

Introduction to the contents

We are fortunate to have twelve such innovative Adlerians who have contributed to this Year Book. Whilst each of the ten papers has within it the creative uniqueness of each author, there is a linking thread between all articles that identifies both the universal needs of connection and belonging, as well as issues of cultural difference and diversity.

Harry Dowling notes that Adlerians appreciate “the deep need of every human being to belong to humanity and to feel recognised for their independent contributions”. Yet while the early ***Forgotten Adlerians*** he traced were “... the very model of the independent, creative mind, inspired to change the world ... not mere distributors of another man’s ideas ...” and helped to improve the lives and life chances of others, their important contributions to Individual Psychology have often not been fully credited.

Manu Bazzano, in ***On Adler’s Fictional Finalism***, writes that “For Adler, having a goal and a purpose in life is vital to the crystallisation of personality and to a person’s well-being ... The term ‘goal’ typically indicates an aim or desired result, the destination of the journey”, i.e., finalism. At the same time, he argues that an emphasis on reason and the literal have obscured the role of the fictional, of desire and hope. Often it is only when “time is out of joint” that we are restored to our essential yearning selves.

Steve Slavik and James Croake review the development of Life Style in early childhood and how it over-determines subsequent choices and learning. However, in their essay ***Curiosity and Learning During the Life Span: An Adlerian Perspective*** they observe the mellowing of personality with age, the unintentional and deliberate changes that occur, and discuss the role of curiosity in these processes.

Alex Gath’s article ***Adlerian Aspects of Anthropology: Reflections from Pilgrimages Fieldwork*** offers examples of egalitarian and community feeling, heightened social interest and encouragement, identity and belonging, with attendant intra- and inter-group enmity when differences arise, as well as the quest for healing an ailing psyche. He also considers diverse ways in which the broad discipline of anthropology can interact with Adlerian psychology to address some of its theoretical and philosophical concerns.

In his paper ***The Life Tasks Re-visited***, **Christopher Shelley** addresses the potent combination of Adler’s pragmatic approach to psychotherapy with the holistic depth offered by Individual Psychology. Via a preliminary exploration of the philosophical bases of Adler’s approach in relation to the Life Tasks of work, social belonging and intimacy, Shelley provides practical case examples that reveal the value of undertaking Life Task analysis through a form of Socratic dialogue, enabling the client to develop further self-reflection and make new discoveries.

Daniel Eckstein offers some fascinating glimpses of ways he has applied Adlerian principles in many different cultures, drawing on his extensive experiences of international travel over the last forty years. In his article ***International Applications of Adlerian Psychology: Five Personal Experiences and Seven Core Concepts***, the reader joins Eckstein in stories of his work in many Pacific Rim, Middle and far Eastern cultures, where both crucial differences between cultures, and Adlerian principles that hold universal traction, are identified.

In ***Adlerian Psychology and Living Theory Action Research: An Alongside Approach to Health Visiting as Ruth Helps George to Sleep***, **Robyn Pound** demonstrates her approach in dialogical

research with mother **Ruth Donnelly**, collaboratively undertaken in order to help baby George sleep on his own. Juxtaposing and applying her alongside approach with Living Theory action research and Adlerian theory, Robyn places Ruth's parenting values and intentions, as well as George's emerging need to enter into co-operative living, at the centre of her work. In doing so she discusses the challenge inherent in moving from authoritarian to authoritative parenting.

The next paper, ***Giving Care to the Elderly from an Adlerian Perspective*** by **Rebecca LaFountain**, addresses the important area of supporting caregivers living and working with the increasing population of elderly people. Drawing on Adler/Dreikurs principles and practice, LaFountain offers a multi-dimensional model, addressing chronological, physiological and psycho-social issues. Through case studies of working with caregivers, she outlines the importance of a therapeutic approach that addresses the caregiver's Life Style, provides encouragement and offers a compassionate education on the ageing process.

Hala Buck's article on ***An Integrative Adlerian Art Therapy Approach to Immigration and Re-Migration Issues*** offers three vividly illustrated case studies that bring alive her work as an art therapist. Buck describes a non-threatening approach, underpinned by an understanding of right-brain functions, that integrates art therapy and an Adlerian approach to Early Recollections. Throughout the therapy an essential focus is maintained on cross-cultural awareness, and key areas of change and personal growth are identified through the process and progress of the clients' artwork.

The final paper, ***The Use of Humour in Adlerian Practice*** by **Anabella Shaked**, provides a very practical and also amusing overview of how, through the use of humour, Adlerian practitioners can help clients handle the "bitter pill" of reality and responsibility. As Shaked states, humour is the "raspberry syrup" that can allow us to "swallow" new ways of perceiving and acting in the world, and "stir up our thinking about the nature of things ... revealing hidden truths of life". Offering clear guidelines on how to apply humour in Adlerian therapy, this article provides a valuable adjunct to the therapist's toolbox.

Our grateful thanks go to all our authors for their fine contributions and we wish all our readers an enjoyable read.