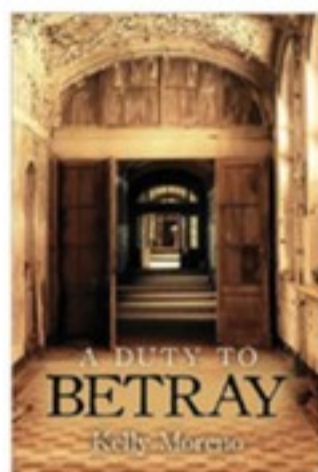


readers to explore greater levels of self through writing and meditation. According to the author, these practices can help people creatively engage with their thoughts in order to recover past events and former selves in order to make sense of their experiences. Moreover, it is the author's belief that our untrained minds lead us to reactive inaccurate processes but the process of becoming awake through meditation and writing connections free us to change toward peace and acceptance.

Snow provides a number of writing and meditation exercises throughout the book, some of which can even be extracted for client use, though they would have to be motivated and willing to do the work. And while the book could certainly be effective for individual clients, its format would best flourish in a weekend workshop, retreat, or short-term group situation for higher functioning persons wanting to explore relevant issues. However, it is possible that the prayers and Buddha

consciousness might be a put off to those of other religious persuasions.

Overall, this book is useful both for practitioners and the clients they work with, and I would recommend it.



A Duty to Betray

By Kelly Moreno, PhD

Reviewed by Quentin Dunne, MS, LMFT

Famed psychotherapist Irvin Yalom has sometimes

referred to his fictional books *Lying on the Couch* and *The Schopenhauer Cure* as “teaching novels,” works that impart valuable clinical principles and practices while also telling unique and compelling stories. Of course,

even the most insightful therapeutic perspective is unlikely to make any impact unless the surrounding narrative actually *is* unique and compelling.

Psychologist Kelly Moreno was likely guided by Yalom's literary spirit when he wrote *A Duty to Betray*, a meditation on psychotherapeutic/professional ethics, personal/moral responsibilities, and the sometimes inevitable (and potentially fatal) clash between the two. Any therapist reading this book will indeed think about the painful nuances of confidentiality and its limits, but will also be entertained and engaged as the exploration of this clash is placed within a riveting cat-and-mouse suspense thriller.

Soon-to-be-licensed psychologist Rick Ruiz is helping oversee the final weeks of a state mental hospital's operations when a former patient is admitted for treatment, a patient who has spent no small amount of time

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book reviews

planning this second encounter with Dr. Ruiz. This patient has AIDS, a condition for which he blames Dr. Ruiz and for which he has conceived a singular—and singularly memorable—form of revenge. Thus begins a series of twists and turns that won't be spoiled here. Suffice it to say, though, the book packs a strong punch and, at times, an unexpectedly tender one. It also features a surprising conclusion that feels hard earned and character-driven rather than convenient or gimmicky.

Aside from its suspenseful and involving story, *A Duty to Betray* derives its power from a number of effective touches. For one, setting the story in a half-empty mental hospital during its waning days contributes to an eerie and unsettling tone. For another, Moreno deftly conveys an atmosphere of balmy, late summer southern California, giving the book an edge of sundrenched noir. Finally, the story's vividly drawn supporting characters appear to have their own dreams, drives, and distinct ways of approaching the world, as opposed to being merely functional pawns of a plot.

Given the nature of its story and themes, *A Duty to Betray* is a worthy addition to the genre of the teaching novel. 📖

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