

Proceedings
of the
Inaugural Meeting
of the
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ADLERIAN
PSYCHOLOGY
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Opening Remarks

LEROY BOWMAN, Chairman, *Brooklyn, New York*

At the outset I want to strike a note that may help to attune our ears to the statements of the speakers about the purpose of this meeting. That purpose is to inaugurate The American Society of Adlerian Psychology, Inc. The time is ripe for such a move and America needs now more than ever before the tools that the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler provides, to meet its problems.

This is the moment in history when Adler's ideas should be promulgated, and responsible citizens given a cue to the values for today of this psychology. The dramatic, not to say melodramatic claims of some of the other schools of psychology have had their impact both on the trained minds in America and on the susceptible imagination of the man on the street. The claims, in the case of more than one psychological school of thought, have been large, and popular myth and imagination have seized on the overemphasis on one or another tenet of these schools and exaggerated it beyond all reason. There is no question, however, but that despite exaggerations and the overextended popular faiths in some unique aspects of one or another of these schools, the net result in terms of the better understanding of themselves by many persons have been great. And it has been wholesome.

Today, however, Americans are filled with concern over the immediate and the distant future. Uncertainty and trepidation are the burden of the conscious mental preoccupation of most of us and of the unexpressed fears lying deep in the lower psychic levels of us all.

We need a message carrying the authority of careful science that can be generally understood and that will point toward goals that can be achieved.

Adler's psychology is peculiarly fitting for this hour in America. It is simple and comprehensible and couched in terms that men and women of intelligence can understand. It is applicable in practice—

perhaps the most quickly applicable to the problems of everyday life of any of the great psychologists. It stresses purpose at a time when purpose for many people is losing its potency and meaning. It stresses individual responsibility in the community—whether it be the local or the national community, and spells out democracy in its deepest meaning to each striving person at a time when democracy needs reinvigoration in the hearts and minds of individuals. In its vital, dynamic, and yet sympathetic fashion, it helps ordinary people to see their everyday problems in relation to the big goals of humanity and brotherhood that it is hoped will persist through decades and centuries to come.

Hence I say emphatically that the purpose for which we have come here today is greater in significance than just the publicizing of what some people think is a tried and proven way of helping people understand themselves. It is all that and more. It is the coming of age at an auspicious time of a movement for self realization of huge masses of troubled individuals and a tool for deeper and sounder integration of our society around the national ideals that are being threatened.

This is the setting in which you and I will be privileged to listen to four brilliant and profound Adlerians.