

## Book Review

### ***The Collected Clinical Works of Alfred Adler,* edited by Henry T. Stein**

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Stein, Henry T. (Ed.) (2002–2006). *The Collected Clinical Works of Alfred Adler*. 12 vols. Cees Koen and Gerald Liebenau (Trans.). Bellingham, WA: Classical Adlerian Translation Project.

Pick any volume of the *Journal of Individual Psychology* over recent years, and you can find a profusion of articles on a range of topics and techniques written “from an Adlerian perspective.” Many authors strive to show how selected pieces of Adler can be elaborated into easy-to-use techniques or are echoed in the latest psychological and therapeutic approaches. I have wondered whether an awareness and appreciation of Adler’s theory as a unique totality is missing in such contributions.

As an alternative to reading the latest publications and connecting a few of the “new” ideas with parts of Adler, it seems to me a better investment of time for Adlerians to study Adler’s clinical writing in depth. With the 12-volume *Collected Clinical Works of Alfred Adler (CCWAA)*, we English speakers now have the opportunity to read his clinical writings deeply and thoroughly, and to learn to use all of his constructs for understanding and treating clients. Such a solid foundation would also prepare us to more knowledgeably compare his thinking with that of other authors.

In this light, the following review draws no parallels from Adler to today’s clinical publications. Rather, it intends to whet an appetite for the fullness of Adler’s complete theory. This fullness is *CCWAA*’s challenge and strength. I trust this appetite will draw you again and again to Adler’s conceptualization of therapy. Adler’s theory and therapy aim to heal by developing a healthy, democratic character in our clientele as the potential gift of therapy.

## Overview

The first volume of CCWAA, *The Neurotic Character*, appeared in 2002 and reintroduces the English-speaking public to Adler's magnum opus in a scholarly and well-documented translation. The last volume, *The General System of Individual Psychology*, came out in 2006. It is a previously unpublished manuscript that Stein unearthed from the Library of Congress archives. Then, in 2012, the compiled abstracts were published as *A Clinician's Guide to the Collected Clinical Works of Alfred Adler*. Edited by Stein and his wife, Laurie, this thirteenth volume is a detailed index with abstracts from each entry in the series. Volumes 1–12 have each gone through at least one reprinting which corrected errors found in the first printing. Quotations in this review are drawn from the most recent prints, typically those of 2012.

Other than volumes 1 and 12, which are individually complete books, each of the volumes has various publications by Adler that are arranged generally in chronological order. Many have editorial prefaces, and each volume has a comprehensive index and at least one appendix. The prefaces in the first two volumes are the most extensive, sharing brief historical and process details about the translation project. (A full historical accounting of the project can be found in Wolf, 2015.) The subsequent prefaces are brief introductions to the contents of each volume. Also included in each volume is a relevant and useful appendix by Stein himself. In volume 1, he reprints "Classical Adlerian Theory and Practice." This is a chapter from *Psychoanalytic Versions of the Human Condition and Clinical Practice* (Marcus & Rosenberg, 1998), which he cowrote with a colleague. Volume 2 includes Stein's essay, "A Psychology for Democracy." In volumes 3–12 Stein includes "Basic Principles of Classical Adlerian Psychology." Volume 12 actually has six appendices, which will be addressed later in the review of that volume.

### **Volume 1. *The Neurotic Character:*** ***Fundamentals of Individual Psychology and Psychotherapy*** **ISBN: 0-971-56450-7**

Volume 1 is a comprehensive edition of *The Neurotic Character*, the first of its kind in English. Along with including the prefaces of successive printings of the book, Stein was able to secure the rights for "references and commentary for all of the names and works mentioned by Adler" (p. iv) as they appear in the German critical edition edited by Karl Witte (see Witte, 2007–2009).

This work is full of colorful clinical examples used to illustrate the major constructs of Adler's theory. I found that taking the time to absorb Adler's appreciation of neurotic patterns was a gratifying effort. The reader/clinician is

presented with more than a dozen constructs that simply are not available through reading today's summaries of Adlerian psychology.

Delving into the paradigm that Adler used for understanding severely dysfunctional personality disorders and those wholly out of touch with a common reality—primarily the relationship among inferiority feelings, the counterfession, and the fictional final goal (e.g., pp. 55–56)—seems initially daunting and yet becomes quite reassuring. Exploring Adler's use of core constructs such as safeguarding through distance (part 2, chapter 4) or anti-theoretical scheme of apperception (part 2, chapter 6) provides a deeper appreciation for the complexity of his theory and its salience across a broad spectrum of clientele. Another result of delving into *The Neurotic Character* is the help one receives in unburdening overused constructs, such as lifestyle and the life tasks, by showing the dynamic interaction of the full range of constructs and their functions in moving toward one's fictional final goal.

**Volume 2. Journal Articles: 1898–1909**

**A Study of Organ Inferiority: 1907**

**The Mind-Body Connection, Social Activism, and Sexuality**

**ISBN: 0-971-56451-5**

Volume 2 includes 16 independent articles as well as two extended works especially important to the development of Individual Psychology. It contains two historical heavy-hitters: one that is considered Adler's earliest professional work and one that was his first full-length book. The *Health Manual for the Tailoring Trade* was published in 1898 in pamphlet form and appears in this volume as part 1, chapter 1. *A Study of Organ Inferiority and its Psychical Compensation* was published in 1907 while Adler was still a member of Freud's circle and appears here as part 2. The other articles are aptly categorized by Stein's subtitle. Part 1, chapters 11–17 deal most directly with the mind-body connection. As for his early interest in social activism, Adler's concern for the tailor trade was only a beginning. He also develops, in several serial articles ("Town and Country," chapter 4; "State Aid or Self Help," chapter 5; and "Hygiene and Sex," chapter 7), an early call for rural health care. The reader can see a developing interconnectedness, if not yet full-blown holism, in Adler's early psychotherapeutic approach. Even sexuality, the bedrock schema for Freud and his associates at the time—among whom Adler was prominent—is not an isolated phenomenon; it is dealt with in relation to social activism in articles ranging from child-rearing to understanding prostitution.

This volume also contains two 1908 articles well-known because of Freud's interest in them and their influence on psychoanalysis: "The Aggression Drive in Life and in the Neurosis" (chapter 11), which addresses



a dynamic that Freud later used to formulate "the death instinct" (Freud, 1923/1961), and "The Child's Need for Affection" (chapter 13). Volume 2 also includes "On the Neurotic Disposition," from 1909, which has an early and very explicit reference to "the fictional final goal," the construct that continues to distinguish Individual Psychology from nearly every other therapy operative today.

**Volume 3. Journal Articles: 1910–1913**

***Elaborating on the Basic Principles of Individual Psychology***

**ISBN: 0-971-56453-1**

In volume 3 there are 24 entries, containing both longer articles and briefer reviews. Adler frequently reviewed books from the popular literature that he found pertinent to psychology and therapy. The volume includes the constructs of "psychological hermaphroditism" (chapter 3) and "masculine protest" (chapter 12), which are constitutive of Adler's ideas on striving for superiority and overcoming. According to Ansbacher & Ansbacher (1956, p. 49), Adler later restricted the meaning of the masculine protest to an objection to the societal privilege of males.

Of special historical note is Adler's 1911 "declaration" of his break with Freud (chapter 10). Also included is a respectful but pointed defense of his dream theory compared to that of Alphonse Maeder (chapter 23). Adler's vigorous defense of his intellectual property rights offers an interesting parallel to our own times, in which many Adlerians struggle to simultaneously make Adler more known and show that his original theories are already contained in much of current psychotherapy.

**Volume 4. Journal Articles: 1914–1920**

***Expanding the Horizons of Child Guidance, Neurosis, and Psychosis***

**ISBN: 0-971-56454-X**

Volume 4 contains 24 entries. One becomes aware of Adler's early social concern for child-rearing, most pointedly in the article "The Social Impact on Childhood" (chapter 12), but also in the five other articles dealing specifically with children. His approach to neurosis and psychosis ranges broadly, from disorders recognizable today (e.g., obsessive compulsive disorders, chapter 16, and anorexia nervosa, chapter 6) to issues, such as homosexuality (chapter 15), that are not considered pathological. Stein is to be commended for his straightforward comments (both here and following volume 5, chapter 31 on the same topic) regarding the inclusion of Adler's article "On Homosexuality."



Adler's view of homosexuality in this article reflects the rather common bias of his time and culture. Although he transcended the widespread misconceptions about women and children at the turn of the century, his view of homosexuality represents a historical limitation and apparent contradiction of his general perspective. In the interests of scholarship and historical accuracy, the controversial article has been included in this volume. The current Classical Adlerian view of sexuality promotes co-operation between partners and attempts to correct domination or depreciation within all sexual orientations. This contemporary stance is more congruent with Adler's central posture of equality, respect and acceptance. (p. 111)

Other important documents in this volume include brief minutes from eight of the early meetings of the Organization for Individual Psychology (chapters 11 and 12).

### **Volume 5. Journal Articles: 1921–1926**

***Talent and Occupation, Crime and Revolution, Philosophy of Living***

**ISBN: 0-971-56455-8**

Volume 5 is arranged chronologically into 43 chapters, roughly half of which are new translations of journal articles from the German-language *Internationale Zeitschrift für Individualpsychologie*. It is fascinating to find that Adler originally published these articles in a variety of other journals, newspapers (including the *New York Times*), marriage and child-rearing manuals, and books (including several chapters within a science-focused series). Only one entry is not Adler's: an introduction to *Heilen und Bilden* (Healing and education) by Adler's long-time colleague, Carl Furtmüller. That book was a volume of previously published articles edited by Adler and Furtmüller.

The uneven distribution of publication dates over the six years covered by this volume is interesting. Adler was a tireless promoter of Individual Psychology and his publication rate reached 30 contributions in 1926 alone (all 17 of his clinical works from this period are included in this volume), yet he only published one 3-page article in 1921. The *Bibliography of Alfred Adler* (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964, pp. 395–423) corroborates this number. Only two similarly brief articles followed in 1922. Hoffman (1994) accounts for this dearth as the consequence of Adler's focus on developing the child guidance centers and spreading his psychological approach in Germany (pp. 131–132).

Seven articles in this volume focus on children—ranging from ineffective parental discipline (chapter 9) to reflections on delinquency (chapter 1) as its periodic consequence. I found the writing style of the articles to be mixed, ranging from quaint to scholarly. Adler recommends against

spanking, even if a child should agree that punishment would help keep him or her in line. Two of the articles include transcriptions of Adler's interactions with parents and children at the child guidance clinics in Vienna (chapters 22 and 34). Adler repeatedly admonishes to *never* give up on a child, nor to become discouraged in one's work with children even when educators or the children themselves believe they cannot be "saved."

Ever emphasizing the importance of raising children to fit into the real world, Adler acknowledged that being fair to all should not be an overriding concern. Rather, "one should and can treat all children equally, but each in a particular way" (p. 94). He further underscored the value of soliciting from "the better-off students" a sense of their duty "to stand by their wayward classmate" (p. 100).

In spite of Freud's criticism of Adler's psychology, that "there is no room for love in it" (Freud, 1914/1957, p. 58), there is ample evidence in these later writings that he paid serious attention to sexuality (cf. Ansbacher, 1978). Seven articles in volume 5 focus on sexuality (chapters 27–33), including men's and women's roles in society (chapters 28 and 29) and another lengthy article on homosexuality (chapter 31). Marriage as a separate topic is further addressed in two other articles (chapters 19 and 36). Adler's political reflection on the 1925 Austrian debate to legalize abortion (chapter 25) strikes one as wholly contemporaneous: "The coercion from a law created by men that robs her of the freedom to decide her fate must feel demeaning to every woman" (p. 112).

Adler's ongoing effort to propagate Individual Psychology can be seen in six articles that introduce, summarize, or otherwise present the theory to the reader in whole or in part (chapters 5, 8, 10, 18, 35, and 43). These are far from being repetitions of one another; rather, they are an example of Adler's emphasizing one or another aspect of his theory in a nearly unique manner, depending on the needs of his readership. Six more clinical articles go to greater depth in dealing with manifestations of normal (chapter 6), neurotic (chapter 26), antisocial (chapter 14), and psychotic individuals (chapter 7), including dreams (chapter 11) and depression (chapter 16) and the reasons for turning to a life of crime (chapter 13).

**Volume 6. Journal Articles: 1927–1931**  
**Structure and Unity of Neurosis; Reason, Feeling,**  
**and Emotion—Dream Theory**  
**ISBN: 0-971-56456-6**

In volume 6, half of the 26 articles were originally published in the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Individualpsychologie*, while the others were conference or symposium presentations (e.g., the First International Conference



for the Sexual Sciences, the Conference for Modern Education, and a conference for the Society of Internal Medicine and Pediatrics). The others were published in various professional journals (including the English-language publications *Lancet*, *Esquire*, and *Police Journal*).

What struck me as coming across most clearly in this volume is the variety of subject matter to which Adler was applying his psychology. For example, he compares the relationship of jokes to the lifestyle structure of the neurotic (chapter 3), and in an extensive article on "Trick and Neurosis" (chapter 25), he explains the utility of a certain type of self-deception. Trickery, he contends—such as the writing of fiction—plays an important role in our lives, making our guesses about the future a necessary venture.

Adler also revisited his more staple themes of neurosis (chapters 5, 11, 13, 16, 21, and 26), crime (chapters 19 and 23), and sexuality (chapter 10), emphasizing different nuances in each. Two articles show that prevention played an important role in Adler's theory, one emphasizing the "Cause and Prevention of Neurosis" (chapter 5) and the other more positively emphasizing "Education for Courage" (chapter 6).

The development of Adler's theory is apparent in the juxtaposition of two specific articles in particular: "More on Individual Psychological Dream Theory" (chapter 4) and "Sleeplessness" (chapter 18). Adler demonstrates his signature holistic orientation in relation to his dream theory in the first of the two articles. He orients the reader toward an understanding that both sleep and full consciousness exist on a single continuum of awareness. Thus, any reasoning in which a person engages, whether while awake or asleep, wholly serves the person's unified approach to life. The second article demonstrates the creativity, cleverness, and trickery of neurosis. Although Adler would later expose the revenge-orientation of suicidal behavior (1937/1964, a very rare omission by CCWAA), here in "Sleeplessness" he already demonstrates how the insomniac's private logic also aims to rivet the attention of others by bringing less lethal harm to oneself. As is usually the case, Adler's formulation and treatment of both insomnia and suicidal behavior includes ruling out "the consequences of an organic illness" (p. 126).

A concise, robustly written formulation of "The Psychology of Power" (chapter 15) is found in this volume, as well as an intriguing summary (written by a Dr. L. Zilahi) of Adler's impressions of the United States after an extended visit in 1926–1927. His comment on "the two extremes between which Americans live," competition and philanthropy, seems still accurate today:

[Americans] generally regard 'competition,' the craving for recognition, as virtuous, despite what also has become known here as 'inferiority' complexes. Everyone strives to be first, especially the youth, even in evading the law. . . . [O]nce Americans have reached their goal, made their money . . . the time has come to do something for the general public, and they create or support welfare organizations, hospitals, and universities. (pp. 55–56)



**Volume 7. Journal Articles: 1931–1937*****Birth Order and Early Memories, Social Interest and Education—******Technique of Treatment*****ISBN: 0-9715-6458-2**

Volume 7 completes the portion of CCWAA that includes Adler's journal publications. This volume contains 28 chapters spanning seven years. Two-thirds were originally published in the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Individualpsychologie*, and the others were conference or symposium presentations or published in other periodicals, such as *Esquire*.

Stein describes this volume as "the most mature expression of [Adler's] ideas on theory and practice" (p. ii). Although familiar themes appear (structure of the neurosis, prevention of delinquency, general expositions of Individual Psychology), the articles are more thoroughly developed. A touching example is "The Technique of Treatment" (chapter 11), in which Adler acknowledges that he seldom writes on technique because he sees it as such an individual, artistic undertaking. He nonetheless lays out—with specific examples included—and commends inquiring about family atmosphere, family constellation, self-evaluation, and early recollections.

There are several other major expositions of Individual Psychology's treatment methods, including approaches to compulsion disorders (chapter 4), family constellation positions (chapter 25), dream interpretation (chapter 21), treatment of alcohol and drug use (chapter 7), and "symptom selection" by children (chapter 23). Contrasted to these is a charming 3-page reminiscence by Adler on "How I Chose My Career" (chapter 28). Acknowledging his theory as molded in the crucible of his own life, he shares personal anecdotes about experiences that shaped the major tenets of Individual Psychology.

The reader will also find three contributions that represent outstanding efforts by Adler to address inspiring topics contra the development of National Socialism in Europe at the time. One expounds on the notion of romantic love (chapter 24) and the other comments on the transaction between the individual and mass movements (chapter 16) and the care needed to assure such movements are benevolent. Although other pieces were published posthumously, the last article in volume 7, "Progress of Mankind" (chapter 27), is what Ansbacher (1957) identifies as most likely the last article that Adler wrote. It is a manifesto that unabashedly declares that humanity naturally pursues beneficent upward movement.

**Volume 8. Lectures to Physicians and Medical Students:  
Medical Course at Urban Hospital, Post-Graduate Lectures at  
Long Island College of Medicine**  
**ISBN: 0-971-56457-4**

Volume 8 consists of two sets of lectures given to medical students and physicians—one in the United States at the Long Island College of Medicine (chapters 1–7) and the other at an “unidentified urban hospital” in Europe (chapters 8–15). The remaining six lectures (chapters 23–28) were previously unpublished and cover a range of psychologically related topics. These include a pointed, and at times humorous, exposition of the concept of the unconscious as it differs between psychoanalysis and Individual Psychology.

At the Long Island medical school, Stein informs us, Adler gave a series of weekly lectures to the students. In this volume half of the chapters are brief, highly readable presentations of the basic tenets of Individual Psychology and its understanding of pathology. The rest are devoted to diagnosing and treating patients, some of whom were interviewed in front of the medical students.

The urban hospital lectures are almost exclusively case presentations. Some are Adler’s own cases; others are those brought to him for consultation. The cases cover a wide range of maladies, both psychological and somatoform. None are simple and straightforward (e.g., in chapters 19 and 20, the case of a 41-year-old man experiencing anxiety, suicidal ideation, and self-destructive drinking). In both the lecture and demonstration, Adler’s approach, his confident and kind interaction with clients and students alike, makes these chapters (8–22) particularly accessible.

If the earlier volumes of *CCWAA* bring Adler the scholar, theoretician, and innovator forward, the later volumes bring forward Adler the clinician.

**Volume 9. Case Histories: Problems of Neurosis,  
The Case of Mrs. A., The Case of Miss R.**  
**ISBN: 0-971-56459-0**

Volume 9 is a 3-part collection of case histories that provide examples of Adler’s overall approach to the individual, while also providing rich specific instances of his use of the stochastic, conjecturing method. As they appear in this volume, *Problems of Neurosis* was first published in 1929 and *The Case of Mrs. A.* in 1931; *The Case of Miss R.* was actually the earliest of the three (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). It was published in German in 1928 and in English a year later.



Soon after publication, *Problems of Neurosis* was recognized as containing several classic formulations of Individual Psychology. Chapter 7 on "The Family Constellation" and chapter 8 on "Earliest Recollections" were both reprinted in 1937 in the then-new, English-language *International Journal of Individual Psychology*. In addition, chapter 8 was included in Hartley, Birch, and Hartley's 1950 collection, *Outside Readings in Psychology*. Chapter 6 was republished twice by Harold Greenwald, first in his 1959 edited volume of *Great Cases in Psychoanalysis* and then in 1967 in his *Active Psychotherapy*. These "vivid thumbnail sketches" (p. iii) of 33 cases span a vast array of symptoms. Each section has gems of theoretical and technical insight to offer, and I highlight some of these in the following several paragraphs.

In chapter 2, Adler's favorite technique for dealing with depression is described in all its original charm. After establishing an empathetic relationship, Adler approaches depression in two ways. First, he offers a friendly admonition either to "do only what is agreeable to you" or at least "not exert yourself to do what is disagreeable." Second, he suggests that the client might "consider from time to time how you can give another person pleasure." But, he warns, "do not actually do anything to please anyone else, but merely think about how you could do it" (p. 17). Adler's ability to put patients' private logic (in the case of depression, for the individual to think only of oneself) into a paradoxical bind comes forward in subsequent volumes as well.

The accent in chapter 3 is on social feeling and contains several classically formulated statements of Adlerian theory (e.g., "social feeling is not inborn, but an innate potential which must be consciously developed," p. 21). Similarly, in chapter 4, Adler formulates his vivid understanding of common sense: "We have two ways of trying to pass through a doorway only five feet high. One of them is to walk erect, and the other is to bend one's back. If I try the first method, I not only bump my head on the lintel, but I also have to fall back on the second method after all," pp. 36–37.

Along with addressing the neurotic lifestyle in some detail, chapter 5 also has wonderful indications of Adler's quite personal therapeutic style. In his own practice he appears to have taken great care "not to tell the patient anything he [or she] is not yet able to understand" (p. 47). And he encourages therapists to let go of all self-importance and sensitivity about a position of dominance. Rather they are to remember the importance of never demanding anything [!] of the patient (p. 48).

In chapter 6 an interesting historical enigma appears. The chapter focuses on the "Neurotic Use of Emotion," and after discussing issues of depression, impotence and polygamy, pride in poverty and agoraphobia, Adler discusses early recollections (ERs) and the meanings of persons who



populate them. Thereafter he recounts the case of “one man” whose ERs ultimately “showed his fighting attitude toward his mother.” The reason, Adler suspected, for the man’s turning away from his mother was that “he had been too spoiled by her to be able to put up with the younger brother’s appearance on the scene” (p. 61). The anomaly is revealed in the last section of the volume, when within his previously published *Case of Miss R.* Adler had already revealed these as his own ER. “Reconstructing the past, I can understand it now,” he said of himself. “My mother pampered me during the first two years of my life because I was a sick child. I became accustomed to this pampering. But when a new child was born, I was dethroned. . . . I could never forgive her for that” (pp. 198–199).

I take this as evidence of what Adler himself coined as “the courage to be imperfect” (Bruck, Adler, & Grubbe, 2009, p. 112); not Sophie Lazarsfeld, as sometimes attributed (Griffith, 2010). Such self-revelation, along with his frequently recounted overcoming of mathematics difficulties when a young student (e.g., volume 10, p. 137), may well be the foundations of his insistence that adults should never, ever give up on children. He certainly never did.

Chapter 10 addresses “Occupational Choice and Sleep Postures.” Its attention to body posture is a precursor to the cottage industry that has sprung up around “body language” over the last decade or more. Adler advises taking hints from waking and sleeping positions—from handshakes that betray tendencies to push others off or pull them in, to a sleeper’s sprawl that looks like a soldier at attention, likely for the individual to “appear as great as possible” (p. 100).

The final chapter in the first section, chapter 11, focuses on “Organ Dialect and Dreams.” Adler specified his approach to dream interpretation by emphasizing “the unity of the waking and sleeping life” (p. 107). He understood dreams to be a consistent expression of the lifestyle, more oriented to the future and the solving of current problems, than a substitute fulfillment of wishes, as Freud contended. The chapter elaborates his point of view and illustrates it with absorbing case material.

After such an extended presentation of the first section of the volume, comments on the other two can be briefer. *The Case of Mrs. A.* presents the standard for Adlerian conjecture about the neurotic character. Besides seeing Adler “in action,” both this brief presentation (29 pp.) and the more extensive *Case of Miss R.* (179 pp.) allow for training oneself in stochastic guesswork. These are most absorbing examples of Adler the clinician. This method is taken up again in briefer vignettes in volume 10, but in volume 9 it can be seen in all its richness. In both cases Adler weaves the tenets of Individual Psychology into his discussion until the reader experiences something like a live experience of applying his technique.

Adler describes the stochastic guessing process as in *The Case of Mrs. A.*:

We must scrutinize each of our assumptions and try to understand the coherence of a case. Our general views may be reflected, but we must be careful not to bias our conclusions by trying to prove a theory. As in other sciences, we must stay open to a wide range of potential influences. This perspective is very valuable, because it keeps us open to intuitive, free guessing and discovery. This freedom will be tempered by the progressive refinement and correction of our thinking about cases, a skill that improves with experience. (p. 115)

That is, his method was one of guessing from the case details toward the goal of the client and searching for further evidence that could either confirm or refute his hunch. Thereupon he would reformulate his hypothesis in line with the new evidence.

**Volume 10. Case Readings and Demonstrations:**  
**The Problem Child and The Pattern of Life**  
**ISBN: 0-9770-1860-1**

Volume 10 is another volume that includes multiple publications. *The Problem Child* and *The Pattern of Life* appear side by side. Both published in 1930, according to Ansbacher and Ansbacher (1964) they were likely published in reverse order to how they appear in this volume, the English *Pattern of Life* before the originally German *Problem Child*. The first chapter of *Problem Child* was published independently in the *International Zeitschrift für Individual Psychology* a year earlier, in 1929. The book in its entirety was published in English only in 1963.

The original publication of *The Problem Child* was the second in Adler's "Technique of Individual Psychology" series. It contains 23 specific cases presented in the stochastic method that Adler had already popularized in *The Case of Miss R.* and *The Case of Mrs. A.* Besides the specific cases there are also four chapters on more generalized topics: "The Alleged Crisis of Puberty" (chapter 5); "How I Talk to Parents" (chapter 21); "The Task of Kindergarten" (chapter 22); and the fourth general chapter is the introduction, "Man and His Fellows." This chapter provides an exquisite overview of Adler's theory and its focus on social responsibility, emphasizing the social embeddedness of the individual and the responsibility of each individual to make society more livable for oneself and the greater community.

As every living organism is striving toward an ideal final form, we find that psychic life is striving to overcome all the difficulties which, on this earth, rise as questions relating to society. . . . What we call "good" is good with respect to its usefulness for all. . . . Solutions are found to be correct only if beneficial to the community. (p. 4)



Here the reader can sense Adler's focus on the socially embedded individual. He insists that the individual "should learn to expect not only the advantages offered . . . by civilization, but also the inconveniences, seeing them as something belonging to him [or her], and accepting them as such" (p. 5). This is the sense of *Gemeinschaftsgefühl* that binds humanity together, Adler maintained. It is not a set, perfect way. In fact, "there is no ideal development of the social feeling"; still, "we must keep the goal before our eyes" (p. 11). And in a contemporaneous reflection, he added: "This also applies to nations when they lack the courage, when they do not have enough interest in others to protect against wars. . . . A nation cannot progress unless it takes an interest in the world community. If it puts its egocentric interests first, another nation will remonstrate" (p. 11).

This is the broad context within which he observes each of the children whom he interviews. And it is within this context that the more specialized chapters cohere. In chapter 5 Adler assures the reader that adolescence is not to be feared. Rather, young people are to be assisted in negotiating greater freedom, more possibilities, and their growing attraction to the other sex (p. 71). He calls for a relativizing approach that appreciates the context of adolescent struggles; so, too, with understanding the "great many people belonging to oppressed races" (p. 138). Adler calls for humanity to "take a step forward in its degree of civilization" rather than accept such oppression and "hostile tendencies." We must see them as they are, as "the expression of a general and mistaken human attitude" that we are slowly evolving away from (p. 137).

And in a very practical way Adler's intention for Individual Psychology to play its part in dispelling the mistake of hostility is emphasized. His chapters on the importance of kindergarten (chapter 22) and talking with parents (chapter 21) both speak to it. Adler believed that "the development of a child's faculties is much more a result of training than of the capacities [the child] possesses" (p. 201). Adler was a great believer in the power of remediation of the school to counter "a lack of sociability" that he was convinced was the worst error that a child can commit in life. But it isn't to be accomplished by the schools alone. They (we) must make partners out of the parents.

The second half of this volume, *The Pattern of Life*, presents twelve more cases—practical extensions of *The Problem Child*. Because these cases come from inner-city families in the United States, there is a slightly more contemporaneous feel to them. What is most stunning however, is Adler's absolutely unique appreciation and assessment of each child. As just one example of the dozen unique presentations, "The Rebellious 'Bad' Boy" (chapter 6) is, for all his frightening behavior (including chopping the tails off of domestic pets), conceptualized as "courageous enough to fight for his rights" (p. 269).



Still more touching is Adler's interaction with this "Nicholas," whom he encourages to "do more than fight with [his] comrades." He adds: "You must make friends with them." In the course of the case presentation, one can see how such guidance becomes wholly doable for the young rebel. Adler's quick-witted use of paradox confirms his understanding of and positive reception by the youth. One can imagine the twinkle in Adler's eye as he concludes: "Now I suggest that in the next week you do things that other people do not like, only two times, and then come back and see me again. Do you think you can succeed?" (p. 280).

**Volume 11. *Education for Prevention:*  
*Individual Psychology in the Schools and The Education of Children*  
ISBN: 0-977-01862-1**

In volume 11, Stein again combines two of Adler's works in the educational field into a single volume. He explains: "Between 1924–1927, Adler attracted more than six hundred Viennese teachers to his course [at the Pedagogical Institute in Vienna]; these lectures became the basis of his book (*Individual Psychology in the Schools*)." As to the effectiveness of these efforts, Stein reminds the reader: "By 1927, the city of Vienna would hire only elementary, secondary, and special education teachers who had graduated from the Pedagogical Institute" (p. ii).

The result is a concise compendium of child guidance. In 10 brief chapters (the entire "book" is less than 100 pages) Adler covers a wide range of issues. In the first two chapters he starts with childhood development in the first five years and provides an understanding and examples of just how such development can result in "problem children." He contrasts his approach with a number of theories prevalent in his day—from instinctual drive theories to religious insistence on children being "bad by nature." He advances instead a social understanding, and the need for socializing children to contribute within their surroundings. Adler provides a list familiar to Individual Psychologists of difficulties faced by children. These overburdening situations include congenital difficulties, abuse, and pampering. Adler understands that such burdens begin with the child but are soon those of society—thus, the urgency in correcting the misperceptions early on.

In the next three chapters, Adler explains the development of lifestyle, illustrating how the difficulties of childhood can distort a child's perception of the world. In chapter 3, he stresses the importance of our subjective worldview. "What had occurred does not even have to be true," he insists, "because what [one] feels is just as effective as if it were true." Again, "the facts are not important, only how we see them" (p. 25). In chapter 4 he

explores "children in difficult situations." It is particularly interesting here to see Adler addressing the issue of lifestyle. He writes that distorting circumstances in one's life may strongly influence a neurotic product, the lifestyle. That is, if "a lifestyle, a habitual and restrictive attitude toward life" (p. 28) is to be avoided, negative influences need to be ameliorated. In this way, the child's whole outlook can be changed.

In chapter 5, such perceptions are understood as the basis of early recollections—and long-term memory. Adler elucidates his theory in drawing attention to his finding that the ER's being factual or not is inconsequential. As an illustration, he shares his own experience of the nonexistence of a cemetery he believed himself to have crossed on the way to school each day. No matter the truth content of such memory fragments, Adler explains, they nonetheless show "the importance of training and the application of . . . overcoming problems" (p. 41).

Adler extends his understanding of ERs as a problem-solving technique in the next three chapters. He explains the similar use of fantasies and dreams, providing a separate chapter on his dream theory and its application to children's lives. In chapter 6 he explains in some depth his conviction that dreams are so hard to understand precisely because they are intended by the person not to be understood. It is the emotional residue that is important, not the manifest content. The purpose of dreaming is "to put us in a state of mind, or mood, in which we can accomplish something that we cannot do with logic alone" (p. 50). Chapter 7 provides brief examples of dreams and fantasies, emphasizing the trickery that metaphors play—especially in supplementing weakly organized logic. To think in metaphors and draw on them in arguments, for example, allows us to hold tight to convictions, without having to appeal to common sense. With these chapters as a theoretical prelude, he uses chapter 8 to speak at length about the application of his dream theory and provides clinical examples of how to use it when working with children.

Perhaps to emphasize the importance of his comprehensive measure of human wellness, Adler concludes his lectures in chapter 9 with a focus on social interest. Herein he encourages child therapists to prevent the pitfalls of pampering and neglecting children. Their duty is to take up, in a more effective manner, the maternal tasks that have failed to a greater or lesser degree. That is, educators are to win the child's interest and steer this interest toward others (p. 69). The book concludes with a chapter of four practical applications—much like the case examples of volumes 9 and 10.

The second work found in volume 11 (*The Education of Children*) has 15 chapters, an appendix of five case examples, and an Individual Psychology questionnaire. These lend themselves to a semester-long course in child guidance, in their very practical focus. The 15-point questionnaire is



annotated and referenced in various chapters in the book. Drawn up by the International Society of Individual Psychology, it is of great historical interest and still contains salient and challenging insights.

The first six chapters include a generous introduction to Individual Psychology (chapter 1) along with thorough explications of three essential concepts: the unified personality (chapter 2), striving for superiority (chapter 3), and the inferiority complex (chapter 5). Each of the notions is explored in its educational significance. For example, chapter 4 emphasizes how teachers can help direct the striving for superiority, while chapter 6 aims to prevent the development of an inferiority complex. Both chapters provide rich case material demonstrating precisely how Adler guided children on the road to contribution. Throughout, there are references to the questionnaire provided in the appendix, which makes the applied use of the material quite teachable.

At the midpoint of the book, chapter 7 presents the importance of social interest and the obstacles to its development. The following three chapters focus on specifics of the school situation: the impact of birth order in the classroom (chapter 8); the "test" represented by the child first arriving at school (chapter 9); and the situation of the child once embedded in the school system (chapter 10). Adler emphasizes that what we learn about children in the school setting explains much about their psychological preparation for life. And such knowledge is not as useful in categorizing and labeling as it is for understanding and redirecting the child into usefully contributing to the school community.

Chapter 11 is an especially rich presentation of some of Adler's views that are not frequently encountered in our literature. He identifies outside influences as "dangerous corners" (p. 184) that need to be avoided if possible. Such corners in life include hard economic circumstances, extended illnesses, and meeting strangers who superficially influence children with no positive intentions in mind. These and other situations can subject children to perceptual distortions that last a lifetime. Less overtly threatening, but as influential, is the issue of children's reading material. A great deal of practical wisdom follows, with Adler encouraging adults to read with children and to be prepared and willing to help them interpret confusing matters, such as fairy tales and religious literature.

Chapter 12 is an encouraging and respectful presentation of adolescence and the need to prepare teens for taking their place in the world. He offers ample insights and advice for working effectively with teens and avoiding power struggles that can result in pushing teens in precisely the wrong direction—toward exhibitions of self-perceived adultlike power. Many problems can be avoided, Adler insists, by accepting teens as young adults and relieving them of the need to prove they are adults. Adler follows these chapters with an extended presentation of healthy sex education.



Chapter 13 serves to illustrate pedagogical errors that afflicted a 12-year-old boy with whom Adler worked (presented in the previous chapter). Here, again and again, Adler emphasizes the cardinal virtue of faith in the child's resilient capacities and how important it is not to give up!

The last chapter of the book, on parent education, is an admonition for Individual Psychologists to work kindly with parents. It is a touching account of the importance of helping parents see their children differently, not by challenging parents directly, but by patiently suggesting alternative ways of approaching their children. It is especially refreshing in its presentation of children and the effective help that is available from attentive adults.

**Volume 12. *The General System of Individual Psychology: Overview and Summary of Classical Adlerian Theory and Current Practice***  
**ISBN: 0-977-01862-8**

Volume 12 is a fitting conclusion to the remarkable series that Stein has assembled as Adler's clinical works. The editor explains in his preface, "'The General System of Individual Psychology' is an unpublished manuscript . . . that was discovered in the Library of Congress. The thirteen undated lectures, identified as 'chapters,' form a complete series that Adler presented in English, possibly in New York City" (p. v). Though originally edited by an American associate of Adler, one Frank Percy, MD, this name is mentioned in neither Hoffman's (1994) nor Bottome's (1957) biographies of Adler. The manuscript needed extensive revising for readability, Stein writes. Volume 12 is a fast paced, extremely readable, and insightful summary of Individual Psychology. In the following paragraphs, I will identify a gem or two I enjoyed from each chapter.

In chapter 1 Adler explains what he means by psychological goals—surely a controversial concept in his time. "Mind . . . is one of the great achievements of evolution. . . . If we are placed correctly in this stream of evolution, then we do not need to think much about it. But when we confront difficulties and struggle to find the best solution, our intellect helps us find the way. All individuals, mind, intellect, and common sense move toward the ideal goal of completion" (p. 2).

In chapter 2 Adler emphasizes the importance of feeling inferior and refutes those who would deemphasize it. "To be a human being means to have a feeling of inferiority, and we can understand that it is another stimulus in addition to the evolutionary power in each living being, a stimulus which pulls . . . toward his [or her] individual goal of perfection" (p. 17).

Chapter 3 focuses on the importance of teaching children contribution as an effective antidote to the overburdening situations of life. This can result in the well-adjusted understanding that "not only the conveniences . . . but

also the inconveniences" of life belong to them and that the "present level of living is the result of the contributions of others" (p. 34).

Chapter 4 underscores creativity as a potential foil to mistaken goals. "I want to emphasize that this connection between organ inferiority and the life style should not be used as a rule. Some exceptions we can predict and some we cannot because we must consider the creative power of a child" (p. 29). The chapter provides limited typologies for understanding clients. Still, Adler insists that rigid adherence to any typology does an injustice to therapy, to its artistic and scientific aspects: "These types can be used only as Individual Psychology uses rules . . . to illuminate the whole field, and then find the special individual. . . . These rules . . . are the keyboard; the art of understanding Individual Psychology is the music" (p. 51).

In chapter 5 we find Adler's understanding of a child's developing social interest: "If I am interested in a person, I will try as much as possible to speak so that I can connect with him [or her], allowing him [or her] to feel my interest in giving" (p. 55).

In chapter 6 he emphasizes the power of early training in providing resistance to delinquency. "In facing the test of friendship, a child who is socially interested cannot be spoiled by bad companions . . . . Negative influences are not the problem, but an opportunity. I have seen children who could resist bad influences. There is no question about it" (p. 90).

Chapter 7 reverses the typical order in which we think of priorities for top-level education. "The most important thing for us to do right now . . . would be to have the best, properly trained educators in prisons. The best educators should not be in colleges or universities; they should be in the prisons. Then we could achieve some success [in the growth of social interest]" (p. 102).

Chapter 8 distinguishes Individual Psychology from psychoanalysis: "Freud . . . insisted before that all dreams are wish fulfillments or infantile sexual wishes. . . . I insisted that his original conception was too narrow, and when I said that a dream does not mean looking back . . . but means looking into the future and going in a particular direction, Freud then came to the idea that dreams are characterized by death wishes" (p. 108).

In chapter 9 "dépà vu" is one of the many fascinating phenomena Adler explains from his perspective: "It is not the actual experience which impresses us . . . as though we had experienced it before; it is our feeling and emotion. It is not the visible things which impress us, but the emotion and feeling associated with them, which we have experienced before" (p. 122).

In chapter 10 Adler shows he was well aware of the horrors of war. In speaking of preparation for life, he strikes a surprisingly contemporary note: "As long as a child of two, three, or four years experiences the fact of war, he cannot feel socially interested. He [or she] sees and experiences life as full of enmity. . . . If we really want to educate him [or her] correctly . . . then we must eliminate war and similar violence" (p. 136).



Chapter 11 deals with active and passive failure in the life tasks and the issue of courage: “[A] child’s degree of activity . . . should not be mistaken for courage. Courage is different; it is activity along social lines in the realm of social interest” (p. 144).

In chapter 12 the emphasis is on the importance of mutuality in the love task: “Clearly, this mutual task with a view for eternity can be accomplished only if the two cooperating people feel entirely equal, because all cooperation would be disrupted if one of the partners left the whole task to the other person. Both partners must unite to solve this problem, which they can do only in a state of complete equality” (p. 161).

In chapter 13 Adler summarizes his theory by exploring the meaning of life: “If we now know that the meaning of life lies in cooperation and contribution, then we must consider the tools an individual has and uses. Only a socially interested person has the appropriate tools and uses them correctly” (p. 182).

Stein also includes six appendices (A–F) intended to “bring the reader up-to-date on contemporary Classical Adlerian practice” (p. vi). These include a summary of Classical Adlerian theory (A), a detailed presentation of an intervention technique (B) and an overview of the training which leads to certification in this clinical approach (E). Two others address different aspects of Socratic questioning (C & D), and the volume closes with a touching memorial statement offered by one of Adler’s closest collaborators (F).

Before closing, reference should be made to *A Clinician’s Guide* (Stein & Stein, 2012) as well as to the two volumes of *Classical Adlerian Depth Psychotherapy (CADP)* (Stein, 2013, 2014). The first, in effect, is a “thirteenth” volume of the *CCWAA*. It provides something like bookends for the series, serving as an introduction as well as a summary for the collection. It is a stand-alone volume that has concise summaries of every article and chapter in the collection. The *CADP* volumes then translate the theory into practice congruent with Adler’s own method and style. In these three volumes the breadth and depth of Adler’s interests are on display and the Steins manage to convey this in a user-friendly style.

### Closing Comments

Writing a review of a multivolume collection presents a number of challenges for the reviewer. Inviting people to actually *read* in these times of snippets and summaries, quick fixes and pharmaceutical miracles, partial connections and technique-driven integration, rapid interpretations and weekend workshops (Dahle Buelow, Hansen, & Hoffman, 2015) is not a casual undertaking. The depth and healing capability of Adler’s theory can be overlooked even among those committed to Adlerian theory. So, in making a

closing appeal to read Adler in the original, singer-song writer Paul Simon's reflections on music listening today came to mind: "It's a beautiful art form. It shouldn't be discarded. The question is, can you reintroduce this art form to a generation that has already gotten used to another way of listening? I think the answer is, yes" (Simon, 2011). The main issue I have been concerned with, however, is providing an accurate enough portrayal of the contents of *CCWAA* for the serious reader—challenged by today's media and reading habits—to consider how important it is to know Adler thoroughly. I believe it is not too much to hope that readers would want to secure access to Adler's virtually inexhaustible clinical insight by encouraging the availability of *CCWAA* within their personal, public, or academic library. Now you can decide. And as you do, please keep in mind Furtmüller's admonition when he reflected on Adler's writing style: "Sometimes you will brood a quarter of an hour over a paragraph. But then you will get out of it more stimulation . . . than in many chapters of easy reading" (Furtmüller, 1946/1964, p. 362). Fortunately, the Cees Koen and Gerald Liebenau translations and the Steins' editing have reduced the brooding time. Still, any time spent grasping Adler's original works is paid back a hundredfold in therapeutic insights, application, and inspiration.

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