

YEAR BOOK 2009

From the Editorial

2008 saw the dramatic failure of major banks around the world in which “bust” followed “boom” in the latest cycle of economic devastation following a period of rapid growth: this time the collapse of the virtual houses of cards within the sub-prime mortgage market. The campaigning, selection of candidates and election of the next President of the United States of America were the other headline grabbing events, in which large numbers of people around the world took a keen interest. Would the world’s richest and mightiest military state practise what it preaches and walk the talk of social democracy? Would eight years of flagrant disregard for the rights and cares of the socially disadvantaged, different or dissenting within its own boundaries and throughout the rest of the world be reversed?

On the 5th of November, following the outcome of the election, one of the ASIIP Year Book editors received and shared a sensitive and hopeful account sent by an Adlerian colleague, Hala Buck, born and raised in Lebanon and an American Citizen for 39 years, now living and working in the U.S. Below are some extracts from what she wrote:

“Since our friends are scattered around the world and we can’t throw a party I needed to let you know about our relief and joy at having Barack Obama as the next President of the U.S.A. For those of you who might have voted otherwise, I hope you will find it in your hearts to overcome division, isolation and join in our new journey ... Everything looks brighter this morning, the world feels kinder, my heart is refilled with hope and joy. ... My faith in this, my adoptive country, has been renewed. ... Not only does the election of Obama start to heal the racial wounds and legacy of slavery in this county, but it also encourages people of mixed heritage and religions, immigrants and young people to dream again.

Barack Obama is referred to as ‘African American’, which he is; he also is white; his father was Muslim, his mother Christian. To me, he is the much-needed ‘*Bridge between Worlds*’ (the title of the book I seek to publish this year). Throughout his campaign Obama’s black heritage was a factor, but few focused on the fact that he was the product of several cultures and faiths. Obama’s unique gifts to this country and to the world are precisely the uniqueness of his own diversity. This melange of worlds broadens the mind, fills the heart with compassion and strengthens the conscious awareness that we are all interconnected.

This is the millennium of inclusion, integration and, hopefully, peaceful co-existence. People like Obama, who were born with and/or married differing 'genes of the soul' – as Amin Maalouf (1996/2001) wrote – have the gift of bridging divides and bringing people together to work for the common good, not just for Americans, but for all human beings. Obama represents that innate ability, that unique vision of seeing beyond the chasms that divide us, or the storms that threaten us. Like a strong and steady bridge, I believe he can lead us to calmer, more respectful, smoother connections with each other in this country and around the world" (Buck, 2008).

Each of the articles offered in this, the fourteenth, edition of the Year Book contribute to the building and maintenance of the bridge that Hala Buck envisions, focusing as they do on making connections, reckoning with simplicity and complexity rather than dichotomising the apparent paradoxes of being human, striving for perfection and significance, separateness and self-determination, whilst requiring and craving relationship and belonging.

In the first article, "*Evolution and Revolution: Tenderness and Aggression*", Guy Manaster takes a hard-headed look at the Adlerian concept of *social interest*, exploring related notions, such as *altruism*, from the perspective of Evolutionary Psychology. He begins with the ideal version of social interest as co-operation, compassion, altruism and empathy, and being involved with the interests of others, "having a feeling of belonging to humankind throughout the spectrum of time, from past to future". At the same time, he acknowledges the difficulty with this: "It is hard to imagine living with so little sense of inferiority and vanity that our connections with others demand only efforts for the common good." He quotes from Roderick MacLeish's (1980) novel, *First Book of Eppie*: "Ethnicity is a form of collective conceit ... If a man doesn't think much of himself, - and in secret most men don't - he takes his pride in his tribe" (p. 99). Manaster concludes, as Adler did, that at the individual level, *social interest* is an innate human potentiality that requires development and going beyond the individual and partial communities, or within-species limitations, for which a revolution is required - one that celebrates difference and makes use of other human potentialities - "to learn and plan and believe and imagine".

Chris Shelley's article systematically debunks the claim that Alfred Adler was the first Community Psychologist. He takes on board the reasons that Adlerians might suggest that he was and examines possible reasons why adherents of Community Psychology (CP) have been silent regarding compatibility between CP and Adlerian Psychology (AP). He notes that, whilst AP can claim adherents among humanists, constructivists and those with spiritualist and metaphysical beliefs, AP and CP share only a humanistic dimension, diverging markedly in other important ways. Crucially, he observes that CP tends to polarise the prevention

and treatment aspects of mental health, focusing almost exclusively on prevention. AP eschews such polarisation, stressing the importance of the social context *as well as* attending to individual distress – the necessity for both preventative and treatment efforts. Shelley draws powerful distinctions between AP's adherence to holism and the embodied individual *and* psychological knowledge - a unification of subject and object. In contrast, CP focuses solely on external factors, and ultimately favours disembodied knowledge and unhelpful dualism on many levels. Shelley suggests that as separate discourses CP and AP might enrich each other, but he warns against promoting a union between the two, which for AP would mean sacrificing holism and concern with the social world *and* the individual, as well as with prevention *and* treatment.

Holism and synthesis are central features of Sue Phillips's original and ambitious article, "*Connections: Neuroscience, Social Interest and Counselling*", in which she highlights the vital importance of relationships, and making connections - between nature and nurture, hemispheres of the brain, mind and body, the individual and the social world, and client and counsellor. Phillips fluently weaves together the latest research findings from the neuroscience, which show that from our beginnings in the womb, our brains are work in progress, retaining their capacity to create structural and functional changes - and being most amenable to change - through positive connections with other people. She further observes that research strongly suggests that relationships are essential to our ability to link feelings and words, and make vital neural links between affect and language. Phillips concludes by bringing together these and other findings that inform existing and potential counselling applications for working with trauma, loss or missed development experiences.

In "*Community Feeling and Striving for Completeness as an Expression of Immediate Experience*", Gisela Eife asserts that community feeling (most often translated from the German into English as social interest) and striving for completeness are part of human life itself, standing for much more than the mere ethical norms that psychoanalytically-oriented Adlerians often believe them to represent. She argues persuasively from a phenomenological perspective that Adler's theory and practice cannot be separated, derived as they were from his own life experiences and personal development. Eife goes on to show how Daniel Stern's (2004) explication of immediate experience, or present moment (p. 23) is the experience of Adler's life as movement. Considering the Life Style as uniform movement, or even repetitive movement, she proposes that only new experiences - that is, connecting with our immediate experiences - can jar us out of the vicious circles we have developed and maintain to achieve our fictive goals. Therapeutically, such jars occur in what Stern (2004) called moments of meeting (p. 151) or when therapist and client authentically connect with each other, and life itself, in a shared community feeling. Eife concludes that "The immediate experience of life is connectedness" and that life itself shows a tendency towards

enhancement and supplementation – realised and expressed most fully in relationship with others.

Seeking to clarify “*Self-Regulation in Adlerian Personality Dynamics*”, Steve Slavik and James Croake consider a significant but rarely discussed element of Adlerian thinking, the *junctim*. They show that Adlerian personality theory is compatible with a self-regulation formulation, in that a person’s *fictive, final goal* is seen to govern individual unity and relationships with others, with memories and continuous self-evaluation, making it possible for us to compare our movement with the standard required by our *goal* - and to self-correct. Such processes are tied to prior conclusions we reach and perpetuate (about ourselves, others and the world) as expressions of our Life Style. We do so “... through familiar symbols, established meanings and rehearsed styles of thinking”, fixed ties that Adler discussed under the term *junctim*. In order to account for greater flexibility and curiosity among some individuals, Slavik and Croake suggest that the fictions and apperceptive assessments of such individuals promote or allow alternatives in movement. Drawing on the painter Pablo Picasso, they suggest another route to increasing individual perception: letting the known lead to the unknown, or what is new. Slavik and Croake argue that Adler’s use of terms was far from simple and often highly technical, helpfully including definitions of *holism, movement* (including direction and quality), *final, fictive goal, self-regulation, junctim, apperception, curiosity, flexibility, Life Style* and *safeguarding*. They offer a few hypotheses that might follow from their discussion and state the advantages of a direct and simple formulation of an Adlerian model of personality, which they hope will stimulate discussion and eventually the development of assessment tools suitable for Adler’s *Psychology of use*.

We are delighted that Clare Kerr agreed to let us publish the summary of her learning journey following her studies for a diploma in Adlerian theory and practice, “*Adlerian Psychology in a Nutshell*”. In the narrative accompanying her diagram, she says that when she was asked to sum up her learning, she did not know where to begin. She decided that her initial “stuckness” was indicative of her tendency to seek both complexity and simplicity - resulting in a visual representation in which she elegantly manages to achieve both!

In “*Seven Degrees of Separation*”, Buddhist philosopher and psychotherapist Manu Bazzano challenges us to take a critical look at our ultimately unbridgeable, existential *aloneness* and *separation*, particularly given the innate power imbalance within the helping relationships. He argues that in this psychotherapeutic “era of the siblings” (Holmes, 1995, p. 9) in which symmetry appears to be the goal, the possibility of equality and bridging the gap between therapist and client in reality is unachievable - and undesirable when we attempt to deny our essential separateness. Allowing that it was groundbreaking when Carl Rogers emphasised the *relational*, Bazzano warns that now, “we run the risk of bypassing the invigorating ache and profound dignity of separation”. Citing Spinelli (2007), he

specifies the difference between *relational* or *inter-subjective* and *relatedness* or *interdependence*, with the latter being another irreducible existential given like *separation*. He concludes that the space between self and other needs to be maintained and cultivated, fostering a kind of interaction that "... belongs not to totality but to infinity" and that "... in spite of the primary interdependence of all things and all beings, that the autonomy and self-determination of the individual is honoured and respected".

Rachel Shifron's article "*Addictions: Workaholism*" is rooted in 20 years of therapeutic work with individuals, couples and families, from which she observes that, with the push for material acquisition, workaholism has become the addiction of our time. She draws attention to the use of "perquisites" or "goodies", offered by employers, keen to pull employees into working longer hours, as one reason for the rise in the problem. At the same time, she notes that, like other addictions, workaholism represents an unconscious and creative effort to resolve unmet psychological needs or escape existential fears. Shifron observes that the goal of addictive behaviour varies depending on the individual's Life Style, but that "the main existential fear of the workaholic is to be excluded from work". Reviewing research that shows a significant correlation between workaholism and marital disaffection, Shifron draws attention to the creativity of the workaholic's solution in securing a morally superior position as "a good provider". She favours a balanced approach between individual, couple and family work, and delineates the stages and steps in the psychotherapeutic process, involving workaholics and family members. She also offers suggestions for working with organisations that compromise the wellbeing of their employees, thereby placing the workplace itself at risk. She concludes with a case study of a workaholic, illustrating the private logic and goals underpinning his addictive behaviour.

Daniel Eckstein and his colleagues' article, "*Three Encouragement Activities for Classroom Teachers*" offers practical advice and inspiration to educators concerned with increasing emotional wellbeing within schools. It begins with a useful description of this crucial feature of Adlerian practice: "Encouragement is a process whereby one focuses on an individual's resources in order to build that person's self-esteem, self-confidence and feelings of worth. Encouragement involves focusing on any resource that can be turned into an asset or strength." The authors then provide a brief overview of published writings on, and application of, encouragement within educational settings before describing and illustrating the three encouragement activities they use with student teachers - who then use them with the pupils in the classrooms where they are on placement. Eckstein and his colleagues report that parents, teachers and friends were named as the sources of encouragement by two-thirds of a sample of over a thousand individuals. They include "encouragement stories" in order to demonstrate the powerful and uniquely personal aspect of encouraging experiences. Finally, they summarise student teachers' evaluations of

incorporating encouragement within classrooms, providing further evidence of its effectiveness and informing “ten recommendations for educators”.

In *“Nobody’s Perfect: Reflections on Same-Sex Orientation”*, Bruce Tate recalls his surprise upon hearing the last line of the film *“Some Like It Hot”*. In that final scene, romance carries on into the sunset, despite the revelation that the woman of the apparently heterosexual couple turns out to be a man in drag. Regrettably, as Tate points out, same-sex behaviour rarely is accepted casually, despite being reported amongst humans throughout history. Tracing the sources and nature of taboos against homosexuality to the major religions, he cites Buddhism and Shintoism as notable exceptions. He reminds us that, despite being ahead of his time in other ways, Adler, like Freud and other early psychotherapists, viewed homosexuality as pathological - if not criminal. Tate reports modern research on sexual behaviour, which refutes fixed-binary sexual orientation, and therefore, labels and stereotypes. He then illustrates the potential usefulness of modern Adlerian therapy in helping clients with same-sex orientation issues. He goes on to discuss encouraging changes in social attitudes and examples of same-sex behaviour and relationships being treated sympathetically on TV and in books and films. Finally, Tate touches on the nature-nurture debate in this area and ends on a hopeful note regarding greater understanding and acceptance of same-sex orientation and behaviour.

The main purpose of Joseph Dittmer’s article *“Adlerian Principles and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Interventions for Group Treatment of Negative Symptoms of Schizophrenia”* is to describe a psychological method that has proved effective in helping sufferers of schizophrenia. At the same time, he challenges some of the myths that often interfere with more fulsome treatment approaches. The four myths he addresses, using Adlerian theory and practice wisdom, are that: 1) medication is the only possible treatment because of genetic/biochemical imbalances in the brain; 2) it is not possible to shift people’s delusions by talking about them; 3) hallucinations and delusions are beyond comprehension, so are not worth talking about; and 4) schizophrenia is incurable. Dittmer notes that typical treatment for schizophrenia focuses almost exclusively on *positive symptoms*, i.e. delusions and hallucinations, or what distinguishes psychotics from others, with little attention paid to *negative symptoms*, e.g. inattentiveness, apathy, asocial behaviour, even though these tend to persist and interfere with adaptive social functioning, as is true for neurotics. He cites research evidence of the limited success of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) in addressing both positive and negative symptoms that involve cognitive distortions. However, Dittmer argues that people with persistent schizophrenia and related disorders require more sustained, often long-term, psycho-social treatment, and he describes in detail a group-based “hybrid” programme, combining CBT and Adlerian methods, which he and others have developed and employ, illustrating via a case study its effectiveness.

We wish to thank Erik Mansager for bringing to life the final two volumes of Henry Stein's editorial tour de force, *The Collected Works of Alfred Adler (CWAA), Volumes 11 and 12*, as he did the earlier volumes. In his review of Volume 11, *Education for Prevention: Individual Psychology in the Schools; The Education of Children*, which combines the two works named in the title, Mansager tells us that the first provides "... a concise compendium of child guidance", and the second a thorough introduction to IP and the educational significance and application of its concepts. His description of the contents persuades us of the continuing relevance of these works - including for the potential design of graduate and post-graduate courses in child guidance. With select quotes from Adler, Mansager's review of Volume 12, *The General System of Individual Psychology: Overview and Summary of Classical Adlerian Theory and Current Practice*, a heretofore unpublished manuscript found in the Library of Congress, convinces us that this is another gem. He suggests that Volume 12 is "... one of several volumes [of CWAA] that are precious stand-alones if you are looking for a starting spot for assembling your personal series of the Collected Clinical Works of Alfred Adler".

To all our contributors, our very many thanks, and to our readers, an enjoyable and informative read.

The Editors

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