

Thus, considering the nature of the problems and materials in psychology and the present status of our tools and control techniques, it is our belief that all Adlerians should keep their minds open and continuously challenging in the presence of the findings and conclusions of "objective" tests in our field. Surely, such conflicting and paradoxical conclusions as have crossed the pages of this section on Testing should encourage such an attitude.

Andrew Lavender, Ph.D.
Associate Editor

1. See Shoobs, N.E. and Goldberg, G. *Corrective Treatment for Unadjusted Children*. New York: Harper and Bros. 1942.

2. Oberlander, M. and Jenkin, N. "Birth Order and Academic Achievement," *Journal of Individual Psychology*, Vol. 23, No. 1. May 1967.

3. Drs. Harnett and Justman were members of the Bureau of Educational Research, Board of Education, New York City, N.Y.

4. Oberlander and Jenkin, pp. 109-110.

THE LIFE TASKS III. THE FIFTH LIFE TASK

Harold H. Mosak and Rudolf Dreikurs
Alfred Adler Institute of Chicago

In two previous papers we have discussed Adler's three life tasks (13) and a fourth task, coping with oneself (14). In addition, Adler alluded many times to *the fifth life task*, but he never specifically identified it. This life task may go under several names—the spiritual, the existential, the search for meaning, the metaphysical, the metapsychological, and the ontological. Yet with Jahn he wrote a book on religion and *Individual Psychology* (25). Even more puzzling, in his pioneer efforts, parallel with the Gestalt school, he titles one of his books *What Life Should Mean to You* (6) and still speaks only of *three* life tasks. In *Understanding Human Nature*, he briefly alludes to the fifth task, starting a sentence with "By situation we mean his place in the cosmos..." (5, p. 41) and drops the subject. Adler's most explicit reference occurs in *Social Interest*, in which he remarks, "They [the life tasks] arise from the relationship of man to human society, to the cosmic factors, and to the other sex" (4, p. 14) and "human beings, as products of this earth, could subsist and develop in their cosmic relationship only by union with the community, by making both material and spiritual provisions for it" (4, p. 43).

Psychologists traditionally have been loathe to discuss this task, their reluctance deriving partially from the feeling in some quarters that such a topic is more legitimately within the provinces of philosophy and theology. Freud, in contrast with Adler, did not feel that the development of a new *Weltanschauung* was the task of psychoanalysis (21). Yet for many individuals the existential tasks are perhaps the most important they face. As Pope Pius XI writes in *Cari-tate Christi Compulsi*, "For God or against God, this once more is the alternative that shall decide the destinies of all mankind...." Adler, in a wry observation, quotes Lichtenberg, who observes how many people are willing to fight for their beliefs and how few are willing to live up to them (8, p. 35). Since the individual's relationship to the tasks of existence involve belief, conviction, and behavior, are these postures not also objects of psychological concern? Certainly these topics emerge from the lips of patients in the consultation room with a frequency equal to that devoted to the more mundane life tasks. Moreover, the subjective overlap between the philosophical and psychological aspects of these tasks

is often so intimate as to defy separation. Freud offers such an example of inter-leaving when he hypothesizes that “now that God was a single person, man’s relation to him could recover the intimacy and intensity of the child’s relation to the father” (17, p. 31).

The recent mercurial growth of the existentialist movement both in Europe and the United States reflects the increasing attention given by psychotherapists to issues previously considered to be philosophical or metaphysical. Many of these existential analysts, particularly those in Vienna, are either Adlerians or former Adlerians, still either wrestling with the problem of “what life should mean to you” or, like Frankl (15), having discovered the meaning.

1. The sub-tasks of the existential task can be subsumed under five headings. The first of these involves the relationship of the individual to God. There is the individual decision, most often made non-consciously, to believe in God or not. Is this totally a religious task, with which psychologists should remain unconcerned? Obviously not. To cite one psychological example, the “cure” of alcoholics through Alcoholics Anonymous (and Alcoholics Anonymous probably “cures” more alcoholics than we psychotherapists do) asks that the individual acknowledge a superior Being. If the individual believes in God, how does he describe this God? Philosophically, as Maimonides (29) does, in his Thirteen Principles of Faith? As “the man upstairs”? As “the concretization of the idea of perfection, greatness and superiority” (8, p. 460)? Pantheistically, as Spinoza does? (37) Is he a god of wrath poised to punish the sinner, or is he a god of love, a benevolent Father?

Having described this God, consciously or non-consciously, how does the individual relate to this God? Does he “seek the Lord where he may be found” (Isaiah LIV:6)? Does he call upon him only when he is in trouble, in confirmation of the sentiment that “there are no atheists in fox holes”? Does he bribe God to win favors from Him? Does he meet God in prayer, regularly, and with the Psalmist does he proclaim, “Everyday will I bless Thee, and I will praise Thy name for ever and ever” (Psalm 145)? Is his communication with God through a “leap of faith” (23), or does he maintain an “I and Thou” relationship with God (12)? Or is God merely that Being whom he visits in church on Sunday? And finally, for many people, their total relationship with God consists of an affirmative answer when questioned as to whether they believe in God. In addition to describing God and his relationship to Him, each individual assumes a posture toward those who either do not believe in God or those who do believe in Him but who do not share the same definitions or the same forms of relating to Him. Here, clearly, there is overlap with the social task. Is he tolerant of others, is he a bigot, a missionary or a spreader of the Gospel? Does he attempt to convert others, save them from eternal damnation, persecute them or burn them at the stake?

Of course, there is a segment of the population which does not share a belief in God. What does the atheist substitute for the belief in God, if indeed he feels he must substitute anything? A rational view of the universe? A naturalistic interpretation of life, a “religion without the supernatural”? In his *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius, an exponent of Epicureanism, foreshadows this latter view (27). A humanistic rather than a deistic posture? Again the spiritual and social tasks overlap. What is the atheist’s attitude toward those who do believe in God? Is he contemptuous of them? Does he missionize and attempt to “convert” them? Is he tolerant or intolerant of the believers? Does he “go along” with the majority, even as he retains his own views according to his personal conscience?

Then, there is the agnostic. Not knowing whether there is a God, does he merely dismiss the problem? Does he, not believing, nevertheless "go through the motions," just in case there is a God? Does he, having doubts, devote himself to the search for signs of God? Or is he a positive agnostic, one not sure whether there is a God but who uses the concept of God as a working hypothesis and conducts his life as if there were a God?

2. The second sub-task involves a consideration of what the individual does about religion. Does he embrace it, accept it, identify with it, run from it, rebel against it, or convert to another? Is he ashamed of this identity and does he attempt to hide it? Is his acceptance of his religion a joining with others in common religious purpose, common prayer, or common activity? Or is it a personal faith? If he rebels against religion and denies its personal necessity, does he adopt a Freudian, Marxist, atheistic, or humanistic stance? Perhaps, for some individuals, any of these may even be transmuted into "religions."

For the majority of the population which identifies with religion, either through formal church affiliation or otherwise, the matter of observance or how the individual perceives his duty to this religion assumes significance.

Is religion a matter of attending church regularly, performing the rituals, with or without feeling? Does the individual discharge his obligation or satisfy his conscience merely by purchasing a new organ or stained-glass window for his church? Does his religion consist of sending his children to Sunday School at the same time that he sleeps late on Sundays? Or is his religion based upon a conscientious (in some individuals, overconscientious) adherence to the principles and practices of his religion? Perhaps he assigns second place to formal practices, elevating to primary importance the acceptance of Christ as a personal Saviour, a joy in the communion with God (e.g., the Chasidim, the Holy Rollers), or some ethical consideration as the Golden Rule, or "Love thy neighbor as thyself" (*Leviticus XIX:18*)¹ or the prophet Micah's, "It hath been told Thee, O man, what is good and what the Lord doth require of thee: Only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (*Micah VI:8*). Does religion involve missionary work, converting others, or seeking to save the souls of the heathen and the non-believer?

How does the individual define the goals of religion? "Nearer, my God, to Thee"? The service of God? The love of God? The performance of good deeds? Greater self-perfectibility or holiness? The assurance of a place in the hereafter? Transcendence over self? Or does he leave these definitions to ecclesiastical authorities and merely render obeisance to them?

3. The individual's conception of the place of man in the universe and the psychological movement to which this conception leads comprises the third existential sub-task. "O Lord," asks the Psalmist, "what is man that Thou shouldst notice him"? (*Psalms 143*). A highly developed animal, replies Sargent (36). Pascal views him as "A nothing in comparison with the infinite, an all in comparison with nothingness: A mean between nothing and all" (37). "Created in God's image," we read in *Genesis I:27*. For Adler, "...to be a human being means to feel oneself inferior" (2, p. 63). Basically good, maintains Rousseau (33). Basically bad, Freud disagrees, "a polymorphous pervert" (18). Encumbered by "original sin," according to Catholic doctrine. Determined, Freud (18) and Jung (26) explain. Free-willing, creative, striving, becoming, self-actualizing, counter Allport (7), Maimonides (28), Rogers (33), Adler (3), and Goldstein (20). He is capable of change, of cure, of salvation because he is a human being, or he can change only by being a true believer or through the exercise of certain rituals, re-

ligious or psychological. While we have only indicated some of the conceptual approaches developed by religion, philosophy and psychology, non-consciously each of us develops an image of man which guides his relationships to himself, to his fellow man, to his God, if he has one, and to the universe.

4. Partly religious, partly philosophical, partly practical is the fourth sub-task to which people address themselves—immortality. In theological and philosophical contexts the various questions concerning the existence of an afterlife, the nature of the soul and its persistence after death, salvation and eternal damnation are central. In a more practical vein, we endeavor to achieve immortality through endowing a university building, through outstanding positive or negative accomplishment, through bearing children (and naming them after us) and inculcating them with our values and traditions.

5. The basic question in the fifth sub-task of life involves the meaning of life. Does life have a meaning inherent in it? Does it have no meaning, or does it possess whatever meaning with which we endow it? The meaning may reside in an abstraction such as "Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know." Christian theology and Freud emphasize the meaning and purposiveness of death. The first reminds the devout that "...whoever loses it (his life) will save it and live" (*Luke XVII:33*)² while Freud, with his fondness for physical and biological analogies, sees the death instinct in man marching him inexorably toward death (16).

Many individuals find the meaning of life in suffering or through suffering. The trials of Job, narrated in the Old Testament saga, represent the classic attempt to uncover the meaning of suffering. The peak development of this viewpoint is the psychological system known as "logotherapy," whose founder, Viktor Frankl, found this meaning while an inmate of Auschwitz and Dachau: "In a last violent protest against the hopelessness of imminent death, I sensed my spirit piercing through the enveloping gloom. I felt it transcend that hopeless, meaningless world, and from somewhere I heard a victorious 'yes' in answer to my question of an ultimate purpose" (15, pp. 63-64). Frankl's views, nevertheless, stand out sharply against those of other existentialists who emphasize the meaninglessness of life and man's attendant existential despair or existential frustration. For Christians, the meaning of life may be found in Christ's suffering, the crucifixion, and resurrection. Variants of this viewpoint involve sacrifice, self-sacrifice, deprivation or self-mortification, the institutional forms of which exist in such religious communities as the Penitentes and the Trappists.

A graphic description of meaning through self-mortification comes to us from a nun who lived in a convent for twenty-eight years and then was given permission to return to the world. She describes an Irish priest killed during World War I who "felt God demanded of him the complete sacrifice always and in everything, of every human pleasure and comfort and the embracing...without injuring his health or work...of every possible discomfort or pain... Certainly this was [mortification] with a vengeance, an 'emptying of self' that would create a capacity into which the grace of God could flow in an impetuous stream."... "It is, however, interesting to note that the extraordinary penances of the Saints were not so much the outcome of a desire for their own sanctification as a tremendous urge to help and save and, if possible, atone for the sins and sufferings of a world which has very largely lost the true idea of God" (10, p. 152).

Diametrically opposed are the advocates of hedonism, who find the meaning of life in the seeking of pleasure. In the third century before the common era, Epicurus held that it was the pursuit of pleasure that gave meaning to life (31).

Not any pleasure would give this meaning, since the only "real" pleasures were permanent pleasures, and these permanent pleasures were the intellectual ones. Temporary pleasures, like the pleasures of the body, were to be courted only to the extent that they did not interfere with the intellectual pleasures. In the 18th century, Rousseau also advocated a hedonistic position as he maintained that "...the love of well-being is the sole motive of human actions..." (34). Later in the same century, our Founding Fathers declared that one of our inalienable rights is "the pursuit of Happiness," a phrase which has been turned about by "girl-crazy" college students into "the happiness of pursuit."

Longfellow's rejection of both suffering and pleasure as the goals of a meaningful life anticipates another meaning of life—finding meaning through self-actualization. In "A Psalm of Life" he sermonizes:

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way
But to act that each tomorrow
Finds us farther than today.

Goldstein refers to this process as self-actualization (20). Rogers holds a view similar to that of Goldstein (33). Allport and Adler share the term "becoming" (7;3), Adler writing "I would like to stress that the life of the human soul is not a 'being' but a 'becoming!'" (3, p. ix). The distortion of this process, which many psychologists see as being at the core of the neurotic process, has been called "the will to power," "the striving for superiority" and "the search for glory" (30; 2; 4; 5; 6; 24).

Some individuals find meaning in their lives through overcoming or having overcome. A case in point is Clifford Beers' overcoming his mental illness and his founding of the mental hygiene movement in the United States (11). Similarly, there are those who feel compelled to climb mountains because "they're there." The scientist finds meaning through overcoming disease, through the conquest of space, through unraveling the mysteries of physical existence. In a revealing autobiographical sketch, Adler analyzes how he chose his career—that of a physician dedicated to overcoming death (1). The distorted counterparts of "meaning through overcoming" may be seen in those who find meaning only in getting, taking, possessing, manipulating, controlling, and conquering.

For still other individuals, the opportunity to make a social contribution gives meaning to life. Closely allied is the endowment of life through work. The "withering away" of workers after retirement furnishes an example of loss of interest in life when the opportunity to work is no longer available.

In the 1950's, a popular song delivered the message that "the greatest thing you'll ever learn in life is to love and to be loved in return." This sentiment is echoed by Frankl in the following statement: "Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human thought and belief have to impart: *The salvation of man is through love and in love*" (15, p. 59). The rhapsodies of our poets and composers to the effect that love is all, that love conquers all, need not be repeated here. Three forms of love may be distinguished here—the love of God, the love of other human beings, and the love of life. "And thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy might," we read in *Deuteronomy* VI:5, and for the devout this love and the opportunity to serve Him create meaning. The Golden Rule has already received our attention above. Fromm gives loving its finest exposition from a psychological viewpoint (19).

Love, for Adler, exists as a component of man's social feeling (8). In this way Adler elevates love to the rank of his highest value for mankind—social interest. "It can easily be shown that love and marriage are on the side of cooperation in general, not a cooperation for the welfare of two persons only, but a cooperation also for the welfare of mankind" (6, p. 263). Adler's assignment of centrality to love and cooperation as giving meaning to life echoes Marcus Aurelius' belief that "we are made for cooperation, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth" (9).

God-centered behavior lends a meaningful dimension to the lives of many people. We have already alluded to the love of God. Many add to the love of God the increment of service to God. Some, like the followers of Billy Graham, find meaning through the acceptance of Christ as their personal Savior. The contemplation of God furnishes meaning for the cloistered religious. Any personal "encounter" with God, through acceptance, alliance, public worship, individual prayer, or "miracles" may give meaning to existence.

If social embeddedness is the key to a person's feeling at home on Earth, then cosmic embeddedness is its counterpart in the existential realm. Feeling at home in the universe provides "the true meaning of life" for the "citizens of the universe."

The foregoing discussion gives ample evidence that Adlerians should be speaking of *five* life tasks rather than the conventional three. This can be accomplished without doing violence to Adlerian thought. Indeed, we have attempted to point out that Adler recognized the existence of these tasks even though he did not formally include them in his theoretical formulations.

FOOTNOTES

1. Variants of the Golden Rule appear in the following Hebrew sources: *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *Targum Jonathan*, *Leviticus* (XIX:34); the writings of Philo Josephus, and Judah the Pious; and in the following Christian sources: *Acts* (XV:20), *Romans* (XIII:10); the teachings of the Twelve Apostles; and the Apostolical Constitutions (20, pp. 563-4).
2. Paraphrases of this expression may also be found in *Matthew* (X:39), *Mark* (VIII:35) and *John* (XII:25).

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APPLYING ADLERIAN PRINCIPLES TO COUNSELOR EDUCATION

President's Address
 ASAP Annual Meeting May 1967
 Manford Sonstegard, Ph.D.

Introduction

What type of a person should a counselor be? What should be the nature of his personality? What characteristics should he exhibit? No one at this moment knows. Very little effort has been made to find out.

Counseling is based largely upon relationships. The counselor is most likely the only controllable element in such a relationship (Wrenn 1957). Arbuckle (1954) proposes that the counselor must be aware of himself as well as of the counselee in order to understand the nature of the inevitable intrusion of the counselor's self into the relationship.

A review of the literature provides little information to guide us on the type of personality and other characteristics the counselor should possess. The counselor is essentially an interpreter of the culture in which he operates, rather than its representative. This role should provide us with some basis for speculation upon the type of person he should be. Certainly he must be an individual with convictions about himself and about his beliefs and capabilities. Above all, he must have a firm conviction about the psychological formulation within which he operates and a clear concept of the nature of man. He must be a person essentially without fear: without a fear of making mistakes; without the fear of being upstaged by children; without the fear that people might think he is worse than he would like to be. He must be an individual with great sensitivity to people, to