

The Alfred Adler Consultation Center

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT, by DANICA DEUTSCH, *Director*

The Individual Psychology Association of New York, Inc., opened the ALFRED ADLER CONSULTATION CENTER in November, 1948, in order to make assistance available to those who needed and could not afford private counseling.

During the two years of operation, 279 clients sought assistance at the Center. In the second year 173 people came for help, ten of whom were former clients. Of the total, 49 were discharged, all of them improved; 15 were not accepted because of too severe disturbance; 46 withdrew from treatment; 28 were referred to private counselors for the summer and most of the remainder (35) are expected to return in the fall. At the conclusion of the season, a waiting list of twenty had accumulated. These applicants had to be deferred because of the limited facilities of the Center.

Of the 173 clients, the families numbered 54. Of the 116 "family" persons, 62 were parents, 2 grandmothers, 21 adolescents and 31 children between the ages of three and twelve. Seven couples came for help in their marital problems and 57 were single people with varied problems.

The fifty-four families who were seen at the Center did not start treatment as a unit. The children were referred either by schools, organizations or physicians because of learning and behavior difficulties. Sometimes a mother came for help because she could not manage her youngster, but once we started to work with one member of the family, often the others joined in the adjustment procedure, one by one. They came to realize that it was not only the problem of the individual but of the relationship among the members of the family.

For these relationship problems, the Art Group for children and the Mothers' Group continued to be very helpful. Some of the mothers who were in the group the previous year returned this year without waiting for emergency situations. They felt that this group discussion helped them to solve problems as they came up.

As this group work had proven to be so successful, we organized a new Group for Adult Clients (non-parents) whose problems were those of work or social adjustment. A dozen clients were referred to this group after a few individual sessions and the response to this group can best be measured by the regular attendance and by the fact that the members became a unified social group and visited one another's homes.

In the second year of its operation, the ALFRED ADLER CONSULTATION CENTER was open for 173 days between October 5th, 1949 and June 15th, 1950. In this period there were 740 individual sessions and 148 hours of group sessions with a total attendance of 450. The Director, 15 counselors and seven staff assistants were instrumental in this work. It should be emphasized that this great number of working hours was given free, without stint.

We have adhered strictly to the rule of medical clearance of every client before acceptance. We refined our screening procedure through obligatory figure-drawing and sentence completion tests. In addition, seven Rorschachs, ten Wechsler-Bellevue, ten Szondi and ten revised Binet tests were administered. Sixteen clients were referred to specialists for differential diagnoses.

In addition to the service to its clients, the Center offered opportunity for field work and research to teachers and psychologists as well as to trainees of the A.A.C.C. There were also seminars on remedial reading and on sociodrama.

Each monthly staff meeting was devoted this season to a comparison of the Machover Drawing Test, the Rorschach Test and the case history of a selected client presented by alternate counselors.

Diversified agencies such as the Veterans' Administration, the N.Y.U. Reading Clinic and the N.Y. Infirmary continued to send clients, and new ones such as the Family Service Units of the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army became interested in our work. In addition, clients were referred by colleges, private and public schools, physicians and psychologists, and by many former clients who had benefited from the services of the Center.

There were more referrals for remedial reading this year than last. Some were so-called "hopeless" cases whom we expect to present as more hopeful next year.

Income consisted of nominal fees paid by those who could afford to, and of contributions by friends of the Center. Some of the clients who were unemployed when they began receiving counseling and who could not even pay the nominal fee, made up for it later when they found employment. One third of the clients received free help.

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The Individual Psychology Association of New York arranged an informal luncheon at the Hotel Commodore on October 7th. Its purpose was to launch the I.P.A. activities for 1950-51.

The luncheon was attended by ninety guests, primarily professional people, psychiatrists, psychologists, physicians and some eminent lay persons. Mrs. Alfred Adler, as the hostess, and Dr. Alexandra Adler, president of the I.P.A. of New York, greeted the guests. Dr. LeRoy Bowman, Professor of Sociology at Brooklyn College, presided.

Dr. Lydia Sicher, Director of the Youth Guidance Center in Los Angeles, gave the principal address on "Mental Hygiene and the Atomic World." She said:

"Mental hygiene *and* the atomic world are two independent problems, in reality, problems contradicting each other—at present, at least. Perhaps one would better talk about the atomic world *against* mental hygiene. Mental hygiene's task to promote and preserve (or restore) mental health originates as a social postulate on the basis that the individual can be mentally healthy only if he learns to experience himself as interdependent with the community of men.