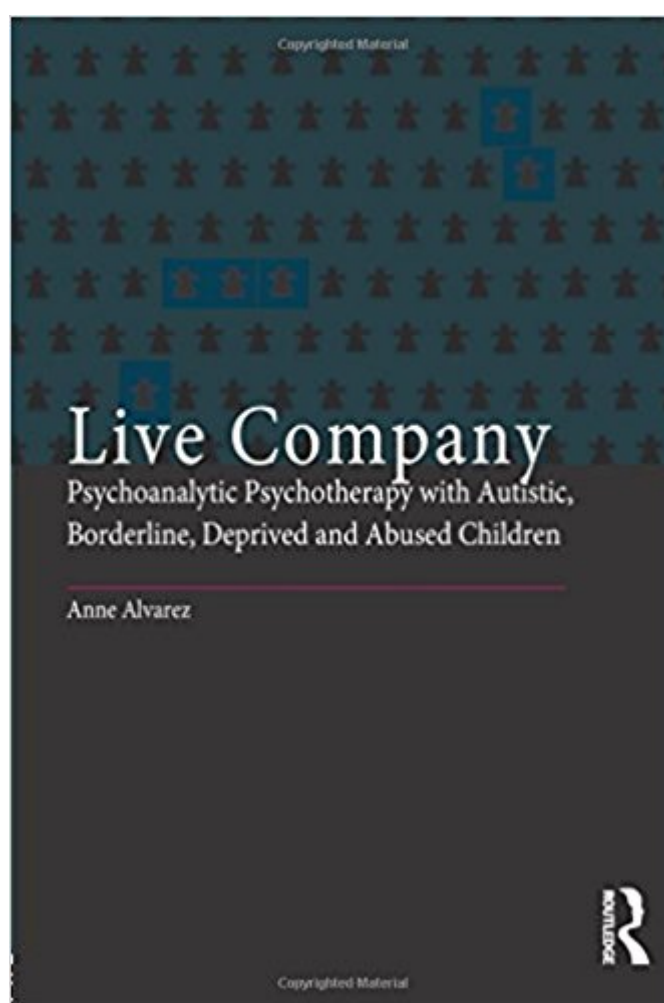


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# Live Company: Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy With Autistic, Borderline, Deprived And Abused Children



## Synopsis

Children whose minds as well as bodies have been damaged by the intrusions of sexual abuse, violence or neglect, and others, quite different, who are handicapped by their own mysterious sensitivities to more minor deprivations, may experience a type of black despair and cynicism that require long-term treatment and test the stamina of the psychotherapist to the utmost. In Live Company, Anne Alvarez reflects on thirty years' experience of treating autistic, psychotic and borderline children and adolescents by the methods of psychoanalytic psychotherapy. Central to the book is the moving story on an autistic child's long struggle between sanity and madness, in which the author describes the arduous journey that she as therapist and he as patient made towards new understanding and his partial recovery. Modern developments in psychoanalytic theory and technique mean that such children can be treated with some success. In the book the author discusses these developments, and also describes some of the areas of convergence and divergence between organicist and psychodynamicist theories of autism. Particularly important is her integration of psychoanalytic theory with the new findings in infant development and infant psychiatry. This has enabled her to formulate some new and exciting ideas and speculate on the need for some additions to established theory. Anne Alvarez has produced a professionally powerful and enlightening book, drawn from her extensive experience as a child psychotherapist at the Tavistock Clinic, which will be of interest to all professionals involved with children and adolescents as well as anyone interested in madness and the growth of the mind.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

this book is not about autism but about being human as a therapist and the humanity of very disturbed children..it is about how the author learned over time that the kind of psychoanalytic therapy she had originally tried with an autistic boy was not helpful - and how what she learned from that changed her ways of working with all sorts of disturbed children. Alvarez is a remarkably creative and honest clinician and a wonderful writer.

This book is about the bravest modern work on the subject I have seen. It takes real courage to stand up against the organized scorn of angry mothers of autistic children. Those women will want to kill you if you suggest that autism might be triggered by mistakes in child rearing, and might therefore be curable--or at least alleviated--through psychotherapy. Like it or not, this is what Alvarez is implying. Some reviewers think Temple Grandin is Brave??? What a joke.

One study of different methods of treatment and education for children with autism established that they did worse in psychoanalysis than in any other form of treatment. High-functioning people with autism are usually provoked to laughter or fury by reading psychoanalytic "interpretations" of their behaviour. Anyone genuinely interested in understanding autism should read one of the excellent first-person accounts written by brave and brilliant individuals such as Temple Grandin.

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