

A PRIVATELY OWNED ADLERIAN CLINIC

In September 1967, our colleague and a long-time staff member of the Alfred Adler Mental Hygiene Clinic, Dr. Leo Rattner, opened his new Center for Psychotherapy in Forest Hills, Queens, N.Y. Located in the heart of a growing community, its main purpose is to provide low-cost psychotherapy to the residents of the area.

In the first six months of its operation, the Center has already attracted a number of patients who are ably served by skilled therapists. At present these patients are seen in individual sessions only. However, a large expansion of group psychotherapy is planned for the future. It is envisioned that all patients will receive a combination of individual and group therapy, thus accelerating the therapeutic progress. A number of experimental programs is also considered, such as married couples groups and group therapy for teachers.

The staff members of the new Center received their theoretical training at the Alfred Adler Institute. This is in line with the basic philosophy that guides the operation of this institution. While therapeutic techniques may be flexible, the treatment goals are clearly defined by Adlerian philosophy. To help the patient grow in awareness and social interest, to make him a cooperative and responsible member of his community—these are the aims which the treatment process tries to realize.

IDEA EXCHANGE COLUMN

by Roland Preston Rice

This column was submitted by Maurice L. Bullard, Corvallis, Oregon:

A Summary of the Panel Discussion on *The Four Goals of Children's Disturbing Behavior* during the Annual Meeting of ASAP, May 26, 1967. Panel Members: Manfred Sonstegard and Maurice Bullard for the affirmative; Ernst Papanek and Paul Brodsky for the negative.

THE AFFIRMATIVE

The phrase Four Goals of Children's Misbehavior refers to both a diagnostic and organizational concept developed by Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs especially for use by teachers and counselors. Reference is made to the immediate and short range purposes of children's *misbehavior*, which he chose to call "the goals." Children are largely unaware of these purposes, utilizing a rationalization at the moment in line with their faulty viewpoints or biases.

Four main "goals" are identified, with distinctions within the goals relative to usefulness or uselessness and the degree of activity or passivity. These goals are designated as 1) Attention Getting; 2) Power; 3) Revenge; 4) Display of Inadequacy (Giving Up). Only when these traits are used excessively to influence others are they referred to as "the goals."¹

A distinction can and must be made between the life style and the four "goals." The life style refers to habitual approaches to situations, stabilized by the child at the age of five or earlier and is best revealed when threatened with difficulties. In contrast, the four "goals" deal with the immediate situation in which the short range purpose may change from minute to minute, depending upon the child's perception of the situation. Indeed, he may spend much of his time not indulging in any of the "goals" of misbehavior.

The "goal" level cannot be determined by the act itself without understanding the purpose. The trained observer uses his own reaction and the child's involuntary reaction when confronted with the purpose to identify the "goal." The variability of the "goal" in relation to the act can be illustrated by a common school problem.

A child not doing his school assignments might have any of the purposes embodied in the four goals:

1. He willingly does his work at home as long as he has the unshared attention of his mother to make a fuss over him. Goal 1: *Attention Getting*.
2. His actions may be conveying, "That teacher can't make me study." Goal 2: *Power*.
3. He may feel, "My parents never get after my sister and they always nag me. If I fail, my mother will cry and I'll be glad." Goal 3: *Revenge*.
4. Or "I am no good, I can't do anything. Nobody thinks I can do anything. I can't do this math." Goal 4: *Display of Inadequacy* ("Giving Up").

THE NEGATIVE

Mr. Brodsky made the point that the four "goals" interject an unneeded terminology which confuses the wording and concepts of Adler. He added that misbehavior is more closely related to inferiority with its accompanying goal of "wishing to be taken care of." He maintained that the four "goals" disappear during the elementary years. Adler does not speak of these as goals. He believes that power is really a goal of security and that the emphasis should be placed upon striving and overcoming.

Dr. Papanek recalled Adler's concept that the main desire is to find a place in the group. The child wants to be good, and if he is not it is because some one has blocked this natural tendency. He felt that even if the four "goals" are accepted, many other aspects of misbehavior would necessitate identifying many more goals. Identifying misbehavior as a stable goal is in itself a mistake. Misbehavior is not inborn; it is a way of life. Inferiority feelings are strong contributors to misbehavior. The four "goal" terminology is imprecise terminology.

CRITICAL SUMMARY

The proponents of the four goals relied rather heavily upon a description of the four goals in relation to children's misbehavior in the classroom and in counseling. More could have been offered about the more advanced use of the goals in situations in which the child will not talk or when he avoids revealing the goal level by incessant laughing or with a poker face at all times. The fine art of what to do about the situation after the severe goal levels are identified was almost entirely omitted. However, a provocative and interesting case was made for the four "goals" as likely procedure, particularly valuable as a diagnostic technique.

The latter conclusion, if accepted, would negate the viewpoint that the four "goals" are unneeded terminology which confuse Adler's wording. The difference between short-term and long-term goals can be learned. The statement that the four goals disappear during the elementary school period may well be in error. For the goals may disappear or they may not. They are often present in their most vicious form during the adolescent period. However, it is true that therapy by this time has focused on life style and long-range goals.

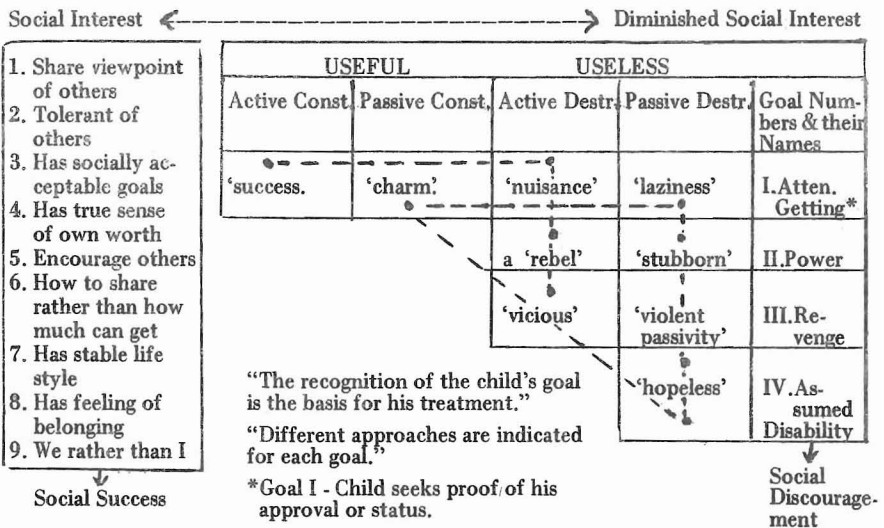
The negative presentation made many valid statements about inferiority feeling, the need for security, finding one's place in the group, wanting to be good,

and learned misbehavior. But even within these motivating conditions the immediate purpose of misbehavior can be revealed in one of the four goals.

Even though many Adlerians practice successfully without having trained in the four "goals" of misbehavior, the teacher, counselor, and parent do seem to find the four-goal concept of value. When the skillful use of this technique is demonstrated by Dr. Dreikurs whereby quick and effective results are secured, one must wonder if the well-trained Adlerians aren't the ones who could profit most by mastering the technique of the Four Goals.

1. A paper by Dr. B. Grunwald pointed out that the four goals were originally formulated as a frame of reference for teachers, counselors, and parents through which they could effectively understand the immediate purpose of the misbehaving child and take counteraction. Instead of concentrating on the act of misbehavior, the focus was shifted to the child's mistaken values or biases as he interprets his situation and experiences. The teacher and parent then attempt to see his world through his eyes.

IDENTIFYING THE GOALS OF MISBEHAVIOR



NEWSLETTER

by Eve Bullard, Corvallis, Oregon

These last six months can be designated as a period of notably increased acceptance of the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler, and this newsletter will briefly relate events in support of this statement.

DR. DREIKURS IN ISRAEL AND EUROPE

Dr. and Mrs. Rudolf Dreikurs spent a stimulating and productive 3½ months from late October to February 18 in Israel. Ten classes at Bar Ilan University and the Alfred Adler Institute of Israel, plus many additional lectures and demonstrations requested by other groups, kept Dr. Dreikurs busy. His most recent book to be translated into Hebrew, *Equality: The Challenge*, was featured with *Children: The Challenge and Marriage: The Challenge* in all the bookstores. The newly formed Association for the Improvement of Human Relations will create study groups to meet the popular demand.

After a few days in Vienna, Dr. and Mrs. Dreikurs went to Zurich to conduct a week of classes. Their week in Germany included a reception in Hamburg given by the publishers of