

Preface

The papers presented together in this volume, entitled *Handbook of Evidence-Based Psychodynamic Psychotherapy: Bridging the Gap Between Science and Practice*, make a convincing case for the importance of empirical research for the future of psychodynamics for two primary reasons. The first reason concerns the current marginalization of psychodynamic work within the mental health field which we see partially as a result of a lack of empirical grounding relative to other therapeutic modalities. Sound empirical research has the potential to affirm the important role that psychodynamic theory and treatment have in modern psychiatry and psychology. The second reason that research is crucial to the future of psychodynamic work concerns the role that systematic empirical investigations can have in developing and refining effective approaches to a variety of clinical problems. Empirical research functions as a check on our subjectivity and theoretical alliances in our on-going attempts to determine the approaches most helpful in working with our patients clinically. When familiar theories guiding our approaches do not seem to yield promising clinical results, it is our hope that clinicians will add systematic empirical research to their means of improving treatment. It is in this spirit of inquiry and on-going dialogue between clinicians and researchers that we present the following research papers. We are enthusiastic about offering work from experienced clinician–researchers who, in many cases, have been publishing their findings for decades. We believe that the uniform immediate interest in contributing reflects the feeling that such a volume is overdue. We are pleased to be adding to the evidence that psychodynamic psychotherapy is an effective treatment for many common psychological problems.

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