<div align="center">**How Far Can You Go and Still Be Adlerian?**</div>

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Our first reaction to the "On Beyond Adler" idea was that you must be kidding. How far can we go "beyond Adler" when he was not fully arrived? We believe there are far too little acceptance, understanding, and use of Adlerian Psychology in the home, the school, and the workplace. Instead of beyond Adler, we need to be concerned with going beyond First-Force Psychology (behaviorism) and Second-Force Psychology (medical/psychodynamic model) that dominate our society (Meredith & Evans, 1990).

One of the stated purposes of going beyond Adler is to "modify Adlerian ideas to apply to today's tough issues, issues that did not exist in the 1920s" (Carlson, 1989, p.411). It is difficult for us to know and misleading to believe that the 1920s were less difficult than the 1990s. We do know that both Adler and Dreikurs were personally affected by the Nazi holocaust. Amazingly they maintained and developed a hopeful and optimistic view of human nature when surrounded by a troubled time. Adler did not go beyond his beliefs and modify his ideas so they would "apply" to Nazi Germany. Instead, Adler went beyond the dictations of the political structure and would not compromise his ideas about holism, social interest, and purposiveness in order to be accepted.

In March 1972, Dreikurs (1972) gave one of his last speeches titled "Toward the Technology of Human Relationships" at the Fourth Brief Therapy Conference. Dreikurs called on us to go beyond the technology Skinner had designed for controlling people,

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and to create a new technology of freeing people. This new technology of human relations can be found in Third-Force Psychology. In general, Third-Force Psychology is an interactive approach where problem behavior is not viewed in isolation but in relation to its immediate context.

More specifically, Third-Force Psychology is a theoretical leap away from the linear psychodynamic and medical model. Psychodynamic theory emphasizes that the present is due to what happened beneath and behind, long ago and far away. While the medical model emphasizes that our present behavior is due to some disease conceived in our physiological or biochemical makeup (Klerman, 1986). These models strongly imply, although often implicitly, that problems are a result of deficits in an individual's makeup. Instead of solving the current problems presented by the client, these deficit models spend their time searching for the trauma in early childhood, the bad constitution, or in finding the right positive reinforcer (Fisch, Weakland, & Segal, 1982).

In contrast to these deficit models, Dreikurs wanted to develop a new tradition of psychology. This psychology would emphasize our freedom of choice and would solve the problems of democratic relationships. He wanted a psychology to "arrive at a concept of man as a decision-making animal, one who decides his own fate without knowing it, helps people to realize the tremendous power they have" (Dreikurs, 1972, p.129).

Third-Force Psychology in the past 30 years has shifted the emphasis away from a deficit model to that of an empowering model. Instead of studying sick people, this model studies the fully functioning person (Crombs, 1962). Third-Force Psychology gives us a new and hopeful view of human nature. This approach recognizes that heredity and

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environment have an influence but do not cause behavior. Humans choose their attitude, at any given moment, and under any given circumstances. This ability to choose is what makes us human and is the most significant factor in influencing behavior. Third-Force Psychology does not believe that the disease, codependency, or deficits in our makeup causes us to drink alcohol (Fingarette, 1988), act irritable, or become a "histrionic personality". We decide whether we will drink, take drugs, or behave in an unreasonable manner.

How Far Have We Come?

We believe that the Adlerian way of working with others and our basic ideas are still controversial and not well accepted both inside and outside of the helping professions. Strides have been made in the past 18 years developing Adlerian strategies, new techniques, and programs for Adlerian parenting skills. Some of our ideas have spread to schools, families, and the workplace. But overall, we have not come very far.

We wonder if Adlerians really want to become Neo-Adlerians in order to fit in with "the real world of mental health and psychological issues" (Carlson, 1989, p.411). These traditional approaches guide most of us in child rearing, education, marriage, and politics. Yet, First-and Second- Force Psychology have done little to improve the abundance of inequality, lack of social interest, and discouragement that now exist. We believe instead of going beyond Adler we could concentrate on becoming an even more dominate Third-Force Psychology. We could once and for all get beyond behaviorism with its obedience training and the medical model with its victim mentality.

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For example, our entire educational system is based on First-Force Psychology. Behaviorism has failed to educate our young and does not allow adults to relate to children in a dignified manner. Yet, we continue to endorse, protect, and search for ways to make behaviorism work in our schools. This may contribute to having more than 1.5 million children abused and neglected each year by primary caretakers (Hyman, 1990).

When presented with the problem of abuse and school failure, the best solution educators, psychologists, and parents can find to replace hitting, neglect, and obedience training, is to continue the search for the one incentive that will make children behave and give adults absolute control. Consequently, we have developed highly sophisticated ways for humiliating children, and our children have developed highly sophisticated ways of getting even.

When educational lenders are presented with effective methods that will improve schools, but go beyond First-Force Psychology, their immediate response is that these methods will not work. Ron Brandt, editor of *Educational Leadership*, recently wrote that the anticipated response to Corsini's 4R schools, based on Adlerian and Third-Force principles is that "most parents and educators would reject Corsini's ideas as unworkable, even irresponsible" (Brandt, 1990, p.3).

First-and Second- Force Psychology have done nothing to help our schools operate in a democratic fashion. Teachers still have not learned in their formal training how to win over a child's confidence. Universities fail to expose teachers to classroom methods that encourage cooperation among students. Adlerians have something to offer education. However this cannot be done by jumping on the bandwagon and joining forces

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with those approaches whose solutions do nothing more than maintain the problem. We must question whether First- and Second-Force psychology represents the real world of mental health and are something we wish to join?

Purposiveness, Holism, and Social Interest

Adlerian Psychology is a comprehensive, cognitive, and social theory, which fits Third-Force Psychology. Adlerian Psychology consists of three basic principles that make it unique from other approaches: purposiveness, holism, and social interest (Dreikurs-Ferguson, 1984). These are the three most fundamental and irreversible concepts of Adlerian Psychology. If you change these constructs, then you change the theory. If you reject these ideas, then you reject the theory. We can add strategies and techniques that promote these ideas. However, mixing purposiveness and holism with causality and dualism is not only impossible but a rejection of Adlerian psychology.

Purposiveness: Beyond Causality. The idea of purposiveness is probably the most difficult idea to understand and accept. Dreikurs knew if you wanted to go beyond what was taking place in the field of psychology, you had to step out and look into the field of physics and natural science (Dreikurs, 1969b).

The Adlerian idea of purposiveness violates the Newtonian cause-and-effect model used by First- and Second-Force Psychology, and places Adlerian psychology into an Einsteinian epistemology (Evans, 1989). Where Newton gave us a world of absolutes, Einstein gave us a world of interactions and relations. Einstein found all movement is relative to the frame of reference of the observer. Understanding requires objects to be

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viewed not in terms of cause-and-effect but in terms of interacting, relating, and what is relative to their frame of reference (Belkin, 1975).

Puroposiveness is a radical idea that is not well understood or accepted and is in opposition to our culture's victim mentality. Purposiveness dramatically changes how we recognize and define human problems and their outcomes. The idea of purposiveness places us in a world of subjective truths, which far removes us from the belief that objective truth is discoverable in the past, unconscious, or in a manual of disorders (Efran, Lukens, and Lukens, 1988).

In short, purposiveness means our attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors are in line with those subjective goals we perceive will give us social significance (Dreikurs-Ferguson, 1984). Mosak and Dreikurs (1974) wrote that "man is not pushed from behind by causes i.e., he is not determined by heredity and environment…Man rather is pulled from in front. He moves toward a self-selected goal" (p.40).

Holism: Beyond Reductionism. Holism means individuals are a unity of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors moving in one direction (Mosak & Dreikurs, 1974; Griffith & Powers, 1984). The concept of holism does not reduce the person into separate parts like the psychodynamic or medical model. Holism is the opposite of reductionism. Reductionism believes that to understand the individual you must reduce him or her into their id, ego, or super ego, or more recently into biological, social, and psychological parts. These parts are often viewed to be in conflict with one another, and this conflict causes the person to behave in a disturbed manner.

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Adler and Dreikurs warned us to trust only movement (Beecher & Beecher, 1967). To understand behavior we must not get lost in the sideshow of reducing behavior into separate conflicting parts. Instead we must look at whatever one is doing as one holistic approach. "Ambivalence is one approach, being torn apart is one, indecisiveness is one" (Dreikurs, 1969b, p.37).

Consequently the Adlerian practitioner does not waste time and energy attempting to understand behavior by discovering past trauma, coming up with hidden gore, or finding the perfect assessment to describe the behavior. Instead, the Adlerian practitioner is interested in a person's movement toward those goals he or she has chosen to find significance among others.

Social Interest: Beyond Pathology. Social interest is one of the harder concepts to define, but makes Adlerian theory a Third-Force Psychology. Social Interest is an expression of belonging. It's a human characteristic that must be developed. Social interest, in its broadest sense, means identification with others, to bond with others, and to have a sense of belonging with your fellow human beings (Dreikurs-Ferguson, 1989).

Third-Force Psychology (Combs, 1962) believes that fully functioning people maintain not only an adequate and realistic view of self but have a strong identification with others. Maslow (1971), in his study of self actualization, found that highly functioning individuals have a genuine desire to help the human race.

Dreikurs (1969a) wanted the criteria for functioning/normalcy to be based on social interest. Social interest as the model for functioning would give us a radically different set of criteria than pathology and obedience, now being used by First- and

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Second- Force Psychology. Social interest provides us with a barometer for helping people move toward the give-and-take of life required to function at home, work, and in the community.

Conclusions

Instead of going beyond Adler and doing more of the same in order to fit in with the "real world of mental health", would we not be better off focusing our attention on teaching about purposiveness, holism, social interest, and how to create change? Instead of searching for causes, would we not be better off focusing on what to do, and how to do it, in order to resolve the human problems that affect all of us?

Perhaps Adlerian Psychology is still ahead of its time. We believe that instead of going beyond, we need to continue to build on Adlerian theory and practice. Adler spent his last years developing his concept of social interest to give us a sound psychology. Also, we can continue modifying and clarifying basic Adlerian ideas. Yet the major quest is making individual Psychology more visible and attractive so that families, schools, and the workplace discover its usefulness. This will require innovation and creativity. Instead of joining the ranks and doing more of the same with First-and Second-Force Psychology, we should have the courage to move forward, in spite of other approaches.

Thirty years ago, Third-Force Psychology challenged us to go beyond First-and Second-Force Psychology. We have not come very far and are still working on this challenge. Adlerian psychology can play a significant role in meeting this challenge.

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