



# Book Reviews

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Counselling &  
Communication in Health  
Care.

Davis and Fallowfield.



**Book Reviews**

## **Counselling and Communication in Health Care. Ed. Hilton Davis and Lesley Fallowfield. Wiley. 1991.**

The focus of this book, of how to foster and develop a whole-person, emotion-oriented perspective to care amongst physical health care professionals is not a message that would strike many of these workers as being new or unfamiliar. Yet despite many years of concern about the quality of emotional care available to patients in medical settings and changes in training which attempt to renege this situation, relatively little has fundamentally changed. The difficulty, therefore, must at least partially lie at another level, at which the institutional ethos, ingrained practice, and the group task combine to create a dynamic in which “doing” or “curing” becomes idealised and is used defensively in the interest of creating distance, whilst being in contact with suffering human beings is neglected. We might well reflect on the reasons why, despite the individuals who populate them, institutions are often difficult to change and why the latest change management techniques and managerialist strategies may well make matters worse because they are based on the same defensive needs.