

In this slim volume Jack and Kerry Novick distill their combined century of psychoanalytic experience and thought into a clearly-written, practical guide that will help therapists and patients to reduce their dependence upon repetitive, dead-end patterns of feeling, behavior, and thought. Their description of closed-system patterns of self-regulation strikes chords that go back to Wilhelm Reich's "character armor" – patterns of defense which, while initially adaptive, become constricting and costly. Their technical handling of the constant oscillation between open- and closed-system functioning that is characteristic of psychoanalytic work recalls Siegfried Bernfeld's comparison of psychoanalysis to a conversation that is begun, then interrupted but later (with effort) renewed and deepened . . . until it is interrupted once again (and so on). Into this old wine the Novicks blend and integrate current findings from the biological, neurological, and social sciences; they then illustrate their theoretical perspective with clinical examples that provide useful guidance to therapists both new and experienced.

The Novicks bring an Eriksonian approach to the way they frame both (1) development across the life span and (2) the phases of treatment. They describe how each developmental phase is characterized by a specific challenge and how that challenge can be met with open-system or closed-system responses (or, as is usual, both). Their schematic approach to the tasks encountered by patient, therapist, and significant others as they traverse the therapeutic landscape from evaluation to post-termination will be particularly helpful to trainees; but it also will be of value to experienced therapists who wish to re-view their clinical work through a new lens.

This book has implications not just for clinical work but also for the psychoanalytic profession itself, a profession which sometimes has mired itself in closed-system functioning. The Novicks' approach expands the domain of psychoanalysis; it also broadens the tools available to those analysts and therapists who venture into new territories. It stands in stark contrast to the many currently popular approaches which focus on the description and elimination of symptoms, ignoring the human meanings which lie beneath them.

A careful reading of the Novicks' book will sensitize readers to the presence of closed-system patterns in themselves, their patients, and the world around them. The result? An enhanced freedom to choose.

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This outstanding book presents in a remarkably comprehensive and insightful manner the model conceptualized by Kerry and Jack Novick over the past fifty years. This model provides both a profoundly psychoanalytical understanding of the human development and an innovative methodology for the treatment of children, adolescents and adults.

The Novicks offer a major and extremely useful contribute for the analysts and the therapists ,who will appreciate their theoretical coherence and the clarity and richness of the case illustrations. Every chapter reflects a most sensitive approach, founded on a continuous collaboration and on the vital importance of maintaining or reestablishing the "freedom to choose".

Enrico de Vito, M.D., Psychoanalyst, Associazione per lo Studio dell'Adolescenza, Milano.

The Novicks' innovative two-system model of development and treatment represents a major advance in psychoanalytic theory and technique. Although their model has been extremely helpful to me both clinically and theoretically for a number of years, I found reading *Freedom to Choose* a most enriching experience which offered fresh insights and understanding of both my child and adult patients. Time and again I found myself immediately able to usefully apply what I had just read to my clinical work. Reading the Novicks' latest contribution has the potential to expand one's understanding of development and technique in significant ways. Thereby, one's clinical work can become more effective, and analytic therapy can be helpful to a broader range of patients, both children and adults. In addition, this model holds the promise of providing an integrative basis for a number of major analytic theories usually considered to be conflicting and for integrating psychoanalytic theory and technique with contemporary biological science including evolutionary theory and neurobiology.

William M. Singletary, MD, child and adult psychiatrist and psychoanalyst on the faculty of the Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia.

This book represents the culmination of fifty years of experience by two of the most creative thinkers in American psychoanalysis. In this exposition and expansion of their two systems model, the Novicks bring together their groundbreaking work on sado-masochism with their creative approach to the integration of ego psychological and relational approaches to clinical work. Not content to prioritize the intrapsychic or the environment, their two systems of self-regulation highlight how early and later unfortunate environmental interactions become internalized and part of intrapsychic conflict. As a result, the sado-masochistic behaviors and personality traits of the closed-system must be analyzed with consideration of the defensive and other dynamic functions they serve. On the other hand, attention to the open-system allows the analyst to support and encourage the healthier aspects of the patient's mental functioning in ways that earlier generations of analysts would have dismissed as merely supportive or parameters. This book is going to become a staple for training psychoanalytic candidates and other mental health disciplines on how to think and work clinically in an integrative and clinically sensitive manner. It will move us beyond today's pluralism toward a model that utilizes all that our disparate schools are learning about mental functioning, pathogenesis, and therapeutic action.

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