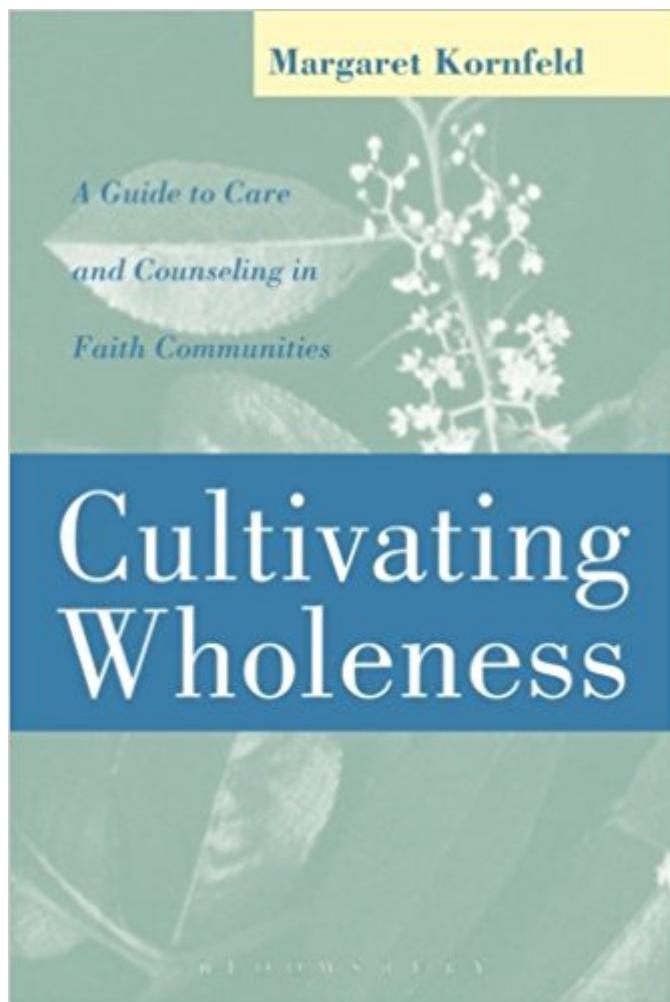


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Cultivating Wholeness: A Guide To Care And Counseling In Faith Communities



Synopsis

Commissioned by the Blanton-Peale Institute, *Cultivating Wholeness* is a practical, comprehensive, contemporary guide to community care and counseling. Margaret Zipse Kornfeld, a pastoral psychotherapist for almost thirty years, focuses on wholeness, the dynamics change, an inclusive understanding of spirituality, the caregiver/ counselor, and on community as not merely the context for healing but also the means by which healing happens.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Kornfeld's book, *Cultivating Wholeness*, is an excellent primer for the parish pastor or lay counselor who does short term counseling. She gives a cursory overview of many mental health issues as well as a course of action (the five step solution-focused treatment model). Pastors will find this book enlightening and helpful. The only word of caution I would make is that no one thinks that because they have read this book, they are now equipped to perform counseling beyond basic pastor/parishioner, brief, solution-focused treatment. All in all, this book is an excellent contribution to the care and counseling of individuals in faith communities. Her five appendices are very accommodating; they include forms and paperwork which will make the solution-focused treatment flow smoothly and provide thorough information-gathering instruments for the pastor or lay counselor. Pastors and lay counselors must read chapter ten if nothing else, especially the portion which deals with professional boundaries and ethical responsibilities. It is excellent. Kornfeld discusses the position of power of the pastor or counselor and how it creates a power imbalance

between pastor and parishioner. This power imbalance can be a subtle precursor to sexual entanglement and it needs to be thoroughly understood by the pastor or lay counselor. I would highly recommend this book for faith communities, but as a means to an end and not as an end in itself. Kornfeld includes books and articles in her bibliography which are copious resources for further study.

Margaret Kornfeld has done a marvelous job of integrating the kind of practical wisdom that develops in clinical supervision with interfaith religious tradition and practice. She has developed the knowledge in a format with the student in mind, at the same time as providing depth and breadth of resources for the teacher. And congratulations to the publisher for allowing the kinds of multiple citations--resources at the end of the chapter, endnotes, and bibliography--that makes "Cultivating Wholeness" into a true guide for continuing education. This really is a tremendously useful book. One really does get the sense that she has synthesized the knowledge of the therapeutic tradition that Blanton-Peale has represented and makes it available in an appropriate manner for the beginning general practitioner.

This book touches the roots of our being. It is a well-written guide for anyone interested in healing in religious communities. All of us are surrounded by change. Some of the changes uproot us. They upset the body-mind-soul balance that is critical to our mental and physical health. Left to our own devices, Margaret Kornfeld says, this uprooting will manifest itself in more severe problems. Communities of care, she says, have stepped in to fill this void. These are groups that combine psychological with spiritual training to help individuals restore wholeness. Kornfeld, a pastoral psychotherapist, an American Baptist pastor, faculty member at Union Theological Seminary, has written an encyclopedic treatment of caregiving. Thorough, engaging and well-written, this book will become dog-eared as you pull it off your shelf to consult. For all caregivers - professional, clergy and caring amateurs - this book is a must-read resource.

What a privilege to read CULTIVATING WHOLENESS! I was both informed and awed. It is a 'tour de force' --- a comprehensive (virtually encyclopedic), concrete, pragmatic, and thematically held together work on change within the context of congregational/community life that takes account of sophisticated psychotherapeutic processes informed by biblical hermeneutic. The care-giver must be an expert, and is helped to be an expert, without being a specialist. In short, THIS IS THE BEST BOOK ON PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING IN SCOPE AND SPECIFICS WITH WHICH I

AM ACQUAINTED.

I have had the privilege of accompanying Margaret Kornfeld's book, *Cultivating Wholeness: A Guide to Care and Counseling in Faith Communities*, in its birthing process over the past several years. I witnessed how Margaret brought together her many fields of experience and expertise: her teaching of psychodynamics to clergy psychotherapists at the Blanton Peale Graduate Institute and to the seminarians at Union Theological Seminary; her many years in an outstanding practice as therapist in individual, group and couples therapy, her pastoral experience at Judson Memorial Church; her work in AIDS ministry; her leadership roles both in the regional and national levels of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors; her prodigious study and reading in all areas pertinent to pastoral ministry and counseling. The result is a prudent and balanced guide to all the complex issues of pastoral counseling. This is the one book I would recommend as a vade mecum for anyone involved in pastoral ministry in a faith community.

Kornfeld has produced a comprehensive work regarding the care of souls in a congregational setting. For this I applaud her. However, at times I felt as though her attempts at being comprehensive minimized her ability to specifically outline congregational health. I do agree with her emphasis on Brief Counseling and the Solution-Focused Method as being most appropriate when counseling/care is done within the life of a congregation. However, she failed to carefully delineate how to use these approaches in the variety of comprehensive issues she raised regarding health needs in a congregation. I appreciated her attempt to be inclusive of a variety of spiritualities. However, it is obvious that she is Christian and the limited times she embraced other spiritualities through illustrations or texts seemed more patronizing than sincere. I would have preferred she simply express her Christian bias without distracting me through failed attempts at inclusion. Because I have Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) my interest was keen when she used the term OCD. However, I was quite troubled that she attributed OCD to areas of unhealthiness that I believe to be incorrect. Basically, I challenge her usage of OCD. This observation made me wonder if she was in error in other areas that she addressed. Pointedly, if she erred regarding OCD had she offered other misleading or uninformed information? Overall, the work is a valuable tool for care givers in congregations. However, I am hesitant to recommend it as the primary tool for guiding that task. Rather, I would hope that the areas pointed toward in her work would prompt care givers to further explore sources that more adequately deal with specific areas of health.

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