

A Review of the Professional Literature Concerning the Consistency of the Definition and Application of Adlerian Encouragement

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Introduction

Encouragement is one of the essential constructs of Adlerian Psychology (Adler, 1946). Adlerian advocates such as Sherman and Dinkmeyer (1987) view encouragement as the most important technique in behavior change. They state: "Encouragement is considered by Adlerian therapists as perhaps the most important technique available for the promotion of change. Most interpersonal problems are the result of discouragement" (Sherman & Dinkmeyer, p. 50). They define encouragement in the following way: "Encouragement, then, is a set of specific skills: faith and belief in the clients, acceptance of them as they are, validating the goal and intention of their behavior, and reframing their behavior in a positive framework" (Sherman & Dinkmeyer, p. 51). Kelly and Chick (1982) offer an Adlerian definition of encouragement in their presentation of basic parental counseling skills. They state: "What is encouragement? It is both a condition and a process, and it applies both to the child who becomes courageous and to the process that facilitates that outcome" (p. 24). They state that the elements of encouragement are to: (1) value children as they are; (2) use words that build the child's self-esteem; (3) plan for experiences that create success; (4) demonstrate genuineness to children; (5) demonstrate nonverbal acceptance through touch; (6) use humor; (7) spend regular time with children; (8) recognize effort; (9) avoid emphasis on liabilities; (10) show appreciation for children's cooperation; and (11) avoid comparing children. Their manual emphasizes the use of Adlerian parenting constructs to help children explore themselves occupationally.

A 1988 study of encouragement versus praise in improving the productivity of the mentally retarded defined encouragement in both a broader context and a specific Adlerian one. Pitsounis and Dixon (1988) in their investigation state that

encouragement is used to inspire with spirit, to foster hope, to stimulate, to support, or to instill courage and confidence. Encouragement was simply a statement such as "you can do it" or "keep on" delivered to an individual while attempting or completing a task. (p. 509)

In the same section of the article they cite a strictly Adlerian definition from McKay (1976): "In Adlerian terms, encouragement is a comment which shows acceptance, emphasizes effort and improvement, appreciates contributions, gets one to evaluate his/her own performance, and instills faith and confidence" (p. 509). Pitsounis and Dixon's findings suggest that when social praise is not given, the production rates of mentally retarded workers reach baseline levels. In contrast, when mentally retarded workers were allowed to reinforce themselves for their work, they became more productive and less dependent on external stimulation, such as verbal praise. Such a conclusion clearly indicates the power of intrinsic motivation.

A 1993 survey was conducted by Evans, Dedrick, and Dinkmeyer to inquire among Adlerian therapists as to their usage of Adlerian constructs in their everyday practices and the relevance of Adlerian Therapy in the field of marriage and family today. They sent questionnaires to 328 members of the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology. The authors reported that respondents see Adlerian therapy as very functional in the current field of marriage and family therapy and that almost all of them report using encouragement (Evans, Dedrick, & Dinkmeyer, 1993). Adlerians view encouragement as essential in reducing negativism among family members, promoting prosocial behavior change, and overcoming illogical and maladaptive thought patterns (Sherman, Oresky, & Rountree, 1991). When encouragement is used in counseling, a variety of socially appropriate behaviors and attitudes and an enhancement of the client's self-worth emerge (Sherman & Dinkmeyer, 1987). It was Adler's conclusion (1946) that when extrinsic praise and reinforcement are replaced by encouragement, one would gain the ability to look at one's own mistaken beliefs and a process of self-evaluation would result. This self-evaluation in turn is to lead to a valuing of self rather than being overly concerned with being valued by others, especially authority figures (Sherman, Oresky, & Rountree, 1991).

The Use of Encouragement in Classroom Management

Modern-day Adlerians steadfastly endorse Adler's notion that encouragement, rather than extrinsic reinforcement and punishment, promotes the most healthy self-concepts and behavior patterns in children (Thompson & Rudolf, 1992; Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1990). Two of the articles on the use of encouragement discussed the use of Adlerian-defined encouragement to develop positive self-concepts in educational settings (Gilbert, 1989; Kyle, 1991). These

articles were not investigative studies but rather descriptions of programs and suggestions for behavioral management interventions in the classroom. Several articles in this area investigate the use of encouragement as it affects academic performance. An article entitled "The Rewards of Learning" (Chance, 1992) states that encouragement and intrinsic reinforcements are important but not sufficient for learning to occur. Intrinsic motivation must be combined with such extrinsic rewards as praise and compliments in the weakest reinforcement possible to strengthen a behavior. This observation is not, however, empirically based.

In a study using encouragement to increase academic performance in the early elementary grades, Rathvon (1990) asked a teacher to deliver encouragement to reduce off-task behavior in 5 first graders. The conclusion is that encouragement succeeds in reducing off-task behavior but is not successful in increasing academic productivity. Contrary to these findings, Van Hecke and Tracy (1987) examined the effectiveness of adult encouragement on 80 eighth-grade students on two easy and two difficult computer learning tasks in a one-to-one adult-to-child learning situation. Their findings are that this increases student motivation. The students' achievement motivation may be due to the encouragement or the individual attention received from adults.

Would the same encouragement process succeed with groups of students? An article by Huhnke (1984) indicates that the answer to this question might be yes. She reviews research articles covering teacher behaviors, classroom climate, and factors to consider in giving rewards. She concludes that the teacher should provide an atmosphere conducive to learning; that external reinforcement systems be kept to a minimum; that students participate in determining their own educational goals; and that all students be given opportunities to succeed. An article by Hitz and Driscoll (1989) supports Huhnke's findings about involving children as active participants in the learning process. The authors investigate six articles that assess the relative merits of praise versus encouragement in the classroom. Their summary concludes that praise lowers student confidence in themselves, is a weak reinforcer, and is an impractical tool in the classroom. It concludes that teachers who use encouragement create a classroom environment where students accept evaluation and make mistakes and learn from their mistakes without undue anxiety. Superstein (1994) supports this conclusion through a study in which 380 high school students were polled. The purpose of the survey was to investigate the underlying causes for the educational crisis in North America. The investigator asked the students what are encouraging and discouraging factors about their educational process. The article concludes: "The educational system would benefit greatly by having teachers treating students with respect, by being able to relate to the students as individuals and to the class as a whole in an encouraging manner" (p. 189).

The Use of Encouragement in Parent Education and Parent Counseling

A traditional area of the use of Adlerian encouragement is in parent counseling and parent education (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1990). Carmack and Carmack (1994) describe the presentation of parental education programs based on Adlerian parental education in Russia. Constructs taught in these parenting workshops include the goals of misbehavior, the use of encouragement to build self-esteem, and natural and logical consequences for discipline. The parental education approach is based on the Adler/Dreikurs model. The researchers taught the participants to provide encouragement through requesting children to self-evaluate. No statistical data were offered. The authors make a strong theoretical argument for an Adlerian parenting program citing the arguments of Dreikurs and Soltz (1964) that a movement from autocratic parenting to democratic parenting without the knowledge of how to instill such family practices were a major contribution to delinquency. Carmack and Carmack felt that it was essential that the children of modern-day Russia be reared in households practicing Adlerian parenting principles.

Another article on the international use of Adlerian parenting constructs is that of Ogden (1990) comparing an American and British parenting group. Ogden uses the same reference by Dreikurs and Soltz (1964) to build a case for autocratic societies moving toward democratic principles to use democratic parenting practices. A significant difference is found between the two groups in their attitudes toward the Adlerian principles taught. The American group rated success based on how well the principles taught helped change the children's behavior. The British, on the other hand, related the teaching to themselves and considered it a novel idea to apply such principles directly to their child-rearing practices. Ogden concludes: "The Adlerian concepts translated well, although certain cultural considerations need to be taken into consideration" (p. 165).

Moore and Dean in a 1979 study collected statistical data on an Adlerian parent-study group. They found that the experimental-group parents demonstrated a significant increase over the control-group parents in democratic child-rearing practices, including the use of Adlerian encouragement. The generalizability of the results would be in question, however, as the experimental group consisted of only eight parents.

In another parental study, a group of parents were seen in a parenting group for 8 months in a university practicum (Riley, 1995). The parents were provided with lectures on parenting skills, homework assignments to carry out concerning lecture material, role-play to enhance the success of homework assignments, and videotape presentations on parenting skills. The parents were then asked to observe behind a one-way mirror while their children engaged in group activities. Parents were then asked to enter the room and

provide encouraging and positive comments to their children. The Piers Harris Children's Self Concept Scale was administered before and after the practicum, along with observational checklists measuring increased eye contact between children in the group and increased eye contact with parents.

A statistically significant difference on pre- and post-measures on children's self-concept was found as measured by the Piers Harris Children's Self Concept Scale. This positive change in self-concept in the children in this study was accomplished in two ways. The researchers conducted a well-structured parenting group emphasizing positive parenting skills along with the opportunity to practice those skills. The specific reason for the change in behavior was not ascertained, however, since encouragement was not operationally defined and thus the intervention might really have been praise. The children and adults knew they were being observed, so it may have been a Hawthorne Effect. In one section Riley stated that "the parents observed their children participating in group interaction as well as an opportunity to practice giving their children positive feedback, encouragement, and support when they joined the children's group immediately after observing them through the mirror" (p. 48). Later Riley stated: "The results of this practicum also indicated that training parents to use positive communication skills, praise and encouragement, and authoritative discipline in dealing with their child significantly impacts on that child's self esteem" (p. 51).

The main question from an Adlerian perspective left unanswered by this study is the impact of extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation on the outcome of the study. It would have been beneficial to divide the parents in two groups, one providing intrinsic and the other extrinsic motivation and compare the effect on children's self-concept.

A study by Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, and Darling (1992) investigated the impact on adolescent school achievement of authoritative parenting practices. They defined authoritative parents as individuals who give children high acceptance and psychological autonomy, provide freedom within reasonable limits, engage in verbal give-and-take with their children, and respond to children's needs and wishes. Their findings support the Adlerian posture on encouragement. They state that authoritative parenting leads to better school performance and stronger concentration on studies than other styles of parenting. This study is based on a report of 6,400 students comparing their parents' child-rearing practices with these students' academic achievement over a two-year period.

Maniacci and Maniacci (1989) discusses Adlerian encouragement and its importance with parents as well as their children. They indicate that parents in their investigation are discouraged because they lacked confidence in their own parental judgment, their view is that parents need reassurance, support and encouragement to self-evaluate their parental role and function. They state a well-defined use of Adlerian encouragement in parental education:

Part of the encouragement process involves accepting others as they are, and when parental values are in line with social interest, then accepting and supporting the parent taking a more active, assertive role in rearing their children is a crucial part of working with families. (p. 511)

Echoing the need to empower adults as well as children in the parenting process, Turnbull and Turnbull (1983) offer guidelines for stepparents and suggest that stepparents must be encouraged through the emphasis on understanding their problems. They state:

There is a need for more understanding of the problems faced by those families and perhaps more importantly, for the provision of support and encouragement for the stepparenting as he or she faces the difficult task of developing a role for which few realistic guidelines exist. (p. 228)

The authors did not define the form that the encouragement should take. It is clear in this article however, as well as the articles reviewed on parenting, that these authors consider attention to adult emotional and self-concept needs as important as attending to those of their children.

A 1977 study by Kern and Wheeler contrasts Watzlawick's paradoxical principles of change with Adlerian childrearing practices. The article possesses some interesting comparisons and discussions on the two schools of counseling, however, no statistical data is offered to support the power of either intervention. The authors provide explanations as to why parents tend to favor extrinsic over intrinsic motivation. The first idea was the "Utopian Syndrome" which the article described as a desire on the part of parents to pursue unattainable goals in their children. Kern and Wheeler (1977) state: "As they push for the unattainable, their children become discouraged and misbehave. This may make it totally impossible for parents to see functional behavior in their children, 'the realizable'" (p. 224). Kern and Wheeler (1977) discusses a second construct that leads parents toward extrinsic and autocratic parenting styles: "the principle that adults are superior and children are inferior" (p. 224). The article concludes by drawing significant parallels between Adlerian and Strategic Family therapy interventions in parenting:

More specifically, the principles of second-order change were similar to democratic techniques as they were applied to such problem as dealing with attention getting, power struggles, and feelings of discouragement. In addition, the principle of change through paradox was applied to the actual teaching of democratic principles of childrearing. (p. 231)

This concluding statement by Kern and Wheeler (1977) recognizes the need to deal with fundamental parent-child relational issues. It also expands the idea of encouragement into paradoxical counseling techniques. The authors suggested that it would provide encouragement if the counselor appears accepting of the dysfunctionality. The intervention is to encourage self-

examination on the part of the parent through the principle of therapeutic double binding or paradox. Encouraging all things to remain the same encourages self-exploration of more adaptive alternatives.

The Use of Encouragement in Teacher Education

The authors' review in the literature indicates those value sets of the participants toward discipline practices become an intervening variable in delivering Adlerian encouragement. Bain, Houghton, and Williams (1991) concludes that teacher encouragement of students' on-task behavior increased during the intervention period of a study. When the program was terminated, teacher encouragement decreased. Teachers gave "lip service" to the project and quickly returned to other more familiar and comfortable forms of student motivation. The authors state "This may indicate the need for an ongoing feedback or self-monitoring procedure for teachers participating in the program in order to maintain appropriate levels of encouragement" (p. 258). Teachers need to be encouraged so they can in turn be encouraging to students.

Kowalski, Stipek, and Daniels (1987) add to this concern over the ability of teachers to deliver sustained encouragement. Their study attempted to have teachers rate the different motivational levels on students and student level of academic achievement. The participating teachers rate students as either motivated or unmotivated and were unable to differentiate among motivational levels of students. In these two studies teachers were very extrinsically oriented in their approach to teaching and motivating students to learn. Reeve (1989) in a study of factors contributing to intrinsic motivation determine that it appears much easier to turn off than to turn it on. Pallak, Costomiris, Sroka, and Pittman (1982) determine that intrinsic motivation is negatively affected when the participants had had a significant amount of prior experience with extrinsic reward.

The Use of Encouragement in Enhancing Self-Esteem and Academic Performance

Accomplishment was the aspect of encouragement most documented when investigating in the school setting. It is, however, quite possible to have highly discouraged children with low self-concept engaging in high productivity. The problem is that their drives for achievement may have come from the anxiety, fear, and mistrust associated with low self-esteem. Their productivity could have been security and safety driven. Their self-esteem was not enhanced. The importance of self-esteem or the affective domain of self-concept in children cannot be overemphasized. For example, Clemes and

Dean (1981) find that children with high self-concept act positively, assume responsibility, tolerate frustration well, feel able to influence their environments, and are proud of their accomplishments. Children with a low self-concept are easily manipulated by others, easily frustrated, blame others for their failures, and avoid difficult situations. Meredith & Evan (1990) note that Adlerian encouragement has been practiced for more than half a century. They emphasize, however, that few parents use it or even know about it. They state: "One possible explanation is that few parents have gone beyond first force psychology (Behaviorism) in their thinking about human relationships and have never experienced encouragement" (p. 188). The authors discuss both second force psychology (Freudian) and third force psychology (Phenomenological). It was in the third force psychology that Meredith and Evans view Adlerian encouragement. They conclude with this very powerful statement on encouragement: "Encouragement is a key concept in helping parents improve relationships in their families. Parents can learn to be more hopeful and encouraging. To do this they must go beyond behavioristic psychology and obedience training. Adlerian and Third Force Psychology offers a chance for a real breakthrough" (p. 192).

Encouragement as an Extrinsic Directive in Education

This group of studies like previous studies discussed in this article use encouragement as a secondary means to change behavior; encouragement is used as an extrinsic directive and advice-giving means of changing behavior, rather than an intrinsic self-evaluative concept. Studies surveyed indicate encouragement used in intervening with at-risk black males, preventing female dropouts, aiding transition from high school to college, encouraging high school girls to take more nontraditional electives, providing support to students dealing with death and dying in an educational environment, helping teachers to build students' self-esteem in the classroom, helping faculty acquire more positive attitudes toward bilingual minority students in high school, aiding postsecondary minority students to transcend from two-year to four-year colleges, helping students and faculty face alcohol addiction in their families, and providing an intervention to treat childhood obesity in the public schools (Cobbs & McCallum, 1992; Earle & Roach, 1989; Esperon, 1986; Faddis, & Hutchison, 1980; Floerchinger, 1989; Gilbert, 1989; Goldsmith, 1987; Kennan & Braxton, 1991; Kyle, 1991; Lucas, 1993; Mendel & Lincoln, 1991; Pitman, 1990; Strauss, 1981; Turk, 1990; Walz, 1987).

Encouragement is noted as a means to promote attendance and completion in a literacy program (Anderson & Helmick, 1988); to improve student motivation to attend a math lab (Capps, 1984); to promote interest in new "older-than-average" college students to seek out information (Chickering,

1987); to reduce math anxiety by promoting parental involvement in student learning (De-Bronac, Marie & Brown, 1982); to promote female involvement in the sciences (Grew, 1986); to improve attendance of migrant children in schools (Mangan, 1989); and as a factor in developing mature college students. None of these studies specifically define encouragement. The context in which encouragement was used in these studies would lead the reader to assume a primarily extrinsic usage. Examples of statements authors considered encouraging are: "to show an interest in someone"; or "to provide motivational talks with someone"; or "give a pep talk to someone"; or "participate with someone"; or "to provide immediate feedback"; or "provide resources that make it possible for a goal to be obtained."

Anderson and Helmick (1988) note that "to minimize dropout and poor attendance, it is important to determine the recruitment methods, selection criteria, program configuration, and types of encouragement that best predict program completion and attendance" (pp. 6, 7). None of the studies cited above determine which experimental variables were most powerful, or how each variable contributes to the outcome of the study.

The Use of Encouragement in Individual and Marriage and Family Therapy

Articles in the areas of individual therapy, and marital and family therapy, are more specific in their definition of encouragement than are articles focused outside of a traditional therapeutic milieu. While better defined, there is still the element of extrinsic encouragement. Minuchin (1974), for instance, in his study of low socioeconomic chaotic families found that a therapist who operates in a permissive and reflective manner will end up with greater chaos. He finds success in therapy as an authority figure, setting tight limits and expectations on the family. He believes that to succeed in encouraging clients one must assess the capability of the client for self-direction, and the client's motivation to take risks and self-evaluate. Mimesis, an adoption of the clients' style of communication and metaphorical style, creates the conditions for the broadest enactment of encouragement (Minuchin, 1974). For instance, if the family is slow paced and focused on athletics as a value in the family, the therapist becomes slow paced and uses baseball analogies to make therapeutic points. Minuchin indicates an authoritarian approach initially with families and individuals with very limited impulse control, need for immediate gratification, and volatile acting-out behavior. He proposes that a developmental progress moving from extrinsic to intrinsic is necessary with low-functioning clients. Through mimesis, however, he is attempting to contact the world of the clients so that they can engage in self-evaluation. This self-evaluation is certainly a goal of encouragement.

Another example of extrinsic encouragement seems to be the use of paradox. This intervention is discussed by a number of authors (Baideme, Kern & Taffel-Cohen, 1979; Kern & Wheeler, 1977; Dinkmeyer, 1991; Dinkmeyer & Eckstein, 1993). Dinkmeyer and Eckstein state:

One specific technique psychologists employ to help individuals change from a fearful to a courageous approach is the use of paradox. Positive growth often occurs when a person can be encouraged to do the very thing he or she fears. Acting "as if" one has the courage to confront one's concerns is a paradoxical power strategy which often improves self-confidence. (p. 15)

The use of paradox as a means of encouragement fits with the view of Minuchin earlier cited, that clients must first be helped to experience success and to feel understood before they can assume the responsibility of self-motivation and self-assessment. The Adlerian concept of acting "as if" also fits this view.

Dinkmeyer (1993) writes of the absolute importance of Adlerian encouragement in couples therapy. He then defines four specific characteristics of "the encouraged marital system." He states that the encouraged couple possesses social interest, recognizes their assets to build a relationship, knows alternatives to overcoming problems, and possesses a sense of humor. Again, Adlerian encouragement is seen as beneficial in a wide variety of presenting concerns (McBrien, 1993; Fisher, 1993; Carlson & Sperry, 1993; Powell & Gazda, 1979; Baideme, Kern & Taffel-Cohen, 1979)

The Use of Encouragement in Career Counseling

Career counseling uses encouragement extensively. Encouragement is used as a tangential construct to the main intervention strategies being investigated such as academic tutoring, behavior modification techniques, and structured workshops (Bloomfield, 1989; Hanks, 1982; Herr, 1989; Kerr, 1990; Kistler, 1982; & Schulz, 1986). Two of the studies, however, take a more direct look at encouragement. Dorn, in a 1987 study, investigates the effect that a career counseling program using specific concepts from social influence theory have on career decisiveness of students. The social constructs investigated are perceived need, counselor interpretation, and encouragement for reattribution. This study attempts to isolate social influence as a means for behavioral change, though encouragement was still not defined or a clear statement made of how it was employed.

A study by Lauria, Williams, Waldo, and Waldo (1983) focuses specifically on the construct of encouragement and its influence on traditional and nontraditional career choices of a group of college freshmen men and women. Encouragement is being used in this study as a separate entity from counseling to provide more information, and to provide more specific programming such

as a training program for this group. Again encouragement is not clearly defined. The contextual usage indicates that the investigators attempt to discern an interest expressed by significant others toward these students to pursue non-traditional career choices. Recommendations following the study are: "...the expending of more resources to identify and encourage nontraditional women and more specific counseling programs for traditional women" (p. 4).

Encouragement and Its Use in the Health Profession

Britzman and Henkin (1992) comment on the use of Adlerian encouragement in the pursuit of holistic wellness. Holistic wellness is defined as the merging of emotional, physical, and intellectual growth. They state this very powerful thought on the use of Adlerian encouragement in the area of holistic wellness: "The Adlerian philosophy of altering perception and supporting efforts to expand behavior repertoires can awaken inner resources, lead to feelings of significance and well being, and facilitate one's wellness process" (p. 201).

McClam (1988) conducted a study to determine means to retain hospice volunteers and reduce volunteer turnover. He concludes: "It is also probable that supervision as needed over and above the supervision regularly supplied provides the support, encouragement and rewards most valued by these volunteers" (p. 10). The author promotes support, encouragement, and reward as separate constructs, or as interchangeable, when she further states: "It would appear, then, that the rewards most appropriate and effective for this group were intrinsic, i.e., rewards and relationships that come from work itself" (p. 10).

Conclusion

The articles reviewed contain a wide variety of definitions of encouragement. However, with very few exceptions, regardless of definition, encouragement is perceived as helpful in promoting behavior change. The most consistently defined categories of studies reflecting an Adlerian definition of encouragement are parent education, parent counseling, teacher education, classroom management, and individual and marriage and family counseling. Encouragement has the widest variety of definitions in the areas of academic performance, career counseling, and in the health professions. Most of the studies are descriptive with little empirical data offered. Empirical data, when collected, is often supportive of Adlerian encouragement (Pietsounis & Dixon, 1988; Rathvon, 1990; Van Hecke & Tracy, 1987; Ogden, 1990; Moore & Dean, 1979; Riley, 1995; Steinbern, Lamborn, Dornbusch &

Darling, 1992; Bain, Houghton & Williams, 1991; Clemes & Dean, 1981). Results which appear to refute or greatly question the power of encouragement in changing behavior are studies defining encouragement extrinsically (Anderson & Helmick, 1988; Capps, 1984; Chickering, 1987; De-Bronac, Marie & Brown, 1982; Grew, 1986; Mangan, 1989; Anderson & Helmick, 1988). Comparison of data is hampered because studies had different and therefore noncomparable definitions of encouragement.

The greatest challenge to research appears to be operationally defining encouragement. The literature in several instances uses encouragement, praise, and reward interchangeably. This was most probably due to the socially ingrained valuing of praise and reward. Praise and reward are widely used in business, in schools, and in families, to attempt to promote high performance and adaptive social behavior. They are widely viewed as synonymous with encouragement. Encouragement is widely viewed outside of the Adlerian community as an extrinsic concept.

Future studies need to define more clearly both the construct of encouragement and how it is being carried out in the study. A hierarchy of interventions based on the capacity of the client to self-assess and self-motivate would enhance successful delivery of the encouragement process. It may not initially be defined by the client or recipient as encouraging, but as threatening or fear producing. Encouragement may be delivered with the cooperation of the client or recipient or, as with paradoxical intervention, may be applied strictly from the analysis of whoever is delivering such an intervention. The ultimate goal is self-analysis and self-monitoring by the client or recipient. Through the intent of encouragement to enhance self-esteem, increase moral reasoning and cooperation, the client or recipient learns to appreciate the encouragement process.

Studies should use for their definition and basis of investigation the full range of Adlerian encouragement as reflected in this article. Encouragement and praise should be compared in parenting groups and family therapy. There are parenting programs being used in both large and small school districts that follow both behavioral and Adlerian guidelines. Therapists could deliver counseling services to a set of families using encouragement and Adlerian parenting principles as the focus, and conduct therapy with a set of families in which praise and behavior modification was the focus of treatment. Pre-post measures of parent and child self-concept could be applied in both types of investigations.

Classroom management interventions based on Adlerian encouragement could be designed and investigated. The Adolescent Discouragement Indicator (ADI) (Lingg & Wilborn, 1992) could be used to construct hierarchical Adlerian encouragement interventions for adolescent school children. Elementary children could be observed using the Four Goals of Misbehavior (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1990) as a guideline to construct hierarchical Adlerian

encouragement interventions. Outcome variables of self-concept, school grades, and student behavior rating scales taken pre-post could then be used to measure the success of these interventions. The studies should last ten weeks to correspond with the length of most parenting groups and with the average length of stay in family therapy.

There has been very little done empirically to document the effectiveness of Adlerian Encouragement. Encouragement is well recognized as a positive concept, and its usage is widespread and widely defined. A construct so basic to a school of thought as encouragement is to Adlerian Psychology, left with such varied definitions in the eyes of the general public and viewed by the general public as a distant second to reward and punishment and defined synonymously with reward and punishment, will probably be used with minimum effectiveness or forgotten. We need to demonstrate that Adler's constructs, which Adlerians understand as fundamental to the successful teaching of democratic principles and the enhancement of personal psychological growth, are highly effective in enhancing emotional and psychological quality of life.

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