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Abstract

The author explores the Adlerian practice of encouragement from a spiritual and holistic perspective. Emphasis is given to the physical, psychological, and spiritual impact on clients. While later proponents of the Adlerian tradition, such as Mosak and Dreikurs, embraced the spiritual dimension or the search for meaning, Adler only alluded to spirituality in his writings and interviews. Because Adler's view of spiritual development primarily involved support of religious activity and commitment that promoted or expanded one's social interest, the author outlines how participation in religious behavior meets Adler's definition of encouragement.

Psychotherapy traditionally has been viewed from the perspective of regulating, improving, and changing the mind. Freud first proposed that there was a mind-body link in which the mind, or psyche, influences or causes bodily symptoms (Hall, 1982, p. 18). However, Freud and his followers did not embrace a spiritual component (Jones & Butman, 1991). During the early emergence of the fields of psychology and psychotherapy, Jung proposed the importance of including the spiritual dimension when working with clients (Kelsey, 1986; Sharf, 1996).

Adler was the first major theorist who recognized the importance of the unity of the person. Indeed, he called his theory *Individual Psychology* because the word individual derives from the Latin *individuum*, meaning "unity" or "whole." Adler's recognition of the importance of attending to the whole client in therapy has caught fire in the last several years.

Interestingly, Freud coined the term *psychotherapy*, which literally means, "soul healing" (Berlinger, 1993, p. 2). While Freud rejected the concepts of religion and spirituality as being neurotic dependencies (1927/1961; Jones & Butman, 1991), the fact that he used such a word to describe the practice of the new field of counseling and psychotherapy could have been an unconscious and prophetic statement in the late 1800s. Between Freud's assertion of a mind-body connection, Jung's emphasis on mind-spirit link, and Adler's holistic stance and belief that religion is important in developing social interest, the stage was set for the current movement toward holism, toward including the integration of a spiritual dimension in counseling.

Holism

Scientists have been exploring the holistic nature of the universe for decades. They have discovered that matter consists of elemental structures called atoms which, when grouped, produce nature's wholes, called cells, which in turn produce bodies or organisms. Holism is the term (from the Greek *holos* or "whole") that designates the fundamental operative in making or creating wholes in our universe (Smuts, 1926). Therefore, Smuts's holism is an ontology "to express the view that the ultimate reality of the universe is neither matter or spirit but wholes" (p. 117). This view, while not new, is beginning to emerge as a powerful force in the field of psychotherapy.

Spirituality

There are myriad definitions of spirituality cited in the literature. Some describe spirituality as the core of humanness or "becoming a person in the fullest sense" (Marquarrie, 1972, p. 40). Others propose that spirituality is a search for meaning or purpose in life (McCullough & Worthington, 1995). Still other writers insist that a relationship with God, Allah, or a higher power is essential for active spirituality (e.g., Koch, 1998). For the purpose of this article, these three definitions will be embraced so that spirituality is understood as the seeking of a relationship with the creative power of the universe in an attempt to find meaning in life and to develop one's uniqueness as a human.

Adler suggested that God was humanity's idea of perfection and the highest image of greatness and superiority. In other words, God was an idea to Adler, not necessarily a reality (Adler, 1927/1954). Further, Adler asserted that the idea of God cannot be scientifically proved but rather needed to be accepted as a gift of faith (Baruth & Manning, 1987). Religion, however, was a communal reality to Adler in which people share an interest in humankind that includes a striving for social interest. While Adler did not propose a belief in the reality of a deity, religiously oriented or spiritually oriented people share many of his ideas, such as encouragement and social interest.

In 1994, 93% of surveyed U.S. citizens stated that they believed in God, a creator, or a spiritual force (Sheler, 1994). In another survey, 82% of the respondents stated that they believed in the power of personal prayer (Kaplan, 1996). While Jung proposed the necessity of addressing spiritual issues in working with clients (Sharf, 1996), most early theorists did not embrace his enthusiasm for the spiritual dimension. However, decades later psychotherapists are beginning to explore the impact of clients' spiritual beliefs on the results of psychotherapy and on their clients' mental health. The origin of

downplaying spirituality involves the scientific-religious split of the mid-1800s as well as the cultural assumption that our spiritual beliefs are private.

Encouragement

Authors have found that defining encouragement is not an easy task because encouragement is partially what one does and partially what one does not do (Azoulay, 1999). Dreikurs (1964) stated, "Half the job of encouraging a child lies in avoiding discouragement. . . . Anything we do that supports a child's lack of faith in himself is discouraging. The other half lies in knowing how to encourage" (p. 38).

Dinkmeyer and Losoncy (1996) defined encouragement as "the process of facilitating the development of a person's inner resources and courage toward positive movement" (p. 7). To perform this process, one must focus "upon assets and strengths as opposed to focusing upon liabilities" (McKay, 1992, p. 1). Being an encouraging person is difficult in a world that focuses on mistakes and blame. Accepting one's personality quirks and the inevitability of making errors is the first step to developing an encouraging way of being with oneself and others. Dreikurs (1964) stressed that individuals need to develop and value the courage to be imperfect before they can encourage others.

The act of encouragement recognizes effort, improvement, and contribution to accomplishing a task (McKay, 1992; Dreikurs & Grey, 1968). In addition, Azoulay (1999) stated that encouragement acts as a stimulus that precedes an action or cognition rather than as reinforcement following a behavior or thought (p. 93). Azoulay also asserted that encouragement is neither a reward for a task well done nor is it praise, which tends to be a positive but judgmental statement about a person or his or her activity (p. 94). Rather, encouragement is a bridge between the outer and inner worlds of an individual.

Dinkmeyer and Losoncy (1996) hinted at this bridge concept when they wrote that encouragement facilitates the development of inner resources and courage toward positive movement. Encouragement may be difficult to define because it is neither the outer nor the inner world. Encouragement both stimulates and motivates by drawing these worlds together. The points of land to which it is anchored do not define a bridge, nor does the river flowing under the bridge, though its structural beams may reach into the riverbed. A bridge is a connection, a way of getting to a destination.

An example of how encouragement acts as a bridge between the outer and inner worlds is revealed in the following example. A child produces a picture for class (outer world), and the teacher wants the student to continue exploring his or her budding talent (inner world). The teacher could use

encouragement to go to the heart (inner world) of the child by saying, "What wonderful use of color on that tree" (message about outer manifestation). "I'll bet you are proud of that picture" (message about inner world). "I can't wait to see what you'll do next with that drawing" (message about positive movement). The bridge links what was done and felt and acts to connect to another possible attempt at art by the student. The teacher's words enthusiastically encouraged the child to continue on his or her journey. The bridge connects the outside comment from the teacher to the inside aspiration of the student so that the student begins to feel inspired and cheered on to the next action.

While praise is used in the next example, there is a discouraging tone to the comment. "That tree has good colors; but it is leaning too much. Why don't you try to straighten it up in your next picture?" This well-intentioned critique does not bridge the outer world with the inner world with action. In this statement the teacher positively remarked about the colors used, gave a critique of the leaning tree, and suggested that the student try again. However, the result would probably be that the child became too discouraged to try. The bridge was not solidly constructed because the comment did not reach down into the heart of the child to stimulate enthusiasm.

Adlerians attempt to convey with their encouragement their own beliefs in the strength of the child. The child must view encouragement as showing respect and acceptance of him or her as a person equal in worth to the adult. (Azoulay, 1999, p. 94)

The second comment does not accomplish the task of demonstrating equality because the statement is evaluative in its intent.

Encouragement and Psychological Impact

Many writers and researchers have written on the topic of how encouragement affects a person's psychological well-being and motivates him or her toward improved mental health. Dinkmeyer and Losoncy (1980) further contended that encouragement is effective because it describes (not judges), highlights social values, accentuates progress and improvement (not comparison to prior performance), emphasizes effort (not outcome), and focuses on the good feeling one has as a result of positive performance.

While writers and clinicians proclaim the effectiveness of encouragement on clients and students, the statistical support must come from the researchers. Pety, Kelly, and Kafafy (1984) used the Praise-Encouragement Preference Scale with children who were in the 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th grades. The study involved a teacher who was trained by the researchers in the use of encouraging phrases and praising phrases with children. The researchers divided the children into two groups. One group received encouragement from

the teacher, and the other group received praise from the same teacher. The children then rated the teacher using the Praise-Encouragement Preference Scale.

The most important outcome of the study demonstrated that the children receiving encouraging statements rated the teacher more favorably than the children who received praise. The researchers cited anecdotal reports of some of the children describing the praising teacher as controlling and manipulative. The encouraging teacher's being rated more favorably than the praising teacher might indicate that the encourager would have a more potent influence on children and, perhaps, adults (Pety et al., 1984). The clinical implication is that encouraging therapists would have greater success with their clients.

Encouragement and Physical Impact

If encouragement affects us holistically, then encouragement must affect us physically. An example of encouraging another using physical means is that of a smile. A baby smiles and receives acknowledgment of the smile when others return the smile. The smile can physically indicate encouragement and can generate a warm feeling.

I have noticed how encouraged people walk differently than discouraged people. Before I invite a client, student, or supervisee into my office, I greet them, shake hands, and then invite them in. As I do, I note how they hold themselves and how they walk. These physical manifestations indicate to me how they are feeling. When people feel encouraged, they physically demonstrate this feeling to others (Dinkmeyer & Losoncy, 1996). Discouraged people walk, sit, and express themselves as if they were carrying the weight of the world on their shoulders. They tend to avoid eye contact and resist smiling. On the other hand, encouraged people smile, make eye contact, and walk with an enthusiastic bounce.

Sweeney (1989) stated that by "practicing body relaxation and positive mental images, individuals learn to overcome debilitating stress" (p. 106). He also said that researchers have established that human bodies do not distinguish between real, imagined, or vicarious experiences. If the person believes that the threat is real and imminent, the body reacts as if it were. For example, many people have had the experience of waking up in the night with their hearts pounding because of a horrible dream that felt real. Their minds and their bodies are intimately connected, and they inherently believe each other. In the same vein, Simonton & Matthews-Simonton (1978) developed a program in which they encouraged terminal cancer patients to think positively in order to assist the body's natural immunological response to attack cancer cells. They believed they demonstrated that encouraging

statements physically affected their patient's bodies, particularly their immune systems.

Encouragement and Spiritual Impact

"Encouragement is the key ingredient in all positive personal and professional relationships" (Dinkmeyer & Losoncy, 1996, p. 5). An accepting and understanding relationship is the foundation that nurtures encouragement. Spirituality is often thought of as the part of us that will exist after the physical ceases to live. However, spirituality is also about relationship, the relationship of one's spiritual self to the creator or creating energy. As stated earlier in this article, spirituality can be intimately linked to religious beliefs and practices, but spirituality can also reflect the essence of a person's being, and it may not necessarily be connected to religious life.

Broadly, spirituality is considered to be a search for meaning and purpose in life, a belief in a creator or higher power, or a transcendence of oneself. Adlerians should feel quite at home with these concepts. The idea that spirituality is a relationship is a model of Adler's premise that humans are naturally social beings who need to be understood within that context (Sweeney, 1989). The definition that spirituality involves a search for meaning or purpose in life is exemplified by Adler's belief that human psychic life is moving toward goals, some of which are fictional. The belief in a transcendent being or energy that causes a person to relate to the cosmos, God, or universal values was a fifth life task that Adler alluded to in his writings and that has been more clearly defined by Mosak and Dreikurs (1967/2000).

Clearly, Adler's concepts integrate well with spirituality. In fact, Adler (as cited in Sweeney, 1989) noted that human beings' uniqueness was the existence of their souls. Encouragement is the way to nurture the soul (as well as the psyche and the body). In addition, respecting other human beings and helping them to achieve their purposes means acting in encouraging ways. Various authors described the ways of communicating encouragement as listening and understanding, being nonjudgmental, remaining patient with others, instilling faith and confidence in the person and his or her abilities, recognizing effort, focusing on effort or improvement, and focusing on strengths and assets (Dinkmeyer & Losoncy, 1980; McKay, 1992; Sweeney, 1989).

These encouraging modes are congruent when looked at in light of various religious belief systems. For example, Zen practitioners believe that, in the connection with each client, there is an opportunity to learn and share and bow mentally to clients in a sense of respect and joy (Rosenbaum, 1999, p. 35). The demonstration of valuing another is the essential nature of encouragement (Dinkmeyer & Losoncy, 1980).

Christians believe that Jesus is an eternal friend who shows love and acceptance when they are discouraged. In addition, the Holy Spirit is referred to as the *Paraclete*, which translates from the Greek as the "encourager" (Jeremiah, 1997). There are many instances in the Bible of encouragement. One of the most famous stories occurred on the road to Emmaus where Jesus met two discouraged disciples immediately following the crucifixion. Not knowing that it was Jesus who was walking with them, the disciples indicated their confusion and discouragement over what they had just witnessed. Jesus listened, gently pointed out how the prophecy had been fulfilled, went to their house, and broke bread with them. Then he revealed himself to them. They were so encouraged that they immediately ran the several miles back to Jerusalem. This enthusiasm, generated by encouragement, is what clients need to feel after counseling sessions. They are discouraged as they enter the office, but after experiencing empathic listening, some instruction, revelation of insight, and an encouraging word, they should feel energized when leaving to work on their behaviors, thoughts, and feelings during the week.

The Jewish tradition speaks of a relationship with God, the Creator, as a covenant, which is available to all people (Fisher & Luyster, 1991). The Torah is filled with stories of the smaller, weaker representatives who, because of their faith in Yahweh, are able to accomplish great tasks. An example is David, a young boy, who slays the giant, Goliath. God is seen as one who listens to the discouraged and then, using the petitioner's assets and even weaknesses, gives him or her strength to overcome the problem. Again, the act of encouraging the discouraged by emphasizing strengths instead of criticizing is a part of a religious belief, and it supports Adler's ideas of encouragement (Sweeney, 1989).

In the Hindu religion, the method of yoga called Bhakti is one that is embraced by most Indian followers of Sanatana Dharma and is connected to the idea of encouraging a relationship (Fisher & Luyster, 1991). Bhakti supports the idea of sharing a relationship with the Supreme who is worshipped in all forms. As a person develops spirituality and moves through established ranks, the relationship to the Supreme changes from that of servant to friend to parent to spouse to romantic love (Fisher & Luyster, 1991). This evolutionary relationship indicates the importance of attaining a feeling of equal worth as a person that is fundamental to encouragement (Azoulay, 1999).

Islam is a religion that emphasizes peace, purity, acceptance, commitment, and an acceptance of the supreme power of Allah who is Unity. "[I]he underlying essence of life is eternal unity rather than the apparent separateness of things in the physical world" (Fisher & Luyster, 1991, p. 278). Thus Allah could be seen as the supreme holistic model. "Islam is supportive of a balanced growth of the total personality . . . spirit, intellect, rational self,

feelings, and bodily senses" (Fisher & Luyster, 1991, p. 303). Based on the belief of unity of personality and their precepts that encourage them to work toward building social institutions that reflect Allah's guidance, Muslims might consider Adler's social interest and encouragement of others as complements to their faith.

At a time when theorists were separating the psychological and physical from other human dimensions, including spiritual and religious, Adler was promoting the unity of the personality and the importance of religion as a way of developing social interest. Later, Dinkmeyer and Losoncy (1996) wrote, "You are literally a miracle! You are such a rare combination of the physical and spiritual that there is not one exactly like you" (p. 75).

The act of encouragement is Adler's way of being with others, and it is unique to his theory. Adler and his followers have invited others to explore their uniqueness and holism in an environment of respect, equality, understanding, and faith with the aim of embracing mental health (Grunwald & McAbee, 1985). The holistic nature of Adler's concept of encouragement emphasizes the act of supporting and respecting the whole client.

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The Tradition of Ignatius of Loyola: A Holistic Spirituality

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Abstract

The qualities of Ignatian spirituality as a holistic spirituality are presented in this study of the psychology of religion. After preliminary definitions of religion and the characteristics of spirituality are provided, Ignatian spirituality is analyzed from the point of view of its holistic worldview and understanding of the human person. This spirituality is placed within a tradition that recognizes humility as self knowledge, as evidenced in other traditions such as monasticism in Europe and North America. The specific contribution of Ignatian spirituality is one in which personal discernment is given priority. It is recognized as further supported by a prayer style that is intensely holistic. The experiential aspects of Ignatian spirituality are presented as a response to the condition of postmodernism.

Prologue

On the centenary of Ernest Hemingway's birth, tribute was justly paid to the impact of his strong and crisp style of literature, if not to his ability as an artist to capture the particular spirit of an age. In his (1938) short story, "A Clean, Well-lighted Place," the younger waiter in a Spanish café complains to the older of the late hours continually forced on him by the last customer, an aged, drunk, deaf man who has recently attempted suicide. The older, more experienced waiter understands the suicide attempt as despair about nothing, a nothing that he fears with a fear that can be assuaged only by a clean, well lighted place. Insulated from the threatening nothing in the dead of night until the dawn of day, he muses prayerfully to himself of this nothing he knows so intimately:

Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name thy kingdom nada thy will be nada in nada as it is in nada. Give us this nada our daily nada and nada us our nada as we nada our nadas and nada us not into nada but deliver us from nada; pues nada. Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee. (p. 481)

The Spanish noun for "nothing," *nada*, becomes a powerful motif articulating the anxiety of an age and predicting the poignant end of the talented artist. To the Spanish speaker, the timbre of this prayer is at once sardonic and comic, with a touch of a familiar fatalism.