

PREFACE

In 2001, a conference on 'Problem Solving and Offenders' was held in Nottingham, UK. Speakers addressed theory, research, and practice, contributing to what turned out to be an inspiring event. The proceedings of that conference are published in a special issue of the journal *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 2001, Volume 11, No. 4 (<http://www.whurr.co.uk>).

The enthusiasm for the subject demonstrated at that conference led us to the decision to take the subject one step further forward by compiling an edited text. The joys of editing a book lie in a completely self-centred motivation. It is a great privilege to be able to choose a topic of personal interest, invite world-class researchers, academics, and practitioners to contribute, and be first to read their work. Each and every contribution to this text is a fascinating, incisive, and evidence-based account of offenders' social problem solving and issues relevant to it that will draw the field together and promote further development.

What is clear from this book is that evidence and practice regarding offenders' social problem solving are in good shape. One possible reason for this is that here is an area where theory-practice links are strong. The language and structure of social problem-solving research have a common-sense appeal to both practitioners and offender-clients. This permits the application of problem-solving therapies by practitioners of many different professional backgrounds with a wide range of clients. An active applied school enlivens and enriches research, which in turn informs and refines practice. This healthy symbiosis is one that should be nurtured and nourished, and we hope that this book will contribute to the continued development of both academic and applied aspects.

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