

# An Instrument For Assessing Competencies In Establishing The Life Style

R.N. Lowe

Anyone who has given consideration to the preparation of practitioners to function as Adlerian counselors and psychotherapists is ever mindful of the many problems associated with assessing trainees' competencies. Since my first experience with Rudolf Dreikurs some thirty years ago, this topic has commanded both my thoughts and efforts. Two years ago I initiated a draft of an instrument under the title, *An Instrument for Assessing Competences — Adlerian Family Counseling\**, an attempt on my part to identify the multifarious aspects of skills and knowledge associated with Adlerian family counseling. More recently, following the original model, I designed the instrument which follows. I believe *The Individual Psychologist* affords practitioners a valuable vehicle for sharing efforts such as this. In the best of all worlds, some will share their "creations" and still others will report their experiences with the various approaches they have designed for the assessment process.

## Instructions

Following are a number of items identified as characteristics or qualities considered essential to conducting a life style analysis. The instrument is intended as a training device to direct attention to specific strengths or specific areas in need of attention.

The instrument may be used in a variety of ways. It may be completed by a student counselor for purposes of self-evaluation, by a supervisor, or by observers who wish to learn more about the process. When a student and supervisor are involved, it is suggested that optimum growth will probably

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*\*Later, with the assistance of Carol Lynn Morse and Betty Lowe, the instrument has been revised and is available upon request. It comprises about 10-0 relatively discrete items involved in Adlerian family counseling and as such does not readily lend itself to journal publication.*

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result when both the supervisor and the student counselor complete separate instruments and subsequently use these as a basis for conferring. In whatever capacity the instrument is used — by student, supervisor, or observer — it should be completed following, not during the analysis session.

Indicate on the scale provided the level you think the student counselor performed on each item.

### **Scale**

1. *Decidedly lacking in competence.* Counselor is sufficiently uninformed or inexperienced that s/he must confer with his/her supervisor for additional training.

2. *Lacking in competence.* Counselor will probably improve with additional information or experience. S/he may wish to confer with his/her supervisor or the supervisor may wish to confer with the counselor.

3. *Competent.* Counselor is qualified to function with minimal supervision.

4. *Decidedly competent.* Conferring with colleagues rather than supervisors is indicated.

5. *Insufficient information.* The competency is appropriate to the session, but information is unavailable or inadequate to evaluate the competency.

6. *Not applicable.* The competency is not appropriate to this particular session.

I am using this instrument: Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

- ( ) As a supervisor.
- ( ) As a peer/observer.
- ( ) For self-evaluation.

### **Part I Adlerian Theory**

Competencies expected of a counselor utilizing basis for undertaking the life style analysis include:

## PERSONAL CONGRUENCE

The counselor's posture, facial expressions and gestures are congruent with the client and the situation (1). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## ASSUMPTIONS

The counselor articulates Adler's assumptions about human behavior as they relate to the client's behavior (2). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## LIMITATIONS

The counselor recognizes the adequacy of her/his knowledge of Individual Psychology to the situation with which s/he is dealing (3). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## GUESSING

The counselor: 1 2 3 4 5 6

integrates what s/he has learned (4), and 1 2 3 4 5 6

"guesses in the right direction" (5). 1 2 3 4 5 6

The counselor: 1 2 3 4 5 6  
validates his/her "guesses" (6), and

in the absence of validation readily shifts the 1 2 3 4 5 6  
guessing process (7).

## PRIVATE LOGIC

The counselor is aware of the client's private logic 1 2 3 4 5 6  
and the purpose it serves (8).

## SOCIAL INTEREST

The counselor utilizes the notion of social interest in 1 2 3 4 5 6  
the helping process (9).

## Part II Adlerian Technique

Competencies expected of a counselor utilizing Adlerian techniques in the analysis process include:

## INTRODUCTION

The counselor easily orients the client to the life style session (10). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## SUBJECTIVE SITUATION

The Counselor solicits the subjective situation (11). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## OBJECTIVE SITUATION

The counselor explores the objective (current) situation in terms of the client's approach to the life tasks:

Work (12), 1 2 3 4 5 6

Society (13), 1 2 3 4 5 6

Sex (14), 1 2 3 4 5 6

## THE QUESTION

The counselor appropriately raises "The Question" (15). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## FAMILY CONSTELLATION

The counselor establishes the family constellation and draws appropriate inferences (16). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

The counselor recognizes the importance of identifying the family atmosphere (17). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## PARENTS

The counselor integrates information about the parents into the data gathering process (18). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## SIBLINGS

The counselor seeks attributes of siblings and is aware of the implied relationships of each to the client (19). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

The counselor appropriately solicits early recollections (20). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## DREAMS

The counselor appropriately solicits dreams or daydreams (21). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## DIAGNOSIS

The counselor identifies maladaptive symptomatology as consistent with the notions of social interest (22). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## INTERPRETATION

The counselor assists the client in recognizing his/her mistaken goals (23). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## INITIATING REDIRECTION

The counselor explores with the client the alternatives to the mistaken goal (24). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## CONFRONTATION

The counselor is able to utilize the technique of confrontation for purposes of: 1 2 3 4 5 6

keeping the client's attention on the problem being explored (25), and 1 2 3 4 5 6

assisting the client in understanding the apparent contradiction between statements and behaviors (26). 1 2 3 4 5 6

## SUMMARY

The counselor assists the client in understanding his/her subjective views, mistaken beliefs, private logic, or destructive behavior (27). 1 2 3 4 5 6

The counselor summarizes the client's life style in a succinct phrase or statement intelligible to the client (28). 1 2 3 4 5 6

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