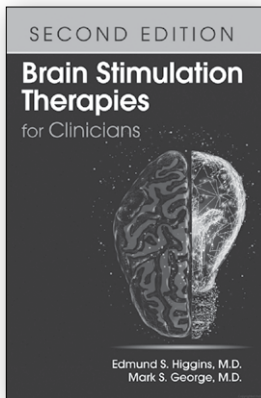


BOOK REVIEWS

Brain Stimulation Therapies for Clinicians. Second Edition



By Edmund S. Higgins and Mark S. George;
Washington, DC; American Psychiatric
Association Publishing; 2020;
ISBN 978-1-61537-167-9; pp 197;
\$72 (hardcover).

Brain stimulation techniques are slowly emerging as a distinct form of treatment that is different from pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy. The oldest of these techniques is electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). Currently, there are at least 13 forms of brain stimulation that are undergoing development and evaluation for neurologic and psychiatric disorders (p xiii). Some of these techniques are noninvasive (eg, transcranial magnetic stimulation [TMS]), while others require surgical implantation of electrodes (eg, vagus nerve stimulation [VNS] or deep brain stimulation [DBS]). They share one common feature (at least the techniques reviewed in this book): “the passage of an electrical current through neural tissue, either peripherally or centrally” (p xiv).

As there has been a lot of new development in this area, 2 experts, Edmund Higgins, MD, and Mark George, MD, prepared a second edition of their book *Brain Stimulation Therapies for Clinicians*. They intended to provide a quick-start volume for “helping clinicians, patients, and researchers efficiently understand the current knowledge about the techniques” (p xiv) and “gain a good understanding of the current state of brain stimulation therapies” (p xv). They also believe that this book could be of help to patients.

The introductory chapter reviews the history of electrical stimulation, with informative tidbits on epilepsy surgery and stimulation of the cortex by Wilder Penfield, work on self-stimulation by James Olds and Peter Milner, and stimulation of deep cortical structures by Robert Heath, who wondered if brain stimulation could be used to alter sexual orientation. The following 2 chapters focus on basic electricity (direct current, resistance, conductance, alternating current, electromagnetism, and various parameters of brain stimulation, including the “right” dose), and on the “electrical brain” (including a discussion of electroencephalography).

The next 3 chapters provide simple, standard reviews of 3 established stimulation techniques: ECT, VNS, and TMS. The chapter on ECT notes that, “The holy grail of ECT is to induce a focal seizure in the frontal

lobes” (p 54). Yet it also notes that “... a seizure is necessary but not sufficient. Furthermore, a seizure alone does not produce the antidepressant effects of ECT. The seizure must originate in specific regions and be powerful enough to generate the ‘secret sauce’” (p 54). In the discussion of the necessary use of anesthesia for ECT, the authors state that there is an interesting new trend—using ketamine instead of propofol—yet they note some clinicians complain that “the recovery time is slower from ketamine than from propofol, and ketamine sometimes induces unusual fear or psychiatric reactions in patients as they wake up from anesthesia” (p 57). Another interesting piece of information presented here is that ECT (as well as VNS, TMS, antidepressants, lithium, and exercise) increases brain-derived neurotrophic factor.

The chapter on VNS starts with an interesting discussion of the role of the vagus nerve, which is to the body what the optic nerve is to the external world. “The optic nerve carries information about the external world, whereas the vagus nerve represents the ‘eyes’ into our internal world—our body and basic life processes” (p 72). The authors further discuss how VNS is administered (a device similar to a cardiac pacemaker), what VNS does to the brain, and safety issues and adverse effects. The chapter mentions an interesting phenomenon of enhanced efficacy with continued use over time, and that while the effects of VNS are not immediate, they often last for many years. Nevertheless, the authors emphasize that the data on the efficacy of VNS is not Class I

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evidence (a positive, double-blind, placebo-controlled study), and thus not all insurance companies will reimburse VNS treatment of depression.

The TMS chapter is a bit “hit and miss.” There are 7 TMS devices that are FDA-approved for treating depression (and one handheld home TMS device for aborting migraine headaches). The chapter reviews the effects of TMS on the brain in detail, how it is used, safety issues and adverse events, and numerous possible indications. However, discussion of pertinent clinical issues, such as the frequency, length, and number of administrations of TMS, is missing.

The next 3 chapters briefly review rather experimental and currently researched techniques, such as DBS and cortical stimulation; transcranial direct current stimulation (several studies of its use in depression have been disappointing so far); and several

other techniques, such as transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation, electroacupuncture, and cranial electrotherapy stimulation.

The last chapter describes some new possible therapies, such as low-intensity focused ultrasound pulsation and temporally interfering electric fields. Finally, the authors believe that “the future is bright for brain stimulating therapies” (p 169) and that the field is rapidly growing.

This volume is a brief, easy-to-understand review of old (ECT) and new areas of psychiatric treatment. I am not sure who the intended readership of this volume should be. Patients? It may be too complicated for them. Clinicians? Well, the bulk and most interesting part of the book focuses on ECT, VNS, and TMS. There are entire books devoted to each of these techniques (eg, *Principles and Practices of Electroconvulsive*

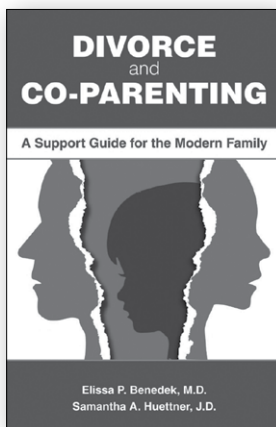
Therapy by Keith G. Rasmussen, or *Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation in Clinical Psychiatry* by Mark S. George and Robert H. Belmaker) that provide much more detailed, practical, and clinically useful information for those who want to practice these techniques. The rest of the book discusses rather experimental and not well-established techniques. Thus, those interested in learning and starting ECT or TMS would benefit more from books that focus solely on one technique (VNS is to be referred for surgical implantation anyway). This volume could be used as teaching material for trainees, but not much beyond that.

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DISCLOSURE: Dr. Balon is a member of the American Psychiatric Association Publishing Editorial Board.

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Divorce and Co-parenting. A Support Guide for the Modern Family



By Elissa P. Benedek and Samantha A. Huettner; American Psychiatric Association Publishing; Washington, DC; 2020; ISBN 978-1-61537-220-1; pp 248; \$29 (paperback).

Divorce and its consequences are a serious social problem. As authors Elissa Benedek, MD, (a practicing adult, child, and forensic psychiatrist) and Samantha Huettner, JD, (an attorney and mediator) write, “Tragically, one of the prices we are now paying for the gain in personal growth and expansion of life choices is the disintegration of the traditional family and repercussions of divorce” (p 3). As examples, they cite a number of statistics from various US studies from the past decade: about 40% to 50% of marriages end in divorce; 16% of children live in blended families; 25% of children younger than 18 live with just one parent; children in father-absent homes

are almost 4 times more likely to be poor; the median income for families led by a single mother in 2017 was about \$41,700, compared with the median income of \$90,380 for married couples; and many custodial mothers have difficulties in collecting adequate child support. These are mostly economic statistics that do not mention the often serious psychological and other consequences of divorce for children and some parents. The price is difficult to enumerate, but certainly is enormous.

Most likely, those facing a divorce are not prepared for all the issues and consequences involved. Thus, the authors put this volume together for divorced and divorcing parents as well as for lawyers, psychiatrists, and therapists who are trying to assist them. This volume is actually a rewritten version of the authors’ book “*How to Help Your Children Overcome Your Divorce*” published more than 2 decades ago.

The book’s 15 chapters illustrate its comprehensiveness in covering all areas, and not leaving a stone unturned: (1) It’s a Different World Now; (2) The Decision to Divorce. Putting Children First; (3) How to Tell Your Children About Your Divorce; (4) Minimizing the Effects of the Legal Process on Your Children; (5) Impact of Divorce on Children; (6) Impact of Divorce on Parenting;

(7) Parenting Time and Related Issues; (8) Special Parenting Issues; (9) Parenting Techniques to Build Your Child’s Self-Esteem; (10) Discipline as Guide and Teacher; (11) Making Use of Others’ Support; (12) Danger Signals. When is Professional Help Needed; (13) Adjusting to Life in a Stepfamily; (14) Questions and Answers; and (15) Additional Resources and Helpful Organizations for Divorced Parents.

The chapter on the decision to divorce notes that “children whose parents are divorced are at a higher risk for a variety of developmental and psychological problems” (p 7), but that keeping the marriage together just for the sake of the children rarely works. The authors add that “Having divorced parents or being part of a divorced family is not harmful in itself. Far more important is the quality of the relationships between family members and their home life” (p 8). This chapter discusses the fact that children know something is wrong, the importance of attachment, and the fact that children need both parents. There are data indicating that “fathers are more likely to drop out of a child’s life than are mothers” (p 11). This is a serious problem, because children lose their source of male behavior in various areas, such as achievement, responsibility, fatherhood, getting along with others, handling aggressive feelings, or relating to the opposite sex. The chapter on communicating with one’s children about divorce emphasizes the importance of preparation and talking to children, if possible, with the spouse (or how to do it without the spouse), and provides examples of responses to common questions and age-appropriate explanations.

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The following chapter on minimizing the effects of the legal process on one's children is a very good guide through the legal process. It discusses what to expect during your first meeting with a family law attorney, including fees; expenses; management of one's expectations of divorce outcome; methods of dispute resolution (litigation and the adversarial system; mediation; arbitration; parenting coordinators); custodial arrangements; types of custody (legal and physical custody and joint custody, and which is better: sole or joint custody); the role of mental health professionals in custody disputes; parenting time; child support; handling disputes after the divorce is final; and what to do when there is no conflict.

The discussion of the impact of divorce on children is very important. It starts with children's most common reactions, such as fears, sadness, anger, guilt, loneliness, rejection, regression, sleep problems, masturbation, school problems, physical problems, eating problems, and wishes for reconciliation and what to do about them. It expands to special considerations based on age (preschool years; age 5 to 8; age 9 to 12; teenagers) and adds that the parents' own reactions have an impact, too. The chapter concludes with a great table listing "What Your Children Need Most."

The chapter on the impact that divorce has on parenting is similarly detailed, touching on adult

regression, denial, and sublimation. There are 2 very useful tables in this chapter: one summarizes warning signs that may indicate that parents are depending too much on their children, and the other provides a guide to assigning chores and responsibilities to children. The treatise on parenting time is also very practical and detailed, bringing up issues such as what to do when children don't want to have parenting time (the custodial parent has a legal and moral responsibility to see that the children spend time with the other parent [p 117]) and how to deal with angry and alienated children. The chapter includes another great table that reviews suggestions on how to spend parenting time.

The discussion on special parenting issues brings up the role of mental health professionals and reviews issues such as a noncustodial parent who is uninvolved or absent; a parent who is overinvolved; a parent who is mentally ill; a parent who abuses alcoholic or drugs; a parent who is physically and/or emotionally abusive; parent who is incarcerated; a parent who died; and parent with a different value system.

The remaining chapters are similarly comprehensive and practical. The authors note that "Following divorce, parents often abandon their role as effective disciplinarians" (p 157) and that "In the past 20 years or so, many parents have chosen to act more like their children's friends

than parents" (p 159), purposefully avoiding discipline. The chapter on using other people's support includes another very useful table with guidelines for friends and relatives.

Another part that is equally important for parents and mental health professionals focuses on danger signals and when professional help is needed. The included table summarizes indications for immediate help. It also suggests how to select a therapist and address the possibility of physical and/or sexual abuse. The authors also warn that parents should not fall into the trap of being a "helicopter parent" and sounding an alarm whenever the child has a problem. The chapter on stepfamilies includes yet another useful table outlining guidelines for stepfamilies.

The questions and answers chapter addresses some common issues seen in the authors' practice. The final chapter not only includes a list of helpful organizations, but also a list of books and articles for further reading.

This is clearly an invaluable guide for parents going through divorce and mental health professionals involved in helping children of divorce and their parents, as well as for lawyers who provide legal advice and help in the process of divorce. It is comprehensive, readable, and filled with a wealth of information. It is a great value for its low price—a definite buy.

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Safe Passage: A Guide for Addressing School Violence



Edited by Michael B. Kelly and Anne B. McBride; Washington, DC; American Psychiatric Association Publishing; 2020; ISBN 987-1-61537-077-1; pp 236; \$48 (paperback).

School violence, specifically school shootings, has been an almost perpetual feature on the news lately. School violence is very disquieting to all of us. We see it on TV, we try to cope with the aftermath, and we ask ourselves “When and where is it going to happen next?” The perpetrators of school violence are frequently labeled, right or wrong, as mentally ill. Thus, psychiatry and allied disciplines are asked to find answers and solutions. However, it is clear that we do not have all the answers, and I am not sure whether many psychiatrists have full comprehension of the scope of school violence.

Michael B. Kelly, MD, and Anne B. McBride, MD, editors and authors or coauthors of 11 of the 12 chapters of *Safe Passage: A Guide for Addressing*

School Violence, seem to have full comprehension and a thorough understanding of school violence. In the Foreword to this book, Charles Scott poses 3 basic questions to be addressed in this volume: “First, what are the relevant factors that lead to violence in our schools? Second, how do various disciplines that interact with youth assess potential threats of violence? Third, what interventions have been shown to address and decrease aggression and violence in a school setting?” (p xiii). These 3 questions and their answers set up the framework of this book and its division into 3 parts: (I) Foundations, (II) Threat and Risk Assessment, and (III) Interventions.

Part I consists of 7 chapters: (1) An Introduction to School Violence; (2) A Recipe for Violence: Immaturity, Impulsivity, and Aggression; (3) Inconvenient Truths: Profiling and Its Limitations; (4) Danger at Home: Addressing Violence Outside School; (5) Bullying and Cyberbullying; (6) Understanding and Addressing Youth Sexual Violence; and (7) Growing Up in Fear: School Shootings, Attacks, and Gang Violence.

The first chapter makes several important points, namely that “Statistically speaking, we live in an age when individuals face the lowest-ever risk of being harmed by others. In fact, overall, youth violence at school has declined in recent decades” (p 3). Nevertheless, aggression and violence are still a part of everyday life,

and there are notable disparities in being at risk for violence. The authors also state that “We cannot eliminate aggression and violence—sports and other human aggressions will outlive all of us. We can, however, seek to redirect a student’s violent propensities away from deliberately harming others and toward prosocial pursuits that spare others from harm” (p 8).

The remaining 6 chapters of this part focus on helping the reader to understand school violence and aggression. Chapter 2 outlines maladaptive aggression subtypes—planned, instrumental, and predatory (PIP), and reactive, affective, defensive, and impulsive (RADI)—noting that aggression could be physical (easy to identify) and relational (could be insidious; could be defined as means of damaging a person’s social standing, peer support, and/or self-esteem). Violence could be interpersonal and/or structural. Common manifestations of school violence include student conflicts, bullying, gang violence, and (less frequently) mass shootings. Maladaptive aggression occurs outside an expected social context; includes aggressive acts that occur, despite the absence of an identifiable trigger and aggressive behavior that is out of proportion to its antecedent; and takes a long time to subside. Finally, this chapter points out that “young people are biologically primed to engage in reward-seeking behaviors around the time that puberty takes hold; however, their ability to control impulses does not mature until early adulthood” (p 15). The following chapter points out that profiling of possible perpetrators is generally ineffective and “most juvenile

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delinquency, violence, and maladaptive aggression do not continue into adulthood" (p 36).

The chapter on "danger at home" focuses on violence taking place outside of school, including experienced and witnessed violence. It includes a great table that defines terms related to child maltreatment and a good discussion of mandating reporting.

The following 3 chapters on bullying and cyberbullying, youth sexual violence, and school shootings, attacks, and gang violence are truly outstanding reviews of these topics. They include good tables (eg, main types of bullying; tips for preventing sexual harassment at school and how to respond to sexual harassment at school). The discussion of strategies for addressing bullying and cyberbullying at school reviews case law related to these issues. I found very useful the discussions of youth dating violence, youth date rape, and drug-facilitated sexual assault, and sexting and digital dating abuse (including tables of tips for dating abuse prevention programming and for educating youth about sexting). Finally, the chapter on school shootings, attacks, and gang violence reviews answers to questions such as whether we can screen students to detect potential shooters, what could be done to mitigate risk, whether active shooter drills can prevent

students from being harmed, what role the mental health system plays with potential school shooters, and what can be done to restrict access to firearms. The part on gang violence includes a table that lists examples of effective gang prevention and intervention programs for youth.

Part II contains 2 good chapters ([8] Hostile Intent: The Principles of Threat Assessment, and [9] Avoiding Danger: The Principles of Violence Risk Assessment) about the complex issue of threat and risk assessment.

The 3 chapters of Part III focus on addressing aggression and violence in schools, assessing and addressing school climate, and violence and the media. The chapters are comprehensive and filled with numerous useful details.

Chapters of all 3 parts feature key points and discussions of case vignettes and, at times, include clinical pearls.

The book also has 3 appendices, including Appendix A: Example Threat Assessment Questions for Use With Grade School Students; Appendix B: Example Threat Assessment Questions for Use With Middle School Students; and Appendix C: Example Threat Assessment Questions for Use With High School and College Students. Each appendix starts with an introduction to an example student and continues with initial questions

regarding a threat incident, precipitant to an event, physical evidence, motives for behavior, plan, accomplices, target(s), weapons, detail specificity and plausibility, and emotional intensity.

This is, in my opinion, a great and very important book. It addresses an area most of us worry about a lot, despite how very little we know. It is filled with useful and practical information. As I mentioned previously, the fact that the editors authored or coauthored 11 of the 12 chapters brings uniformity and avoids the overlap and unevenness that frequently occurs in edited books. The book is a truly comprehensive guide for all professionals involved in managing school violence. I agree with Charles Scott, who notes in the Foreword that "This outstanding book represents an invaluable resource for psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, teachers, administrators, judges, probation officers, lawyers, policy makers, and family members, all of whom are architects responsible for constructing a safe passage through the halls of school and the path of a student's life" (p xiii). This volume is a definite buy for all involved in managing school violence.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

The following books have been received or otherwise obtained and will be reviewed by selected individuals, the courtesy of the sender is acknowledged by this listing.

Different Patients, Different Therapies. Optimizing Treatment Using Differential Psychotherapeutics. Edited by Deborah L. Cabaniss and Yael Holoshitz; New York, New York; W.W. Norton & Company; 2019; ISBN 978-0393713428; pp 457; \$59.95 (hardcover).

Behavioral and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia. By Art Walaszek; Washington, DC; American Psychiatric Association Publishing; 2020; ISBN 978-1615371686; pp 269; \$65 (paperback).

Clinical Manual of Pediatric Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry, Second Edition. By Richard J. Shaw and David R. DeMaso; Washington, DC; American Psychiatric Association Publishing; 2020; ISBN 978-1-61537-231-7; pp 547; \$75 (paperback).

Practical Strategies in Geriatric Mental Health: Cases and Approaches. Edited by Laura B. Dunn and Erin L. Cassidy-Eagle; Washington, DC; American Psychiatric Association Publishing; 2020; ISBN 978-1615371488; pp 491; \$75 (paperback).