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The publication is a journal of the Society and will contain official announcements of ASAP. Articles may be submitted that address themselves to the practical applications of the of the principles of Adlerian psychology as exemplified by a holistic, field-theoretical approach.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

New York, 28 November 1967

The Netherlands, where I come from, is a very small country in which thirteen million inhabitants live close together, ten percent of them in the capital Amsterdam, a very old city famous for its historical houses, many canals and bridges. While many of us prefer to live in the suburbs, we are still all very fond of our city and proud of being born there. We seem to have concluded a secret pact together, a bond to which the observer from abroad can never have access. In Dutch this is called "gezelligheid," and the translations "sociability," "conviviality," "coziness," hardly render its true meaning. It is the sheer pleasure of the human being in the fellow humanity of his neighbour. Every Dutchman strives, more or less conspicuously, to achieve "gezelligheid." Much that seems enigmatic in the Dutchman's character can be explained by this basic pleasure in being a fellow human being. His natural penchant for deliberation and consultation along with his aversion to state compulsion; his respect for considerations of conscience along with his distaste for demonstrations of emotion; his urge towards domesticity and intimacy along with his dread of sentimentality and fuss ... are all connected with the Dutchman's deep-rooted consciousness of unity with his fellow human beings.

Perhaps this characteristic explains the way in which the students as well as their teachers of the course in Individual Psychology in Amsterdam treated the theory of Dr. Alfred Adler and his contemporaries: in a rather "philosophical" way, so to say. Adler himself came from a Vienna known in his time for its "Gemutlichkeit," which has very much in common with the Dutch idea. New York, on the contrary, is a very cosmopolitan city, with representatives of almost every country in the world among its population. In fact, native-born New Yorkers are probably in the minority.

In this huge, busy city the pace is intense and therefore it is attractive for those who are talented and ambitious. For the same reason you don't feel like a stranger here, coming from abroad, as there is no secret bond which ties all inhabitants together. They are much more individualistic.

I do not want to assert that New Yorkers have less social consciousness and less social feeling, but their way of life does make them less contemplative and more pragmatic. The pace gives no time for a long and meticulous scrutiny of reality. How to practice, how to use psychology in education and therapy is emphasized here. As repression of the emotions is not so characteristic here as it is among the Dutch, group therapy and psychodrama are more popular and better applicable. People relate easier and feel less ashamed to show their problems.

This may be one of the reasons why all kinds of therapy are far better known and more widely practiced here than in my country. We have no Adlerian medical health centre, for instance. Anyway, after having successfully attended the Dutch course, I have come here to study the practical side of Individual Psychology with the aim of applying it at home.

Hermine Gans Van Weerden