

ABOUT THE PSYCHOTHERAPY OF ADLER.

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“ We respect Adler due to his wisdom, direct vision and humanism without concessions”. Ernest Becker.

“If you want something new, revise the classic authors”. Miguel de Unamuno.

PREAMBLE

What Adler did with his patients, or in other words, what he did with the people he worked with, seems to have be forgotten by many people. But the marvellous fact is that it still survives in the major psychotherapies that exist nowadays.

Therefore, when Freudian Psychoanalysis started focusing in the analysis of Ego (*Ich*) it somehow became -without knowing it- “unconsciously” adlerian.

Wolfgang Hochheimer –in his classic text- states that in the Junguian therapy the contributions of Adler are less referred than the Freudian ones. However, in the practice the adlerian contributions are notoriously more present.

Heinz and Rowena Ansbacher in their fecund documented recopilation argue that today more than ever, the question is not whether you are adlerian or not but rather how much adlerian you are. Victor Louis, in a seminar about dreams with therapists of diverse trends, says that: “the interpretation of Freud’s method is totally adlerian because the way is already determined by the goal”.

Mira y López, a serious author of dissidence, referring to Rank says that at the end of his life, his writings began showing greater Adler’s influences. Adler insisted on the fact that dreams reveal the attitude of the dreamer in relation to some element of the present and they represent a symbolic rehearsal of an action that the patient will have to do in his real life and an attitude in relation to it (Grotjahn).

It is important to remember that Adler himself introduced Rank to the Psychoanalytic Association. Soon before Adler’s death they had a meeting in a seminar in Paris –according to Anais Nin.

Binswanger says that he witnessed a discussion in the first Association in Viena: “Adler was the one who defended more Stekel!”.

Thus, we should become less dogmatic, be surer and less sensitive to the word “eclectic”.

In contrast with what Glover said in relation to the study of dissidences among candidates to psychoanalysts: “What is the purpose of making them waste time?”

These situations make us reflect that in the firm nucleus of the theories and practices there are adlerian components, from the profound or psychodynamics to the ones called cognitivists, and even the constructivists are not excluded.

If Piaget is the big constructivist about the formation of the thought, Adler is the biggest thinker in relation to the lifestyle, total personality -which includes intelligence and afectivity- and, of course, the place in the World, as one of the first practical existentialists.

All these statements lead us to a question: If Adler is or was so important in the actual Psychotherapy, why he is so little known or recognized?

The answer is obvious: because of his political generosity. This led him to say that his psychology was like a basket of fruits, meaning anyone could take the one he liked the most and make his own without recognizing the place from where it was taken.

A MODEL IN ACTION

Adler liked to ask questions; his method was ironical like Socrates' (in Greek *eironeia* means interrogation). And the answer had to come up from each lifestyle, the same which had created the symptom or the social deviation.

His framework was variable; it could go from the conventional consulting to the frequent cafés in Vienna, though his method was more directive and responsible than others which derived from his.

His original definition and conception of the unconsciousness was: "It is what men know but cannot understand, as part of the goal".

When one of his patients brought the message, or the "phantomatic" word or the program of his family, Adler asked him in an accomplice attitude: "do you believe what they have told you?".

At this point, there is no need for interpretation or pointing out; besides the profundities of psychism, the person becomes free and responsible - according to Dreikurs.

In psychotherapy itself, Adler used dialogues, dreams, childhood memories, verbal and paraverbal language, even the sleeping position of patients which constitutes a symbol of the unconscious attitude towards life (R. de Becker).

According to the romantic Novalis: "The soul has the shape of the body"; this is why Adler discovered the inferiority of the organs, and he discovered that *Naevi* (moles) were a warning that cancer may occur.

The same author (R. de Becker) insists on how successful Adler was, specially with those patients who needed relief throughout a new *modus vivendi* in society.

THE FIRST CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

When I was a teenager, I listened to Dr. Ramón Sarró (disciple and patient of Freud) speaking on an Argentinian T.V. program where he criticized his therapist and master (for instance, he said that in all his life Freud saw a hundred patients, most of them doctors, all neurotics and none psychotics). He was asked if he thought that Psychoanalysis would have a future and he answered: "yes, as long it does not become confined by an absurd regression to childhood".

Nevertheless, what this distinguished divulger of profound psychology did not take into consideration was that the first remembrances are fictions which orient all our life style. This is to say, the way each individual feels, thinks and acts in every circumstance.

In our adlerian psychotherapy practice, we work with poor people following Adler's example who was the first one in doing so in the bourgeois Vienna. For instance, we have seen a very poor family in which the younger children did not have space at the table; once they became workers, every time there was going to be a reduction of employees in their jobs they knew they were going to be the first ones to be fired.

However, when this connection between everyday events, life and fate is known, they become more responsible and with chances of making choices.

These childhood memories are the compass which allow us to understand and interpret the lifestyle and its therapeutic possibilities.

ELEMENTS TO SEE: CONSTRUCTION, ENVIRONMENT AND INHERITANCE

In relation to the genetical disciplines, the one which has had the most important advance is Genetics; it makes us believe that everything is determined by heritage (this was stated by the most reactionary political ideologies, as Titzes says).

Ansbacher includes in his important book, this phrase of Adler: “Do not forget that inheritance and environment are not determinant factors; both give only the framework and the influences to whom the individual responds with his own style constituted by his genuine power”. In our educational work, as professor in centres of formation we have chosen this sentence in order to reflect upon it; what is more important: inheritance or environment? It is necessary to take into consideration Adler’s book written in 1907 - “About the inferiority of the organs”- and observe attentively the whole family in order to discover any organic inferiority as well as the environment.

Now we know that those born in Bolivia will be shorter than what it is determined by its genetical potential, due to the fact that there is less oxygen in the atmosphere. The same situation occurs to those people who do not have the necessary amount of protein required in childhood; the consequence leads to intellectual handicap.

It is important to understand that both inheritance and environment count and all of it is organized by the creative style of the individual.

Béla Székely always reminds us that Adler was the first author to teach that more important than what you bring is what you do with it. Obviously, the environment presents rules and tastes. However, within them we have the possibility of choosing.

In sum, we will study the environment neither believing that everything is acquired as Watson thought: “Bring me six children and I will do whatever I want with them no matter their innate influences”, nor its new version by Skinner.

No, let’s go back to Béla Székely. We will study inheritance, in those aspects in which we are not free, but taking into consideration the creative Ego (*Ich*). That Ego (*Ich*) –even though not so creative- will be, after Adler, the most important object of study in the Freudian psychoanalysis

Rank shows us through his disciple Allen that an Ego (*Ich*)” receives the impulse and the orientation coming from another Ego (*Ich*) with the individual differences and the similitudes and the relationships between one individual and the other, with the appropriate psychotherapeutic possibilities.

Adler, before Ferenczi, and without taking into account the transference used to say that the analyst takes later the place of the mother.

Becker shows us: “*how Adler became clearly aware –before the edition of Freud’s last works- about the fact that transference is basically a problem of value*”.

He insists on the fact that if transference is related to lack of courage, we can understand why it comes from childhood, and it reflects the need of creating security –by all means- and satisfaction, learning how to act in his environment and the annihilation of anguish.

Becker quotes Silverberg in a classical psychoanalytical definition of transference: “It indicates the need of having a complete control of the external circumstances in all their variety and multiplicity of manifestations. Transference can be considered a monument to

the profound rebellion of man against reality and his tenacious insistence in the ways of immaturity. To transform that cowardice into courage, Adler used to tell a fairy tale about a rabbit that frightened a dog, so the patient could take the example.

Allen says that the baby in order to grow up needs to have a community relationship with another individual. The Ego (*Ich*) is not a pawn of chess moved by external factors more powerful than himself that restrict his primary instincts. Thus, Allen (indirectly adlerian via Rank) ends up saying that the Ego (*Ich*) can be considered not only as a precipitate but also as something which has the quality of spontaneity, and the creative power. This conception of growth lays the foundation of a neo-adlerian philosophical therapy.

Also Kohut states that the theme of the catexis of the self is so vast and important that refers to one half of the contents of the mind (quoting Hartman), while the other half are the objects.

PSICAGOGIA AND/OR PROFILAXIS

The word seems to be a jinguan one or of Radecki, divulged here long time ago. Nevertheless, the term is adlerian and means psique conduction.

This has to do with Adler's objective about psychohygiene: to transform the therapist into an educator.

This prevention found a direct connection in the Rio de la Plata with Pichon Rivière who honestly admitted to have found psychoanalysis through pedagogy –this is to say, by reading Adler –according to the argentinian Emilio Rodrigué in one of his last books.

Reich also understood the concept, against Freud, who believed that no matter the changes in the context or education, neurosis would not change. We should also take into account that neurosis is not only a negative phenomena but rather a positive reality to discover –according to Raymond de Becker (it would take too long to list the therapists who after him defend or develop the same from different angles).

The psychagogia is related with the formation of psychotherapists, and it is an essential part of good didactic analysis. This is deeply connected to trust, element which is the base of the therapeutical relationship. Adler did not admit candidates who he did not trust in.

FEELINGS

We should speak about “feelings of inferiority” instead of “complex”, because the last term belongs to another theory.

Anyone who interprets a dream or any humane manifestation knows that the most important is the feeling which accompanies the circumstance.

Feelings determine –in some tendencies- the complex, trauma and even intelligences – is the case of Gardner and Goleman.

It is necessary to observe the feeling of inferiority -compensated or not- which is a *pathognomic* characteristic of all neurotic.

He may swing from considering himself the worst person in the world (labeled as “depressive”) to the best (labeled as “megalomaniac” or “paranoic”). Both have their own private logic. Adler, following his ethic position and his collaboration with humanity-never advocated that it could be wrong an exacerbation of the feeling of community.

Furthermore, soon after the First World War, Adler started to insist on the need of stimulating this feeling, showing that it is always possible to collaborate with mankind. In the difficult moments – that could be named as “resistance” or “negative transference”- he

advised to look for any kind of collaboration in the past. Here it is explicit an ethic and an axiology.

Titze says that, after returning from the war, the disciples of Adler argued about such a concept, Adler said: “Yes, that is what the World needs, the feeling of community”.

Also patients needs this all the time. The feeling is the key which accompanies and decides any cognitive situation, affective or active. We can ask how we feel about our couple, job, studies...

THE PROGNOSIS CONCENTRATED WITH THE DIAGNOSIS

Adler (before Pigem Cordoba) created a diagnostic questionnaire which allowed to see the lifestyle and the points of stagnation. Some of them were taken from the famous questionnaire by the Internacional Association of Individual Psychology; others were taken by Otto Ruhle in his book “ The Psique of the Proletarian Child”.

The first question which is the base of the desiderative test consists of asking the patient if he would not be human what he would like to be, being able to choose anything. It is necessary in this case the interpretation (Deutung) or reduction.

Many authors agree with Adler in relation to the primary environment but there are few who take into consideration the first reactions towards the environment.

Ivan Pavlov classified the main communications in first and second system of signals; the first is purely environmental (how hot or cold is a room, if it is humid, flavours,etc). Transaccional analysts ask: “What did you think about the world when you were a child?”, similar questions are found in Otto Ruhle’s works.

The second system (which is the most daring diagnostic simplification) is to know the causes for the complaints (not always there is a coincidence with the reason for consultance, what would you do if you would not have this or that symptom or difficulty?). For instance, what would you do if you were not impotent? The answer could be: I could marry, what it is exactly what the patient is trying to avoid. That is why it is called the question of what the patient avoids. The question is always prospective, e.g: “What would you do if you could be born again?” or “What would you like to be if you were born again?”

Asking children would imply: “What do you want to be when you grow up?” It is visible the aparent simplicity of adlerian Psychology.

However, since the model is artistic (not mechanic); it requires great qualities from the therapist. If lifestyle or neurosis are works of art, the dismounting of them and the encounter with himself from a minus to a plus is also a piece of art.

NEUROTIC OR PSYCHOTIC FORMULAS

Neurosis is constituted by many behaviours and feelings in order to avoid certain responsibilities; if all responsibilities are trying to be avoided we use the category “psicosis”- always metaphorically.

Kunkel taught us that those are mere indicators of a “process that can be perceived by intuition but never understood”.

Ansbacher explained didactly the neurotic formula as: “ If... But”.

The “if” represents the common sense and the “but” the private logic. Neurosis and psicosis are the prevalence of a private logic over common sense and in the psicosis the

last practically disappears and private logic takes over. This occurs with the “arrangements” or elements which lead into a solution according to the identity of the lifestyle. He gives us an example of a relative and patient who always had *migraines* and he had to point out the unconscious elements by saying: “No one suffers only from *migraines*”.

This shows that it is possible to maintain certain physical features during all life, from childhood to death and it is also possible to keep the same psychic characteristics which constitute character.

A 4 year old child with interpersonal problems in the kindergarten when is 40 will avoid social relationships, according to what Jaime Berstein clearly states in the prologue of “The Neurotic Character”.

Adler states the idea of unity in the neurosis; the difference between one and another is the grade; it is more quantitative than qualitative.

THE VIOLENT CHILD

It is closely related to the violent adult; without affirming any kind of classification, it can be stated that children tend to negligence when he has lost his faith in the future, and after having being convinced about their little value for others. They are so afraid of showing their inferiority that they prefer to be treated as lazy or even to be punished.

THE FUTURE VS. THE PAST

Some transactional analysts have stated that Freud had forgotten to include the future in the building of the symptom or the mental illness.

Adler, an optimistic man, liked to say: “You have already lost your past, now what you have is the future”. The neurosis has more a WHAT FOR than a WHY.

This enables the anticipation of the patient-subject and the analyst-subject, because their routes are anticipated in all character manifestations or lifestyles.

Nearby where I live there is an original graffiti which says: “Melancholy is a lifestyle”. This is a good epitome of adlerian sychology.

This reminds us Dante when he speaks about those who “live in the sweetness of the melancholy and groan eternally between sighes”.

It is very well known the anecdote of the 2 soldiers who lost the same day an arm. Adler saw them later and one of them lived anguishly on public assistance and believed he was the most miserable man of the world; the other had a family, worked and felt happy. The trauma is exactly the same; the difference is the subjective interpretation each individual elaborates. The neurosis or the mistake is the exploitation of the shock that from a stagnation in the past dyes all the future.

MORE FEELING OF COMMUNITY.

Adler insisted on the need of the honest collaborator. We can think about the coincidences between Vigotsky and Adler, from his social constructivism so useful to elaborate a theory of learning. The well-known “zone of proximal development”, as an area of work in collaboration with someone more knowledgeable helps both the disciple and theanalyst.

Would that be the reason why some people from Zen states: “the more I insist in helping you, the more I insist in being helped?”.

He elaborated a sub-technic to work in groups called “the confession in third person”; it constitutes an experience for the group and it helps the confessor to get better himself.

It is possible for him to take affective distance and then he is able to encounter the feelings and facts.

We have already seen that the objective facts are not the ones which make us neurotic or psychotic but the interpretation we do of them.

About this point he did not discuss, he would only sentence: “Neither you nor me can change the events, but we know that when the events are studied deeply they are seen in a different way”.

Erickson, master of the paradoxes in therapies to solve problems, prescribed an old woman to plant many Alpes ~violets in order to give them as presents to the ill people in the community, what also meant that she was more accepted and be less lonely.

In this situation, Erickson was –perhaps without knowing it- putting into practice an adlerian idea: the need to expand cooperation and the feeling of community.

It is remarkable that even his opponents, said Adler was kind with anybody willing to transform society. Adler used frequently `paradoxes in his treatments and quoted as Spinoza: “*Tout comprendre c’est tout pardonner*”, or different: “*Tout comprendre c’est rien pardonner*”.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF “THE NEUROTIC CHARACTER”

This book (according to the editors) marks the independence of the adlerian psychology and an outline of the theory of the practice, many years before Kunkel said: “one technic is the mistake of the technic”.

Adler –who did not like to talk about himself -says:” my difficulties belong to me” and according to Jung Adler was introvert, he never published his clinic (his own life), though when he believes appropriate he amplifies his ideas with certain events of his life. Jung stated that Adler was introvert -in opposition to Freud- who was an extrovert.

It is necessary to take into consideration that he assured that these classifications are not relevant; he just gave them an instrumental and transitory value, as Bruner used to say (scaffoldinf).

When he writes this book he was 42 years old, and he was in crisis with problems in his family, and he broke with the Freudian psychoanalysis “before change (precambio”): we speak about the one that experimented the psychoanalysis). The book is a protest with the luteran connotations of the term. The luteran authorities decide to give testimony in favour of their beliefs against the Emperor Charles V. The topic is strictly psychological and not fisiological, but as the one who writes the prologue it was a bad choice in order to obtain the “Privat Dozent”, opposed to Freud who chose a topic entirely neurologic. Apart from this, Adler ‘s socialist political position did not favour himself.

Lidia Sicher calls this a bad intelligence which nowadays would be called bad marketing.

Adler’s psychotherapy was widely and badly copied by different trends or lately discovered.

In this book we are taught to see each characteristic as part of a whole (*holos*). Physiological explanations of the medical model oppose those of the psychological explanations. Therefore, instead of being reduced to impulses, the person or the individual is a whole (*individuum*, that cannot be divided, as Adler expressed many times).

But also, instead of temperament (which a concept from the XIX Century Sychology which Adler rejected) he speaks about character or lifestyle.

I do not know whether Adler had the idea (like Rank did) that someone else would re-write his compendium of original sychology and sychotherapy: but it would have been better to title this book: “The neurotic lifestyle”.

One of the great ideas of this book is that neurosis or lifestyle means for the individual a way of placing himself in the world. Furthermores, for him is the best way. And the task of psychotherapy is make him see (abilities and knowledege of the therapist as tools) that choice was wrong and that even worse, is to defend it.

The changes, however can be several. Trying not to be dogmatic, Adler says: “Everything can be different” or “all I am saying now can be completely different”. He also said this in relation to his own statements, interpretations and theory in general.

This book means the declaration of independence of the new Pyschology, in that moment unfortunatley called Individual Psychology, because it is still today misunderstood (even politically). Adler was openminded and believed that the progress of mankind was directly related to the feeling of community as the base of better relationships and could act as an antidote against neurosis and psychosis, too.

The term “character” derives from the Greek *charasso* which means to tatoo, record or coin -but now we know that even tatooes can be changed.

This implies leaving behind a conservative paralogism, already identified by Stuart Mill: “what has even been, will always be”.

HELPED BY BERNSTEIN’S ORDER.

a) PRECOCIOUS:

The lifestyle is formed before the child is 5 years old, that is why we have to pay attention to this difficult period with its interested amnesia and the changes that can happen within memories. That is perhaps why the Greeks thought that Clio –the muse of History- was the less serious of all the muses.

b) FINALITY:

The lifestyle is formed for someone (even Lacan states that the first word before meaning something, it means for someone). The most useful explanations are the ones who answer “What for?” instead of “why?”. This is like in the biblic myth where Job’s wife was converted into statue of salt because she looked backwards -or as the transactionalists say: we play archeology.

We have always stated that one of the causes of the effectiveness of the Adlerian therapy is that it looks forward, to the future: “You have already lost your past, now what you have is the future” – Adler said.

Needless to say that the present itself and the insistence of living in the present is relative because it soon will become past.

c) UNIQUENESS

It is unique and it is always present in all the features, it has an internal coherence and if we do not perceive it is because it has a third element hidden (arrangement).

d) CONTINUITY:

It is not interrupted like the stream of thought as William James states, it goes from the cradle to the grave, unless a new force makes us see the erroneous part of our feelings, behaviours and trainings.

e) SOCIAL:

As we have insisted in this article, every relationship is a tie-type one, therefore social - nobody lives alone like Robinson Crusoe in his island.

What varies and can be modified is the degree of collaboration and social immersion. In the Middle Ages it was on fashion to be alone –to a certain extent; that is why Anatole France wrote: “In those days the desert was full of anchorites”.

f) PARTICULARITY:

This characteristic enables us to accept diversity; each case, each individual is unique. If the psychiatric symptoms are garbage -as Adler stated in a psychiatrists’ conference-classifications are then in the same category. Each case is more important than all classifications of diseases or taxonomies. Thus, several members of the anti-psychiatry trend like Cooper said –following Adler: “The word psychopathology must be the most obscene of all the word”

g) CREATIVITY:

We are all artists, ones more unsuccessful than others, but we all have created our lifestyle as a response to inheritance and to environment. And if we did something to build it we can do something to change it (Allen).

According to the goals or fictionalism and the eagerness of being superior, built upon a feeling of inferiority, character is perfect, but when the individual starts to understand what he knows, he changes it because the goals also change. This is to do a lifestyle therapy.

SOME KEY IDEAS.

A) Compensation:

Van Der Post said that Jung told him that Adler had was only one important idea: compensation; this idea finally becomes the foundations of Jung’s Psychotherapy and specially in the interpretation of the dreams.

It is wise to recall, like Brachfeld said: “not everything is hostility in the trends of Profound Psychology”. Brachfel himself translated “The theory of Psychoanalysis” by Jung.

In 2007, it is a century that “The study of the inferiority of organs” was first published. In this book , a therapeutic trend is suggested still related to the organic aspects and some cases like Demostenes’ are mentioned (who could overcome his stammering increasing the obstacles) thus provoking the overcompensation, which implies to strenghten the same area of the handicap. When this happens in other area, it is called “compensation”.

In: “Studies about the inferiority of the organs”, is where Adler expresses himself as a doctor and a therapist, in the broadest and most responsible sense.

A girl had many times an accident in the eye (we should not forget that Adle studied and work as oftalmologist). He saw the girl and observed all her family to see the inheritance, context, to avoid coming to any sudden conclusion or make forced interpretations. In this work Adler –as the pioneer of the psychosomatic medicine-stated that it is easy to understand that the habitual demands of life and civilization can be expressed in a nocive way in the level of these critical points (*Locus minoris resintenetiae*) -places of less resistance-.

Besides, he saw the significance of the “white or black giants” stated by his disciple Kunkel. But if this does not occur, therapy can repair it.

Grotjahn explains, and by doing this he reinforces Adlers’ beliefs- that the concepts about the inferiority of the organs constitute a development of the principle of Claude Bernard (1813-1878). He said that an organ tends to be keep its constancy in its inner environment. This concept was later amplified by W. B Cannon in his principle of homeostasis

In 1907, Pierre Janet proposed similar ideas in France in the book “Sentiment d’incompletude”.

Freud respected some of the concessions made by Janet and considered the contribution of Adler about inferiority of organs as a “valuable work” (Freud believed Adler will eventually include in his investigations the biological foundations of the instinctive processes). But life separated them and the same occurred with their psychotherapeutic practices.

Collin Wilson specified that Freud took from Adler (in “The civilization and its discontents”) the idea that the man had to convert himself in a social animal in order to compensate his organic inferiority.

The pure psiquical compensations are the most frequent. According to Tompson, a girl who listens to her mother complaint about the simplicity or inferiority of the girl, can phantasy or believe that she is a princess.

Or -as it is on fashion nowadays- the belief in reincarnation, a poor person may believe that in other life he was an important figure. According to Progoff, and the theories of the French therapists like Pierre Janet, Adler arrives independently to the concept that compensation (organic or mental) occurs below the line of consciousness.

B) The directive line:

Progoff summarizes that the psique is taken throughout a personal objective which is seen as perfection, though he cannot describe or give the reasons in advance why is searching for this. “The man knows more than what he understands”, was one of the best definitions of the unconscious used by Adler.

A internal principle push us forward and guide us to where we cannot see. According to Progoff it is falsed when we lose contact with that principle and it is cured when we return to it.

C) The desire of superiority (in German: *Uberlegenheitsstreben*)

“Any psyquic expressive form is presented as a movement that goes from an inferior position to a superior one” -Adler said.

Many times it constitutes a compensation to the feeling of inferiority; there we find one of the causes of the neurosis due to be abandoned.

Odiar points out that there is a relationship between the feeling of inferiority and the abandoned neurosis. Others see there one of the causes of what today is called: “insecurity neurosis”; both have the same origin: the loss of the feeling of value.

Odiar believes that the main thesis in the syndrome of abandonment, all the phenomenology is a funtion of the loss of the object-authority and in the syndrome of inferiority, the loss of feeling of self-esteem.

Both aspects are “syndromes of ego”.

Ad majore gloriam Dei was the motto of Loyola, paraphrased by Adler as: *Ad majorem gloriam suam*.

Loyola was the enemy (or the complement?) of Lutero; it is a bad thing to live only for ourselves and without considering the others.

Hans Trueb stated that an ego needs a healthy relationship with another ego. Laborit even says: “*we are the others*”. Any man is an island because he belongs to mankind.

John Donne says at the beginning of his novel about the Spanish civil war: “No one is an island, he is a part of a continent, do not send anyone to ask whom the bells ring; they ring for you”.

That is why Wilde says that Christianity gave men a giant and pantheist personality: “what we do to others we do to ourselves”.

The desire of superiority is the contrary to the feeling of community. The neurotic creates a fictitious superiority; e.g., a very poor patient felt he was very important and another who was not successful at his studies used to say: “If I started working seriously, I would be the best”; but that was exactly what he was afraid of; being proved and becoming conscious of his feeling of inferiority.

D) **The will of power: (German: *wille zur macht*)**

The feeling of aggressiveness which is the base of the Freudian superego had already been formulated by Adler. It is good to remember that Freud in Heins case (first edition) considered the aggressive and hostile feelings as manifestations of “aggressive trends”, which seems to be a remarkable confirmation of the Adlerian ideas (M. Grotjahn). In the same book Adler’s contributions can be seen related to the mechanisms of defense, so efficiently explained by Anna Freud.

Let’s see the “confluence of impulses” (we mention it here because of its possible therapeutic utility), for instance, in the confluence of sexual and aggressive impulses, the last are always subordinated to the first.

Adler suggested that the impulses can be transformed into its contrary and that they can even go against the Ego (*Ich*). For example, the scopophilic impulse can turn out into an exhibitionist behaviour.

Afterwards, Freud adopted these two principles in relation to the instincts and he named the first one “reactive formation” and the second one as “returning of the instinct against himself”. Anna Freud described the mechanisms as basic defenses of Ego.

E) **The Arrangement**

It is a more tangible concept than the “solution of compromise” given by Freud - also elaborated later than Adler. The arrangement is a bunch of attitudes and feelings destined to give security and maintain the lifestyle. In “The neurotic character” and “The Practice and Theory of the Individual Psychology”, Adler talks about “the arrangement of symptoms”, the arrangement of obsessive ideas, the arrangement of insomnia and of the nausea, the arrangement or laziness (it corresponds to “which is your favourite ‘if but’? - as the transactionalists say)

F) **The virile protest** (In German: *Manlicher Protest*)

It consists in the tendency to occupy a dominant, (above), masculine role opposed to the feminine (below) trends that can be seen in our culture and were even more noticeable when Adler wrote. It occurs in both genders and it appears when they need to compensate a feeling of inferiority.

According to Adler, it is present in all the neurosis because there are no neurotics without feminine features and the struggle against them. It is a reaction towards all that he may be considered to be inferior or soft (von Perfall).

G) **The social interest** (in German: *Sociales Interesse*)

Proffoff presents it as one of the most important principles about the healthy human being -without speaking about Adlerian sociotherapy, as Bercker states. Jung himself started his work with a very similar conception to Adler's in relation to the social nature of man and the relationship between nature and society. Also Otto Rank worked with similar ideas in relation to the social conception of man and he developed them in a very original way, as he outlined the main features of a deep social Psychology.

H.) **The acceptance of reality with a dosis of imperfection.**

It called Adler's attention that some neurotics wanted to be the best in all fields, or that in an obsessive situation the individual looks for perfection and he pointed out that it was vital to be more tolerant with the world and themselves.

Seneca used to say: "Everything depends on the opinions; we are as unlucky as we believe we are", and Adler included as an epigraph of his book: "The neurotic character".

However, referred to the ideas of trauma, Odier remarks that an imaginary danger opens the door to the prelogic thought and in the magic level, the anguish determined by the feeling of danger, is more intense than a danger inspired on a real one. He calls it "absolute anguish".

An imagined misfortune is as if it were a real one. The insecure individual is fond of dangerous situations and his impotence is the second generic relationship that Adler discovered brilliantly.

I) **The patient who wants to leave.**

Some authors call it resistance. Adler used to say: "I could even give you better reasons to leave, but it is important to know if it exists a true relationship between us". Collaboration is the key, as it was in other times, when everything had to do with the Edipo complex for the psychoanalysis.

Adler was the first who pointed out - within Deep Psychology - a non-edipical paradigm. As Jacobi puts it: what for the Freudians is the Edipic Complex, for us is the Number 4 (the archetype of quaternity).

We believe it is faster the concept of feeling of community. There was always a call for action and responsibility. He said: "now that it was discovered what it has to be done, we should not continue arguing".

When a person wanted to be the best in all the fields; referred to them, Adler used to say: “The green-grocer’s at the corner knows much more than me about vegetables but I care very little about it.”

When he saw individuals who were always complaining and did not want to change anything about themselves or external conditions, and previously knowing that they would not commit suicide, Adler told them: “one has to accept things the way they are or shoot yourself”. Of course, that this message cannot be said by any therapist.

J) *The big tasks in life*

According to Adler they are 3:

- 1) social contact.
- 2) work.
- 3) marriage and sexuality.

They have to be solved in order to have a balanced personality.

He added a fourth one: art.

SOME QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS:

According to Proffoff, Adler asked himself: “What is the organism trying to achieve? What is demanding his psique to do? To what inferiority he is trying to recover? How is it going the compensation of his weaknesses?

And, how is the relationship with community in his feeling of inferiority and in his attempt of compensation?

Proffoff insists that the most important to take into consideration is not to diagnose the neurosis but discover its sense and aim behind it. Adler’s finality was to help the patient to restore his self-curative potentials.

And in order to do that, Adler identifies the subjective vital sense -which was not functioning for the individual- and he identified the reasons why he became incapable of acting.

SYNOPSIS OF SOME INDICATIONS (OPEN, VAGUE AND UNCOMPLETE).

In an article of Ansbacher, Adler refers to the treatment. It is not a recipe book or a fixed guide.

They are indications about the maturity of a master in Psychotherapy. Those recommendations were efficient in its time, and they can still be if the therapist is skillful and has a solid formation. We dare to say that this formation should be eclectic because it is the only one who enables us to see a wide screen of the compared psychotherapies –and this is the point where we should be placed.

In this article (improvised by with a background of rich experience), Adler clearly presents us his way of doing psychoteraphy.

Ansbacher’s first notes also orient us, specially in the field of transference, that in this case has different connotations if compared to the Freudian psychoanalysis.

It is the repetition of behaviours, feelings and situations and the pointing out or the reduction by the therapist of the elements which can provoke insight done. Therefore

what ends in the replacement of old habits by new useful behaviours and according to the lifestyle.

Adler starts quoting Saint Agustin, the saint of the change and tolerance (because he changed himself) and also Dostoiewsky, the genius of contradictions.

Adler states that it is easier to work as a therapist than speaking about the therapy. He said: “when I am not asked I know, when I am asked I do not know”. His principles are open and they start from the surface, in spite of the fact that it is a deep psychology.

He first recommends to work in the reduction of symptoms (he call them rubbish). Thus, even though classifications are somehow useful, will be soon discarded.

Mary Barnes and Joseph Bercke in the book” Voyage trough Madness” ask Dr. Ramón Sarró the prologue of their book. He says: “Why did not you pay more attention to the differential diagnosis? Mary’s father (without being a professional) asked him if he thought it was a maniac depressive disturbance or esquizofrenic.

In another place, he thinks about hysteria and he discarded. I know that you do not value diagnosis very much. You believe these are postures, individual trayectories from certain unbearable situations.

Although accepting this thesis, don’t you think that it would be possible to blend?

Though you call deviations to what others call illness, you should recognize that they are different ways. Precisely, if we admit that they are different “**lifestyles**” (Alfred Adler spoke this way) chosen unconsciously from a certain point in life, it is essential to pay attention to basic differences. The comments are obvious and the posture of Sarró reconfirms us in the way (also “method” in the Greek sense) of Adler.

Adler tried to diminish the symptoms of the neurotic patient.

In a modern language, a methaphor-word which indicates a process that can be intuitively known but never comprehended, as Kunkel puts it.

It has nothing to do with the candid posture of new therapists who tell the patient:” Do not think on that anymore”, which was the first way taken by the patient before consulting. The strategy should be wiser, subtler, persuasive, and it should match with the patient’s lifestyle in order not be rejected (like in a transplant).

He also quotes Lutero: “Do not look to the eyes but the hands of the person in front of you”, which means to take into consideration the paraverbal language and its place in the history of the psychotherapy.

Adler appears as the great reformer of psychoanalysis. He always believed

- unlike the behaviourists and the symphomatic treatments- that is useless to cure the symptoms because individuals will always find another alibi (arrangement). It is more useful to give courage to the patient.

Within the strategies we have to mention the sharing of responsibilities of the “cure” with the therapist, where the most responsible is the patient, but the therapist cannot be irresponsible or neutral “What it is needed is a committed therapist” -Laing explained afterwards.

Adler describes briefly the treatment of melancholy and the moment in which the therapist should stop listening and start acting and the kindness which should accompany the pointing out. He also speaks about those patients who come from different therapies and bring many rationalisms which only allow the permanence of the symptoms. In those cases, he would said firmly: “Now I am not going to listen to you because you are disturbing our cooperation”.

Since the first interviews, Adler focuses on freedom. We should not forget that Adler had sessions in cafés, with cigarettes, a habit that was not questioned in those days, the patient could choose the place where to sit down. This can be interpreted in terms of collaboration or affective distance; that is the reason why the furniture is not put in a conventional way.

The time in which Adler let his patient speak without interruptions is difficult to estimate, because he could interrupt immediately or let him speak for 3 hours and in a respiratory pause point out something (remember the old hypnosis as a precedent of psychotherapy).

Adler is very skilful in asking indirect questions. He advises not to say: “Speak about your childhood”, but ask instead more vaguely: “What about your parents? Were they nervous?”

He recommended to ask how many children they were (and we continue doing so), which place he occupied in the series of siblings and whose favourite he was. At this stage of the questionnaire or “anamnesis”, if we are skilful enough we know quite a lot about the lifestyle and we are able to start with the process of therapy.

Adler stated that in the series of siblings, the eldest is more conservative, he tends to compromise with power; the second child, (if of the same gender) thinks about the struggle and tries to knock down everything. The younger diverts from his origin, surpasses others or he becomes indolent.

An apparently candid question can be very revealing of the context and the story of life. Were you a bad or good boy? A person who worked with us used to express her anguish because of the feeling that she was bad in his childhood because the day of her communion (in Summer) she refused to put a T-shirt below the dress, as her abusive mother pretended.

Withing the reduction of symptoms, we could speak about an item: children and the night, considering it as the receptacle of fears and symptoms -such as enuresis and onicofagia.

Considering psychotherapy as an conjectural discipline, according to Adler, it is necessary to make “resound” the first memories with the other clues.

We will find symptoms as a big “bunch of rubbish” used by the patient in order to hide and keep his fictitious superiority; e.g.: a Secondary School teacher whenever had to play the piano in a festival had a terrible headache. This symptom served her as an arrangement to hide her condition of bad player from the others and herself and allowed her to maintain her status : “If it were not because of the terrible headache I could show how good I am at playing the piano”.

This contributions has also been taken by other trends -such as the transactional analysis- which in one questionnaire asks: “which is your if at least favourite?”.

Adler insisted on the idea that “we should not take many precautions in life; the only one to take is courage”. In what is called “comparative cynicism”, he warns against false sufferings, “they originate our worst difficulties”. A young woman who committed suicide leaves a letter to his mother: “Mum, you did not teach me that we need courage to live”.

In the same way as a good analysis ends (if it does so) with a good synthesis, an adlerian psychotherapy ends with the amplification of the capacity of cooperation with

others. This is not philanthropy but also an interest in changing society. It is not a mere adaptation...

But before, during all the treatment and since the very beginning we cannot avoid resistance (Practice and theory). Any circumstance will serve the patient to put into action his eagerness of superiority from the therapist. In the book cited, there is an example in which the patient wants to change the hour of the session, and that it would be a great mistake to leave this item without discussing and see the causes of such proposal. May this serve as an example that causality is still present.

DOSTOIEWSKY. THE GENIUS OF CONTRADICTIONS. A PRACTICAL FOUNDATION.

In a fecund chapter in the book "Practice and Theory of the Individual Psychology", Adler stops at an extremist thought of Raskolnikov: "Am I Napoleon or a louse?"

He is between these two extremes, but he is in a moment of confusion and contradiction between the feelings of inferiority and community.

Adler –like Dostoevsky- was attracted by the humiliated and offended, such as children. But as Carroll states: "we are all children, only older, dear,".

In that essay about the Russian writer, there is a simple description of the limits between the "allowed and the prohibited" in childhood.

Let's see some reductions where Adler states: "Wanting to travel to the moon means wanting to be alone".

Analyzing Dostoevsky's lifestyle, Adler concludes that action is useless for him. Adler advantaged Victor Frankl and other existentialists in saying that neurosis can be the lack of sense.

Ravagnan says: "This new orientation is, since then, the denial of the powerful influence of the past.

I cannot choose the past, but I can choose the future. The past cannot be changed (Sartre) but it is there –within all our memories- and we can give it a sense in the present taking into consideration what we want to be.

In this case, the emphasis is in the present and the future which are open to the projection and according to the essence and temporality of life."

The question: Why the characters of Dostoevsky produce such an effect on us?, is answered by Adler like this: the effectiveness derives from their absolute unity. You can study any of his characters and you will always find reunited all the determiners of their lives and their expectations. In our patients, or better said: "people who work with us", if we know how to observe, occurs the same.

Sometimes we are surprised when we study the history of psychoanalysis and we do not find the recognition that Adler should have had for being the first one in formulating the importance in non sexual factors as components of the neurosis. (Tompson).

No less important than that, is the ethic background of all this. Adler quotes Kant : "each one is co-participant about the blame of others. He concludes: if I am co-participant of the blame of others and of all of them , I have an eternal obligation which impulses me, makes me responsible and obliges me to pay".

In other moments, Adler said that we had to accept reality (when we cannot change it) as it is or shoot ourselves (sic). Some patients dared to ask him if one of his patients

had committed suicide and he answered: “ not yet, but I am prepared if that moment comes”.

As much as using the verbalization of situations, he could use “the adlerian psychodrama”.

One day, a child (a patient from the Adlerian clinics instaurated by the socialist government of Austria and later closed by Nazism) had problems in his behaviour and Adler deduced that he wanted to be an adult and that was the reason why he bothered his teachers and classmates. Instead of telling him that, Adler stood near him firmly and the patient (child) immediately understood what the therapist was pointing out: exactly what he was doing.

Another patient who used to be alone asked him to stand next to the wall of the room, and asked him: “ Now where will I go? “.

SOME PRINCIPLES OF BRUNER.

a) The perspectivist

Bruner says that this refers to the creation of meanings. The meaning of any event, proposal or encounter provide a point of reference but they must have rules of evidence, consistence and coherence. This has to do with the sentence written by Adler: “*Everything can be different*”.

Sheldon Kopp, states that the therapist should be where others are not, in another perspective.

Bruner states that this postulate underlines the interpretative and creative side of the human thought.

b) The constructivist

It is the one who makes the reality that we ascribed to the world we live is built. According to Nelson Goodman (cited by Bruner):“Reality is built, not found”.

It has to do with the personal and creator lifestyle. This principle related to the field of education (also seen as “prevention or pshchohygiene”) is considered as a tool that children should receive in order to be able to learn about the creation of meaning and interpretation of reality, so they can adapt better to the world and to help them in the process of changing it, as required. In this sense, education may help people to become better architects and builders”.

Adler was worried about education and stimulated that children could take the initiative, free from all surveillance.

c). The narrative.

“*Did you believe what they have told you?*”, Adler used to ask his patients when they used the judgements of authorities as an excuse not to change.

Bruner remarks that our immediate experience - what happened yesterday or the day before yesterday- is framed in the same way.

We represent our lives and others lives in a narrative way. He arguments that is not surprising psychoanalists now recognize that that the person implies narrative.

The neurosis is the result of a history, uncomplete or inappropriate about ourselves. He says that when Peter Pan asks Wendy to come back to the world of the never more, he gives her as a reason that she could teach those lost children how to tell stories (sic). If they knew how to tell them, lost children could grow up. Here there is an epitome of the adlerian psychotherapy.

d). Identity an self steem

According to this author, the most universal thing in human experience, is the Ego. We know that education is vital for the formation of it.

In psychotherapy we need to know how it was formed and the data that was taken into account; that is why from the very beginning Adler was preoccupied about the sexual education; this should be included in the curricula.

Bruner states that the human being is characterized by the construction of a conceptual system which organizes a register of encounters with the world. This is related to the autobiographic memory and also launched into the future.; a Ego with history and possibility - that is to say again- the feeling of community.

SYNTHESIS FROM ANSBACHER.

It is vital to explore the personality by:

- A. First memories from childhood.
- B. Position in the family.
- C. Dreams during the day and night.
- D. Disturbances in childhood.
- E. External factors which provoke illness.
- F. Relationship with the therapist.

When the therapy has already started, is necessary:

- 1. understand the lifestyle.
- 2. transmit that understanding.
- 3. try that the patient understands it,
- 4. encourage social interest.

The understanding is achieved by:

- a. Empathy.
- b. Intuition.
- c. Conjecture.

Translation: Prof. Daniel Abelenda Bonnet.

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