

Counseling for Family Adjustment*

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An increasing number of people need and seek counseling for their adjustment to family life. Many find it difficult to live harmoniously and to get along with each other. This is reflected by the rapidly increasing divorce rate, by the rise in juvenile delinquency, and by the growing frustration of parents in rearing children.

However, while people require more help and assistance, they get less than ever before. In the past, the main source of guidance has been the church. Priests, ministers, and rabbis functioned as counselors and guides in all problems of life. The family doctor was in a position to be consulted in crisis and conflict situations. Today, fewer people depend on their church, and even many faithful church-goers do not bring their personal problems to their spiritual leader. The family doctor has been replaced in many instances by the specialist; most doctors know little about family relationships and the intimate life of their patients. Furthermore, the complexity of modern life makes it more difficult for them to give advice merely on the basis of common sense and good judgment. Probably the greatest amount of family counseling is furnished by well-meaning friends with good intentions who frequently contribute more friction and confusion than help.

We must face the fact that rarely do the individuals involved or the public at large realize the real nature of the problem. Many reasons are offered for the rise of divorce and juvenile delinquency, but very few see the real issue. Statistical evidence is completely inadequate. The reason for divorce presented in court is notoriously unreliable; but not less misleading are the reasons which are actually given for marital difficulties, for the conflicts within the family, and especially for the maladjustment of children. Many attribute their conflicts to in-laws, financial hardship, sexual incompatibility, or difference of temperament and interests. All these should, however, not be regarded as the *cause of the friction*, but rather as the consequence of a disturbed human

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relationship. A faulty equilibrium between the members of the family is the real basis of family maladjustment and conflict. However, most persons involved are unaware of the nature of their relationship with their close relatives. And, most of all, very few realize the part which they themselves play.

A mother who asks for help with her child, or a husband or wife who complains about the partner or the mother-in-law, present the same picture: Their opponent seems to be utterly unreasonable and uncooperative; and we cannot blame our client if he does not know what to do, and is unable to understand the other one's behavior. The report of each is like a recitation of a dialogue in which the lines of one actor are omitted. Take any dialogue in a play and read only one part—and it will make no sense. But when you add the other part, each word and action becomes meaningful and sensible. The report of our client omits one part—that one which *he* plays. We all know what the other one is doing, but not what we ourselves contribute to the situation. The mother sees only the misbehavior of the child, the husband the faults of his wife, and neither of them sees his or her part in the game. Harmony or friction describe a relationship to which both parties contribute equally. Both behave either adequately or provocatively, both have their own faults and shortcomings. But no fault or misbehavior creates any conflict as long as the partner does not respond destructively, as long as the human relationship between them does not become affected and disturbed. Two people generally have the same faults and shortcomings when they fall in love and get married as when they get a divorce; what had changed was only the relationship. As a rule, they knew their faults when they got married, but accepted each other as they were. The disturbance in their relationship is generally not caused by their faults; these are rather used as a justification for a wrong attitude of the person who complains about his mate. (If such faults really appeared first after marriage, they may have been provoked by the complaining partner.) A typical example is the relationship between a drunkard and his wife. Often enough, she knew that he was drinking, which did not prevent her from marrying him; on the contrary, many women like to marry men in order to reform them. If the husband started drinking after marriage, nobody, including the wife herself, realized the role which she played in his addiction. Everybody sympathizes with the poor noble soul who takes on all responsibilities, makes all the sacrifices until she no longer can

take it. The husband is obviously wrong—and he knows it himself. Unfortunately for him, he was the loser in a contest with this wonderful person, his wife, who made him *feel* like a heel—and *act* as such. Actually, the disturbing factor in this marriage is often the indulgence and protectiveness of the wife, her moral superiority and her high expectations which the husband could not match nor meet. His drinking or his “weak character” are not so much cause as consequence. We find often the wife of a drunkard to be such a superior holy female, who has all the virtues on her side and therefore leaves only the faults to the husband with which to fight back.

The disturbed human relationship within the family can only be understood fully if we recognize the cultural and social conditions in which we live. The same factors seem to be responsible for the increase in family maladjustment as well as for the increased tension in our whole society. There is a striking similarity between the conflicts within the family and those on the national and international scene, between management and labor, between the white and the colored people, between the Gentiles and the Jews, between America and Russia. What was said before about husband and wife, about mother and child, is equally true here: everybody knows only what his opponent does wrong, how unreasonable and uncooperative he is, but none knows how he provokes such a disturbing behavior. We have reason to assume that this prevalent pattern of conflict and friction has some common ground which can be found in the particular predicament of our present civilization. Our time seems to be especially chaotic, full of danger and insecurity, wrought with threat of impending doom of our whole civilization, perhaps even of our whole earth.

Many reasons have been promulgated for this precarious state of our culture. Some blame the weakening of religious faith for the present confusion, others the loosening of morals, others again the industrialization, the accelerated and disproportionate development of technical sciences, others the increasing materialism. They all may have a point. But again, they seem to confuse the symptom with the cause. All these above mentioned factors would not cause friction and conflict on this wide scale were it not for the change in human relationships underlying all these spiritual, ethical, economic and technical changes. We are moving towards a reorganization of our human society, characterized by the establishment of democracy. This democracy is based on the assumption of fundamental human equality and of equal

human rights. Never in the past has such a pattern of a relationship between equals existed, although the need for it has been recognized and has been expressed throughout the ages, since the beginning of our civilization. The Greek Stoics, the late Roman lawyers, the early Christians, not only dreamed about this human equality, but also urged its realization. The French Revolution established the idea of democracy as the guiding principle of political and social development, the American and the Russian Revolutions tried to put it into practice. Right now we are in the process of making democracy work. But we have not succeeded as yet. So far, human equality exists only on paper. The existing human relationships are still patterned after the principle of superiority-inferiority, which has been the basis of all human relationships in the past. Our present problems and conflicts are part of the struggle to overcome the previous pattern and to establish a new one. We cannot turn back the wheel of time; the evolution of mankind moves towards actual equality, which alone is the basis for harmonious and stable relationships, in line with what Alfred Adler called "The ironclad logic of living together."

In this light, the problems with which we struggle, individually or in groups, take on a new significance. We all want to live in peace and harmony, but we have not learned to regard our fellowman as an equal. On the contrary, today more than ever we have the tendency to push everybody down. Today, man has actually become man's enemy, regardless of any closeness by interests or blood. This is due to our present social organization which has—at least partly—destroyed feudalism. Under feudalism, group superiority and inferiority were rigidly maintained. It was progress when these limitations were removed and the way was open for everybody to go ahead. But when the static structure of society changed into a dynamic one, everybody with his unlimited chances had to contend with everybody else. This led to the intense competition of today. If we speak of equality today we mean usually that everybody should have an *equal chance*. That in itself is a fallacy, because nobody actually has really the same chances to go ahead. What is worse, this concept of equality certainly does not imply *equality in fact*. In order not to be inferior to you, I must try to be superior to you. Such an attitude does not permit stable relationships and harmony.

As we approach equality, the friction between individuals and groups becomes more violent. Those who are in a superior position

are afraid of losing it, and those who feel inferior or are considered so are no longer willing to accept their fate. The result of this relationship is increasing mutual suspicion and fear, anxiety and hostility which destroys the only basis for human cooperation, namely, the feeling of belonging. This general pattern of neurotic attitudes prevails in our society and penetrates into the life of each family. It is the prevalent pattern between husband and wife, between parents and children, and between brothers and sisters.

Our cultural atmosphere affects the present day family in more specific ways also. There is first a new equilibrium between men and women. It changes rapidly towards equality. Equality between the sexes never existed previously in all human history. We have not yet reached equality, but have more of it than mankind ever knew before. But while masculine superiority diminishes constantly, the friction between the sexes increases. The "masculine protest" (Adler) affects men and women alike. Women no longer accept the position of the second sex, and men who still feel obliged to live up to a masculine pattern of the past, find it increasingly difficult to prove their superiority and become apprehensive and neurotic. In this way, husband and wife become suspicious of and antagonistic to each other, despite their best intentions, despite their love and affection and their sincere desire for peace and harmony. This fear of losing out in the competition, of being dominated or defeated, abused or humiliated, creeps into their relationship, almost unnoticeably in the beginning, and not fully recognized even in the stages of full-blown warfare. In an atmosphere of violent competition no agreement is possible not even in the most simple matters. They cannot decide whether to go to the movies or to stay at home because either decision makes one the winner and the other the loser. In this struggle for prestige every little incident serves as a welcome opportunity to seek a short-lived victory. As they cannot agree on anything they might finally agree to get a divorce. But even then they may not get anywhere because they cannot agree on the terms, as many court cases prove.

The very essence of the male-female relationship, namely sex, becomes a pawn in this struggle for superiority. It is hardly possible that both mates are always equally interested in sex. As soon as one desires more, the other one feels imposed upon and the first one rejected. Sexual incompatibility is the result rather than the cause of personal disagreement. Prevalent concepts of the nature of human sex

tend to confuse the issue. Human sex is not merely a biological urge, but a function which can be used according to the individual's intentions. Unlike an animal, it is independent of glandular activity.* Impotence and frigidity as well as perversion express an antagonistic attitude towards the opposite sex.

The increase in sexual maladjustment is clearly connected with the precarious equilibrium between men and women. It is true that sex has always puzzled and confused mankind. However, that is not due to any intrinsic antagonism between sex and social living, as some are inclined to believe. Sex, linking two individuals in the most intimate union, had to be perplexing as long as man was unable to establish this union on the basis of the logic of social living, i.e., on mutual equality. As long as such equality did not exist between man and woman, and it never existed in the past, sex which bound them together remained full of inner antagonisms. Love, desire and affection could not serve as means of true unification; sex was used primarily in the interest of the superior gender. The double standards for men and women throughout the ages prevented full sexual harmony. Monogamy was required through religious and legal precepts; but it never was practiced, as society granted the superior sex special prerogatives.

While it is true that sex was always confusing and disturbing, today the situation is even worse. Women were always inhibited in their sexual function through rigid regulations and restrictions. As long as women had no sexual rights, their sexual response did not matter and did not cause any sexual maladjustment. Few were the women who could break the strict code and become sexual problems for men. Today the situation is radically changed. Man is no longer sure of himself. At a time when society guaranteed man his social status and backed his sexual demands, he had little difficulty in performing sexually. Impotence and homosexuality became widespread only in times of increased feminine emancipation as it occurred during certain phases of Greek and Roman history as well as in modern times. Our sexual education has not caught up yet with the social changes and our children are not yet prepared to accept their sexual role without fear and resentment.

The difficulties in establishing family relationships in accord with the new democratic principles affect not only the relationship between

*For further clarification see pages 7-12 of Dreikurs' book, *The Challenge of Marriage*, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, N.Y., 1947.

husband and wife, but especially our parents. They are confused in their efforts to bring up children. Educational techniques always reflected existing social patterns. It has already been mentioned that in the past human relationship was based on the principle of superiority-inferiority. Order meant the ability of the superior one to keep the inferior one in line. This was done by means of bribe and threat, reward and punishment. Many parents still adhere to this principle and cannot imagine that order in the family could be maintained without it. But their children, growing up in the democratic atmosphere of our country, no longer accept such treatment and, backed by the revolting spirit of their peers, retaliate by applying the same methods in subjugating their parents. Some other parents start out with the idea of a new order. They want to respect the needs of their children and wish to let them "express themselves." They think that this is democracy, while it actually means only *laissez faire*. They confuse freedom with license and democracy with anarchy. Consequently, the children get out of hand and demand more than the parents can give. In their despair the parents revert to the old scheme and try to suppress the misbehaving child. Most contemporary parents vacillate between over-indulgence and suppression. They either neglect the respect for the child by belittling him, by nagging, scolding and punishing, or they disregard the necessary respect for themselves by yielding, by permitting the child to impose his whims upon them and to put them into his service. Most parents are ignorant of methods of child training which do not require punishment or reward. Fathers and mothers share this predicament with the rest of the contemporary civilized world; we all believe in democracy, but have not yet learned to put it into practice. We profess our willingness to respect the rights of others but are too much concerned with our prestige. We do not know how to settle opposing interests by agreement, but revert to the old method of using force or of yielding to force. The present system of small families makes the position of parents even more precarious. It is small wonder that our parents, confused and inefficient as they are, become defensive, feel frustrated and inadequate.

We can see now why the problems which are often blamed for causing family maladjustment are not really the *causes* of the conflict. We may now identify the commonly known reasons for family strife like in-laws, financial hardships, sexual maladjustment and misbehaviors of children, as test situations. They merely test the solidity of

the existing relationship between husband and wife, between parents and children. They may stimulate strife and conflict only if the courage and morale, the feeling of belonging between all the family members has been weakened. Economic hardships can as well break up the harmony between husband and wife as solidify it. The decisive factor is their relationship. If one blames the other for his failure or shortcomings, then the resulting warfare between the mates makes any task unsolvable. On the other hand, if their relationship is based on mutual respect and confidence, and they are willing to help each other without fear of being imposed upon or slighted, then hardships may unite them even stronger.

The same is true for in-law problems. In-laws can break up a marriage if husband and wife fail to recognize them as their *common* problem. As soon as one blames his mate for friction with his relatives, the relationship loses the necessary resistance to ward off the danger. Furthermore, the disturbing in-laws themselves, let us say a mother-in-law, can be a problem only if the couple fails in its effort to maintain a proper relationship with her. People who disturb rarely do it out of sheer meanness. They are generally motivated by fear of losing their social status. Then they may become over-demanding, domineering, aggressive and hostile. If one recognizes their need for appreciation, reassurance, and estimation, one can deal with them more adequately. This is never accomplished by either yielding or fighting; but most people, confronted with in-law problems, do exactly this.

Difference of cultural, religious and educational background can endanger a marriage only if they are used by one mate to look down upon the other one. The same is true for any difference of interests or temperament. Such differences add color and breadth to a marriage, as long as any evaluation of superior-inferior is avoided and neither partner feels ignored, neglected or humiliated. If one assumes superiority and belittles the other's achievements, even strong common interests and activities can easily deteriorate.

We can see now that all family conflicts, frictions and maladjustments which may require counseling are not so much caused by any objective predicament or hardship as by the effect which this particular condition has upon the relationship between the members of the family. The gravity and destructiveness of a problem does not depend on the nature of the actual adversity, but on the attitude of the individual toward it.

Effective family counseling must recognize these facts in their full significance. They indicate clearly which methods of counseling can be expected to be effective; they also explain why others are limited in their value, although they have been widely used. We are witnessing some fundamental changes in counseling techniques in line with the new insight in human motivations and a new understanding of human behavior.

When a person asks for help and assistance, he naturally wants to know what he should do. It is equally natural for a counselor to fall for this temptation and to give advice. Today we realize the ineffectualness of such procedure. As each person behaves in accordance with his attitude, it helps little to tell him what he should do. With the proper attitude he would find for himself the right answer to his problem; with his present faulty attitude he is in no position to carry out the best advice. There are a few situations where good advice may be helpful. This may be the case when the client actually is not aware that simple solutions exist. However, such occasions are rare in family conflicts. Here the problems are generally complicated and do not permit an easy solution.

A counselor who tries to give advice in a family situation usually appeals either to the conscience or to the common sense of the client. This approach has its unquestionable historic value. We must keep in mind that moral teaching and good sense was the basis for all education in the past. Conscience and good intentions were the main objectives of educational efforts until psychiatric research demonstrated their limitations. What could not be reached through reasoning and preaching was considered unapproachable. Many still believe that the development of conscience is the prime objective in the training of children; consequently, they regard all actions, behavior patterns and motivations, which do not correspond or conform with such prescription, as irrational, evil, unreasonable or uncivilized. Today we know better. We need conscience, the knowledge of good and bad; but this is not enough. Conscience, or as one may call it "common sense," is only part of our reasoning. If we do not act according to our conscience, we are by no means bad or irrational. We merely act on the basis of another reasoning, which Alfred Adler called our "private logic." We know what we ought to do, which is in line with social, religious and moral conventions; but we may have personal goals and intentions which cannot be attained with socially accepted methods. In our eval-

uation of a given situation, non-accepted behavior patterns may seem more efficient. We do not necessarily give up intentions which are not acceptable to our conscience; but we learn to conceal them from ourselves. Our attitudes, supported by our emotions, are the result of our personal evaluation, whether we are aware of our reasoning or not. For this reason, emphasis of our moral obligation or our better judgment is of little avail when we have decided to take a stand despite of them. We know most of the time what we *should do*; but we do not feel always like doing it, we cannot get ourselves to act according to our "better knowledge." Further appeal to it increases only the feeling of frustration or the feeling of guilt; neither of them is conducive toward a more adequate attitude.

As the futility of such counseling becomes obvious, some suggested that the best counseling is non-directive. They assume that the good sense of the client is sufficient to lead him to proper solutions if his reasoning-power is stimulated by questions. Such procedure may be helpful in many cases. However, one can doubt whether complete objectivity on the part of the counselor is really possible, and whether he can abstain from directing the client, even though his part in the counseling might be restricted to asking questions. The forcefulness of innocently sounding questions has best been demonstrated by Socrates. Freud had gone to the extreme in demanding complete passivity on the part of the therapist who should only listen and refrain even from asking questions, thereby stimulating the patient to solve his inner conflicts by himself. Freud's fatal mistake, as we know today, was the assumption that "free association" is actually free and provides a reliable basis for discovering the emotional forces which struggle within the individual. No, there is no chance in any human cooperation to be truly nondirective. We influence each other by merely being together. There are a thousand subtle ways for communicating ideas, expectations and opinions. Whether the therapist asks questions with a poker face, or the analyst sits in back of the patient, in each case the patient is aware of the reaction, the attitude and the direction of his therapist.

The technique I found most helpful is that of interpreting the patient to himself, based on Alfred Adler's concept of goal-directed behavior and life-style. It is possible to show the patient a picture of himself, and let him draw his own conclusions. Nobody knows himself completely. What he knows are his wishes, desires and intentions as far as they are reconcilable with his conscience. He does not realize

his fundamental attitude towards life, his life-style, nor is he always aware of his true intentions, his real attitudes towards others in the given situation. As our approach is based primarily on the revelation of attitudes it could be most adequately called *Attitude Psychology*. It can be used on various levels. On the most superficial level, *general* negative attitudes can be disclosed and positive attitudes stimulated through interpretation. On a deeper level, the *specific* attitude toward the present situation can be disclosed, while the most profound level is the discussion of the patient's *fundamental* attitude toward life, his life-style.

Destructive attitudes are always based on the client's wrong evaluation of himself. We are all conditioned to succumb to inferiority feelings, partly as members of the human race, but particularly through our childhood experiences. Feeling to be less than others in a group prevents cooperation and constructive action and limits the development of social interest, of the feeling of belonging. Inferiority feelings stimulate fear and resentment, as the feeling of belonging and self-confidence leads to courage and acceptance. A discussion of the client's concepts, evaluation and interpretations of himself and of the existing problem can demonstrate his errors and mistakes in judgment and stimulate a new attitude. General Semantics uses similar approaches.

A few cases will demonstrate our point.

A couple came for consultation with the following problem: The husband had taken one of his employees for lunch to discuss with her some business matter. The wife became jealous and demanded that he refrain in the future from such practice. He objected to her request because he felt justified in arranging his work as he saw fit. Why should he not use the lunch hour if he did not have any other time for the necessary discussion? They had long arguments and asked me to decide who was right. The wife did not suspect any personal interest of the husband in the employee, but still felt that his behavior was not correct. Was she right? There was no answer to this question on the logical or moral level. Both parties seemed to have some justification, and both were wrong at the same time. She had no "right" to interfere with his working habits nor was he correct in ignoring her "feelings." An investigation of her attitude provided a completely new slant on the situation. They had recently moved into a suburb, and his work had increased considerably. Prior to that time he had spent much more time with her, had seen her several times during the day, and they had

often had lunch together. Now she was alone all day long; he came home late and—due to pressure of his increased work—often took work home with him. And even if he did not spend the evening working, he was preoccupied with work. She felt neglected, without having any good reason to complain, as she realized that under the circumstances he could not act differently. Once she had considered lunching with a male acquaintance but had refrained in consideration of good taste. The incident of her husband's luncheon engagement gave her the first opportunity to voice openly her resentment, to justify her antagonisms against her present life situation, which she no longer was willing to accept. This disclosure changed immediately the attitude of both parties. Neither of them had been aware before of the wife's predicament. Recognizing it, the husband no longer resented her complaint, and she for the first time could express her resentment openly without resorting to his assumed misconduct. As they became aware of the real nature of the problem, they came to the logical conclusion by themselves, deciding to move back to Chicago as soon as possible. Having made this decision, she lost her resentment and her feeling of frustration.

This is one of the rare cases where a couple came for consultation early in the game, when the wrong attitude of one partner had not yet disturbed their relationship, and a simple interpretation could solve the problem. As a rule, people are caught in a vicious circle. One party feels slighted and frustrated, and in his ensuing effort to compensate for it, he instills the same feeling in the other. The result is the well-known picture of mutual retaliation. In the above case this vicious circle was interrupted right at the beginning. It is only in premarital consultation that one has frequently a chance to see a couple before the wrong attitude of one partner disturbed the whole relationship.

A young couple intended to be married in a few weeks, when the bridegroom suddenly got "cold feet." He suddenly doubted whether he really was in love and whether he should go through with the marriage. The girl was puzzled and felt hurt, but was willing to accept any decision of the psychiatrist. Of course, I did not intend to make any decision, but tried to find out what was going on. The young man was utterly confused. Most of the time he was sure of his love. But he got spells of despair, of depression, where he wanted to run away from everything. A short discussion revealed that he was the only son of very ambitious parents. He constantly tried to live up to the highest expectations. He was a fine and successful young man who operated

on the mistaken belief that he must please everybody. If he could not do so, he gave up and ran away. As a rule, he had managed pretty well on that basis. But now, for the first time, he was confronted with a situation where he tried to satisfy antagonistic interests. The needs of the bride conflicted with certain requests of the parents; *her* family had certain ideas about the wedding date and arrangements, and *his* family had others. As it was impossible to please all parties concerned, he felt utterly inadequate and defeated. He was not sure whether he could ever make a good husband, without knowing that the real reason for his doubts was his exaggerated desire to please. Our interpretation cleared the air immediately. The girl recognized that his difficulties were not directed against her. She no longer felt humiliated; on the contrary, as she suddenly understood his problem, she wanted to stand by and help him. He on his part realized for the first time what bothered him. He smiled happily as his puzzling confusion cleared up. He now knew that he just had to learn to take a stand and not to depend on the approval of everybody. He may require psychotherapy later on, but he was sure that he could go through with his marriage. This case is typical for the problem of many premarital indecisions. Such last minute hesitations can often be dissipated by one interview if the real reason can be uncovered.

Most counseling is not restricted to the clarification of one person's attitude, but must take into consideration the existing equilibrium, i.e., the attitudes of both. It is not always necessary to see both parties, although this is desirable. In many instances it suffices to make one party aware of his own and also of his partner's attitude which he had not realized before either.

A young girl came to my office just to make an appointment for her mother who was depressed and suicidal. She gave me this initial information: Her mother, a woman with high standards, raised in a conservative tradition, could not bear the breakup of her marriage. Divorce seemed inevitable. The father no longer showed any interest in his family, spending his time with his young secretary upon whom he showered gifts and money. At home he was irascible, either criticizing and quarreling or sullenly silent. They tried in vain to pacify him but now all were against him. The girl had been his favorite and previously got along well with him. Now she was disgusted with her father and sided with her mother, quarreling with him as much as the others. Without any intention to go deeper into the problem at that

time, I just mentioned some possible reasons for his behavior. Perhaps he had felt the need to assert his masculine superiority at the time when he got older and when the children became more independent and less submissive to his leadership. Perhaps his young secretary gave him the desired recognition while the growing criticism of wife and children had demonstrated to him that at home he no longer was the "big shot" and could not hope for admiration and respect. So he lost interest in his family and got deeply involved in his outside activities. The daughter admitted that at home nobody had a nice word for him, and he must have felt that all were his enemies. We discussed her attitude and that of her mother and sisters. She considered the possibility of changing her tactics. Maybe she could sometimes ask her father's advice and appreciate his opinion and judgment. Maybe she, his previous favorite, could be the person to reestablish the old relationship where the father was the recognized master and leader. We agreed that mother would make an appointment in the immediate future. But I never heard from the family again, until years later when the daughter wrote that after her interview she was able to influence the family situation, and now mother and father lived peacefully together in another state. It is only rarely that one can alter a situation so rapidly. As a rule, well established patterns of relationship require time for reorganization; people don't change their attitudes so easily. It takes time and effort.

We can distinguish four steps for counseling. The first is the *establishment of a proper relationship* between counselor and client. Many misunderstandings exist as to what "proper relationship" means. Some see it in a strong emotional attachment of the client (transference). Others consider absolute and impersonal objectivity as the criterion. Some others, influenced by patterns of the past, believe that the counselor should be impressive, and that his power and superiority are the most important factors in counseling. As we understand it, proper relationship is mutual confidence and respect. This requires a certain warmth and personal interest on the part of the counselor, without any attempt to impress with his own capacity, but also without disdain. A counselor who distrusts or frowns upon the client does not fulfill the first requirement. One should not go further with any counseling before having established a proper relationship; and during the whole counseling procedure the relationship must be watched carefully and immediately re-established if any disturbance occurs.

The next step is to *understand the client* and his problems. This requires an investigation of the client's attitudes, of his relationship with others and of the attitudes of his opponents. The cultural factors must be recognized in their influence upon the reasoning of the participants, which in turn affects their attitudes. As all problems are *inter-personal* problems, we prefer to work with all parties involved simultaneously. Such procedure is at variance with a present trend of having different counselors or therapists assigned to each person. This trend is based upon the assumption that human conflicts are *intra-personal*, meaning that each person has his own problems, independent of those of his opponent. We find no evidence for such assumption. On the contrary; the problem situation, the existing disturbed relationship is exactly what they have in common and what they should change together.

After the counselor understands the client's problems, i.e., after he has made the diagnosis, he must help the client to *understand himself*. This requires generally more time than either of the first two phases. But "insight" is not sufficient. Knowing his attitude does not necessarily induce the client to change it. Insight is only a pre-requisite to the fourth step.

This fourth step consists of re-orientation. In the process of thinking the problem through together, the client may become aware of the mistakes in his concepts and ideas and correct them. It is a mistake to suggest that the client should change his behavior. Actions depend on judgment and evaluation. As long as the client maintains his outlook, he cannot act differently. His evaluation must change not only in regard to his situation and to his opponent, but first of all in regard to himself. Most mistakes—and the most disastrous ones—are in our own evaluation, are the doubts in our position, our power, ability and our value. For this reason, encouragement is the most effective tool in adjustment. As most people do not realize their own contribution to the present situation, so they fail to recognize their own power and ability to produce a change.

The same four steps characterize psychotherapy. But counseling is not psychotherapy. It is necessary to distinguish between both. The main difference seems to be the objective. Counseling is concerned mainly with the acute situation and the solution of immediate problems. Psychotherapy, on the other hand, is designated to affect the whole personality and to stimulate the individual to a complete re-

organization of his life. For this reason, psychotherapy implies more intensive and extensive work and requires a lengthy procedure. Opinions differ on the indication for psychotherapy. Certain child-guidance agencies do not accept children unless the mother undergoes psychotherapy. Our own experience does not substantiate that counseling for adjustment always requires psychotherapy. The majority of persons who come for consultation in family affairs, especially those who have difficulties with children, do not require extensive psychotherapy. A clarification of the immediate situation is often sufficient, although it takes six to ten interviews to produce insight and reorientation. Only if the patient or client is unable to adjust himself in this way, must one proceed to uncover his whole life-style and to correct his entire outlook on life. Some knowledge of the client's life-style is necessary for every counselor. But in counseling the immediate situation remains in the foreground, and any reference to the life-style is either completely omitted or only incidentally touched upon; while in psychotherapy the emphasis is placed on the patient's life-style and the present situation is regarded as a neurotic symptom and only used as an illustration and example.

This is the case of a man who was deeply upset about his marriage. He became involved with another woman, but did not have the courage to break up his marriage. He had been married for twelve years but became increasingly disappointed, when he finally fell in love with the other woman. While he wanted to marry her, he hesitated because of his seven-year-old child and his concern about the reaction of his friends. He also felt responsible for the despair of his wife who broke down completely. He always had accepted his responsibility to his family and had tried very hard to stick it out; but he no longer felt capable of managing the situation, especially since he now felt responsible for the other woman who had left her husband for him. He could not understand how he, who always had such high standards in life, should get in such a dilemma. He wanted to know what he could and should do. There was no answer on the common sense level nor on moral grounds. He knew all the possible answers, but could neither see a chance of reconciling himself with his wife nor the possibility to break away from her. We tried first to understand the present situation in the light of his personality. We found that he was the third son who got ahead of his older brothers by being always so good. He found his social position within the family by being ex-

ceptionally good and considerate, by taking on responsibility, in contrast to one brother who was aggressive, selfish and unreliable. He married a girl who was just "right." Both had very high standards and everybody approved of this perfect match of two wonderful people. However, these high standards became their downfall. He could not live up to her demands. And as soon as she began to criticize him, their difficulties began. This is what he called his "disappointment." The quarrels started when his sense of obligation outside of the family came in conflict with the domestic needs. Step by step he lost his position as the "good husband." Despite all the quarrels which disgusted him and which he hardly could stand, no idea of breaking up his marriage entered his mind. Then he found a woman who looked up to him as a God. We can assume that this was not a mere coincidence—but he did not realize that. The deep love which overwhelmed him, permitted him for the first time to reject his family obligations; his sense of loyalty shifted slowly from wife and child to the other woman who had sacrificed everything for him. At this point of our investigation it became obvious that mere counseling was not enough in this case. There was no solution to his dilemma, either in renouncing his love nor in breaking up his marriage. In either case his troubles would continue. He could not function successfully with his life-style either in his present marriage, nor if he married the other woman. He considered disconnecting himself from wife and child and also from his friends who would disapprove of a divorce. But even in a new environment, in a new social setting which he planned far away from his present field of operation, he would not be able to maintain his desired position of a "wonderful man." It is different to play "God" to a woman whom one sees only on rare occasions in an outburst of mutual desire, than to a wife with whom one lives in daily contact. As he needed to be so good, he would run into the same conflict in any marriage; and if he changed his attitude and learned to function on a different level, he no longer would need somebody to admire and venerate him and, therefore, could function adequately in his present marriage. This patient needed psychotherapy. His present situation was only a symptom of a mistaken attitude toward life.

The problems of counseling are somewhat different in child guidance. While counseling parents and children follows the procedure of family counseling in making both parties aware of their disturbed relationship and of their faulty attitudes, the approach to the problem is

different here. Counseling the child is actually psychotherapy, as the child's immediate goals are identical with his life-style. We see the child, especially the younger one, in his formative years when his attitude toward parents and siblings becomes the basis of his attitude toward life in general. The family constellation, for example, which in the psychotherapy of adults must be carefully reconstructed, is here a forceful reality. Changes in the present family relationship imply for the child not merely a better adjustment to the existing problem situation, but to life itself. On the other hand, the discussion with the parents is entirely on a counseling basis because it is restricted to the immediate problem situation, without any reference to the parent's personality and life-style. What they need is only an understanding of their own attitudes toward the child and a re-orientation, based on the recognition of the child's attitudes and goals. Only if parents cannot respond to this procedure are they referred for psychotherapy. Most parents, however, do respond. Their emotional distress, their feeling of frustration, their antagonism toward the child, which is often mistakenly called "rejection," disappears when they learn to understand the child and discover adequate methods to handle the situation.

As neither parent nor child realizes the child's immediate goals, mutual disclosures are necessary. We found four goals of children's misbehavior. They either want to get attention, to show their superiority and power, to get even and seek revenge, or to avoid obvious defeat by demonstrating their inadequacy. The child responds to an accurate interpretation of his goal with immediate understanding, evidenced by his "Recognition Reflex." The child is accessible to psychological interpretations at an early age, as soon as he understands the meaning of the words. It is more difficult for the parents to accept an interpretation of the situation, of the child's schemes and of their own part in the existing conflict.

In child guidance we deviate on one point from our general counseling practice: We give advice to the parents. We feel justified in doing so, because the parents actually do not know what they could do, and because the advice is of a simple nature. However, all our educational recommendations have as their main objective a change in the parent-child relationship.

Counseling for family adjustment will become an important part in our cultural setup as the need becomes recognized. At the present time we suffer from an extreme lack of facilities. If we intend to alle-

viate much unnecessary suffering and to prevent marital failures and juvenile delinquency, we will have to move fast. Our efforts must go in two directions.

First, we must increase the number of agencies for adequate counseling. Such agencies are marital consultation centers and child guidance clinics, which I prefer to call Guidance Centers for Parents and Children. Such centers should be decentralized, each serving its immediate community.

Second, we must provide adequate training for sufficient personnel. At the present time, the service is provided by a team of psychiatrists, social workers and psychologists. Such an arrangement is possible only if the service is centralized, intended for a large area. If the needs of the public are to be met, and each small community to have its own guidance centers, the structure of the service will have to be changed. There are not sufficient psychiatrists available now, and probably will not be available in the future, to serve all small communities. For this reason psychiatrists should be employed only in a supervisory capacity, and all the detailed work be placed in the hands of specially trained technicians. This applies not only to counseling but also to psychotherapy.

Psychotherapy is a time-consuming procedure, and the number of persons needing it is increasing steadily. For this reason, adequate facilities will be available only if psychotherapy will be practiced by non-medical technicians. We have witnessed a similar development in occupational therapy and in physiotherapy. There too, specially trained technicians function under the supervision of a medical specialist. Today we have no accepted standards for technicians, nor for training methods in psychotherapy. The development is blocked by a difference of opinion. We have no agreement, yet, whether or not psychotherapy should be the prerogative of psychiatrists exclusively; and those who are in favor of non-medical therapists have not agreed as to which group should be entrusted with psychotherapy. At this time we witness a race between the psychiatric social workers and the psychologists for recognition as qualified psychotherapists. The outcome of this controversy will greatly affect the counseling services in this country. All counselors, be they psychologists, social workers or teachers, will require some training in psychotherapeutic procedures. A closer cooperation between their groups and psychiatry is necessary. This lecture is not only an indication, but the result of the present tendency to get psychiatrists and counselors together.