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SKILLS**

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A Peer Reviewed International Journal for the Advancement of Clinical Skills

Contents

Foreword

Welcome to the latest edition of the International Journal of Clinical Skills (IJOCS), Volume 9, Issue 1, Jan 2015.

Evidence regarding blended learning is increasing, but more needs to be known about its use in clinical education for clinical skills and how students utilise and perceive e-learning as part of a blended approach. Researchers from The University of Sydney and King's College London present a study which explores first year nursing students' perceptions, patterns of use and the influence on skill development of an e-learning resource when used to supplement traditional teaching methods to teach the skill of aseptic technique.

Breakaway skills are defined as 'a combination of physical techniques and safety principles that are designed to allow an individual to protect (oneself) from physical injury and escape from a potentially aggressive situation'. Aggression in many health care settings is unfortunately all too common a feature. Researchers at London South Bank University consider occupational therapy and nursing students' impressions of structured and discovery based teaching approaches to delivering breakaway skills. The findings of this study are important as it is the first of its kind relating specifically to students' experiences of being taught personal safety skills in a clinical setting.

'Pass the PSA (Prescribing Safety Assessment)' and 'The Unofficial Guide to Prescribing' are two important books reviewed in this issue of the International Journal of Clinical Skills. In addition to both books being a valuable introduction to drug prescribing for medical students, they are very useful refreshers for established doctors and nurse prescribers.

As always, your feedback is invaluable for the continued development of the International Journal of Clinical Skills – the only peer reviewed international journal devoted to clinical skills. E-mail: feedback@ijocs.org

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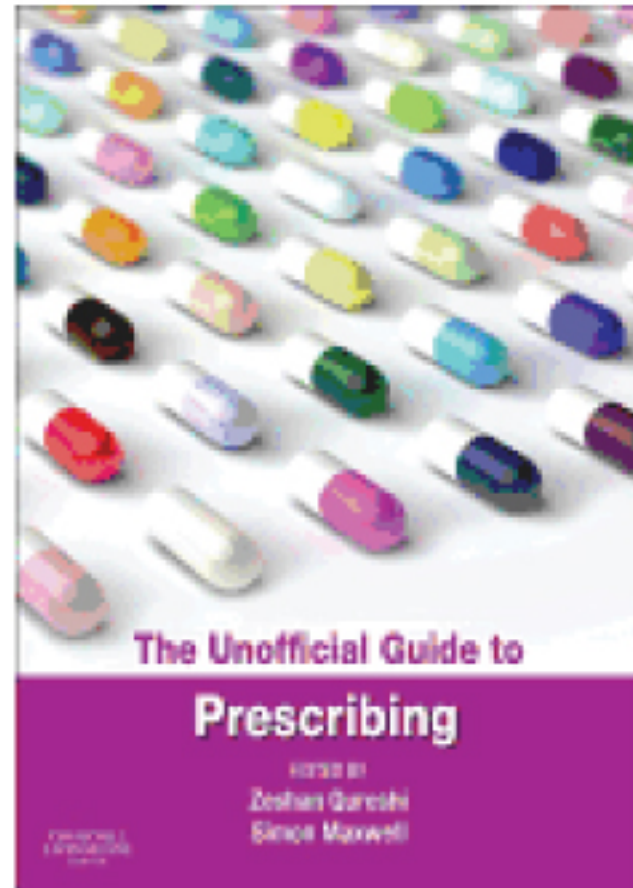
Always follow the guidelines issued by the appropriate authorities in the country in which you are practicing and the manufacturers of specific products. Medical knowledge is constantly changing and whilst the authors have ensured that all advice, recipes, formulas, instructions, applications, dosages and practices are based on current indications, there may be specific differences between communities. The IJOCs advises readers to confirm the information, especially with regard to drug usage, with current standards of practice.

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IJOCS Book Review



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Book Review: *The Unofficial Guide to Prescribing*

As part of 'The Unofficial Guide to...' series, this excellent book is a must have for all students, as well as professionals involved in prescribing and hospital care – it provides a solid foundation for dealing with emergency situations and complex prescribing scenarios. It strengthens theoretical knowledge and applies it to 'real life' situations.

In a world where drug costs are spiralling and prescribing errors can be fatal, it is important to have a trusted resource, which no doubt 'The Unofficial Guide to Prescribing' is becoming.

This thorough guide takes the reader through each of the various medical specialities, considering important scenarios and components within each speciality. There is an absolute wealth of information; tables and drug charts dispersed throughout the text provide valuable insight and information which might otherwise not come to light.

'Handing Over the Patient' sections are contained throughout the book; these are very useful in helping the reader prepare (or improve) hand-over technique, which can often be very poor in clinical practice and lay open the gates for fatal errors. This approach is reassuring and supplements each scenario very well.

There is no doubt a tremendous amount of knowledge has been organised into a concise as possible format in this book – the information may seem overwhelming at first, but upon closer inspection it is all essential knowledge, without which prescribing and clinical

practice would be deficient. Colour graphics in future editions might possibly make the book design even more appealing and perhaps allow the information to be more easily digested.

'The Unofficial Guide to Prescribing' should be introduced as early as possible during clinical training as it is a resource that provides the solid basis upon which students can learn and build upon throughout the rest of their careers. There is always variation in technique and prescribing; consequently readers must always update themselves with local policies and updated guidelines. However, this book tries very well to explain in detail much of the information and as such, readers will find it very easy to utilise this guide with additional updates from their local institutions.

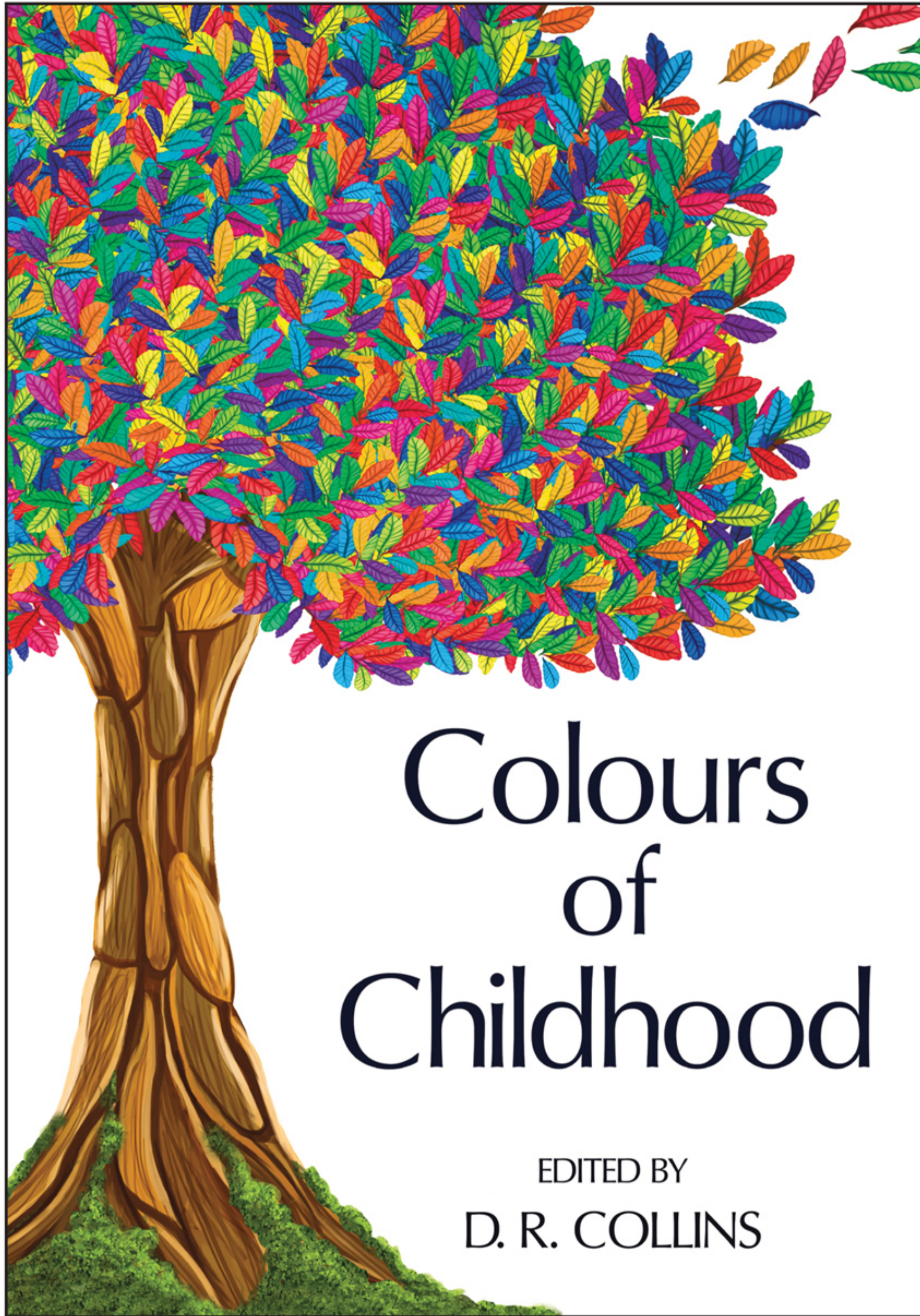
Not only are students, pharmacists and doctors expected to understand prescribing, but nurses and allied health professionals (such as physiotherapists) need to understand medications and prescribing in order to conduct their health care duties competently. Despite its tremendous detail, 'The Unofficial Guide to Prescribing' is a brilliant resource for all those involved in clinical care. It provides the much needed insight into clinical care and prescribing activities, thereby preventing inadequate healthcare provision, as well as costly errors.

There is no better time that 'The Unofficial Guide to Prescribing' could have been published and it is an essential resource that should hold a place on all university reading lists.

Review by:
Dr Irfan Rashid MB BS MRCPCH
IJOCS Book Reviewer

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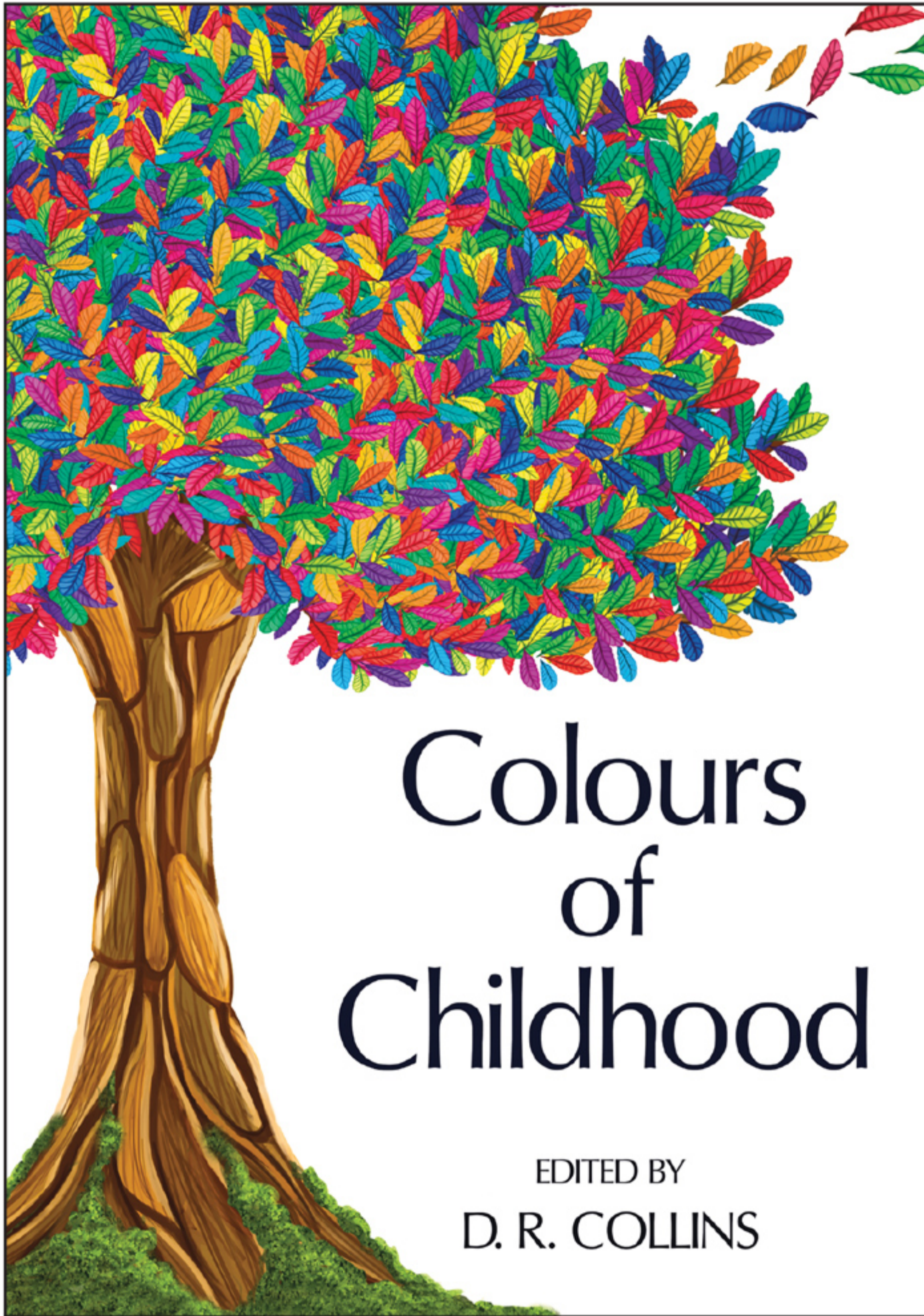
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We all have hopes and dreams, many of these in childhood. But life's twists and turns can make or break a future. **Colours of Childhood** is a tribute to childhood and its many colours. It includes contributions from over one hundred people from all walks of life; they include religious leaders, royalty, sporting personalities, actors, politicians and musicians, just to name a few. Over a hundred poems accompany the contributors' messages, with each poem giving a distinctive insight into childhood and much more. The full-page colour illustrations throughout the book provide a thought-provoking background to the poems. Childhood should be a time to be carefree and happy – but not all of us are so lucky. This unique anthology depicts also human determination and courage, as well as the urge to love and help others. It gives us hope for a better, more united world. What were your childhood hopes and dreams? Wherever life leads you, **Colours of Childhood** is sure to inspire you and brighten your way.

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