

Dr. Dreikurs' time was always available for local radio and TV programs, mental health meetings, parent study groups, and any other group seeking better child-parent information. His lectures and demonstrations at the University of Oregon Medical School, in Portland, Oregon, have contributed to the good relationships between the Society and the medical profession. Never has any Adlerian, while in Oregon, more willingly contributed time and effort.

Membership of the Oregon Society in the International Association of Individual Psychology with delegates attending three Congresses was the direct result of arrangements made by Dr. Dreikurs for this affiliation. His initial work has led to such sustained activities as the Society's News Letter with world-wide circulation and a materials supply service which has filled almost 400 orders.

The activities of Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs, while at times turbulent and controversial, have always been effective. He retains an active, loyal Oregon following.

THE INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGIST LOOKS AT TESTING

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[From her paper read at the International Congress for Individual Psychology at Salzburg, Austria, in September 1966. Miss Seidler died on February 27, 1967.]

The purpose of this paper is to inquire whether the tremendous amount of psychological testing that is standard procedure in psychological examinations in the United States is of value to the clinical psychologist of Adlerian orientation. It is hard to imagine that the extensive research of many keen scholars who have dedicated lifetimes to the problem of testing could not be applied by Individual Psychologists in a meaningful way.

Let me state that there is no doubt in my mind that projective tests like the Rorschach Inkblot Test, the Thematic Apperception Test by Murray and various other Picture Tests, all the Drawing Tests like Karen Machover's "Drawing of a Human Figure," Buck's "House-Tree-Person," etc. are of value to the Individual Psychologist. They tend toward an understanding of the global personality, not merely toward detecting single traits of character, but observing how they are interrelated and—I add as an Adlerian—strive in a continuous dynamic stream toward the fictitious goal of the individual. But what about the army of so-called objective tests?

Binet's scale, for example, attempted to explore the subject's reasoning, judgment, comprehension, and memory, beside many already familiar measures. Binet grouped test items according to the age at which most children were able to solve them. This was to help place retarded children in classes where they could profit from teaching. There was no discussion of permanence of intelligence.

The Binet-Simon Scale was treated and revised periodically in accordance with typically American scientific procedures. The most important concepts that grew out of it were Mental Age versus Chronological Age and the ratio between M.A. and C.A., and the Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.). Why? It seemed of crucial importance to express test results in numbers, since numbers are objective, can be expressed graphically in various ways. Just remember the normal distribution curve representing the relationship of frequencies and scores.

In the attempt to be objective, psychological statistics became a very complex science. Validity and reliability of each test had to be carefully established,

which implied numerical correlations, correlation coefficients, standard errors, norms, etc. All these data were treated statistically. Intelligence profiles derived from batteries of tests replaced the too simple I.Q. Percentiles pinpointed the position of the individual participating in group tests. Aside from intelligence tests an increasing variety of other tests were employed: achievement, aptitude, and innumerable special tests of all kinds. The greater variety of tests, the greater possibility in refinement of statistics, always with the defined purpose of establishing objectivity. With the tremendous variety of tests today, testing now is a far cry from the revised Stanford-Binet that Terman edited in 1911, when he introduced the much abused I.Q.

In 1944, when Charles Spearman, T.L. Kelly and L.L. Thurstone concentrated on trait organization and explored the interrelation of a wide variety of test scores in order to get more accurate results, Factor Analysis became the thing. And the philosophy underlying all this objective testing included most essentially the concept of permanence of the results. The dynamic philosophy underlying Adler's theory, for instance, was not taken into account. Nor the attitude of the subject toward the testing situation, which cannot be limited by norms or standardization. The subject may be cautious, daring, scared, hesitating, aggressive, withdrawn, confident, and so on. Thus, such clearly subjective items contribute to our so-called objective examination of life-style.

I deny therefore that any tests are objective. The *subjective attitude* of each and every individual toward any given test necessarily renders the test non-objective. Therefore the results of all the many test-batteries administered teach the Adlerian examiner what the subject *may be* capable of doing momentarily under certain conditions—and this can be important—but nothing of the dynamics of the personality, which would enable the examiner to know under what conditions the same subjects might develop capabilities of a highly different degree or nature.

Therefore, within the self-created life-style of the individual his intelligence should be considered permanent only in accordance with his needs. This is the reason, for instance, why tutoring is so often without result. It can be successful only when it is assimilated by a student who is ready to learn what he formerly rejected in accordance with an erroneous goal.

Before the development of depth psychology the understanding of personality was approached with tools that are used today, but they were used in a different way. In the second half of the last century Galton used "Free Association," Ebbinghaus "Sentence Completion," and Ferrari "Picture Stories." Personality, however, was still regarded as static. In America standardized questionnaires and rating scales developed by Pearson and Catell were used. The Personal Data Sheet by Woodworth was administered to the soldiers in World War I. Another approach was the exploration of single personality traits by Hartshore-May, who examined school children for lying, cheating, cooperativeness, etc. A third approach naturally are the projective tests, which I have already mentioned. Though they too interpret personality as constant, they lend themselves to Adlerian interpretation and help the patient to understand himself and to correct his errors.

One of my favored projective tests is the Michigan Picture Test, composed of a series of twelve pictures, four of which are considered key pictures. The first shows a family scene around the breakfast table; the second one offers a group of six children of both sexes, two of them playing checkers, a game that is very familiar to all American children; the third one shows a stroke of lightning in the dark of the night with some scattered lights; the fourth is a blank. The subject is given all twelve pictures and the blank is the last one. By this time the subject

has overcome hesitation and is usually quite ready for dispensing with the stimulus of a picture or is even pleased not to be limited by it.

Many years ago, when I was a teacher in a Viennese Hauptschule, I used in a surprisingly similar way a series of pictures by Schwind and Richter. I had my young pupils compose stories to them. My instruction was: "Tell a story! The picture is only one scene in your story. You must not describe the picture." My purpose was to detect the life-style of the student by very careful examination of his story. The essential difference in my procedure was that I gave just one picture, not a series of pictures, to each student. In another attempt to study their life-style, I allowed them to choose the picture. Since I was very familiar with my students from very many varied experiences with them, I naively believed I had sufficient control for the validity of the test. Today I know that my judgment was essentially subjective, based as it was not only on the picture test.

In my present home of Des Moines, Iowa, a social agency is involved in a number of research projects, one of them exploring the most successful way of treating emotionally disturbed children who live in foster homes or group homes. Some children have a caseworker and psychotherapist; an equal number have a caseworker who is the psychotherapist. At the beginning and at the end of a two-year period the same battery of tests is administered to all subjects. There is much more information available than the test results: a very detailed social history with extensive information on the parents and their families, complete school records, etc.

I myself play only a tiny part in the research team. I examine the two sets of stories given by the subjects in response to the Michigan Picture Test at the beginning and at the end of the two years. I receive no other information about the children than their sex and age. From the stories I try to develop detailed presentations of the dynamics of each individual's personality. I ask myself: What parts of the picture were considered by the subject? What people were not noticed at all? A subject who overlooks certain people could do this for many reasons: rejection, fear, hate, hostility, and many others. I concentrate especially on the plot of the story. Does the subject detect any problems in it? This often gives me a very good lead. Another important step is to consider the subject's attitude toward his solution of the assumed problem. I note carefully various character traits, attitudes toward the family and each family member, toward other social groups and toward the demands of life. This enables me to look into unique dynamic structure of the subject's life-style, especially since I have the rich material of twelve different stories. In many cases I can guess with fair accuracy real past experiences of the subject as well as his present living conditions. The comparison of the two personality descriptions derived from the stories at the beginning and the end of the two-year period demonstrates what use the subject has made of his experiences during this time, especially of the psychotherapy that he has received.

This comparison helps me recommend the kind of experiences he should be exposed to in the future. I present my findings to a staff conference whose members know the subject and have had many experiences with him, some therapeutic, others in daily life situations. These staff members are familiar with the school reports, the family history, the social background and with the results of the whole battery of tests. In spite of my very meager information—age and sex—my colleagues have always found that my personality interpretation was useful. It can serve therefore as a check, so to speak, on other findings.

We may ask ourselves: Why then a battery of tests? Many details concerning

achievement and special qualifications I cannot detect. But my point is that such results are most helpful adjuncts when the problems of the person are understood, not only by the psychotherapist, BUT BY THE PATIENT TOO. He too often needs certain information about himself in order to use it when striving toward a positive goal on "the useful side." In the light of these findings I would call the so-called objective tests "temporarily objective," if this were not a sacrilege.

In fairness to present American psychology I must state that the literature on testing approaches Adlerian concepts. Shafer in his *Clinical Psychological Testing* is much less interested in the quantified norms of huge standardization samples than in the experiences of small groups, for which he develops normative data that are not quantified. And this is just one example among many others.

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