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Birth Order & Early Memories; Social Interest & Education; Technique of Treatment

(Editor's note: By now, readers may become aware of the seeming repetition of certain ideas throughout Adler's articles and lectures. If examined closely, these repetitions have subtle differences and suggest a wide range of application. He also repeats general aspects of his theory to emphasize the tight integration of these theoretical constructs. The lectures, in particular, were often addressed to an audience unfamiliar with IP. Rather than assume that his listeners knew the entire theory, Adler addresses the topic of each lecture in the broader context of his full theory.)

Chapter I: The Neurotic Character (1931) continues the discussion of neurosis begun in the last chapter of Volume 6: Chapter XXVI: "The Structure of Neurosis: (1931). Adler states, ". . . a description of character does not mean a description of the total inner life as something fixed and immutable. Character is not immutable." Descriptions are necessary because no single concept can express what we mean by "neurotic character." "Character" means "social attitude," thus reflecting both the inner and the social realities of the environment. Traits we consider good or bad have meaning only in a social context, which is why no good or bad traits can be inborn, because "in the period before the child has social contacts, she has no opportunity for such developments and for finding expressions." Using IP, "We can put our finger directly on that spot where the emotional life was stimulated or mutilated, the point at which the child became dependent and began to see nothing in life other than opportunities to exploit the contributions of others for herself." After describing in detail the various manifestations of neurosis, Adler refers to the need for more counseling centers in the schools. Despite his optimism, he knows we could not possibly train all parents in the healthy principles of child education. (Editor's note: Also, parents who may need this help the most may be the least motivated to seek or accept it.) Our best hope is to "place the entire task of educating the nation into the hands of experienced, well-instructed teachers," who

can educate children with warmth and understanding, with the goal of “expanding and solidifying social interest.”

In **Chapter II: The Child's Symptom Selection** (1931), Adler rejects the idea that heredity alone determines symptom selection; many symptoms appear without any specific organic cause: “That which we call neurosis is only symptoms, symptoms of an erroneous life style, that appears when someone is unable to cope with the tasks of life in a manner normally expected of us.” The child's (or adult's) choice of symptoms is always appropriate for achieving his future goal. Adler provides several case studies to illustrate that “Understanding the selection of symptoms is not a matter of mathematics that can be solved by formulas. Every formula is to be avoided.” We must bring evidence to support that which we surmise. “We must apply the general diagnosis of IP, but cannot allow ourselves to be satisfied with that. We must follow with the specific diagnosis until we uncover the totality of the personality, the individuality. Therefore, 'Individual Psychology.’” (Editor's note: “individual” as in “indivisible;” it cannot be divided.)

In **Chapter III: Individual Psychology and Psychoanalysis** (1931), Adler examines the differences between Freudian psychoanalysis and IP. First, IP concentrates on the person's “I,” an undivided, coherent unity. No “it” or “drives” exist outside this basic unit. The task for the individual “is to be embedded in everything that humans become and in all they do. In this process, the uniqueness of every life style is formed neither by heredity nor by the influences of the environment, but by the goal-striving and fulfillment-urging of the individual.” The child uses her “creative force” in the formulation of her life style and goal, but her degree of social feeling and social interest determine the nature of that life style and goal, which are revealed in all her forms of expression. Individual Psychological therapy consists of using the individual's memories, dreams, fantasies, and all forms of expression to help us understand the “basic melody, the same psychological sound pattern, the totality that is woven through the entire psychological fabric.” The success of therapy depends on our being able to help a person become “a cooperative, loving, fellow human being.” Although we use no formulas, we are “guided by our basic principles. The importance of an awareness of common sense and the training required in observing connectivity is known merely to the few who devoted many years of work to IP.”

In **Chapter IV: Compulsion Neurosis** (1931), Adler begins, “Rarely is the striving for superiority so clearly defined as it is in a compulsion neurosis.” In showing how little is generally understood about compulsion neurosis, he mentions that “what some writers on the subject have described as ambivalence, ambiguity, contradictoriness, or split personality are simply contrasting means to the same end.” In attempting to uncover that “end,” or fictional goal, IP focuses on the psychic life as movement. The infinite variety of life styles “shows no ideal movement upward. Many paths to significance and superiority may be followed.” Hence, the infinite variety of compulsion neuroses. But all these neuroses share a core similarity; they reflect the individual's attempt to “evade the realities of life, since he feels incompetent to face them, and since his high-flown ambition must elude any sort of failure.” In keeping with the coherent, holistic nature of IP, Adler explains that “the construction of the compulsion neurosis is identical with the structure of the entire life style which adopts all the forms of expression that suit its purpose, and rejects the rest.” He presents twelve case studies to illustrate his point.

In **Chapter V: Pampered Children** (1931), Adler focuses on the development and nature of pampered children, emphasizing the crucial influence of the mother, for better or worse. The most common error mothers make, with generally good intentions and usually because they were raised this way themselves, is to do too much for their children. This leads to a variety of problems, such as: individuals who depend on others to serve them, a lack of courage, and undeveloped social interest. Adler points out the disadvantages of particular birth order positions, especially that of the only child. The pampered child “hits with admirable accuracy the vulnerable point in the family tradition, which bothers the mother the most. How such children act in new situations, with friends, in kindergarten, in school, at work and in love, how they get into and create difficult situations constitutes a very large part of psychopathology.”

In **Chapter VI: The Fear of Women** (1932), Adler argues that sexual dysfunction is rooted in the masculine fear of women. He says that a feeling of guilt (“bad conscience”) may be a significant factor in sexual impotence: “In many cases, a conflict regarding sexual relations, particularly a fear of women, can be traced back to a feeling of dishonorableness. The man feels that he is not honorable when he approaches a woman. He feels like a thief, proposing to enrich himself at

another's expense." Adler comments, "If I wanted to have relations with a girl and felt that I was going to deceive her, I also would not be in full possession of my sexual capacities." Love is a task for two people. "IP and psychoanalysis differ greatly in this regard because for us sexuality is not a primitive urge, but a relationship between two people of opposite sex, developed through social feeling."

In **Chapter VII: Narcotic Abuse and Alcoholism** (1932), Adler describes the origins of and effective therapeutic treatment for alcohol and drug addicts. Lacking in courage and patience, these individuals seek relief from life's tasks and challenges. In approaching such a person, Adler first attempts to establish "the conditions under which the abuse began. If we succeed and gain an exact insight into how that beginning occurred, then we can answer the following question: For what kind of situation was the patient unprepared?" In order to gain a sense of the whole person and her life style, he then asks many questions regarding friendships, truthfulness, loyalty, the ability to establish new relationships, work, and communal feeling, all the necessary ingredients for meeting the challenges of life. He examines in detail some symptoms of these clients, such as impatience, suspiciousness, jealousy, and "ungratified ambition." He also explores the influence of pampering and other hindrances to healthy psychological growth.

In **Chapter VIII: Personality as a Self-Consistent Unity** (1932), Adler argues for the primacy of the spiritual life and against the tenets of behaviorism. "Like every other science, IP leads into metaphysics. The psychic life has a creative power that is identical with the life force itself. This creative power has the capacity to anticipate, which it must do, because human beings move. The psychic life means movement and direction with one goal." Great artists understand this dynamic, illustrated by the poets, painters, and composers who create whole personalities, whose every part fits the whole. He refers to Shakespeare, who was a genius in creating examples of unique, whole personalities in his plays. Ending with a case study, Adler shows how all aspects of a particular client's life, including four of his dreams, reflect a "self-consistent unity." To make "this portrait totally lifelike so that the patient appears convinced of its correctness requires subtle work."

In **Chapter IX: Structure and Methods of Individual Psychology** (1932), Adler elaborates further on the philosophical relevance of IP: "We consider psyche a metaphysical construct. Above all, the psyche

consists of movement which is goal-directed.” He refers again to the child's creative power: “The self creates itself, using all possibilities and influences.” Even the influences of the environment, birth order, and organ inferiority do not “determine” anything; they only create “probabilities.” He repeats four main categories of movement in individuals lacking sufficient preparation for life's tasks: hesitating, distancing, avoiding, and excluding certain aspects of a problem. However, we must avoid categorizing people, and instead focus on “understanding the mistakes of each individual,” as part of her unique “self-consistent unity.”

In **Chapter X: Individual Psychology and Education** (1932), Adler returns to the possibilities of education, and the necessity of emphasizing the upward-striving of human personality: “We see here the optimistic force of IP asserting that everyone can achieve more if he does not set limits on himself. Neurosis and other failures are probably caused by self-limitation and the individual rules of movement the person establishes.” Pampering leads to self-limitation more than anything else. Typically, “pampered people do well when they are successful immediately. Only being tested in a difficult situation will show whether or not they were well prepared.” The opening days of school, the first major life “test,” often reveal the effects of pampering. However, when the teacher succeeds in her task, the mother no longer takes center stage in the life of the child; another person appears on the child's horizon. The teacher, therefore, serves a crucial role in preparing the child for life by nurturing his social interest, courage, and independence.

Chapter XI: The Technique of Treatment (1932) contains a number of practical strategies for the therapist. Adler emphasizes that the practice of IP is an art which must be adapted to each individual. In dealing with neuroses, the therapist must “do his utmost to deflate the high value the neurotic places on her symptoms. Seeking fictive superiority, every neurotic patient has symptoms that betray this abortive struggle, an ambitious striving to be 'out of the ordinary' behind her illness. Unless we realize that symptoms symbolize a huge muck-heap out of which the patient builds herself a refuge, we cannot grasp the technique of treatment.” He then discusses specific therapeutic techniques, such as making the client cooperate during treatment sessions (training her for life outside the therapist's office), treating her courteously as an equal (modeling how the client should treat others), and having enough chairs for her to select one (enabling the therapist to see the client “in action”).

Adler suggests many questions to ask, eliciting when the client's troubles began, what she was like as a child, and what family members were like. He also asks for early recollections. All this information is designed to reveal the client's inner life, particularly if she has been pampered, "I become more and more convinced that 'neurotic cases' originate in a pampered childhood." He recommends that "explanations should take the form of vivid, illustrative examples, rather than long, dreary dissertations." Therapists need "patience and tolerance, and humor and wit help a lot." The chapter concludes with five case studies, showing Adler's treatment techniques in detail.

Chapter XII: Origin of the Striving for Superiority and Social Interest: From a lecture to the Viennese Medical Society for Individual Psychology (1933) consists of Adler's views on the philosophy and psychology behind every human action. He points out that IP was the first to establish that each individual has "the striving for completeness, striving from lower to higher." The greater an individual's feeling of inferiority, the more likely his striving takes the form of striving for superiority or power over others. Striving for completeness is innate, a part of the developmental and evolutionary process: "To live means to develop." However, people "imagine the goal of completeness differently. When someone tries to reach completeness by dominating others, we consider this goal unfit. It forces the individual to protect himself, full of anxiety. When we meet people whose goal of completeness is to lean on others, we consider this goal to contradict common sense." The basic direction of human evolution is toward social feeling. Social interest is also inborn, but it cannot develop under adverse environmental conditions. Social interest "never has anything to do with a presently existing group or society, or with political or religious concepts. Specifically, it means to feel with all concerned 'subspecies aeternitatis,' striving toward a form of community, which has to be conceived as eternal, as the ultimate development of mankind." Thus, IP contains a "touch of metaphysics," and "every science ends in metaphysics." As he concludes, he returns to the importance of social interest for the "contemporary psychological state of mankind," (Hitler came to power in 1933), and for the education of children. He expresses his hope that "perhaps in the course of thousands of years talking about social interest will be superfluous, like talking about correct breathing." In this chapter, Adler clearly defines his "concept of cure," or ideal mental health.

In **Chapter XIII Physique and Psyche** (1933), Adler explores the mind-body relationship. Life consists of developmental striving, which has the “eternal goal of adjustment to the demands of the environment.” There is no static point in this process. Psychological traits like mind, character, personality, and intelligence are some of the instruments of this striving. Adler refers to Cannon's book, *The Wisdom of the Body*, pointing out that the biological processes of equilibrium presented in that book play their role even in psychology: “Overcoming is promoted by striving toward self-preservation, physical and psychological balance and completeness.” However, “psychological balance faces constant threats. In his striving toward completeness, man is always psychologically in motion and feels unbalanced in comparison to his goal of completeness . Thus, the psychological process manifests itself not only in the body, but also in the psyche itself, where it promotes all kinds of mistakes, actions, and omissions which conflict with the challenges of society. In the same way, the physical state influences the psychological process.” Case studies illustrate this connection.

In **Chapter XIV: The Structures of Psychic Activity: A Contribution to Individual Psychological Understanding of Character** (1934), Adler begins, “In order to obtain a picture of the total personality from a person's attitude to social life tasks, IP focuses on and evaluates carefully the level of activity with which a person approaches her problems.” The individual's “constant level of activity corresponds with her constant law of movement, which IP calls the life style. This lifestyle contains as its guiding structures a level of activity and a certain degree of direction-giving social interest.” Some examples of activity include the hesitating attitude, withdrawing from the outer world, and avoiding. “If someone tries merely to avoid revealing to others her imagined lack of value, then she will conduct herself in thinking, feeling, and acting in such a way that she leaves all tasks unsolved in order to keep at least an illusion and possibility of superiority in reserve.” In contrast, “If a person is a real, cooperative human being, cooperation becomes the guiding principle of life, as demonstrated in all life tasks.” Adler ends with the comment that, “The psychologist must also clarify poorly understood nationalism that hurts all human society, and leads to wars of conquest, revenge, or prestige. He has to help people avoid discouragement, and help prevent anything which would hinder expansion of social interest in the family, the school, and society at large.” Thus, he connects the psychic activity

of the individual, in ever-widening circles, to the psychic activity of nations.

Chapter XV: Psychosomatic Disturbances (1934) returns to the topic of mind-body relationships examined in Chapter XIII: "Physique and Psyche" (1933). After describing the influences of organ inferiority, Adler states, "Inadequate preparation does not have to originate in organic factors, but can also start from an opinion. A person's opinion influences his behavior, and the typical use of his functions. Everything depends on opinion. This approach gives us the courage to say that a person's attitude can be changed." When an individual feels overwhelmed by a life task, his "body also expresses the felt burden." Adler describes the connection between opinion, feelings, and emotions and various physical disturbances, including abdominal problems, anxiety symptoms, thyroid gland difficulties, gynecological troubles, and sexual dysfunction. Even our faces express the character within: "Physiognomy expresses movement that has taken form." He admits that little is known about how this happens, but it does. He ends with, "The outside appearance of man is more connected with his consonance with the society he is striving for than we have previously been able to explain."

In **Chapter XVI: Mass Psychology** (1934), Adler explains how the mass-psyche comes into being and describes its significance." First, he focuses on the constructive influence of the mass-psyche: "Language cannot be understood except as a mass-product, effected both at its origin and its subsequent development by a unified cooperation of the elements of the mass. The same unified cooperation underlies the universal currency of practical reason, aptly termed 'common sense.'" At the basis of these achievements "lies the power of the sense of the community." Compassion, altruism, and art are all "guided by a common urge to value the welfare and future of humanity as a whole." However, the mass-psyche, like the individual psyche, can turn in dangerous directions. A dramatic example, aside from countless wars, is the persecution of witches, when "more than a million completely innocent girls and women suffered death by fire after unspeakable torments." The psychology of the mass must be considered from the same point of view as the psychology of the individual; human social groups also strive to overcome a minus-situation. For instance, children who grow up "without an adequate sense of community" tend to put their personal desires ahead of the general welfare, so that "war seems a justifiable

means of satisfying their selfish interests.” Taking a long view of history, Adler notes, “. . . the approximately coherent style of life of the more active group in each generation appears as the mass-psyche of that generation, in all areas of social life, art, as well as in politics and philosophy. The final evaluation of any mass-movement is determined by the invincible power of human evolution, which relentlessly preserves the welfare of all mankind.”

Chapter XVII: The Fundamental Views of Individual Psychology

(1935) is a short statement written to introduce “The International Journal of Individual Psychology” in the United States and Great Britain. In covering the basic principles, Adler states that IP begins with a focus on the “relationship of the individual to the problems of the outside world,” which he places in the three main categories of friendship, occupation, and love. The individual approaches these tasks “according to her interpretation of herself and her present problem.” That interpretation includes her own definition of success, expressed in her psychic goal, and in her life style, which consists of her manner of movement toward that goal. All her “thinking, feeling, and acting, every expression of her personality” constitute a unity, which moves in the direction of her fictional goal. While each individual must be studied in the light of her own development, Adler offers, for teaching purposes, four classifications of attitude and behavior toward life's problems: the dominant or ruling type; the getting type; the side-stepping (avoiding) type; and “the socially useful type, prepared for cooperation and contribution.” The principles which guide us when grouping individuals into these four types are 1) the degree of social interest, and 2) the form of movement they develop (“with greater or lesser activity”) in order to achieve their own idea of success.

In **Chapter XVIII: What is Neurosis?** (1935), Adler connects neurosis with the major concepts in IP, illustrating his points with a case study. The client in question exemplifies “the tension into which the patient falls when he is confronted with the three problems of life: friendship, occupation, and love, which affects not only the body, producing functional changes, but also the psyche.” This tension can be corrected only through an understanding of the individual's unique life style (attitude toward himself, others, and life's problems) and his psychic goal (his interpretation of success). Social feeling “must be present to a significant degree for the solution of all problems of life.” Thus, one definition of neurosis is: insufficient social feeling. Poor preparation in

social feeling and for the problems of life, “originates in childhood, and with it a felt inferiority toward the outside world.” Hereditary organ inferiorities, pampering, or neglect may lead a child to oppose social feeling, but his “creative power” takes precedence over any of these factors. This creative power uses all impressions and influences to construct an attitude, a unique “law of movement,” which characterizes the life style. Instead of feeling connected with others, the neurotic primarily feels fear, of failure or loss of prestige, so he concentrates on safeguarding behavior, retreating from life's tasks. Thus, another definition of neurosis is “Yes-but. “In the 'yes' is embedded the recognition of social feeling; in the 'but,' the retreat and its securities. The neurotic turns his whole interest toward the retreat, until it becomes an elaborate 'Retreat Complex.' . . . Even the question, 'Why should I love my neighbor?' springs from the inseparable connectedness of mankind and the stern criterion of the community ideal. Only he who carries within himself, in his 'law-of-movement,' a sufficient degree of the community ideal and lives according to it as easily as he breathes, will solve his inevitable difficulties.”

In **Chapter XIX: The Structure and Prevention of Delinquency** (1935), Adler returns to a topic that was important to him. He points out that we can reduce crime only by understanding what causes it, and stated most simply, individuals turn to crime when they face difficulties they are not prepared to overcome. Although the issue is “extraordinarily complicated,” IP recognizes what is required to properly prepare individuals for life. The interest in others must be strengthened, thereby promoting an attitude toward the tasks of life that is “directed toward common usefulness.” The mother plays a crucial role in nurturing a child's inborn potential for cooperation and interest in others, but “many mistakes can be made.” For instance, the father may be excluded, the mother may keep the child too attached to her, or spoil him. However, “bad training given by the mother is not responsible for producing the pampered life style. This attitude could not occur unless the child claimed for himself all the advantages of such a relationship.” The great majority of criminals demonstrate a pampered life style, revealed in their earliest recollections. As proof of their lack of social interest, Adler cites two facts: “First, fifty per cent of arrested delinquents are untrained and unskilled, meaning that even as children they did not cooperate or develop their social interest to a degree necessary for business or professional life; and second, fifty per cent of criminals suffer from venereal diseases, meaning they are unable to solve the problems of love

in a normal way.” To prevent crime, Adler proposes one major solution: that “schools need to assume the task of developing the inborn potential for social interest.” Furthermore, he suggests “a law that no child may leave school until he can take a useful place in society, until his interest in others is sufficiently developed to enable him to meet the tasks of life.”

In **Chapter XX: Prevention of Neurosis** (1935), Adler points out that “each psychologist talks the language of his own 'style of life,'” and “a psychological system has an inseparable connection with the life-philosophy of its formulator.” In proceeding to explain his theory of personality, he rejects the hereditarian theories of human nature, as well as environmental conceptions. He maintains that the two major forces within us are the striving to “overcome difficulties and obstacles,” and social feeling. In neurosis, the striving to overcome obstacles becomes a striving over others. “In neurosis we always face a highly placed goal of individual superiority. For therapeutic purposes, this information has to be shared with the individual carefully and kindly. Such a highly placed goal of personal superiority reflects a lack of the proper measure of social feeling and precludes the development of healthy interest in others.” In the structure of every neurosis, Adler finds three factors: “1) too little social interest; 2) striving in a wrong direction; and 3) a comparatively small degree of activity.” Therefore, prevention means training from childhood that nurtures interest in others, promotes social usefulness, and encourages courageous activity in the face of difficulties. He provides a case that “demonstrates how IP understands and deals with a neurotic individual.”

Chapter XXI: On the Interpretation of Dreams (1936) begins with a comparison of the Adlerian and Freudian approach to dream interpretation. In Adler's view, dreams are primarily an attempt to solve the problems of life, in accordance with the totality of the individual's personality. In order to uncover the purpose of dreams, “we must find what purpose is served by forgetting or not understanding them.” We construct dreams to “fool ourselves” with emotions and pictures: “When our life style clashes with reality and common sense, in order to preserve the style, we need to arouse feelings and emotions with the ideas and pictures of a dream we do not understand.” As part of the expression of the individual's life style, “dreaming is like stepping on the gas in the process of driving a car.” The dream gives a person “added impetus in a time of uncertainty to help her reach her objective, impelling her toward

her goal with increased emotional power.” Common features of dreams may include falling, flying, paralysis, and examinations. Through case studies, Adler illustrates what some of these features may represent, such as inferiority feelings or striving for achievement. “The 'fooling' power of dreams needs to be understood so that we no longer emotionally intoxicate ourselves.” He concludes, “Imagination, as in a dream, is exceedingly worthwhile as long as it supports life in a useful direction. Otherwise, with a lack of social interest, such manifestations of the imagination as dreams are dangerous training places for unsocial actions.”

In **Chapter XXII: The Neurotic's Picture of the World** (1936), Adler explains that the Individual Psychologist focuses on a client's “unsuccessful relationship with the outside world,” attempting to convince him “of the coherence of his behavior, to show him his error, and to reveal to him his incorrect, fictitious picture of the world leading to the faulty philosophy upon which he has built his life.” His concept of cure consists of helping a client “correct this faulty philosophy” and accept a “mature picture of the world,” as opposed to one developed in childhood. Typically, the neurotic's world view conflicts so strongly with reality that he feels threatened from many sides, and consequently “narrows his sphere of activity.” The manifestations of neurosis (extreme discouragement, doubt, hyper-sensitivity, impatience, exaggerated emotion, retreat, the need for support) “all indicate that a neurotic patient has not yet abandoned his early-acquired 'pampered life style.’” Adler cites the case of a 21-year-old student in detail, demonstrating his treatment strategy of emphasizing not “causal factors, but idea and attitude,” which create the world-picture of the patient. Experiences do not create neurosis; the client “interprets experiences according to his existing attitude and life style,” both of which are reflected in his picture of the world, “created in early childhood and used as his 'private map' to navigate his way through life.” The process of cure requires understanding this process, and redirecting him to “a more normal way of living,” rather than one in which others are expected to give him the primary position and special privileges. “He will have to alter his old private view to bring it into harmony with a 'common view' of the world,” by which we mean “a view others can share.”

In **Chapter XXIII: How the Child Selects His Symptoms** (1936), Adler argues that the problem of symptom-selection is the most difficult subject in neurosis-psychology and psychology in general, because

“Understanding symptom-selection requires looking at symptoms as creations, as works of art. We must accept with admiration that every individual is an artist in his mode of life, even in his errors. Behind his mistakes lie influences that could not have been good ones and to which he reacted with an erroneous response.” Adler goes so far as to say, “Were I in the same position as this child, had I the same misinterpretation of the meaning of life and the same training, then I, too would have suffered from similar symptoms.” Any one symptom must be considered as one part of a complete whole, of the “personal and unique” totality of the individual. Adler discusses a number of the possible influences on the child's development: heredity, physical defects, nutritive difficulties, economic conditions of the family, attitude of his teachers, the skill and experience of the mother, neglect, and pampering. Using his creative power, the child incorporates all influences into a “direction” he chooses, “one that promises to lead him to an ideal state in which all his problems are resolved.” Because of this innate “creative power,” children growing up in the same family with the same influences may choose very different directions; birth order does not necessarily “cause” anything. The child's response to problems for which he does not feel prepared “tells us immediately to what extent misconceptions have crept into the construction of his life style.” After illustrating his theories and treatment with case studies, Adler ends with, “The problem of symptom-selection cannot be understood if it is treated like a problem in mathematics which demands no more than a formula for its solution. We must reject all formulas. We must, of course, employ the general diagnosis of IP, but that must be followed up with a special diagnosis until the totality, the (unique) personality, of the individual has been revealed.”

In **Chapter XXIV: Love is a Recent Invention** (1936), Adler presents his understanding of the concept of love, often in contrast to much of what has been written by poets and philosophers. He starts by observing that while we know more about sex than previous generations, we do not really know more about love. In fact, as he points out, “We sometimes confuse the two.” A comparatively new discovery (hence the title), “the ideal of modern love did not exist until women were emancipated from their social and economic shackles and human life was placed upon a higher level than the mere satisfaction of physical appetite.” Emphasizing the importance of cooperation, he uses a number of metaphors, such as, “Like a dance, love requires the harmonious cooperation of two partners.” Other requirements include equality, not

expecting perfection, thinking of each other as a twosome, and giving as well as taking. While certain elements of modern life favor love, others work against it, inspiring the “masculine protest” in women and the inordinate “fear of women” in men.

Chapter XXV: How Position in the Family Constellation Influences Life-Style (1937) treats at length one issue for which Adler has become particularly famous: “birth order.” As he makes clear, a child's position in the family constellation is merely one potential factor in the construction of his life style; it is not causal, as many misinterpret it to be. (Editor's note: See Chapter XXIII on the child's creative power.) What matters, as always in IP, is the child's particular situation and how he interprets it. The first-born is generally spoiled, like an only child, but suffers “dethronement” when the second child is born. This may lead the first child to strive to regain his position, by either positive, socially useful means, or negative, socially useless ones. Believing in authority, power, and the law, eldest children often become scientists, politicians, and artists. For the second child, life is very different: “Life for him is more or less a race; the first child sets the pace and the second tries to surpass him. What results from their competition depends on their courage and self-confidence.” Chafing against the strict leadership of others, second children may become revolutionaries. The youngest child never knows the “tragedy of dispossession.” Because parents frequently grow more prosperous with age, the youngest may be the best educated. However, he may also be over-indulged by both the older siblings and his parents, leading to a life style of relying on others. Also, if he feels compelled to compete to maintain a starring position, he may choose a field of activity far removed from other family members. For instance, if the family is successful in business, he may become an artist or poet. Adler remarks on the “remarkable number of youngest children as leading characters in *The Bible*.” Only children tend to be pampered and receive too much attention without effort, which can lead to a life style “based on being supported by others and at the same time ruling them.” Single boys growing up among girls, and single girls among boys, have their own difficulties. While there is no perfect position in the birth order, the family's evaluation of men and women has significant influence.

Chapter XXVI: Significance of Early Recollections (1937) begins with Adler's statement that “The discovery of the significance of early recollections is one of the most important findings of IP. It has

demonstrated the purposiveness in the choice of what is remembered longest.” Although he believes memories may be inaccurate, or even imagined, they give “indications of self-training to overcome the organic difficulties or deficiencies felt in the early environment; reveal signs of the person's degree of activity, courage, and social interest;” and express the patient's fictional goal. Because a great number of spoiled children seek treatment, most memories include the mother. They often “reveal an interest in movement, such as traveling, running, or jumping, characteristic of individuals who encounter difficulties working in sedentary occupations.” Many early remembrances concern “dangerous situations, usually told by persons with whom the use of fear is an important factor in their style of life.” After using case studies to illustrate his interpretation of early memories, Adler concludes, “memories give us valuable hints and clues in finding the direction of a person's striving. They illuminate the origins of the style of life,” and reflect the attitudes guiding an individual since childhood and in his present situation.

In **Chapter XXVII: The Progress of Mankind** (1937), Adler presents the philosophy of IP: its basic assumptions, idea of progress, and emphasis on social interest. He readily admits that IP has its own assumptions and point of view, but “it is well aware of this fact.” After reviewing how IP was the first school of psychology to break with instinct and drive theories, he states three of its primary assumptions: “1) The personality is a self-consistent unity. 2) The individual behaves toward the changing problems of life based on her opinion of herself and her environment. 3) The individual's striving for successful solution of her problems anchors the structure of her life, but she decides what constitutes success.” He has definite criteria for appraising the movement of any individual or group; what matters is “the degree and kind of social interest” necessary to the goal of improving the general welfare. The rationale for this assumption is that “every individual faces problems that can be solved only with sufficient social interest.” He defines progress, therefore, as “a function of the higher development of social interest.” This capacity, like all human potential, “develops in accordance with the individual's style of life, formed by the child out of her creative power, from the way she perceives the world and what appears to her as success.” He finishes by quoting Winston Churchill: “Success is never final. Failure is never fatal. It is one's courage that counts.”

Chapter XXVIII: How I Chose My Career (1947) is a fitting companion piece to Chapter XXVI: “Significance of Early Recollections” (1937), as Adler now offers us his own earliest memories and their connection to his theory of IP. He was the second child in the family. One of his recollections at about age two “is of sitting on a bench, bandaged because of rickets, with my healthy elder brother sitting opposite me. He could run, jump, and move quite effortlessly, while for me movement of any sort was a strain and an effort.” His next recollection, when he was nearly four, concerns the death of his younger brother: “I remember him only very slightly, but his death remains firmly fixed in my mind.” Always eager to go outside, he did his “utmost to excel at running, jumping, and rushing around.” Although there were few vehicles in the area of his home, he managed to be run over twice when he was four or five years old, “but without being seriously hurt.” A friendly child, “At an early age, I became part of a wide social milieu, and in our games both the boys and girls learned to look upon one another as natural equals.” His elder brother was the only one with whom he did not get along well. He points out that his struggle to overcome early organic inferiority and early connection with others outside the family circle “laid the foundations of my psychic structure and attitude toward life. We can also see clearly how my childhood experiences established a tendency, representative of my position in the family and my desire to move freely, to see all psychic manifestations in terms of movement.”

At the age of five, he contracted pneumonia and the doctor told his father that “there was no hope of my living.” When he recovered, he decided to become a doctor, “so I would have a better defense against the danger of death and weapons to combat it superior to my doctor's. The determination to become a doctor never left me. Even the lure of art, and my considerable abilities in music were not enough to turn me from my chosen path, and I persisted although many complex difficulties lay between me and my goal.” This final chapter of Volume 7 vividly illustrates the origin of Adler's theory of IP in his own childhood, and in particular: his emphasis on movement, social equality, and social interest; the influence of organ inferiority and birth order; and the importance of courage in struggling to overcome difficulties. The chapter also echoes his earlier assertion in Chapter XX: “Prevention of Neurosis,” that each system of psychology reflects the personality of its author.