhood, and remarriage.

Retirement

Dickinson PA: *The Complete Retirement Planning Book*. New York, D.P. Dutton, 1976, \$6.95. This book covers everything the retired couple needs to know, including planning in advance for retirement and also the enjoyment of retirement once it arrives. Chapters deal with body fitness, appropriate eating habits, financial planning, decisions about moving and where to live, wills, the use of lawyers, and the use of extra time available once retirement occurs.

Parents and Children

Pregnancy and Childbirth

Kitzinger S: *The Complete Book of Pregnancy and Childbirth*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1982, \$15.95. The book introduces the experience of pregnancy and childbirth to the woman who has never experienced childbirth. It deals with physical and emotional changes during pregnancy, the experience of birth, including what specifically happens during labor, the special needs of

the newborn, the father's role during pregnancy and childbirth, sexuality during pregnancy, preparing older children for the baby, and the loss of a baby.

Pregnancy After Thirty

Kappelman MM, Ackerman PR: *Parents After Thirty*. New York, Wideview Books, 1980, \$7.25. The author discusses special strengths and problems that come with being an over-30 first-time parent and shows how to evaluate individual readiness for parenting. The effects of parenting on careers and inevitable changing of lifestyles and social patterns are realistically presented. Every phase of child rearing is covered thoughtfully and in detail from nurturing the baby during pregnancy to preparing the adolescent for life.

Infertility

Silber SJ: *How to Get Pregnant*. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1981, \$6.95. This small book is full of information for the couple having fertility problems. It discusses in detail female and male reproductive functioning and what it is that physicians do in trying to unravel the problem of infertility.

Parenting

Mothering

Barber V, Skaggs M: *The Mother Person*. New York, Schocken Books, 1978, \$4.95. This book describes the process of adaptation to motherhood and the normal stages of a mother's development. It describes common fears, feelings, and potential pitfalls and offers advice for handling them.

McBride AB: *The Growth and Development of Mothers*. New York, Harper & Row, 1975, \$3.95. This book describes some of the myths associated with the motherhood mystique and discusses the process of adapting to motherhood. It also contains suggestions for mothers who are having a difficult time with the changing patterns of family life associated with having a child.

Fathering

Dodson F: *How to Father*. New York, New American Library, 1974, \$3.50. This book discusses child development and the roles that fathers can play in child rearing. It is strongest in discussing the school years and

ages. It also describes the grieving process in children.

Grollman EA: *Talking About Death: A Dialogue Between Parent and Child*. Boston, Beacon Press, 1976, \$4.95. A book that sensitively assists parents in explaining death to their children. A good reference list is included.

Books About Death (for Children)

Center for Attitudinal Healing: *There Is a Rainbow Behind Every Cloud*. Millbrae, Calif, Celestial Arts, 1979, \$5.95. Eleven children share their experiences with terminal illness, including ways in which they helped each other cope with the likelihood of their own death.

Krementz J: *How It Feels When a Parent Dies*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1981, \$9.95. This book tells the story of approximately twenty different children between 7 and 16 years of age who have lost loved ones. It describes the grieving process, feelings, and coping in different races, ethnic groups, religions, and situations.

Leshan E: *Learning to Say Goodbye: When a Parent Dies*. New York, Macmillan, 1979, \$7.95. This book answers the many questions that children have when a parent dies.

Stories About Death (for Children)

Fassler J: *My Grandpa Died Today*. New York, Human Sciences Press, 1971, \$9.95. This nicely illustrated book describes the process of losing a grandfather, the family's response, and the grieving process, and offers several ways for coping.

White EB: *Charlotte's Web*. New York, Harper & Row, 1952, \$7.95. This is the modern children's classic about a child losing a pet.

Lee V: *The Magic Moth*. New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1972, \$7.95. This book is a children's story about the death of a pet and how the child resolves the grief.

Lifestyle Modification

Fitness

Cooper KH: *The Aerobics Way*. New York, Bantam Books, 1977, \$3.50. A workbook designed to help readers choose aerobic activities they enjoy and develop a personal exercise plan that will lead to cardiovascular

fitness. There is an excellent discussion of the rationale for such a fitness program.

Stress Management

Tubeising DA: *Kicking Your Stress Habits—A Do-It-Yourself Guide for Coping With Stress*. Duluth, Minn, Whole Person Associates, 1981, \$10.00. This is a workbook and all-purpose guide for stress reduction. Chapters include personal management skills, relationship skills, outlook skills, stamina skills, and a final chapter that is an inventory allowing individuals to assess their coping habits.

Pelletier KR: *Mind as Healer—Mind as Slayer*. New York, Dell Publishing, 1977, \$6.95. This book describes the nature of stress, how it affects the individual, and how it relates to personality. The book also describes several methods of controlling stress including meditation, visualization, autogenic training, and biofeedback.

Girdano DA, Everly GS: *Controlling Stress and Tension: A Holistic Approach*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1980, \$5.95. This book defines stress, the body's response to it, and a theory of psychosomatic disorders. It assists the reader in managing his own personality traits and discusses techniques for managing or reducing stress by self-change and several different relaxation techniques.

Alcoholism

Miller WR, Munoz RF: *How to Control Your Drinking*. Albuquerque, University of New Mexico, The Press, 1982, \$9.95. This straightforward, straight-talking book deals with the issue of excessive drinking, defining the problem drinker as anyone who is experiencing significant life problems related to his or her use of alcohol. The authors deal very specifically with techniques for the control of alcohol consumption including counting drinks, learning self-control skills, slowing down, and refusing drinks.

Milan JR, Ketcham K: *Under the Influence: A Guide to the Myths and Realities of Alcoholism*. Seattle, Madrona Publishers, 1981, \$12.95. This book firmly takes the stance that alcoholism is a disease. It addresses the importance of nutrition in the progression and treatment, the relationship of hypoglycemia to alcoholism and recovery, specific guidelines for helping an alcoholic into treatment, the impact of alcohol on the family, and a model treatment program.

Alcoholism (for Spouses of Alcoholics)

Drews TR: *Getting Them Sober—A Guide for Those Who Live with an Alcoholic*. Plainfield, NJ, Logos International, 1980, \$2.95. This book is a practical guide for anyone living with an alcoholic. It makes specific recommendations concerning issues such as taking blame, arguing, taking care of yourself using confrontation, avoiding abuse, dealing with arrogance, and practical matters including driving with an alcoholic and understanding some of the aspects of the disease. It is well written, short, and to the point.

Smoking

Halper M: *How to Stop Smoking*. New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1980, \$6.95. This book is a workbook for the individual interested in stopping smoking. It includes a self-assessment to find out why he or she smokes and what it would take to stop smoking, such as keeping a diary, aspects to quitting smoking, switching brands, or cutting down. There are also general chapters on stress reduction, keeping fit, and information about smoking and nutrition.

Changing Life Patterns

Ellis A, Harper RA: *A New Guide to Rational Living*. Hollywood, Calif, 1975, \$3.00. This book applies Ellis's Rational Emotive Theory to a variety of problems of daily living including dealing with neurotic behavior, unhappiness, dealing with excessive needs, dealing with fears, an approach to anxiety, improving self-discipline, and accepting reality.

Bolles RN: *The Three Boxes of Life and How to Get Out of Them*. Berkeley, Calif, Ten Speed Press, 1978, \$8.95. The author describes this book as a book about ideas including school, work, and retirement—what's wrong with them, what could be right with them, and what someone might do to change the direction of his or her life.

Sexuality

Sexuality: General Issues

Calderone MS, Johnson EW: *The Family Book on Sexuality*. New York, Harper & Row, 1981, \$15.55. The intent of this book is to cover a wide gamut of sexual issues as they relate to individuals and families. Chapters include understanding ourselves as sexual persons.

how the human sexual response works, how human beings have children, family planning, marriage, sexual education programs, and sex in special situations such as people with disabilities or abused and neglected children, the single person, and the elderly.

Comfort A: *The Joy of Sex*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 1972, \$10.95. This book is a sexual manual that aims at raising people's consciousness of their sexual potential. It is well illustrated and appropriate for all persons who feel that they are not enjoying their sexuality as they might.

Sexuality: Female Issues

Boston Women's Health Collective: *Our Bodies—Ourselves*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 1972, \$8.95. This book deals with many women's issues including female anatomy and physiology, sexuality, sexual relationships, homosexuality, women's nutrition, exercise and health habits, birth control issues, including abortion, parenthood, pregnancy, preparation for childbirth, and menopause.

Sexuality: Male Issues

Zilbergeld B: *Male Sexuality*. New York, Bantam Books, 1978, \$3.95. Written by a clinical psychologist specializing in sexual therapy for men, this book deals with the physical and emotional aspects of sex for men. It dispels common myths men have about sexuality and deals specifically with sexual problems such as ejaculatory control, erection, sexuality in aging, and sexuality during various medical problems.

Sex Education (for Children)

Mayle P: *Where Did I Come From? Secaucus, NJ, Lyle Stewart, 1973, \$4.95*. This book, for the school-age child, describes the anatomical difference between men and women, intercourse, conception, pregnancy, intrauterine development, and the birth process.

Andry A, Schepp S: *How Babies Are Made*. New York, Time-Life Books, 1968, \$7.95. This is a good narrative describing the process from conception through delivery with excellent illustrations.

Puberty

Mayle P: *What's Happening to Me? Secaucus, NJ, Lyle Stewart, 1981, \$4.95*. This is a book written for late latency and early teenage

years regarding the changes of puberty. It has captivating illustrations and pulls no punches.

Sex Education (for Adolescents)

Wibbelsman C, McCoy K: *The Teenage Body Book*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 1978, \$7.95. This very complete book is written for teenagers regarding all aspects of puberty, hygiene, common illnesses, venereal disease, birth control, pregnancy, parenthood, and sex education. It includes many vignettes from the lives of teenagers, is very readable, and is to be used as a resource book.

Bell R: *Changing Bodies, Changing Lives: For Teens on Sex and Relationships*. New York, Random House, 1980, \$7.95. This book describes changes of puberty, sexuality, physical health care, and emotional changes associated with the teenage years. The book contains many excerpts from the lives of teenagers and answers common questions that teenagers ask.

Homosexuality (for Parents of Gay Adults)

Fairchild B, Hayward B: *Now That You Know: What Every Parent Should Know About Homosexuality*. New York, Harcourt Brace, 1981, \$6.95. This book was written by two mothers of gay children and draws on numerous candid interviews with gay men and women and their parents. The authors discuss the nature of homosexuality, its effect on the lives and careers of children, the prospects for gay relationships, and the troubling question of religion. They have specific recommendations for parents in terms of responding supportively to gay children and how to keep families together in a bond of understanding and affection.

Coping With Feelings

Loss

Colgrove M, Bloomfield HH, McWilliams P: *How to Survive the Loss of a Love*. Toronto, Bantam Books, 1976, \$2.95. This book deals in a warm, yet informative and helpful, way with one of the most common and painful of human experiences: loss. It is a guide to overcoming grief and unhappiness and is described as a practical manual for emotional survival. The book deals specifically with topics of loss survival and healing and is a step-by-step guide to getting oneself into position to enjoy life after divorce.

Depression

DeRosis HA, Pellegrino V: *The Book of Hope*. New York, Bantam Books, 1976, \$3.95. The book deals specifically with depression as it relates to women. Chapters discuss specific areas in women's lives including work, marriage, myths about sexuality, motherhood without guilt, and dealing with the alcoholic husband.

Anger

Rubin TI: *The Angry Book*. New York, Collier Books, 1969, \$3.95. This book is about the basic human emotion: anger. The author's premise is that most people have trouble handling anger. The author feels that poor mental health, poor physical health, and damage to relationships, especially parent-child relationships, are all related to our culturally poor understanding of the meaning of the emotion of anger.

Poor Self-Esteem

Peck MS: *The Road Less Traveled. A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 1978, \$5.95. The author describes the process of individual growth through his vast experience as a psychotherapist. He makes suggestions for ways in which people can confront and resolve their problems and reach higher levels of understanding. The book also includes a discussion of the nature of loving relationships, how to recognize true compatibility, how to distinguish dependency from love, how to become one's own person, and how to become a more sensitive parent.

Improving Children's Self-Esteem

Clemes H, Bean R: *Self Esteem: The Key to Your Child's Well Being*. New York, GP Putnam's Sons, 1981, \$12.95. This book describes the importance of self-esteem, how children develop it, and the parent's role in promoting self-esteem. It has a good section on communication and also discusses ways of building the parent's self-esteem.

Helping Children Understand Feelings

Berger T: *I Have Feelings*. New York, Human Sciences Press, 1971, \$9.95. This book has several nice illustrations and a text presenting vignettes from children's lives and discussing their feelings. This book may be used by parents to provide an opportunity to talk about feelings in greater depth.