

**Joanna Minta's PhD thesis: *Transitions in
Constructing Careers. Messages for Counselling,*
The Faculty of Education, The University of Lower
Silesia, Wrocław, 19th April 2012**

On the 19th April 2012 at the Faculty of Education of the University of Lower Silesia in Wrocław, the public defence of the doctoral dissertation written by Joanna Minta took place; her work is entitled *Transitions in Constructing Careers. Messages for Counselling*. This dissertation was prepared under the supervision of Prof. Bożena Wojtasik, PhD (University of Lower Silesia) and reviewed by Prof. Ewa Kurantowicz, PhD (University of Lower Silesia) and Prof. Roman Leppert, PhD (Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz).

The choice of research theme on which the dissertation was based was not made by Joanna Minta coincidentally. Joanna Minta graduated in education (pedagogy) with a counselling specialization from the Faculty of Historical and Pedagogical Sciences at the University of Wrocław in 1999. She has been working as an academic teacher (an assistant) at the Unit of Social Pedagogy and Counselling of the University of Lower Silesia in Wrocław since 2001 as well as being a counselling practitioner (counsellor) cooperating with the Academic Career Offices and other institutions and organizations. She deals with the analysis of career counselling, as it is broadly understood. In her dissertation, Joanna Minta has undertaken an analysis of the transitions experienced by 'young adults' (who were born before 1980). She has also attempted to determine the importance of the assistance provided throughout counselling to young adults, who made use of such kinds of assistance during the process of career constructing and the process of transition.

The process of career constructing has been described by Joanna Minta in chapters I and II. While reading the andragogical and counsellological literature, the author has presented it as a permanent re- and co-construction process and as a sequence of events that both requires biographical learning and enables people to learn. The substantial part of chapter II is devoted to the analysis of the ongoing global discourse about career designing. While making use of the concepts of R. Vance Peavy, Mark S. Savickas and Jean Guichard, Joanna Minta has shown the change in the manner of perceiving and understanding 'career' within the social sciences. Therefore, chapter III is the natural consequence of the earlier reflections

and analyses of life transitions constitute this chapter. The author has pointed out that the counselling process and situation may also become a transition. She has demonstrated it by making use of the transition model by Nancy M. Schlossberg.

The research methodology has been presented in chapter IV. Research studies have been anchored in the qualitative paradigm, namely biographical methods.

In the next two chapters (VI and VII), the author has presented the results of her research. Both the types of transitions experienced by young adults and the roles of these transitions in their lives have been described in these chapters. The author has also called attention to the young adults' ways of career constructing and the ways of making use of career counselling. This part of Joanna Minta's dissertation is of special importance, especially for counselling researchers, because it shows the types of assessments of counsellors' assistance made by counselling recipients. This can enable them to identify the meaning and importance of counselling to young people, who are making use of counselling services.

Based on the results of her research, Joanna Minta has presented messages for current counselling and the conclusions provided by her research in chapter VII. The tool for counsellors elaborated on by the author, which is labelled by her as *a tool for identifying counselling clients' biographical transitions*, may be treated as a kind of culmination of practical conclusions. This tool is a perfect example of the application of current career counselling theories in practice and may be useful in the process of the qualitative analyzing of transitions experienced by clients during the life and career problems solving process.

The dissertation prepared by Joanna Minta, PhD has received very positive reviews and high marks. The reviewers highlighted Joanna Minta's erudition as well as her competencies, capabilities and solid research. They also emphasized the values of this dissertation itself: the issues undertaken in this dissertation, the timeliness of these issues and the fact that the analyses carried out by Joanna Minta are anchored in current discourse and research on career counselling being conducted not only in Poland, but also outside this country. Taking these all advantages of this dissertation into account, the reviewers asked for the PhD to be awarded and encouraged the publication of the doctoral thesis.

Anna Bilon

(Translated from Polish by Anna Bilon)