

Book Review

Classical Adlerian Depth Psychotherapy, Volume 1

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Stein, H. T. (2013). *Classical Adlerian Depth Psychotherapy, Volume 1. Theory & practice: A Socratic approach to democratic living*. Bellingham, WA: The Alfred Adler Institute of Northwestern Washington. 297 pp. [ISBN: 978-1-939701-12-1]

Dr. Henry Stein's recently published book, hereafter referred to as *CADP, Vol. 1* is a must-read for any serious student of Alfred Adler. It is also a compelling book for experienced Adlerian clinicians, or those of any other therapeutic orientation, wanting to deepen their understanding of Adler's original, profoundly artful, creative psychotherapy. The first time I read it, I was practically unable to put the book down; I finished it in only two sittings. However, it is a volume to read repeatedly, and I recommend reading it more slowly to give adequate time for savoring and processing the subtle nuances. A significant amount of concentration is required to appreciate the difficulty in mastering the constructs and techniques described in the text.

CADP, Vol. 1 is the product of a lifework of intense intellectual curiosity, rigorous scholarship, discipline, creativity, and an insatiable love of learning. For its entirety it remains clear, concise, and readable, to the point of appearing deceptively simple. Yet there is a depth, richness, and intelligence that challenges readers to ponder what they just read. For example:

The unifying purpose behind the abundant diversity of symptoms is the creation of distance from a threatening task. . . . As clinicians, we must imagine the prime vector of the distance from common sense, cooperation, and responsibility; we cannot measure it. Herein lies our general therapeutic task: to diminish that distance from the tasks of life. (p. 65)

This appears to be an obvious statement to anyone who has studied Adler in any depth. Yet more questions arise. What is the unifying purpose of the client sitting with us? How is it found? How do we know when we've found

it? How great is the distance? What is the threatening task? How do we discover it? How do we imagine this "prime vector"? How do we determine what is common sense? How do we implement it in practice? How do we assist the client in diminishing the "distance from the tasks of life?" All of these questions are taken into consideration, explicated, and made digestible in the gentle unfolding of Adler's theory and its application.

CADP, Vol. 1 is extremely well organized and covers a wide range of topics. It provides a rich overview of Classical Adlerian Depth Psychotherapy and its constructs in four parts. Part 1 is an extensive overview of Classical Adlerian theory, with 26 chapters on the theoretical principles. Part 2 covers Stein's original contribution of the twelve "Stages, Tasks, & Techniques of Classical Adlerian Depth Psychotherapy" (for a representation of this, see pp. 280–281). This is an invaluable tool for the student and a road map for the trained psychotherapist. Many clients do not get through the eleventh stage, and fewer completely dissolve their life styles. However, the trained Classical Adlerian therapist must be prepared to assist the client in this direction.

Part 3 discusses the use of Socratic questioning in Classical Adlerian Depth Psychotherapy. Socratic questioning, as adapted by Stein, is another extremely useful contribution to the field of psychology, and here the reader will find arguably the most thorough presentation of using this method in print today:

The CADP approach has the flavor of a Socratic dialogue. We use leading questions not only to gain relevant information, but also to promote insight. Step by step, we lead a client to make his own conclusions about what he is doing and what he could be doing in life. These conclusions come mostly from the client, not from us. (p. 196)

The five demonstrations of the use of the Socratic method are riveting. The dialogue between therapist and client with process notes from Stein, a master therapist and teacher, shows clearly how to think about a case.

Part 4 describes the technique of how to provide a missing experience in psychotherapy. Although Adler did not use this technique, its congruence with his theory, as well as its usefulness in helping to promote psychological change and personal growth, is clear. At the end of the book are three brief appendixes. The first is a concise description of the democratic personality. The second presents one of several teaching and learning tools that illustrate Classical Adlerian concepts, including an Internet link for viewing in fuller detail and color. The third is a description of distance training in Classical Adlerian Depth Psychotherapy for those who are interested in learning more about it.

Similar to reading Adler's original writings, this book leads us to more questions, to deeper thinking, and eventually to a more profound

understanding of the uniqueness of the human psyche and the creative process of psychotherapy. This volume, the first of possibly four in a series, should be on the reading list of all students who want to come to know the richness of Adlerian psychology and who are interested in the extent to which it can be applied today. The book is an essential contribution to the field of psychology as a tool for deepening the creative power and skills of any psychotherapist. All Classical Adlerian Depth Psychotherapists in training will definitely want to study it. Dr. Stein has created a readable, prolific, and notably useful work that is destined to become an Adlerian classic, one worth spending time reading repeatedly and digesting thoroughly.

Dyanne Pienkowski, MA (dpienkow@comcast.net), is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in California, as well as a nationally certified Master Addictions Counselor. She is Director and Training Analyst at the Alfred Adler Institute of San Francisco. Dyanne received her training, study analysis, and certification in Classical Adlerian Depth Psychotherapy (1999) from Sophia deVries and Henry Stein. She has specialized in the field of chemical dependency for over 40 years, working in inpatient, outpatient, halfway house, and detoxification clinic settings. Dyanne has been in private practice for over 30 years. Her practice includes individuals, couples, children, families, groups and assessments of potential chemical dependency for individuals, employee assistance programs and organizations. At present, besides training and supervising students and writing, she is working on the integration of CADP with chemical dependency treatment.

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