



# KOHLENBERG, R.J. AND TSAI, M. (2008). FUNCTIONAL ANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY (FAP) – CREATING INTENSE AND CURATIVE THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIPS.

MÁLAGA: UNIVERSITY OF MÁLAGA PUBLICATION SERVICE.

(Translated by Luis Valero and Sebastián Cobos)

Reviewed by:

**Miguel Ángel López Bermúdez**  
Clinical Psychology Centre, Bailén (Jaén)

**T**he title of this excellent book announces clearly and concisely what the reader will find explained inside: **psychotherapy** with a structure defined according to therapeutic rules whose intention leads to the **functional analysis** of behaviour, particularly verbal behaviour in Skinner's (1957) classic formulation. The approach described draws, therefore, on the philosophical principles of radical behaviourism.

Classical Behaviour Therapy has been criticized for having ignored the therapeutic relationship. However, **Functional Analytic Psychotherapy (FAP)** builds its entire structural scaffolding precisely on the basis of the **therapeutic relationship**. Thus, it proposes a series of precise rules to which the relationship should adhere in order to be a genuine **curative** relationship. What in classical therapy would be a mere excipient becomes an active ingredient in this type of therapy. This assumption inevitably leads therapists to adopt a role that is much more dynamic, active and attentive than those found in other therapies, as well as – allow me to infer – a more committed one, insofar as the functions entrusted to them are complex. Thus, the application of this therapy requires the therapist to identify **Clinically Relevant Behaviours**, evoke them, and reinforce Type 2 behaviours (the appropriate ones or therapeutic targets) and weaken those of Type 1 (the problematic ones for the session and for the client's everyday life). A task of such dimensions requires the therapeutic relationship to be a more **intense** one than in other therapies, whose scripts would be much more static; here, the script is idiosyncratic with the client within the session itself.

The book is divided into eight chapters, organized by the concepts and principles of the therapy, the definition of relevant behaviours, the therapeutic rules to be observed and the skills the therapist should possess, and

numerous examples with dialogues taken from therapeutic sessions. The first chapter deals with the theoretical foundations of FAP on the basis of functional analysis applied in the therapeutic session itself and the therapist-client dialogue. The second explains the concept of relevant clinical behaviours and sets out the five basic rules governing clinical application. Chapter 3 offers numerous examples of the functional analysis of verbal behaviour according to Skinner's (1957) classic formulation, applied in this therapeutic dialogue. Chapter 4 looks at the role of emotions and their clinical implications at a behavioural level, the difference with respect to cognitive constructs, and the role of emotions in the therapeutic relationship itself. Chapter 5 deals with the role of cognitions and beliefs and proposes alternative approaches to them from behaviourism, contrasting them with the perspectives of cognitive theories. In Chapter 6 the authors formulate a behavioural theory of "self", as a verbal and socially constructed concept, focusing on its genesis and development and proposing a classification of its disorders that is useful for functional analysis within the session. Chapter 7 contrasts FAP with psychodynamic concepts, even incorporating a possible functional interpretation of "transference", which here takes on a quite different meaning. In the final chapter the authors reflect on ethical and research issues, since in this type of psychotherapy there is a direct and genuine involvement of therapist and client, in a relationship that is not merely intellectual or professional, but also emotional and related to experiences within the sessions.

With this translation of the FAP manual, Professor Valero culminates the work of authors such as Dr. Rafael Ferro, the author of reference on FAP in Spanish, and Marino Pérez Álvarez (Pérez Álvarez, 1996a; 1996b) –



whose texts on the subject are now classics – in bringing this therapy to the attention of a Spanish readership.

FAP is, above all, an extremely useful therapy, whose effectiveness with different disorders has been endorsed in numerous works both in English (Callaghan, Summers & Weidman, 2003; Kanter, Kohlenberg & Loftus, 2002; Kanter, Schildcrout & Kohlenberg, 2005; Kanter et al., 2006; Vandenberghe, 2007) and in Spanish (Carrascoso, 2003; Ferro, 2008; Ferro & Valero, 1998; Ferro, Valero & López, 2007; Ferro, Valero & Vives, 2006; López, Ferro & Calvillo, 2002).

There remains a great deal to be done, but this magnificent book may provide further stimulus to research on solutions to psychological disorders. What it certainly does is to provide an excellent source of inspiration for psychologists, especially clinical psychologists and psychotherapists, to solve the psychological problems of our clients, both in session and beyond the consulting room.

#### REFERENCES

- Callaghan, G. M., Summers, C. J. & Weidman, M. (2003). The treatment of histrionic and narcissistic personality disorder behaviors: A single-subject demonstration of clinical effectiveness using Functional Analytic Psychotherapy. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 33, 321-339.
- Carrascoso, F. J. (2003). Jealousy: A case of application of Functional Analytic Psychotherapy. *Psychology in Spain*, 7, 88-98.
- Ferro, R. & Valero, L. (1998). Psicoterapias conductistas: nuevos enfoques clínicos [Behaviourist psychotherapies: new clinical perspectives]. *Psicologemas*, 12, 31-62.
- Ferro, R. (2008). Recent studies in functional analytic psychotherapy. *International Journal of Behavioral Consultation and Therapy*, 4, 239-249.
- Ferro, R., Valero, L. & López-Bérmudez, M.A. (2007). Novedades y aportaciones desde la Psicoterapia Analítica Funcional [Innovations and contributions from Functional Analytic Psychotherapy]. *Psicothema*, 19, 452-458.
- Ferro, R., Valero, L. & Vives, M. C. (2006). Application of Functional Analytic Psychotherapy: Clinical analysis of a patient with depressive disorder. *The Behavior Analyst Today*, 7, 1-18.
- Kanter, J. W., Landes, S. J., Busch, A. M., Rusch, L. C., Brown, K. R., Baruch, D. E. & Holman, G. I. (2006). The effect of contingent reinforcement on target variables in outpatient psychotherapy for depression: An investigation of functional analytic psychotherapy. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 29, 463-467.
- Kanter, J. W., Kohlenberg, R. J. & Loftus, E. F. (2002). Demand characteristics, treatment rationales, and cognitive therapy for depression. *Prevention & Treatment*, 5, Article 41.
- Kanter, J. W., Schildcrout, J. S. & Kohlenberg, R. J. (2005). In vivo processes in cognitive therapy for depression: Frequency and benefits. *Psychotherapy Research*, 15(4), 366-373.
- Kohlenberg, R. J., Kanter, J. W., Bolling, M. Y., Parker, C. & Tsai, M. (2002). Enhancing cognitive therapy for depression with functional analytic psychotherapy: Treatment guidelines and empirical findings. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 9(3), 213-229.
- López Bermúdez, M. A., Ferro, R. & Calvillo, M. (2002). Una aplicación de la Psicoterapia Analítica Funcional en un trastorno de angustia sin agorafobia [An application of Functional Analytic Psychotherapy in an anxiety disorder without agoraphobia]. *Análisis y Modificación de Conducta*, 28, 553-583.
- Pérez Álvarez, M. (1996a). *La psicoterapia desde el punto de vista conductista [Psychotherapy from the behaviourist perspective]*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva.
- Pérez Álvarez, M. (1996b). *Tratamientos psicológicos [Psychological treatments]*. Madrid: Universitas
- Skinner, B.F. (1957). *Verbal behaviour*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
- Vandenberghe, L. (2007). Functional analytic psychotherapy and the treatment of obsessive compulsive disorder. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly*, 20, 105-114.