

What is your profession? A teacher, educator? Or maybe a parent? You'll then understand what we mean here: keeping abreast of the kids you educate or look after is highly laborious. This requires a genuine effort to catch up with the recommendations on education every minute and childhood development. The whole thing makes you feel as if you have to get your hand on a novel must-read handbook each week!

Relax. You don't have to keep up with each novel progress in the area.

One fact is that children have constantly been difficult, needing, and challenging. What is the reason for exerting yourself to find novel solutions to age-old issues? Viennese psychologist Alfred Adler established highly innovative theories of education and childhood development in the early years of the 1900s. Moreover, his ageless erudition on the methods to educate and bring up cheerful, self-sufficient kids continues to be applicable in our time, too.

Chapter 1 - When we give education, we aim for children to acquire self-sufficiency.

Why do we educate a kid?

Do we educate them so that they learn reading and writing? or so that they can solve differential equations, say aloud the capital cities of each state, or repeat pi to the 20th decimal place from memory?

What psychologist Alfred Adler suggests is deeper than that.

His theory introduces two key notions that are involved in self-reliance.

For starters, Adlerian psychology suggests that humans are trained to endeavor for development and self-reliance. Consider this: When we were infants, we crave to surmount our weakness. This thing urges us to crawl, walk, and talk. People are inherently pushed toward growing self-reliance.

Next, this self-reliance involves fulfilling our personal anticipations and solely our personal anticipations. Actually, Adler puts forward two classes of "tasks". There is a task for ourselves – which interests us – and there is a task for others – which interests them. People should not do tasks that are not within the scope of their responsibility.

Thus, for instance, should my boss dislike me, there is no need to make efforts to alter her thoughts about me. She may hold good opinions about me or not, but this isn't my task. Furthermore, when people work on our own task without meddling into that of others, people achieve self-reliance.

Adler thought that genuine happiness is acquired via gaining complete self-reliance. However, never make the erroneous assumption that this involves withdrawing. What he

believes is that people who are genuinely self-reliant are congruously blended into society and they can concurrently fulfill their own tasks.

Then... where does education play a role in it?

On the surface, Adlerian psychology may seem as though it has no place in an educational context. Well, does the concept of educating self-reliance not sound like a little counter-intuitive? Moreover, taking into account Adler's logic, certainly learning is a task that involves kids – it doesn't involve an instructor or family. Does it?

In reality, Adler viewed education as vital for self-sufficiency. Do you remember the way it is linked to society? Adler's opinion was that kids acquire self-sufficiency and the knowledge of being part of their society by disseminating human information – such things as the methods of communication with others, or the meaning of the sign of green light at a crosswalk means. To put it differently, education.

In the following chapters, you're going to read more about the way Adler's views about education can be implemented to assist both teachers and parents to bring up self-sufficient, and happy, kids.

Chapter 2 - Respect is perceiving another individual as they are.

Picture a classroom. There is an instructor in front of the board. He has prepared an appealing and educational courses. He's meticulously chosen whatever he's going to use and devised engaging tasks that are appropriate for his students' age. However, his students are being unmanageable. They neglect what he's teaching and reject to pay heed to him or sit in their chairs. Furthermore, the students are racing in the corridor and drawing pictures on the school's walls.

As you can evidently notice, his lessons lack a fundamental element. Respect.

However, who do we talk about when we mention respect?

Many would assume the students have to begin showing respect to their instructor. But, Adler would suggest that the instructor himself has to begin showing respect to his students.

Most people think that showing respect to someone involves accepting their power. However, Adler looks at it from a totally distinct perspective. For him, respect is an instrument of building relationships. Actually, Adler thought that showing respect to others was the basis of solid relationships. Moreover, solid relationships play a fundamental role in making people pay heed to what you say.

Think about the last chapter where Adler highlighted that self-sufficiency hinges on fitting in society. After all, respect allows the relationships that are necessary for us for that fitting.

One other thing you have to be cognizant of Adlerian respect exists. For him, respect didn't involve seeing someone in high esteem or admiring their accomplishments. Adler thought that to deeply respect another person, you just have to respect them for who they are, not making any comments about them.

Now, consider again that instructor that is in trouble with students that disobey. What Adler proposes is that the instructor doesn't have to see respect from his students. The instructor himself has to begin showing respect to them – respecting them for the people they are, not giving any sort of the second opinion.

Once he pays heed to this advice, his students will show respect to him, right? Moreover, since there will be reciprocal respect, the students will pay attention to what he says and participate in his lesson, won't they?

Perhaps they will. Perhaps they won't. Showing respect to another person doesn't ensure they'll also show you respect. However, should the instructor accept his students as the people they are, he inspires all his students as a result to accept themselves. Thus, this acceptance constitutes a stair on the ladder to self-reliance.

Chapter 3 - Avoid admonishing problem behavior... however, avoid cheering good conduct, too.

Suppose that a kid gets a magnifying glass as a birthday gift. Using the magnifying glass, the kid sees an enthralling insect world. The kid kills much time looking at ants walking through the grass, enthusiastic to find out more about their diligent conduct. Then, haphazardly, the kid finds out it is possible to use the glass to intensify the rays of the sun. Now being enthusiastic to learn about two things, she directs the sunlight on an ant, as a result of which the ant is set to fire.

Is the kid in this scenario ruthless? The kid is not. What happened followed from the kid's curiosity and the kid didn't know the worth of a life - even if that life belongs to an ant.

Thus, most children's problem behaviors, such as setting ants to fire, yelling in silent places, or going to roads full of traffic, follow from the fact that they don't know anything. For this very reason, it won't yield any good results if we reprimand them. The good thing is to show them what they didn't know and tell the kid with the magnifying glass that life – no matter whose life it is – is very valuable. Stop admonishing the kid for doing something without being conscious of the result of her action.

You might find this a nice recommendation... however, just to some extent, certainly? A kindergartner may refuse to follow rules because he doesn't know them. However, what if it is a ten-year-old who is fully aware of the rules, yet still neglects them?

What Adler puts forward is that reprimanding wrong behavior is unfruitful even if this is the case. Furthermore, praising good behavior is not more productive than the former.

Actually, Adler split problem behavior into levels. Every one of them demonstrates the way praising or reprimanding kids in fact promotes wrong behavior.

The first level is the “demand for admiration”. If kids are praised because of their good conduct, kids conduct themselves well so that they can be praised more. This kindles the second level, which is named as "attention-drawing" by Adler. This occurs if a kid conducts himself well yet isn't praised as she anticipated she would. Later, she starts using disruptive conduct in order to draw attention, which ends up them being reprimanded. However, what the kid thinks is that this attention she got in the form of reprimand is still better than no attention.

Be mindful of this: no matter how the kid conducts himself - well or badly -, his actions are formed so as to attract attention. Thus, the solution for families and instructors coping with problem behaviors is to just stay away from praises or reprimands while caring for their kids.

However, is praise not a good thing? What's the way of bringing up a happy, both mentally and physically good kid unless you congratulate them on his good behavior? You'll read more in-depth about it in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 - Praise hinders development and promotes harmful rivalry.

Gold stars, shining report cards, and many others... Praise is one of the most potent instruments that today's teachers can use. Educators usually see praise as a sort of good reinforcement – praise a kid when they show good behavior, the theory says, and the kid will continue to exercise that good behavior.

However, the fact is very different: praise functions contrary to our thoughts about how it functions.

Praise a kid when the kid shows good work and the kid will perceive praise to be the reward for good work. Though most people generally develop this habit, this habit is gravely un-Adlerian.

We've mentioned Adler's notion of tasks? So, in this case, the kid's duty is to work. Praise is not among his tasks. If an instructor recommends a kid's work, she diverts the kid's attention from his task. What's more, the instructor educates the kid to look for happiness in praise and deprives him of the deeper joy of good work carried out for itself.

Praise repels respect as well. Adler's view about respect is that it means accepting other people as they are, without having any qualifications. However, praises solely mean, “You

are worthy of my respect as long as you behave in one way, however, unless you behave in this way, I won't show you my respect.”

What follows after praising a loud kid for listening silently at storytime? Perhaps, he will make less and less noise in the future. However, we make him know that we'll only give him our attention if he doesn't behave as his usual character.

Apart from this, praise builds a hierarchy in a classroom atmosphere, too. As you can understand, it is impossible to distribute praise evenly – otherwise, praise turns into superfluous. Thus, some kids are praised more and some aren't praised as much as the former. This creates a hierarchy, which leads to rivalry. Shortly later, praise drives students in the same classroom to the competition.

Yet... life is rivalrous, isn't it right? Undoubtedly, should we protect our kids from the rivalry in school, they won't be able to withstand never-ending rivalries in adult life.

However, Adler sees a discrepancy between competition and rivalry. Competition is part of life itself. But, the rivalry doesn't constitute a part of life.

Suppose that you're racing in a marathon and there are many other racers around you, however, you sense no rivalry. You continue to compete. Actually, other racers encourage you to go more rapidly and continue running. And after completing the marathon, your feeling of success isn't dependent on whether you came first, second, and so on. This is what competition in which there is no rivalry involved resembles.

There has always been competition in our society, however, we cannot say the same thing for rivalry. Moreover, through refusal to build hierarchies by means of praise, instructors have the capacity to eliminate rivalry from the classroom

Chapter 5 - Though kids aren't superior to adults, their inferiority gives them an advantage.

Children are intricate, smart, and inconsistent people, which sounds quite similar to adults. In the same fashion as adults, kids also have subtle wants and necessities. Moreover, they also have their own opinions, and feelings, both of which are also pertinent to adults.

However, let's be honest: Societally, kids are inferior to adults. Adults can do numerous things whereas kids cannot do most of them, such as casting a ballot, car-driving, legal alcohol consumption, or even getting to the highest shelf at the supermarket.

Adler wrote down that children usually experience an inferiority complex, a sense of anger that transpires if a person thinks he is incompetent in contrast to others. The kid feels distressed. As a result, our initial urge, if a kid talks to us about what upsets her, is to soothe her by means of supporting, reassuring words. Sadly, the underlying meaning of these

words are these: You are complete. You are above others. You are unique and do not resemble others.

There is one thing you should keep in mind. It's absolutely normal for kids to feel incomplete. In fact, kids begin their lives from a "place of incompleteness", as named by Adler, which indicates that their growth continues. Though their minds are complex, they are frail and little in contrast to the physical features of the grown-ups. Each day they have to face the discrepancy between their desires and their capacities.

However, if there is something our civilization has taught us, it's that inferiority doesn't have to be a disadvantage. We are surely not among the most potent creatures on Earth. However, our feebleness impels us forward. Were it to be possible to move as rapidly as horses, there would be no need for trains and cars. Were it to be possible for us to fly in the skies like birds, there would be no need for planes. If you consider this, we realize our inferiority has impelled us to accomplish all we did.

Furthermore, this inferiority provided us with something even more important than what we technologically accomplished: togetherness. From the times of the hunter-gatherers, we have needed to collaborate in order to remain alive. Thus, our inferiority connects us with the remainder of humanity.

Commending a kid coping with an inferiority complex in fact separates her from this sense of togetherness. Such praises that go as "you are unique" or "you are different than others" separates her from society. What is even terrible is that it educates her to hinge on others to get approval – ironically, it makes her remain in inferiority forever, instead of allowing her to grow self-reliance.

Chapter 6 - Your friendship is the best thing the students can learn from you.

Education resembles presents. Educators provide their students with talents, information, attention, and spare their time for them. Outstanding educators have the capacity to provide their students with something beyond that. They can give their students joy. But this is not the sole thing they can do. They can also endow them with the ability to build and maintain joy in their personal lives, even many years later they are no longer in the school desks.

Well, Adler devised an intriguing theory. According to him, every issue was an interpersonal one.

Why do issues affect joy? You'll read about it soon. However, initially, let's examine the theory that every issue is interpersonal. Were there to be no one except you in the world, Adler thought you would live with no competition, jealousy, or even solitude – well, since you become genuinely alone, there is no way of becoming lonely.

Then, was his opinion that it is possible to avert issues by staying away from people? On the contrary, to be frank. For starters, it is impossible to eschew people. From the moment of their coming to the world, people are linked to others. The next thing is that, and maybe more significantly, Adler viewed interpersonal relationships not solely as the reason behind every issue. But, they were also the reason behind joy.

According to what Adler asserts, joy arises from “community feeling” – a sense that makes us feel we are part of society, and we aren't separated from it. Every person comes to the world with this inherent feeling inside us, however, all of us have to initiate it. Its activation depends on our “friendship relations”, as called by Adler. More than merely finding several close friendships, it involves treating anyone people encounter as their friends.

Then, what is the place in which we initially discover friendship as little kids? School, surely.

The educators come in at this point: an educator becomes the role model of these friendship relations for her students. They don't need to act as though she and her students were friends, however, what is important is to treat each one of them with the affection and understanding she would show to a real friend.

If the educator becomes a model of friendship in this way, her students discover how to create and sustain their personal friendship relations with the people they know. Through this way, they create the opportunity for permanent joy.

Chapter 7 - Who is born first or later affects children's conduct... and grown-ups' as well.

We can present you numerous methodologies like star signs, Myers-Brigg tests, aura readings, enneagrams that allegedly show the person we are, and the reason behind our actions. However, What Adler puts forward is that the sole thing that can find answers to our personality is birth order.

As we've learned in the previous chapters, Adler highlighted interpersonal relationships a lot. Most of the kids' most powerful collection of interpersonal relationships they go through are the ones with their close family.

Adler thought that kids go through these relationships rather diversely, which hinges on the order of their birth. You'll find below the explanation.

Kids who came to the world first draw their family's full love and attention – until for some time. After a new member joins the family, the situation gets more intricate, and for some children who came to the world first, the novel order bothers them so much that they kill most of their time in life making efforts to fix and revert the novel order to the previous one. Consequently, the oldest kids may have the inclination towards conservatism and pessimism.

Kids who came to the world second or later are exactly vice versa. Upon their birth, they find themselves an already-existing rival. Their urge is to exceed their elder sibling, which sets the elder kid in a more potent stance. Consequently, the self-worth of more juvenile siblings can result in defiance, and a refusal of family dynamics.

However, things are also difficult for those who are the sole child of their family. There is always persistent worry inside them about the possible arrival of a novel sibling and opponent. However, should this never happen, those kids direct that rivalry onto their fathers and mothers. Consequently, the relationship between them and their family may become pugnacious.

If inclinations are linked to birth order, then they are especially deleterious. Furthermore, self-reliance becomes unlikely for them since all their behaviors are attached to approval and attention from people within the family.

What's in front of teachers and parents to assist children to surmount these bad tendencies? Educators can motivate kids to find a way to self-reliance. Families can fastidiously develop balanced relationships with all their children.

However, the best thing they both can do is to relieve herself of her birth order inclinations. Uncontrolled, these attention-searching conducts can continue in adulthood, being an obstruct in front of modeling self-reliance.

Chapter 8 - Love helps the shift from dependence to independence.

After a baby comes to the world, he becomes the focus of his own small cosmos. He has the omnipotence of the gods: if he wants others to comfort, give food to, or sway him, he just needs to cry. " 'Me' – the kid learns– 'I' am the most significant being on the planet."

Naturally, he may have influence, however, he is utterly reliant on others, too.

Moreover, should he fully accomplish the transition from dependence to independence, he will have to do away with the thing he embraced lovingly: that notion of "me" as the focus of the cosmos.

Then, what ways does he follow to do this?

Adler thought that genuine independence could solely be unfastened via love.

You may be excused for considering the prominent psychologist had gone out of his mind – does love not involve being dependent on another person?

Well, this is precisely what Adler wanted to draw attention to.

As you can understand, the self-reliance that Adler has discussed for long doesn't try to detach us from other people. Self-reliance helps us open up. According to Adler, self-reliance involves abandoning egocentrism.”

Once people are self-sufficient, they can fulfill their individual demands. That enables people to live congruously as a community without needing others to serve our wants or provide us with a feeling of self-worth. Only if people get to this stage will it be possible for them to forge good relationships. Via these partnerships, argues Adler, that permanent happiness can come about.

Genuine happiness. Not the one involving happiness that is egoistical, that is centered on how we feel, and not the one involving happiness that is based on others, related to the happiness of our partner. Adler thought that it is solely possible for this sort of happiness to arise if two people abandon “me” and form a novel bond that pertains to, and works for, “us”.

Thus, this is the ultimate stair on a kid's journey from dependence to independence: being in love, no matter what kind of it is - romantic or platonic - and eventually abandoning “me” for “us”.

The Courage to be Happy: True Contentment Is In Your Power by Ichiro Kishimi, Fumitake Koga Book Review

Education should not solely involve giving information and numbers— there is a lot more significant role for it. Education possesses the capacity to develop self-reliance for children. And making a child develop self-reliance shows him how to be joyful, respectful, and congruous with his society. Educators and families who are capable of developing self-reliance for the children they care for are meeting education's greater goal.

Stop disseminating praises, grow empathy.

Adler thought that praise was detrimental to kids in the end. Then, what's the way of confirming positive behavior? Rather than praises such as “Your act of sharing shows your generosity,” which motivates the kid to self-reflect, be the model for empathy. Say to her, rather, “By allowing Rishi to play with your toy, you had him feel very joyful.”

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