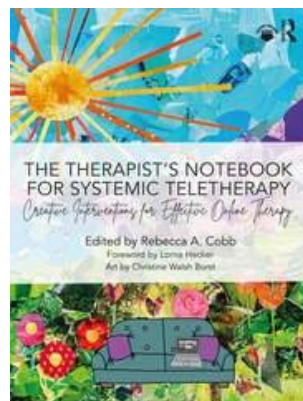


Book Review: The Therapist's Notebook for Systemic Teletherapy: Creative Interventions for Effective Online Therapy (Edited by Rebecca A. Cobb, Routledge, 2024)

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Abstract

What does it mean to practice systemic therapy in a virtual world? Can a screen truly mediate safety, attunement, and relational depth? *The Therapist's Notebook for Systemic Teletherapy: Creative Interventions for Effective Online Therapy*, edited by Rebecca A. Cobb, does not offer simple answers—it invites you to ask better questions. It is a resource that challenges the assumption that teletherapy is merely a compromise, reframing it as a complex ecology rich with possibility. Structured yet adaptable, this text explores the practical and ethical dimensions of systemic teletherapy. From addressing cultural resonance in virtual care to reimagining the Self of the Therapist as a systemic tool, it opens space for innovation while never losing sight of relational coherence. This is not a prescriptive guide—it is a carefully constructed framework that respects the practitioner's role as both creator and participant in the therapeutic process. What are the systemic principles that hold steady across bandwidth and pixels? How might the nuances of identity, culture, and power be negotiated through a virtual medium? This book does not dictate the answers—it equips you to find them. Whether you are a new therapist seeking structure or a seasoned clinician in search of renewal, this text promises to transform how you approach therapeutic presence in the digital age. Intrigued? You will want to read more.

Key words: Systemic Teletherapy, therapeutic presence, digital modalities,

cultural humility, relational attunement, virtual care, marginalized populations, Self of the Therapist, ethical praxis, creative interventions.

In a professional landscape increasingly saturated by digital expediciencies and algorithmic abstractions, *The Therapist's Notebook for Systemic Teletherapy* arrives not as a mere manual of method, but as a reverent recalibration—an invitation to rehumanize the digital encounter. Edited by Rebecca A. Cobb, this volume assembles a generative chorus of clinicians, supervisors, educators, and researchers who collectively resist the notion that virtuality is inherently disembodied or ethically diminished. Across 40 chapters organized into seven thematically curated sections—from clinical setup and therapeutic presence to supervision and training—the text offers interventions not as tools of control, but as relational gestures: ways of being-with, even through the screen. For those of us working at the intersection of systemic therapy, technology, and ethics, this book is not simply a compendium of techniques; it is a testimony to adaptability without erasure. It holds space for nuance. It recognizes that teletherapy, while emergent from crisis, has become its own ecology—demanding creativity not as spectacle, but as sustenance. What distinguishes this work is not its breadth (though it is expansive), nor its practicality (though it is generous with step-by-step guidance), but its implicit ethics. The contributors do not treat the screen as a barrier to presence; rather, they inquire: what forms of presence are possible here? How do we create resonance across latency? How might therapeutic attunement survive—and even thrive—through pixels and bandwidth? These are not hypothetical questions for those of us navigating the layered terrains of digital mental health, where client agency, clinical effectiveness, and equity are often shaped as much by broadband access and interface design as by theory or modality. Cobb and colleagues do not shy away from this complexity. Instead, they meet it with systemic thinking, cultural humility, and a pedagogy of care. Particularly notable is the section on Self of the Therapist, which does not treat clinician subjectivity as a contamination to be minimized, but as a relational node—vital, reflexive, and ethically consequential. In naming the therapist's body, identity, and internal state as part of the intervention, the authors refuse the illusion of neutrality. This is crucial, especially when working with marginalized populations whose trust in institutional care has been historically earned—if at all—through presence, not procedure. The interventions for working with LGBTQ+ clients, BIPOC families, neurodivergent individuals, and youth are attentive not only to cultural context, but to the textures of safety, embodiment, and invitation that teletherapy complicates. There is a radical honesty in this collection—an admission that virtual care is not the same as in-person care, and yet not lesser. Different

affordances. Different risks. Different forms of intimacy. All worth exploring. As a clinician-researcher and systems theorist, I am particularly moved by the book's structural fidelity to systemic principles. Each chapter models feedback loops—not just between therapist and client, but among theory, practice, and ethics. The reader is not positioned as a passive consumer of technique, but as a co-participant in ongoing inquiry. This is a rare and valuable stance, especially in a professional climate that often confuses replicability with efficacy. Of course, no single volume can address every complexity. There is more to be said about the biopolitical dimensions of digital care—the role of surveillance capitalism, platform monopolies, and digital colonialism in shaping both client experience and clinician autonomy. But *The Therapist's Notebook for Systemic Teletherapy* does not pretend to be exhaustive. Instead, it is porous: structured enough to guide, flexible enough to adapt, and open enough to be critiqued, extended, and reimagined. In the final accounting, this book is not a map, but a field guide. It offers directions not to a singular destination, but to multiple points of ethical entry. For new therapists navigating their first online sessions, it provides scaffolding. For seasoned clinicians retooling their practice, it offers renewal. For supervisors and educators, it opens dialogic spaces. And for all of us committed to sustaining therapeutic presence in disembodied times, it affirms that the work is still—resolutely—relational. This is, in essence, a text about coherence: clinical, ethical, relational. It reminds us that even in digitized space, resonance is possible. Not through mimicry of the in-person, but through a thoughtful translation—an intentional act of care across medium. And that, too, is therapy.

References

Cobb, R. A. (Ed.). (2024). *The therapist's notebook for systemic teletherapy: Creative interventions for effective online therapy*. Routledge.