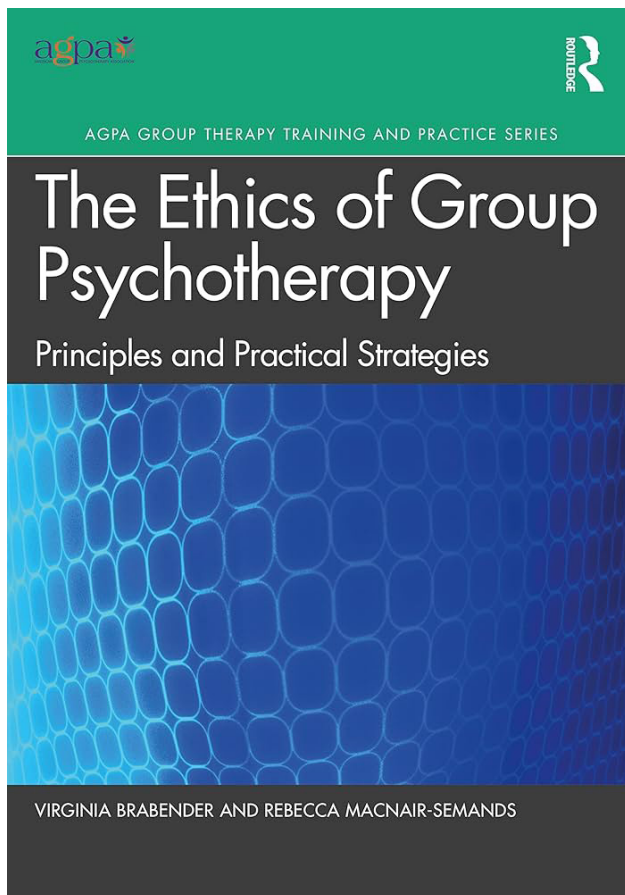


**Book Review**

## **Ethics in Group Psychotherapy: principles and practical strategies**

**Edited by Virginia Brabender,  
Rebecca MacNair-Semands  
(Routledge, 2022)**



**Reviewed by Thomas Northrup**  
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Virginia Brabender and Rebecca MacNair-Semands have put together an organized, compact ethics manual for group psychotherapists for the training and practice series of the American Group Psychotherapy Association, which Samuel Slavson founded. The work introduces an ethical decision-making program, drawn primarily from Koocher and Keith-Spiegel's 2016 model, for group therapists to examine and resolve ethical dilemmas. Readers will find the text immediately applicable because of the vignettes woven throughout, which illustrate ethical dilemmas that group therapists face.

*The Ethics of Group Psychotherapy* is a critical, unifying resource for group psychotherapists in the US, a cohort with diverse professional backgrounds and licensure. The book synthesizes the codes of ethics for the professions of group therapists, emphasizing particular strengths of certain disciplines (e.g., NASW's core value of social justice). It also includes references to current, high-quality research on best practices for working with diverse populations. It provides tools for group leaders to select participants and resources for both therapists and participants to use for self-reflection and evaluation.

The book opens with an overview of ethical and legal standards for mental health practitioners. It is not limited to professional ethics and the law; however, it also includes an assortment of moral and theoretical frameworks (e.g., virtue ethics, feminism) that will benefit group therapists. Each following chapter applies these frameworks and standards to an essential practice in group work (e.g., confidentiality, informed consent, supervision). At the end of every chapter, there are CEU and discussion questions, as well as further vignettes/role-plays on the chapter's topic. The last chapter explains the nature of practitioners' blind spots and emotional biases and provides resources to mitigate them and conduct groups with confidence.

The book's thorough examination of ethical dilemmas in group therapy may make some readers wish that it had also attended to the ethical merits of the practice. An unjust world may demand a practice that elicits peer support and mutual aid, like group psychotherapy. To this end, the book might have cited seminal ethicists of mutual aid, such as Kropotkin and J. L. Moreno. Psychodramatists, in particular, will notice—though perhaps not be surprised—that no mention is made of Moreno's contributions to mutual aid practice or to group psychotherapy itself, despite his having coined the term, and despite the book's emphasis on using role play to explore ethical dilemmas. Still, psychodramatists, sociometrists, and group psychotherapists will be grateful for this reference when ethical dilemmas arise in their and their peers' practices, while supervisors and trainers will find the citations and end-of-chapter resources useful in creating and enhancing their educational materials.