Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler
Ever heard about:

- feelings of inferiority?
- inferiority complex?
- superiority complex?
- woman’s revolt against her feminine role?
- the overprotective mother?
- self-centeredness?
- need for affection?
- dethronement of the first-born?

Then you have already met Adlerian concepts
"Ich glaube mich an keine strenge Regel und Voreingenommenheit gebunden, vielmehr huldige ich dem Grundsatz: alles kann auch ganz anders sein" (Alfred Adler, 1933)

„I don't feel obliged to obtain tough rules and prejudice, on the contrary: I pay homage to the principle: everything can be totally different.“
Program:

- The Man Alfred Adler
- Basic Concepts of Individual Psychology
- Development of Personality - Attachment Theory, Mentalization, Intersubjectivity
- Adlerian Psychotherapy
  - Adlerian Psychotherapy of Children and Adolescents
The Man Alfred Adler
**Biography:**

1870 Alfred Adler was born Feb 7 in a suburb of Vienna. He was the second son in a Jewish family of seven children. His father was a grain merchant coming from Burgenland.

Adler was a child of weak health condition, suffering from rachitis (rickets) and laryngospasm. He was able to walk only at the age of four. When he was five he nearly died from pneumonia - doctors had already given up his treatment.

The experience of his younger brother dying and his own weak physical condition made him come to the decision to become a medical doctor in his early years. In his autobiographical notes he describes that he had set a goal to overcome his fear of death by choosing the occupation of a physician.
1888. Adler started to attend the University of Vienna
1895 he received his medical degree. At first he specialized in ophthalmology, then turned to general medicine, later established himself as a neurologist and psychiatrist
1897 he married Raissa Timofejevna Epstein, who had come from Moscow to study in Vienna. She was a politically engaged woman, mainly active in feministic affairs.

They had four children:
Valentine, Alexandra, Nelly, Kurt (Alexandra and Kurt later on had been working as psychiatrists and psychotherapists in New York)
1898: „Gesundheitsbuch für das Schneidergewerbe” (The Health of Taylors)
  Valentine is born
1899: taking up the practice of general medicine in Vienna in a lower middle class neighborhood.
Adler meets Freud.
1901       His daughter Alexandra is born. In her adult life she will be continuing his work as a psychiatrist, medical head of »Alfred Adler Mental Hygiene Clinic« in New York, long-term president of “International Association of Individual Psychology“.

1902       Adler is invited by Freud to join the „Mittwochsrunde“, the weekly psychoanalytic meeting.

1904.       Adler develops his basic ideas about education, publishing: „Der Arzt als Erzieher“ (the physician as educator) He converts to Protestantism, not because of religious reasons but as a symbol for his attitude of non-religious life style (which at that time only could be shown in this way)

1905       His son Kurt is born - he later on founded together with his sister Alexandra the “Alfred Adler Institute” in New York, a psychotherapeutic training facility. He was head of it for many years.

1907. „Studie über die Minderwertigkeit von Organen“ (Study of Organ Inferiority and Its Psychical Compensation; a Contribution to Clinical Medicine, published in english 1917)

By that study Alfred Adler becomes a pioneer of psychosomatics. The term “Inferiority of Organs” is the starting point of an approach of understanding the self-regulating system of body and psyche, based on medicine and depth psychology.
1910. becomes the president of „Wiener Psychoanalytische Vereinigung“ (Viennese Psychoanalytic Association) and editor of „Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse“ (Central Journal of Psychoanalysis) together with Wilhelm Stekel.

1911. Adler held two lectures at the Psychoanalytic Association which question Freud’s sexual theory of neurosis in a critical way: “Zur Kritik der Freudschen Sexualtheorie des Seelenlebens“

After that Adler was pushed to leave the Psychoanalytic Association. He formed his own group, which was at first called “The Society for Free Psychoanalytic Research” and which had its own publications. Within the year he changed the name to “Individual Psychology”.

1912. „Über den nervösen Charakter - Grundzüge einer vergleichenden Individualpsychologie und Psychotherapie“ ((The Neurotic Constitution) is published, a profound presentation of Adler’s proposition about the normal and the neurotic psyche. Adler’s research work lead to a holistic view of human individual. Already in this work he postulates the concept of an unconscious style of life - to be aware of it is necessary to understand the human individual.

1914. „Heilen und Bilden“: a collected volume of articles by Alfred Adler and his co-workers, addressed to physicians and pedagogues on purpose of prevention of neurosis

1914 Founding of “Zeitschrift für Individualpsychologie“ (Journal of Individual Psychology”) together with Carl Furtmüller
1915 The Medical Faculty of Viennese University refuses his habilitation treatise.

1916-18 during the First World War Adler served for two years in the Austrian Army as a physician in Krakow, Brünn and Vienna

1922 the first international congress of Individual Psychology takes place in Munich


1924 „Praxis und Theorie der Individualpsychologie - Vorträge und Einführung in die Psychotherapie“ (Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology) is published.

Adler is lecturing at the „Pädagogikum der Stadt Wien“, the teachers’ college in Vienna, and was nominated as a professor.

Adler establishes the first child guidance clinics in Vienna in connection with the Viennese school system. Ultimately these numbered some thirty. They were followed by a kinder garden, working on principles of Individual Psychology and a reform school.
1926. „Handbuch der Individualpsychologie“: Edited by Erwin Wexberg - co-workers of Alfred Adler deal with different aspects of Individual Psychology

From 1925 Adler regularly visited the United States. He served as a visiting professor at Columbia University

1927 „Menschenkenntnis“ ("Understanding Human Nature") is published: a transcription of Adler's lectures, which he gave at the "Volkshochschule Wien", a public facility for education of adult citizens of Vienna. In this book he aims on an overall view on Individual Psychology that can be understood easily without any previous psychological education.

1929 „Problems of Neurosis“ and „The Science of Living“ are the first books of Alfred Adler written in English.

Adler becomes the medical chief of the “Ambulatorium Mariahilf”, a public outdoor clinic for treatment of neurosis.

„Individualpsychologie in der Schule“: lectures for teachers and educators

1930 „Die Seele des schwer erziehbaren Kindes“; „Das Problem der Homosexualität“
Individual Psychology made great gains at that time, reaching its height before the advent of Hitler, when there were thirty-four local groups in Central Europe and all over the world.

1930: At his 60th birthday he becomes “citizen of honour of Vienna”

The 5th International Congress for Individual Psychology takes place in Berlin, more than 2000 participants join the congress
Adler was free from any pomposity. He spoke the Viennese dialect, enjoyed sociability and simple pleasure of life, such as food. He was very musical, had a good voice and enjoyed singing the ballads of Schubert and Schumann. His manner was generally simple, he preferred to use non-technical language, addressing to any kind of audiences in order to reach as many people directly as possible. After his many lectures, he liked to be surrounded by the audience, answering questions. He would later continue the discussion at home. So his students often visited him at home – he stayed in Salmannsdorf, which is a green district of Vienna.
Alfred Adler´s most outstanding personal characteristic was his interest in and his sympathy with the „common man“.
From his student days on he was keenly interested in social problems and improvement of living conditions.
Also from his early years of professional life he was highly engaged in school reform and also supported his wife in her activities in women's rights.
So it was only natural that he was attached to any kind of social reform and therefore the Social-Democratic Movement.
1932 Associations of Individual Psychology in 16 countries.

1933 „Der Sinn des Lebens“ (Social Interest; A Challenge to Mankind): in his last big opus describes neurotic symptoms caused by the conflict between the individual and community.

In the same year he publishes: „Religion und Individualpsychologie“

1935 Adler and his family settled in New York, he is working as a psychotherapist and a lecturer.

He held a chair for Clinical Psychology at the Long Island Medical College.

The „International Journal of Individual Psychology“ is founded - American Edition
1937, May 28th: Adler dies from a heart attack in Aberdeen, Scotland while on a lecture tour.

1939 After the invasion of National Socialists in Austria the Association of Individual Psychology (Verein für Individualpsychologie) was eliminated by law.

1946 The „Verein für Individualpsychologie” was reconstituted in Austria, an international association was reconstituted in 1954.
• His body was cremated at Warriston Crematorium in Edinburgh but the ashes were never reclaimed.

• In 2007, his ashes were rediscovered in a casket at Warriston Crematorium and returned to Vienna for burial in 2011.
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S. Freud - A. Adler

- both - depth psychology because it discovers buried unconscious phenomena

- Like S. Freud A. Adler distinguishes the “conscious” and the “unconscious”. But conscious and unconscious are not antipodal struggling forces, as A. Adler is understanding the unconscious as “not awareness”.

- Conscious and unconscious are aspects of a unified relational system.
Theory of neurosis

- the psyche is determined by drives, especially the sexual drive
- the sexual drive develops in different phases; during a certain phase a special body region is provided with libidinal energy (oral, anal, phallic, latency, genital ...)
- the drive occurs tension, which has to be discharged - this leads to feelings of pleasure
- the manner of accomplishment with the drive tension leads to specific characters (oral, anal, ...)
- neurosis develops because of repression of drives (or trauma)
Psychoanalysis
Theory - Basic concepts (1904 - 1911)

Theory of neurosis

- the sexual drive is intensively repressed (society)
- neurotic symptoms are alternative paths toward satisfaction; they represent the repressed (sexual) drive
- the most important conflict is the relation to parents: Ödipus complex
Psychoanalysis
Theory - Basic concepts (1904 - 1911)

The psychoanalytical treatment

- free association - law of determination of the psyche
- uncovering the unconscious

What is unconscious?
- repressed drives (especially the infantile sexual impulses)
- transference: a reproduction of emotions relating to repressed experiences, especially of childhood, and the substitution of another person for the original object of the repressed impulses
Some early Writings (1904-1911)

1904 - Der Arzt als Erzieher (The Physician as Educator)
1907 - Study of Organ Inferiority and its Psychical Compensation; a Contribution to Clinical Medicine
1908 - The Aggression Drive in Life and Neurosis
1908 - The Need for Affection of the Child
1911 - Repression and masculine Protest; its Importance for the neurotic Dynamic
At the beginning:
Theory of Organ inferiority

Early discussion of psychosomatic disorder!

• A disease afflicts only the inferior (= weak) organ which reacts to pathogenic stimuli from the environment

e.g.

→ Franz Alexander (1950): increased vulnerability of an organ causes somatic reaction to emotional stress
At the beginning:
Theory of Organ inferiority

„organ dialect“
= a way of expressing inner psychic conflicts which cannot be put in words, aiming unconsciously to superiority in a discouraged way

→ Stavros Mentzos (2010): increased vulnerability of an organ causes somatic reaction to emotional stress
Aggression Drive (1908)

- a superordinate dynamic force
- if satisfaction of a basic drive failed, the aggression drive will succeed satisfaction
- a superordinate psychological field which connects the drives
Need for Affection (1908)

- innate need
- children want to be fondled, loved and praised
- need for social relationship
- later develops the social interest
Masculine Protest (1911)

- through this concept Adler turns toward a psychological path
- sex is a metaphor: man = superiority; woman = inferiority
- overcompensation of feelings of inferiority
- the desire of being a powerful person instead of an inferior one
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. Freud</th>
<th>A. Adler</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• wanted to be a (natural) scientist seeking for causal explanation; using physics and chemistry for PA</td>
<td>• individual is socially embedded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• unconscious is determined by drives, their repression, transference</td>
<td>• sexuality is a metaphor (sexual drive = masculine protest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sexual drive</td>
<td>• psychological AND physiological explanation</td>
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<td>• libido</td>
<td>• subjective explanation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• teleology</td>
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Gabriela Pap: The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler
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<th><strong>S. Freud</strong></th>
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<td>• Aim of the psychical activity: satisfaction of drives, avoid displeasure</td>
<td>• Aim of the psychical activity: safety, &quot;Will to Power&quot; focuses on the individual's creative power to change for the better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the basic needs of human beings: are biological and somatic ones</td>
<td>• the basic needs of human beings: need for affiliation, safety, love, recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• human as monad</td>
<td>• viewing the individual holistically rather than reductively</td>
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Gabriela Pap: The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler
Basic Concepts of Individual Psychology

Gabriela Pap: The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler
Basic Concepts of Individual Psychology

- Feelings of Inferiority + Striving for Overcoming
- Fictional final Goal
- Safeguarding Tendencies
- Social Interest
- Style of Life + Scheme of Apperception
Feeling of inferiority

• The primary feeling of inferiority is the original and normal feeling in the infant and child of smallness, weakness, and dependency.

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Feeling of inferiority

- Feeling of inferiority usually acts as an incentive for development:

One basic force behind all human activity, a striving from a felt minus situation towards a plus situation; from a feeling of inferiority towards superiority and perfection.
Feeling of inferiority

• **anthropological inferiority**
  to be a human being means to be inferior
  is always accompanied by the striving for superiority

• **organ inferiority**

• **social inferiority**
  always in comparison with others
  the final fictional goal
Fictionalism and Finalism

- Fiction by H. Vaihinger
- Fictional final goal
Fictionalism by H. Vaihinger (1852 -1933)

• "The Philosophy of „As If“: A System of the Theoretical, Practical, and Religious Fictions of Mankind“ (1911)
• fictions are ideas, including unconscious notions, which have no counterpart in reality (e.g. classifications, reducing complexity, typology, using analogy, mathematics etc.)
• useful
• hypothesis, dogma
Fiction and Finalism by A. Adler

- Fictions are helpful for solving problems.
- An "as if world".
- Security giving points of orientation.
- Fictions can be adapted and abandoned.
- Finalism - orientation toward a final goal which gives orientation in the chaos of life.
Fictional final goal

• not only the past determines individuals but also the future
• causa efficiens + causa finalis
• forward orientation of the individual toward a final goal (the unifying condition)
• unconscious
• creation of the individual

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Fictional final goal

- constructed in early childhood as a bridge into the future where power and superiority resides
- has the inevitability of fate if it remains unconscious
- in hours of insecurity fictions become more prominent
Striving for overcoming, perfection, power, superiority

- The striving for overcoming, for compensation of inferiority, receives its specific direction from the individually unique goal, an “ideal self”.
Compensation - avoidance - overcompensation

- Compensation is the natural reaction of the nonneurotic person who has accepted being an imperfect creature
- To be human means to feel inferior
Compensation - avoidance - overcompensation

- Neurotic person is concerned about his (enhancement) self-esteem, his goal is of superiority.
- "Normal" person is concerned with gaining satisfaction by overcoming difficulties which are appreciated as such by the others as well - his superiority goal includes the welfare of others.

Brigitte Sindelar/Gabriela Pap: The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler
Compensation - avoidance - overcompensation

- Overcompensation by finding means to excel in this or another area

As a boy Demosthenes had a speech impediment: Demosthenes actually suffered rhotacism, mispronouncing ρ (r) as λ (l), had a weak voice. So he went to the sea shore, put pebbles into his mouth and trained to pronounce very clearly, citing verses while running and raising his voice to become louder than the roar of the waves. He became one of the most famous orators of Ancient Greece.
Safeguarding tendencies

• Strategies to protect self esteem, to avoid situations of inferiority feeling.

Example:
A child does not do his homework, does not prepare for exams.
What is the safeguarding function in this behavior?
• The individual cannot be considered apart from his social environment and situation. He is always to be seen as socially embedded.

• Everybody is aiming to find his place of value within the social community.
Socialization of the individual is not achieved by repression, but is afforded through an innate human ability, which, however, needs to be developed.
Social Interest

• is not an inborn full-fledged entity
• an innate potentiality which has to be developed consciously
• it develops in a social context
• remains throughout life
Social Interest

• „to see through the eyes, to hear through the ears, to feel with the heart of the other person“
• identification and empathy
• these abilities are necessary for relationships
The three main tasks of life

- love and marriage
- occupation and performance
- community
Adler called an individual's characteristic approach to life the “style of life”. He expressed this concept as self or ego, personality, individuality, the unity of the personality, an individual form of creative activity, the method of facing problems, one's opinion about oneself and the problems of life, or the whole attitude towards life.
**Style of Life**

- dynamic concept comprising the final goal, the individual's opinion about himself, the others and the world
- the independent creation of the individual
- the child is not a passive creature molded by external forces

*Gabriela Pap: The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler*
“Everyone carries within himself an opinion of himself and the problems of life, a life line, and a law of movement which keeps fast hold of him without his understanding it or giving himself an account of it.”

(Adler, 1933a)
Style of Life

- Every individual keeps trying to overcome the feeling of inferiority of early childhood by striving for perfection, completion, superiority or evolution.

- Like Freud, Adler viewed the first five years of life as central in the development of personality. By that time, children have experienced enough to have adopted a prototype of their goal and style of life, although there can be some modification throughout the rest of childhood and adolescence.

- The style of life becomes the way in which individuals approach or avoid the three main tasks of life and try to realize their fictional final goal. In healthy persons, this dealing with the tasks of life is relatively flexible. They can find many ways of solving problems and, when one way is blocked, they can choose another.
The Style of Life has to be understood as an unconscious program of self concepts, concepts of the world, goals and believes how those goals can be reached. This life line shapes strategies of behavior, which the individual takes for suitable to get from his starting point to the goal of overcoming difficulties.

Style of Life becomes obvious as soon a person is exposed to new and demanding tasks.
“The first four to five years are enough for the child to complete his/her specific and arbitrary training in the face of impressions from the body and the environment. From then on the creative activity of the style of life begins its work.”

“The apperception connected with the law of movement is the way in which man looks at himself and the external world. ... It is the opinion which the child, and later, in the same direction, the adult has gained of himself and the world.”
The ways of conceiving the self and the world seem to fashion for us a set of “lenses” through which we see the world. Individual perception is limited and there will always be a discrepancy between reality and the perception of it. For normal people, this discrepancy is relatively small; for psychologically disturbed people, the discrepancy is much greater.
Our senses do not receive actual facts, but a subjective image of them. The same experience does not mean the same to all people experiencing.

→ It is not the event that takes influence on us, but the meaning we link to it!
Scheme of Apperception

An example, used by Adler:
Caesar’s landing in Egypt:
Caesar jumped ashore, stumbled and fell on the ground.
Roman soldiers took this as an unfavorable omen, until Caesar threw out his arms and shouted: “I am embracing you, Africa!”
- by early memories one can obtain more easily a picture of the style of life
- but any event will express the basic attitude
- unconscious and not assailable to criticism (of experience)
Scheme of Apperception - Style of life

Adler’s autobiographically note:

„When I was five I became ill with pneumonia and was given up by the physician. A second physician advised a treatment just the same, and in a few days I became well again. In the joy over my recovery, there was talk for a long time about the mortal danger in which I was supposed to have been. From that time on I recall always thinking of myself in the future as a physician. This means that I hat set a goal from which I could expect an end to my childlike distress, my fear of death. Clearly I expected more from the occupation of my choice than it could accomplish:

Brigitte Sindelar/Gabriela Pap: The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler
The overcoming of death and of the fear of death is something I should not have expected from human, but only from divine accomplishments. Reality, however, demands action, and so I was forced to modify my goal by changing the conscious form of the guiding fiction until it appeared to satisfy reality. So I came to choose the occupation of physician in order to overcome death and the fear of death."
Case study

Childhood memories and the earliest recollection
Basic Concepts of Individual Psychology

- Feeling of Inferiority
- Fictional final Goal
- Striving for Overcoming
- Safeguarding Tendencies
- Social Interest
- Style of Life
- Scheme of Apperception
Four basic patterns of style of life can be detected:

- **active and constructive** („I have to be successful”);
- **passive and constructive** („I have to sacrifice myself for others”, “I always have to be charming”);
- **active and destructive** („I have to oppose”, ”I have to take revenge, I have to pay back”);
- **passive and destructive** (”I have to show my weaknesses, I have to be lazy”).

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Observing Style of Life in situations of everyday-life

- Imagine a group of four friends going to a restaurant.
Each of the four persons has a different life style. They enter the restaurant, the servant tells them that their pre-booked table has already been given away to another group of four, there is only a table with three chairs available.
How would each person of this group of four react, depending on his/her individual life style?
Basic propositions of Individual Psychology

- there is one basic **dynamic force** behind all human activity, a **striving** from a felt minus situation towards a plus situation, from a **feeling of inferiority** towards superiority (perfection)

- the striving receives its specific direction from an individually **unique goal** of self-ideal, which though influenced by biological and environmental factors is ultimately the creation of the individual. Because it is an ideal, the goal is a **fiction**.

- the goal is only dimly envisaged by the individual, (or even fully **unconscious**) which means that it is largely unknown to him and not understood by him.

- the goal becomes the final cause and the key for understanding the individual
Basic propositions of Individual Psychology

- the **style of life** comprises the movement towards this goal. It becomes established in early childhood by the age of 5-6 years, at a time where there is no language for feelings and thoughts. That is one of the reasons why the style of life rests unknown for the individual.

- the style of life, which means the individual's opinion about himself, the others and the world, the movement toward the final goal, his **apperceptive scheme**, his interpretations of life (subjectivity) influences every psychological process.

- the individual cannot be considered apart from his social situation and is regarded as **socially embedded**. IP refuses to recognize and examine an isolated human being.

- all important life problems, including certain drive satisfactions, become social problems.
Basic Concepts of Individual Psychology

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- Fictional final Goal
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Optimal development of personality
Adler’s theory of human nature and personality

- Human character and personality results from experiences of attachment and interpersonal relationship in early childhood.
- But the child never is a total victim of experiences but an individual with creative power.
Adler’s theory of human nature and personality

- Holistic approach: personality is an undividable, unified and unique whole of body, mind and emotion.

“Individual Psychology”
Optimal development of personality

- In an optimal situation of development, adults will win children’s cooperation, helping them to develop a sense of significance through contributing to others, minimizing their inferiority feelings, stimulating their courage, guiding them to be active, and helping them feel a part of the whole.
Optimal development of personality

- These experiences will help children identify and develop their capacities and become cooperative, productive, and satisfied adults. They will be able to see and feel their interdependence with others and be challenged to develop sufficient courage to deal with difficulties, to connect intimately with others, and to improve themselves for the benefit of all.
The neurotic character

Maladjustment: “Discouragement”

- mistaken opinion of: himself (by increased and exaggerated inferiority feelings) and the world
- mistaken style of life: underdeveloped social interest and uncooperative goal of personal superiority, self-centered instead of task-centered
- various forms of abnormal behavior aimed at safeguarding the self esteem
- an unconscious process
The neurotic character

- Caused by discouragement, the person follows a destructive style of life, using the symptoms of neurosis to reach a fictive superiority.
- Strives for superiority over others rather than superiority over difficulties.
- A rigid tendentious apperception makes the person interpret anything self-centered negatively.
- Lacks of social interest.

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The neurotic character

- feelings of insecurity force the neurotic to stronger attachment to fictions, ideals, and principles
- her/his thinking is characterized by antitheses, dichotomies, and prejudice
- she/he clings to dogmatized fictions to support him in his efforts at coping with life
The neurotic character

- Neurotic symptoms have the task to safeguard the person’s self-esteem.
- Symptoms: a form of defense of the ego from threats by outside demands and problems of life (not only against instinctual demands).
Alfred Adler: a visionary man of current findings in:
attachment theory
mentalization
intersubjective psychoanalysis (neurobiology)
Individual Psychology
Developmental Theory

Gabriela Pap

History and Theoretical Development of the Psychotherapy Schools I
Individual Psychology
Attachment Theory

* J. Bowlby established the attachment theory during the 1950s
* At the beginning there was harsh criticism on behalf of psychoanalysis
* Since the 1980s there is an approach between psychoanalysis and attachment theory
Attachment Theory

• a primary biological instinct of mankind, which exists independently from all other drives

• an emotional bound, which accompanies man during his whole life span

• goal of attachment behavior is the feeling of security
Attachment Theory

Internal Working Models

• a set of expectations and beliefs about the self, others and the relationship between the self and others

• beliefs about: my own and other people’s behavior, whether or not I am lovable and worthy of love, whether or not others are available, interested and able to help/protect/support me
Attachment Theory
Internal Working Models

- are formed in early infancy
- they are subject to chance and development according to experiences in relationships in the first few years - later they lose flexibility and become resistant to change
- are mostly unconscious
Attachment Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>attachment patterns in childhood</th>
<th>adult attachment patterns</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>secure</td>
<td>autonomous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insecure avoidant</td>
<td>dismissing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insecure ambivalent</td>
<td>preoccupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disorganized</td>
<td>unsolved</td>
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</table>
Pattern of Attachment in Childhood

Caregiver does not answer, rejecting
Acceptance
Security
Proximity
Caregiver unreliable, Rejection, unpredictable
unpredictable frightening

<table>
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<th>secure</th>
<th>insecure ambivalent</th>
<th>disorganised</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attention toward objects, deactivating the need for Attachment</td>
<td>Attention is flexible, Exploration and attachment is balanced</td>
<td>Attention toward persons, hyperactivated attachment system</td>
<td>fear without solution, controlling behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repression of negative feelings</td>
<td>Emotional balance, positive and negative feelings</td>
<td>Anger, doubtfulness, exaggeration of emotions</td>
<td>feelings of anxiety unsolved in chaotic and destructive form</td>
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Gabriela Pap
The Secure Base Model

- **AVAILABILITY** Helping the child to trust
- **FAMILY MEMBERSHIP** Helping the child to belong
- **SENSITIVITY** Helping the child to manage feelings and behaviour
- **CO-OPERATION** Helping the child to feel effective - and be co-operative
- **ACCEPTANCE** Building the child's self-esteem

A SECURE BASE
being a subject means to be recognized as somebody with own feelings, mind, wills, intentions, plans etc.

- a sensitive caregiver has the baby’s mind in mind

- mentalizing ➔ seeing yourself from the outside and the others from the inside
Intersubjectivity - Mentalization

- children learn to mentalize by being mentalized
- mentalizing develops best in trusting and safe relationships
- mentalizing enables to find meaning in other’s actions, a clear demarcation between inner and outside reality, a good level of intersubjective contact
Intersubjectivity - Mentalization

- Mentalization emerges in the context of infant - caregiver relationship through early affect mirroring
- Mentalization is essential to the development of intersubjectivity
• G. Rizzolatti et al (University of Parma) discovered mirror cells in 1990s

• mirror cells could explain how and why we can read others’ minds and why we feel empathy
Neurobiology
Mirror Cells

- the baby is born with a basic configuration of mirror cells
- the development of the mirror neurons depends on the interaction with other persons (mirroring)
- successful mirroring → the body produces opioids
Individual Psychology - Developmental Theory at SFU
The „Big Four“ of developmental theory

- Intersubjectivity
- Affection
- Regulation
- Mentalization
- Attachment

Gabriela Pap
Stages of intersubjectivity by Trevarthen:

• (innate) primary intersubjectivity (dyadic relation)
• secondary intersubjectivity (triadic relation)
Individual Psychology - Developmental Theory at SFU

Stages of intersubjectivity by Th. Stephenson (SFU):

- in-subjectivity (pregnancy)
- primary intersubjectivity (dyadic relation)
- secondary intersubjectivity (triadic relation)
- tertiary intersubjectivity („group-us“)
- quaternary intersubjectivity („mankind-us“)
Competences of intersubjectivity by Th. Stephenson (SFU):

- Primary intersubjectivity: coordination
- Secondary intersubjectivity: collaboration
- Tertiary intersubjectivity: cooperation
- Quaternary intersubjectivity: co-construction
## Attachment style - Education Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attachment style</th>
<th>Style of education (Adler)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>secure attachment</td>
<td>encouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insecure-ambivalent attachment</td>
<td>discouragement by pampering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insecure-avoidant attachment</td>
<td>discouragement by drill and strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disorganized attachment</td>
<td>neglect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Birth Order Position

- First born child
- Second child
- Youngest child
- Only Child
- Other sibling situation
Birth Order Position
First-Born Child

• generally has a good deal of attention
• unique situation of an only child - sole object of consideration and care
• can be dethroned and has to share the attention of his caregivers
• can develop a striving to protect others, talent for organization
• all expressions are characterized by the position; e.g. dreams of falling
Birth Order Position
Second Child

- he shares the attention of the family from birth on
- usually she/he behaves as if she/he were in a race, tries to surpass the older brother or sister
- dreams e.g. of running after trains, being in a race
- later they hardly endure leadership, conservatism, the idea of eternal law
Birth Order Position
Youngest Child

• can not be dethroned, no followers but many pacemakers
• probably the most pampered child of the family
• a lot of stimulation, he may develop in an extraordinary way (fairy-tales)
• may suffer of extreme inferiority feelings
Birth Order Position

• the only boy (girl) in the family
  - grow up in a feminine environment
  - being different, isolated
  - great stress on masculinity (feminity)
• the only child
  - his rivals are adults not siblings
  - may grow up in an atmosphere full of anxiety
Program:

- Introducing Adlerian Psychotherapy
- Basic Concepts of Individual Psychology
- Development of Personality - Attachment Theory, Metallization, Intersubjectivity
- Adlerian Psychotherapy
  - Adlerian Psychotherapy of Children and Adolescents
- The Man Alfred Adler
Adlerian Psychotherapy
Adlerian Psychotherapy

- The overall goal of Adlerian psychotherapy is helping an individual to develop from a partially functioning person into a more fully functioning one. Fully functioning means solving each of the areas of life more cooperatively, more courageously, with a greater sense of contribution and a greater sense of satisfaction.
Adlerian Psychotherapy

- The first specific goal of therapy is not necessarily fulfilling the client's expectation. The client may want instant, and somewhat magical, relief of symptoms or to continue what he is doing without feeling so uncomfortable.

- The therapist has to be sympathetic to this desire, but must clarify and establish, as quickly as possible, the cooperative working relationship that is required for genuine improvement of a difficult situation.
Presumptions

clients come to therapy because they:

• do not understand their symptoms
• cannot control them
• and are frightened by them.
Presumptions

- Psychotherapy represents a specific mode of joint action that is at the same time instrumental and deeply dialogical.
- The consultation is a social problem, the patient will introduce himself according to his law of movement.
- The patient has the same feelings toward the therapist as toward important persons.
Presumptions

- Even if not available for self-reflection, the client's problematic experiences are an inseparable aspect of his or her personality, echoing the events that formed them.
Presumptions

• The client's partly disowned experiences lie buried in his/her symptoms, which can be regarded as meaning-laden signs.

• Symptoms are individual creations, a unique work of art.
Presumptions

- Communication does more than just report or describe.
- It is NOT just gathering data to come to a theoretically based intervention.
what psychotherapeutic discourse should be:

- The art of guiding the client to a better understanding for him/herself
- The art of guiding and supporting the client to understand the meaning and the aim of his/her symptoms and his/her disorder
- The art of guiding the client to overtake accountability for him/herself
- The art of guiding the client to a satisfying new way of life-style

Brigitte Sindelar/Gabriela Pap: The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler
Psychotherapeutic discourse

• Has to provide the climate to express feelings, even and especially if they are considered unsocial, unattractive, immoral, insane

• Has to give room to feelings which have been unknown

• Has to support the process of growth and personal freedom
the most trustworthy approach to the exploration of personality is given in as comprehensive understanding of:

- earliest childhood recollections
- position of the birth order
- childhood disorders
- day and night dream
- the nature of the exogenous factor that causes the illness
most important component of the therapy is to uncover the unconscious (part of) life style, schema of apperception, safeguarding tendencies
but:

How to get there

??????
psychotherapeutic discourse

trust

- absence of judgements, (even if the client demands)
- attentive awareness
- accountability
- empathy without compassion
- reliability
- respect
psychotherapeutic discourse

words

non-verbal signs

action

Brigitte Sindelar/Gabriela Pap: The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler
psychotherapeutic discourse

is a *process*

between

the patient and the therapist
psychotherapeutic discourse

„You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink.“

- the treatment is the responsibility of both: patient and therapist
- psychotherapy is an exercise in cooperation
Adlerian Psychotherapy

After studying the parallel patterns of childhood and the present and analyzing the rich projective material in early recollections and dreams, the therapist develops preliminary hypotheses about the inferiority feelings, goal, life style, private logic, and scheme of apperception.
Adlerian Psychotherapy

- Genuine self-esteem does not come from the approval or praise of others. It comes from the person's own experience of conquering difficulties. Therefore, small progressive action steps, aimed at overcoming previously avoided difficulties, must be taken, one at a time.
Adlerian Psychotherapy

The patient's style of life is influencing the relationship between the client and the therapist. This is permanently taken into account within the treatment.
Techniques of Adlerian Psychotherapy
Techniques of Adlerian Psychotherapy:

Early Memories
Anamnesis: Family Constellation, Birth Order
Socratic Questioning
Guided and Eidetic Imagery
Analyzing (day and night) Dreams
Techniques of Adlerian Psychotherapy: Early Memories

Early memories, whether they are "true" or fictional, embody a person's core beliefs and feelings about self and the world. They contain reflections of the person's inferiority feelings, goal, scheme of apperception, level and radius of activity, courage, feeling of community, and style of life.
Early Recollections

- recollections can be classified as productions of the individual
- according to Adler they are selections, distortions, or inventions of past events which have to fit the underlying mood, purpose, and interest of the patient, his style of life
- they reflect the individuals inner world and style of life
- first memory is the fundamental view of life
Techniques of Adlerian Psychotherapy: Socratic Questioning:

Early stages of psychotherapy: the therapist uses questions to gather relevant information, clarify meaning, and verify feelings.

Middle stages of therapy: more penetrating, leading questions uncover the deeper structures of private logic, hidden feelings, and unconscious goals. Throughout, new options are generated dialectically, examined, and evaluated to help the client take steps in a different direction of his/her own choosing. The results of these new steps are constantly reviewed.

In the later stages of therapy, the Socratic method is used to evaluate the impact of the client's new direction.
Techniques of Adlerian Psychotherapy: Guided and Eidetic Imagery:

Some clients need a vivid image of themselves as happier in the future than they presently are, before they journey in a new direction that they know is healthier. Guided imagery can be used therapeutically to change the negative imprints of childhood family members.
Freud’s important contribution for the understanding of dreams
manifest and latent content of the dream
verbal association for the understanding of the latent content
other mental phenomena using the same dynamics as dreams: slips of the tongue, daydreams, fantasies, etc.
Techniques of Adlerian Psychotherapy: Analyzing dreams:

Unity of personality: belonging to this unity is characterizing dreams.
Dreams have to be considered as one of the expressions of the style of life.
In dreams we fool ourselves into an inadequate solution of a problem, inadequate from the standpoint of common sense, but adequate from the standpoint of our style of life.
Dreams are metaphors, the goal of achievement remains the same as in waking life, but with increased emotional power.
Techniques of Adlerian Psychotherapy: Analyzing dreams:

Example, given by Adler:
A case of anxiety neurosis taking the form of agoraphobia, heart symptoms, occurred in a man of thirty-five. The man wishes to marry. Dream: „I crossed the border between Austria and Hungary, and they wanted to imprison me.“

What does that dream tell us (and the patient) about the final goal of his symptoms.
Program:

- The Man Alfred Adler
- Basic Concepts of Individual Psychology
- Development of Personality - Attachment Theory, Mentalization, Intersubjectivity
- Adlerian Psychotherapy
  - Adlerian Psychotherapy of Children and Adolescents
Psychotherapy with children and adolescents
Psychotherapy of children and adolescents - a special situation

has to take into consideration, that children and adolescents need **protection** and **support** and they are often unable to recognize the consequences of their disorder in all dimensions.
Psychotherapy of children and adolescents - a special situation

The psychotherapist is not only a professional helper, but often also a person of trust who often witnesses secrets not revealed to parents or caregivers.
Psychotherapy of children and adolescents - a special situation

needs agreement and compliance of the parents or legal agency

(exception: danger for life or health)
Psychotherapy of children and adolescents - a special situation

Confidentiality is also obligatory with children and adolescents. That means: the therapist is not allowed to inform parents about the contents of the psychotherapeutic session.
Psychotherapy of children and adolescents - a special situation

- equal to adult psychotherapy confidentiality has to be questioned in case of danger for life or health
- e.g. suicide, anorexia nervosa
Psychotherapy of children and adolescents - a special situation

Client and therapist are much *less similar* than an psychotherapy of adults.
Psychotherapy of children and adolescents - a special situation

Children and adolescents are much more dependent on their environment than adults are.
Psychotherapy of children and adolescents - a special situation

Parents and environment have to be engaged in the psychotherapeutic process - but how???
Psychotherapy of children and adolescents -
a special situation

need for special competences and skills
Special competences and skills in psychotherapeutic work with children and adolescents

- special competences in the psychotherapeutic relationship
- *special language*
Aspects of relationship between caregivers and child, caregiver and therapist influence the therapeutic process
Special competences and skills in psychotherapeutic work with children and adolescents

- working with parents and caregivers does not mean to instruct them, but to guide them to a change of their inner emotional attitude towards the child

- parents’ counseling is working with clients who usually do not identify themselves as subjects of treatment
Special competences and skills in psychotherapeutic work with children and adolescents

- psychotherapeutic work with parents and caregivers means to support them in their development of parental competence
Special competences and skills in psychotherapeutic work with children and adolescents

• working with the child means using special languages of psychotherapy
Special competences and skills in psychotherapeutic work with children and adolescents

- **PLAYING** is the tool to express what cannot be put in words
Special competences and skills in psychotherapeutic work with children and adolescents

- children express their biographical and current experiences by playing, by telling stories, by role play, in drawing …
Special competences and skills in psychotherapeutic work with children and adolescents

- psychotherapists working with children and adolescents have to be multilingual
Special competences and skills in psychotherapeutic work with children and adolescents

- using forms of communication adequate to age and status of development
- using non-verbal conversation
- reading, understanding and talking with symbols and metaphors
- translate the wordless messages
Thank you for your attention!