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CHAPTER **9**

CAREER-STYLE ASSESSMENT AND COUNSELING

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Adler's Individual Psychology offers a perspective on vocational development that enriches the classic career counseling model (Watkins, 1984). The present chapter contains an elaboration of this assertion and a presentation of methods and materials that career counselors can use to bring the Adlerian perspective to their work. The chapter begins with a review of the strengths and weaknesses of the most widely used approach to career counseling: matching persons to occupations. What follows is a discussion of four ways in which Adler's Individual Psychology elaborates this matching model to be more useful to counselors. The chapter proceeds with a brief section describing how Adlerian counselors apply Individual Psychology materials and methods to implement the matching model when they do career counseling as an adjunct to life-style counseling.

The remaining two-thirds of the chapter contains a presentation of Individual Psychology materials and methods specifically designed for Adlerian career counseling or, more precisely,

career-style counseling. The presentation of career-style counseling is divided into three sections. The first section consists of a description of a structured interview that counselors use to collect data about a client's career style; the second section holds ideas on how counselors think about these data to assess the client's career style; and the third section contains a description of a five-stage model for career-style counseling.

THE MATCHING MODEL

The classic model for career counseling (Parsons, 1909) is based on the psychology of individual differences. Counselors use individual differences to match people with suitable and viable occupations. The fundamental proposition of the matching model follows the wisdom of the familiar maxim, "birds of a feather flock together." Counselors measure clients' interests and then identify corresponding occupations in which their interests may be enacted and rewarded. These congruent occupations offer clients opportunities to integrate personal needs with job demands and thereby experience job success, satisfaction, and stability.

Career counseling that follows the matching model can be likened to a translation service. A linguist translates Spanish into English; a career counselor translates a client's identity into occupational titles. For example, if clients identify themselves as nurturing and dominant, then the counselor may translate their self-concepts into occupational titles such as teacher, counselor, minister, nurse, or other occupations in which the worker helps people. The counselor then encourages clients to explore these occupations.

The matching model is embedded in the major career counseling instrument, **interest inventories**. These inventories automate the translation task. In responding to interest inventory items, clients describe themselves in terms of the constructs provided by the inventory's author. The scoring keys for the inventory comprise theoretically or empirically derived descriptions of successful workers in a variety of occupations or work environments. The results profile a client's similarity to workers in different occupations. In effect, results plotted on the

profile sheet translate the client's self-concept into occupational titles. Test interpretation is the prime counseling method that counselors use with the matching model and materials (Crites, 1981). Counselors interpret interest inventory results to clients in ways designed to encourage vocational planning, guide occupational exploration, and structure career decision making.

The matching model with its inventory materials and interpretation methods is very popular with both clients and counselors. In fact, many clients begin their initial interview by requesting an interest inventory because they have heard from others that inventories are useful. Counselors like interest inventories because they provide occupational titles to discuss with clients. Few counselors deny that interest inventories can be used effectively with clients who are ready to translate their self-concepts into occupational titles.

Readiness, however, is essential if the use of inventories is to be effective. A great many clients have not crystallized their self-concepts and so they are not ready to respond meaningfully to interest inventories, especially those that present occupational titles as items. When asked to respond, they do their best, yet, their indecision and confusion in dealing with inventory items produces inconsistent, undifferentiated, and unstable profiles. Every career counselor has experienced frustration while interpreting flat or inconsistent profiles to disappointed clients.

Most counselors soon learn that interest inventory interpretation does not help clients who lack a clear and stable picture of who they are and what they want from life. These clients benefit from help that develops their self-concepts and clarifies their career goals. Career counselors need materials and methods that ease clients' identity development and goal selection. Such techniques make clients consider their own experiences and opinions instead of just reacting to interest inventory items.

Adler's Individual Psychology (IP) can broaden the classic matching model as well as its methods and materials to accommodate the needs of these clients. IP elaborates the core constructs of the matching model. It also offers methods and

materials that widen the range of clients which the model addresses. *IP's attention to life goals and styles can help clients develop their identities.* This self-knowledge prepares them to make occupational translations that capture their spirit, not just their stereotypes of the world of work.

ADLERIAN ENHANCEMENT OF THE MATCHING MODEL

IP counselors appreciate matching for fit, yet view it as static. Therefore, they expand the classic matching model, beyond predicting occupational fit based on individual differences in traits such as interests and abilities, to include how people use the traits they possess. IP counselors agree with Uncle Remus who said to Briar Rabbit, "it ain't what you got, it's how you use it."

Like trait-and-factor counselors who apply the classic matching model, IP counselors inventory clients' abilities, interests, and values. However, they concentrate on how their clients **use** these traits to fit in, that is, **belong, contribute, and cooperate**. Adler's psychology of use can elaborate the classic matching model in at least four ways because it:

1. expands the core construct of fit,
2. focuses on uniqueness,
3. explains how interests develop along a career path, and
4. explicates the career decision-making process.

Elaboration 1: From Fit to Belongingness

Individual Psychology elaborates counselors' conception of occupational fit and enhances their ability to communicate it to clients. In describing the classic matching model, vocational theorists present occupational fit as the core construct for psychological and pragmatic reasons (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Holland, 1985a). Empirical evidence shows that goodness of fit

between a person and occupational position relates to job satisfaction and success (Spokane, 1985). IP theorists agree and add social and philosophical reasons to support person-position fit as the criterion for career choice.

The IP elaboration of the fit construct rests on ideas about belongingness and social interest. Each individual is born into the stream of history. When a baby arrives, the community already exists. The toddler's experience can be likened to someone being pushed to center stage as the curtain rises for Act II. Without knowing what occurred in Act I, the actor must try to fit into the ongoing story and relate to the characters who share the stage. The successful actor moves toward the other characters, learns to cooperate with them, and thus carves out a role. In life, the child should move toward the family and community. They in turn must welcome the child in order for the child to feel **belongingness**.

When the child feels belongingness, the child can form attachments and develop social interest. The child then responds to **social expectations** (also called developmental tasks) to become somebody in relation to other people. To thrive, children must make a place for themselves in the community through work, friends, and love. Thus, fit leads not just to earning personal payoffs like success and satisfaction but also to making social contributions. People must ask both selfish and selfless questions in trying to fit in: Where can I make my place? and How can I contribute? To answer these questions, people should consider their unique goals and talents.

Elaboration 2: From Similarity to Uniqueness

In the classic matching model, interest inventories deal with how the client is similar to workers in different occupations. The Adlerian perspective addresses these similarities yet also deals with individuality. IP emphasizes the uniqueness of a **life in progress** because Adlerian counselors believe that people design their own personalities. A person is both the artist and the painting. People shape and channel their movement through an ever widening social context by structuring personal goals and means. To understand clients, IP advises that counselor learn **what clients intend** and **how they propose to**

do it. Clients' **goals and means** reveal their uniqueness more than do interest inventory profiles. Inventories measure how clients feel about occupations, not how they intend to use them to achieve their goals and become more effective and complete.

Elaboration 3: From Interest to Career Paths

Once a counselor understands a client's life goal, the counselor knows the client's orientation to life and the general direction in which the client is heading (Csikszentmihalyi & Beattie, 1979). Adlerians call the client's way of moving to a goal **guiding lines** (Griffith & Powers, 1984). Knowing a client's goal and guiding lines allows the counselor to envision the client's career path. Think of a real path that you can walk along in your own neighborhood. What you meet along the path can attract or repel you. You have to react to what you encounter even if the reaction is disinterest or boredom. Objects on a different path require no reaction, assuming that you even know they exist. By analogy, **only occupations along our guiding lines can become interesting to us.** We recognize these occupations and, if we evaluate them as potentially useful, may become interested in them.

Life goals preoccupy us. They shape our outlook, that is, how we approach a subject. From this subjective starting point, we look out for environmental opportunities to objectify our life goals. When we see them, we subjectively link ourselves to these objects by forming an interest. To paraphrase Angyl (1941, p. 55), an interest is not what defines the direction, but on the contrary, the direction defines what can become an interest.

This view of the origin and development of interests fits best for careers in the professions. Blue collar workers often do not have an opportunity to select work based on their interests. They may have to select from job alternatives narrowed by the opportunity structure in their community. Often they must settle for the job they can get or choose the job that pays the most. These workers express their interests through leisure activities and family roles rather than through work.

Elaboration 4: From Choice to Decision Making

The classic matching model and its interest inventories focus on occupational choice, not the career decision-making process. **Adlerian counselors distinguish between occupations that clients choose and how they make their choices.** This expands the focus of vocational counseling to include the career decision-making process. From the perspective of IP, the career decision-making process denotes clients' search for a synthesis between their dreams and reality, that is, an integrative solution to the problems of growing-up. Counselors evaluate the success of clients' attempts at synthesis by comparing their private sense (dreams) to common sense (reality).

Adlerians refer to **private sense** as the "private logic" that clients use to orient themselves to life and answer questions such as (1) Who am I? (2) What is this world like?, and (3) How and where do I fit in? In contrast, Adlerians refer to **common sense** as answers to these questions that make a contribution to the community. The degree of congruence between a client's private logic and the community's common sense indicates the probability that the client will adapt successfully to the challenges of occupational choice and work adjustment.

Clients' **private logic** include their "guiding fictions," that is, their conclusions about what they need to feel less incomplete and more secure. Guiding fictions also are called **fictional goals** because they define a client's ideal self-concept and conception of success. In the process of career decision making, clients use their private logic to evaluate occupations and to select ones along their guiding lines that move them closer to their fictional goals. An occupation that evokes interest, initially attracts a person because in some way it deals with that person's guiding fiction. Thus, the occupations that interest clients have a personal meaning for them. Typically people have unexamined ideas about how certain occupations will help them reach their fictional goals and become more complete. Knowing clients' guiding fictions enables counselors to understand the **hidden reasons** (Dreikurs, 1973) or meanings behind their career goals and occupational interests.

In discussing their occupational interests with other people, clients talk in common sense terms about the public meaning of their occupational interests. Rarely do clients spontaneously articulate the guiding fictions that direct their careers or the hidden meaning behind their occupational interests. For example, several of my clients have wanted to become physicians. They all gave the same common-sense explanation of their interest in medicine: they liked people and science. Yet each client invested medicine with a different fictional goal such as being in control, overcoming clumsiness, playing with winners, being right, or pleasing father. Their hidden reasons for choosing medicine expressed guiding fictions about what it would take for them to actively master what they passively suffered.

Common sense understands this idea of occupational choice as a means of turning problems into opportunities. We all have heard stories about a person overcoming stuttering to become an orator, a girl overcoming polio to become an Olympic track star, a boy overcoming shyness to become a famous actor, or a woman overcoming her lisp to become an accomplished newscaster. Although these are dramatic examples, they are not rare. IP contends that everyone forms guiding fictions as they grow up and that everyone's private logic distorts reality to some degree. Thus, in facilitating a client's career decision making, **Adlerian counselors always attend to private logic and uncover guiding fictions in general and hidden reasons for occupational interests in particular.**

For example, a girl grew up with the guiding fiction that she could belong only if she could please other people. In most instances, she was able to get along well. However, with regard to career choice, her father and grandfather were displeased when she considered anything other than law. Although she wanted to become a teacher, she felt completely lost and worthless when her father was displeased. She sought career counseling for the first time during her final year in law school. She asked the counselor to help her understand why she hated law school and to predict how she would fare as a lawyer. The counselor helped her to examine her fictional goal of pleasing other people and her hidden reason for choosing law. She ultimately became a law professor to integratively resolve her problem in growing-up.

ADLERIAN CAREER COUNSELING

Because of their concern with belongingness, uniqueness, usefulness, and private logic, **Adlerian career counselors typically do not use interest inventory materials or test interpretation methods.** They implement an IP matching model through prototypal Adlerian materials such as found in Chapter 7 or the *Family Constellation Interview Guide* (Dreikurs, 1954, 1973; Shulman, 1962, 1973), *Early Recollection Report Forms* (Dreikurs, 1954; Mosak, 1958), and the *Life Style Inventory* (Ekstein, Baruth, & Mahrer, 1982; Mosak & Shulman, 1971; Shulman & Mosak, 1988a). IP counselors use these materials to elicit clients' unique experiences and opinions so that they may assess clients' life goals and styles. Characteristic IP methods for interpreting the assessment to clients and facilitating their decision making (life style management) or reorientation (life style modification) are presented in Chapter 7 and 8 of the present book. Examples of how other IP counselors use these generic Adlerian counseling materials and methods with career clients can be found in McKelvie and Friedland (1978, 1981), McKelvie (1979), and Manaster and Perryman (1974).

Counselors who try them usually report that IP materials like the *Life Style Inventory* are extremely useful as they work with clients to facilitate identity development, enhance self-awareness, and translate identities into occupations. However, they also report three disadvantages in using the *Life Style Inventory* and similar materials with career-choice clients. First, the questions lack face validity for career clients. When clients begin career counseling they do not expect to be asked about their childhood experiences, family relationships, or early recollections. Although, communication and rapport engage them, career clients hesitate before discussing these topics. Second, the materials are extensive, taking two and sometimes three sessions to complete. Third, much of the data gathered with the *Life Style Inventory* pertain to career-adjustment counseling, that is, helping clients cope with problems at work. Although enlightening, data about family constellation and early recollections are not needed for career-choice counseling. To eliminate these disadvantages, some counselors do more than adapt life style counseling materials and methods to address career choice. They have developed IP materials and methods specifically for career-choice counseling.

Collectively, I refer to these materials and methods for implementing an Adlerian approach to person-position matching as **career-style counseling**. The rest of the present chapter contains a description of career-style counseling materials and methods, starting with interview materials designed to elicit career-style data from clients, continuing with assessment methods to interpret career-style data, and concluding with career-style counseling methods.

CAREER-STYLE INTERVIEW

The **career-style interview** consists of stimulus questions that seem valid to career counseling clients and elicit from them opinions and experiences relevant to their career choices. The questions elicit life goal and style information that reveal how clients think an interest can solve a problem or make them more complete. The stimulus questions are sequenced into a structured career-style interview. The topics flow smoothly and keep clients actively engaged in self-exploration while they describe themselves for the counselor. The stimulus questions deal with (1) role models, (2) books, (3) magazines, (4) leisure activities, (5) school subjects, (6) mottos, (7) ambitions, and (8) decisions.

Question 1: Models

Counselors begin the career-style interview by investigating a client's predicament in life as portrayed by role models. To identify a client's role models, the counselor might say "Whom did you admire when you were growing up?" If clients do not understand, then the counselor can ask them whom they respected a lot, maybe even enough to imitate. With clients who cannot think of anyone, the counselor may suggest that it does not have to be a famous person or fictional character. This often leads a client to name a relative or family member. After the client has named one model, the counselor asks for two other models. When the client has named three models, the counselor asks in turn for each model, "What did you admire about this person?" It sometimes takes prodding, so the counselor may ask the client to "just tell me about the person. What were they like?" The counselor closes this first topic by asking for each model, "How are you like this person and how are you different from this person?"

It is not unusual for a client to name a famous animal as a model. In fact, many counselors have said that they admired Lassie. Lassie was always able to help out and save the day. A crisis counselor said he admired Mighty Mouse for much the same reasons. A gentle and kind social worker reported that his hero was Ferdinand the Bull. He went on to explain what that meant to him in relation to his alcoholic father. Two different clients admired Peter Pan. Both clients had trouble accepting adult responsibilities and eventually chose occupations in which their childlike life styles were assets.

As clients discuss their models, counselors should **concentrate on what clients admire** about their models more than whom they admire. In attending to whom clients admire, counselors err by relying on stereotypes and what the model personally means to them. I recall a clear example of this mistake. I was doing a public demonstration of counseling with a disadvantaged student who said that he admired a football player. Several counselors in the audience jumped to the conclusion that the young man viewed professional athletics as his way out of the ghetto. In explaining why he admired the athlete, the young man told several stories demonstrating how the athlete was independent, artistic, and manly. This athlete modeled for him the self-confidence, independence, and vision that corresponded to his secret dream of being an architect. The young man chose his model because the athlete showed him that a person can be artistic without being effeminate. The athlete modeled a way for the young man to accept his mother's encouragement to be artistic and reject his father's admonition that, if he did, he would become homosexual.

As clients discuss role models, the counselor should think of what the models imply to form follow-up questions. Effective follow-up questions express inferences, not interpretations, so clients find them thought provoking and occasionally humorous. For example, someone who admires the Lone Ranger could be asked, "Are you a loner?" "Do you have a Tonto?" or "Do you like secrets?" and so on. The client's answers to follow-up questions increase the counselor's understanding of the client's career style.

In talking about their models, clients describe themselves. **A model shares the client's plight yet has found a way out of the predicament.** In responding to questions about models, clients tell counselors about the problems that they wish to

solve above all else. Thus counselors may identify the problems which structure clients' goals as well as the means that they use to move toward these goals. In other words, **a client's model identifies a central life goal, articulates and labels the client's central concern, and reveals what the client thinks it will take to overcome that problem.**

Do not confuse role models with "gender guiding lines" examined by *Life Style Inventory* questions about parents (Griffith & Powers, 1984, p. 47). Parents guide clients' lines of movement because they are familiar with the course of life and offer their children continuous presence or direction about the way to proceed. In a life style interview, counselors ask clients to describe what kind of man was father and what kind of woman was mother. Clients respond by telling what impressed them about their parents' example. From their answers, counselors learn about parents as clients' standards for what it means to be a man or a woman and how to live. These archetypes are usually an unexamined part of a client's private logic. In contrast to the unexamined guiding lines that parents provide, people purposefully choose role models to show them how to work out a role and how to reduce their feelings of incompleteness or inferiority.

Experienced career counselors often ask their client to compare a role model to a guiding line. The differences between the guide and model reveal the link between that client's problems and goals and thus map the client's line of movement from passive suffering to active mastery. For example, one client described his father as tough and his mother as tender. He loved them both and felt torn between their contradictory styles of relating to other people and situations. His way of integrating these contradictory poses was to imitate Robin Hood whom he described as tough yet tender in defeating villains and helping people in need. The client eventually directed a social work agency, a role he enacted in a tough yet tender manner.

Question 2: Books

As the second topic in the career-style interview, counselors ask clients to describe their favorite books because a book usually includes another model, or more precisely, a life predicament and its solution. Typically, clients' favorite books portray

clearly their central life problem and how someone else dealt with it. People are attracted to books in which a major character experiences a problem similar to their own problem. It comforts them to learn that other people have faced the same problem. They often find encouragement in how a character dealt with the problem and sometimes even imitate that character's coping strategy.

Some clients clearly demonstrate this idea. For example, a female pre-medical student frequently read *Gone With the Wind* because Scarlett O'Hara fascinated her. At an unexamined level, she was dealing with how to be a physician without deviating from her female gender guiding line. She found that this book addressed the fear that her needs for achievement and intimacy conflicted. Another client read Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea* as a parable that addressed his creativity and hypersensitivity.

Sometimes discussing a favorite book draws the client and counselor to the core issue. A college freshman who had *Winesburg, Ohio* as his favorite book planned to major in chemistry. This story about a student writer corresponded to his dream but because of parental attitudes he sought a "real" career. He could not envision a person like himself becoming a writer because everyone in his family worked in a blue collar occupation. If a client cannot readily name a favorite book, then the counselor moves to the next topic without probing.

Question 3: Magazines

The third topic in the career-style interview is magazines. Counselors start by asking clients which magazines they enjoy reading. As prods, they ask clients if they subscribe to any magazine or read one regularly. Typically, counselors try to elicit two or three magazine choices before asking clients to describe what they enjoy reading in each magazine. It is useful to get some detail about the sections that clients like most, a favorite story from the last issue, or what attracts them to the magazine.

Counselors ask about magazines during a career-style interview because magazines vicariously immerse readers in an

environment. Favorite magazines tell the counselor about the environments that fit the client's style. As they listen to a client's responses, counselors link them to the client's responses about role models and consider if the magazines represent environmental outlets for interest that the client finds useful. For example, the student who admired the athlete liked *Jazz Musician* and *Architectural Digest*. A client who emulated Lassie's helpfulness enjoyed *People*, *National Enquirer*, and *Psychology Today*.

Occasionally, a client does not read magazines. In these instances, the counselor may ask clients about favorite television programs. It usually turns out that they watch some television programs regularly. Favorite programs reveal some information about preferred environment, but rarely as much as magazines. Magazines immerse readers into an environment more completely than do television programs.

Question 4: Leisure Activities

The fourth topic in the career-style interview deals with self-expression. Role models and books reveal a central problem and suggest which interests may be useful. Magazines display which environments attract a client because useful interests can be enacted and reinforced. At leisure, clients manifest their interests.

Counselors begin to examine clients' leisure activities by asking them what they like to do in their free time and, if they need a prod, what hobbies they enjoy. If they still need prodding, counselors can ask clients what they did last weekend. After identifying their leisure activities, counselors discern the role clients play in these activities. Sample roles are partner, listener, performer, host, tourist, and member. Then, within the role, counselors determine the key functions and rewards. For example, bridge partners may cooperate to win. Listeners may experience feelings in response to music. Hosts may help guests relax in order to attract friends.

Sometimes clients say unexpected things. For example, one client loved bowling. I thought that physical competence or competition made the interest useful to her. Surprisingly, she

said her favorite part of bowling was keeping score. Because leisure motives are intrinsic, counselors can form a clear picture of how clients prefer to interact with their environment.

In addition to self-expression, leisure presents opportunities for personal development. Through leisure activities clients can work on feelings of incompleteness or inferiority. Leisure can be autotherapeutic because in structured play, people can symbolically cope with activities or objects that they are unable to master in real life. Through leisure activities, people develop skills and strategies that eventually enhance their competence and confidence and enable them to cope with the problems in real life. In this sense, play is rehearsal. ***So in examining a client's leisure activities, counselors consider both the self being expressed and the problem being addressed.***

An example may explicate the autotherapeutic function of leisure. A homemaker who was housebound and felt unproductive decided to learn to play tennis. She played every day during one summer. At the beginning she was pale, overweight, and clumsy. By the end of the summer she was tan, slim, and a tournament winner; that was what her playmates saw. They did not recognize her increased achievement motivation, competitiveness, and confidence. She had learned that not only could she compete with men, she could beat them at their own game. That fall, she started her own small business and succeeded. Through tennis she actively mastered what she had passively suffered by transforming her feelings of incompleteness and inferiority into feelings of competence and competitiveness.

Question 5: School Subjects

The fifth topic addressed in the career-style interview deals with clients' preferred work environments. Counselors investigate clients' school experience to sample this aspect of their career styles. Schools present fairly uniform work experiences that shape students' work habits and attitudes. Schools expose students to a variety of work environments. For example, English classes present different job demands than do shop or chemistry classes. Counselors ask clients about their success (grades) and satisfaction (happiness) in these different work environments.

Counselors inquire about school subjects during a career-style interview to find out which work environments clients liked best in high school. Counselors ask clients to separate teachers from subjects to avoid confusion. Sometimes clients report a particular subject as their favorite, yet this subject does not fit with their life story. On inquiry, it turns out that the client enjoyed the teacher. For example, one artistic and creative client loved ninth grade Latin. It turned out that he disliked the subject but admired the teacher. His favorite part of the course occurred when the teacher digressed from Latin instruction to relate life experiences and personal opinions.

After clients describe their favorite subjects, counselors ask them about disliked subjects. Then, they review each subject in detail by asking what clients liked about it, what grades they earned, and what effect it had on their career thinking. From these answers, counselors can picture work environments that clients prefer as well as their work habits and attitudes.

Question 6: Mottos

The sixth topic in the career-style interview deals with clients' favorite sayings or mottos. In a motto, counselors listen for how clients title their life story. Some titles that clients have used are "that which flows from the heart alone brings others to your own"; "you got a mouth, use it"; "better safe than sorry"; and "that shit happens." If clients do not have a motto, counselors can ask them to repeat a saying they remember hearing or create a saying. With encouragement, even reluctant clients can formulate something.

Question 7: Ambitions

As counselors approach the end of the career-style interviews, they ask clients to tell them about ambitions their parents had for them as children. This gives counselors some idea of the occupations to which clients have reacted. Occasionally, indecisive clients say that their parents wanted them to avoid trouble or a nervous breakdown. These clients have not reacted to positive images of themselves or occupations and usually they are extremely discouraged. When asked for a positive goal, they are silent because they have not developed a dream for their life.

In conjunction with the parental ambition question, some counselors ask clients about the ambitions they had for their lives when they were in elementary school. Another useful procedure is to ask which occupations they daydream about now. Playful daydreaming and fantasizing to conceptualize oneself in different occupations seems to be an essential component of effective career decision making (Crites, 1969, p. 167). Moreover, the content of occupational daydreams is about as valid in predicting career choice as are interest inventories (Touchton & Magoon, 1977).

Question 8: Decisions

At the end of the career-style interview, counselors ask clients to describe an important choice they have made and how they made it in order to discern their decision-making strategies. For example, a client described how he chose a college by saying:

I think I chose it just by the fact that it was convenient. I really couldn't decide. I applied to a lot of schools and we couldn't really get financial aid from any of them. That was how I first decided it's not practical. You know if anybody gave me any money, I'd go there. I didn't get any money, so I decided to come here because it was close to home and it wasn't that expensive. I didn't want to go downtown. I wanted to go to a good place. You know, like I didn't want to go to a state college. I wanted to go to a good place, but I didn't want to go to an Ivy League college either. I wanted to stay in between. I don't know how I made the decision. I just kinda ended up here. I'm not sure how. I booted my girlfriend the same way. I just, one night I realized I didn't want to go out with her anymore, so I just stopped taking her out. It was like a very sudden thing. I didn't really sit down and rationally think about it. I just suddenly realized I didn't want to take her out anymore. It was more like intuition, a gut feeling. That's how I chose this college. It's more like a intuition, rather than a rational decision.

Counselors close the career-style interview by asking clients to think in between sessions about how they will eventually choose an occupation and by orienting them to the next session.

CAREER-STYLE ASSESSMENT

Before the first counseling session and after the career-style interviews, counselors analyze their clients' interview responses to assess clients' career styles. The following seven steps in summary form provide an Adlerian approach to career-style assessment.

First, they begin by reviewing a client's responses to the role model questions. In considering the responses, counselors attend to the central problem portrayed and the interests that seem useful in resolving this problem.

Second, counselors may consider the leisure question responses to discern manifest interests and identify the roles, functions, and rewards that intrinsically attract the client.

Third, counselors may review responses to the magazine questions to determine the prominence of data, people, things, and ideas in the client's preferred environments (Prediger, 1982).

Fourth, counselors may consider the client's schoolwork responses to compare the client's reaction to different work environments and analyze successful and satisfying experiences as well as failure and dissatisfying experiences.

Note that the first two areas that counselors review (models and leisure) deal with the self whereas the next two (magazines and schoolwork) deal with the environment.

Fifth, the area that they review next deals with occupational fantasies and decisional strategies: parental ambitions, childhood ambitions, occupational daydreams, and an important choice. Consideration of these topics allows counselors to envision clients' images of themselves at work and how they might choose an occupation. This consideration may also yield a better understanding of how private logic affects clients' decision making. After reviewing these five areas, experienced counselors usually can verbalize a client's career style.

Sixth, counselors relate the career style to the career-choice predicament that the client presented and then identify occupations that can continue the client's life story and lead to more completeness. Usually, counselors should start informally by thinking about the occupations that the client mentioned during the career-style interview. These occupations are reference points in the client's thinking and must be discussed with the client. After considering occupations explicitly mentioned by the client, some counselors use intuition and imagination to generate a list of occupational titles. Remember, that by knowing the client's career path, counselors can identify some occupations which may be useful and interesting to the client.

Seventh, after using these informal procedures to generate occupational titles for a client to consider, counselors may turn to more formal procedure. At this point, person-occupation translation materials devised to implement the classic matching model of career counseling are very useful, particularly those based on personality systematics (Dahlstrom, 1972) such as Holland's (1985a) typology of vocational personalities and work environments or Jung's theory of psychological types (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, Chapter 4). For example, with Holland's typology, a counselor can assign a type code to each hobby, magazine, school subject, and self-descriptive adjective that the client mentioned during the career style interview. Using clinical judgment, the counselor can sum the results to determine an occupational type code and then use the *Dictionary of Holland Occupational Codes* (Gottfredson, Holland, & Ogawa, 1982) to identify occupations that correspond to the client's occupational type code. When they have a list of occupational prospects in hand and the client's career style and fictional goal in mind, counselors have completed the career-style assessment.

Practice Case

The following case material may be used to exercise your skill at career-style assessment. Read the following career-style interview data and, before reading further, perform your own assessment of the client's career style, career path, interests, and occupational prospects. The client was a male, 19 year old, college sophomore who disliked the science courses in his pre-medical curriculum.

Models:	Lincoln because he (1) lost political campaigns yet never gave up, (2) got up and gave speeches, and (3) wrote speeches.
	Edison because he was (1) imaginative, (2) practical, and (3) told other people what to do.
	Walt Disney because he came up with and built imaginative things.
Books:	<i>Winesburg, Ohio</i> , about a boy who works for a paper and wants to write.
Magazines:	<i>Time</i> and <i>Newsweek</i> for movie reviews and politics.
	<i>Jazziz</i> for articles about jazz music and musicians.
Leisure Activities:	Play trumpet, build models, watch <i>Star Trek</i> .
School Subjects:	Liked history of how foreign policy was shaped and English, especially drama in plays. Disliked science and mathematics.
Motto:	The unexamined life is not worth living.
Parental Ambition:	Father said be an actor or use your mind; Mother said be a doctor.
Childhood Ambition:	Musician or teacher.
Important Choice:	Talked with parents about which college to attend; deferred to them and chose the one they preferred.

The counselor's goal in performing a career-style assessment is not "to be right." As Aristotle noted, there are so many more interesting things to be than right. Specifically, Adlerian counselors try to be useful to their clients. In comparing your assessment of the above data to the assessment which follows, do not get stuck in the dichotomy of right versus wrong. Instead, look at both assessments and ask yourself, "How useful would these assessments be to the client in easing his self-exploration and prompting occupational exploration and career decision making?"

Career Style:	He moves through life as a communicator who uses oral and verbal skills to entertain, report, persuade, supervise, and critique other people. His style includes the use of imagination, persuasiveness, and perseverance to identify and deal with practical problems or challenges.
Career Path:	His future success and satisfaction may follow the line of writing or speaking about how to make decisions and solve practical problems.
Interests:	He appreciates the usefulness of writing, politics, performing, teaching, human relations, managing, and consulting.
Occupational Prospects	
Along Career Path:	He may want to investigate occupations such as journalist, author, lawyer, politician, actor, technical writer, human relations manager, performing arts manager, advisor/consultant.
Guiding Fiction:	"If other people like me, then I will belong and feel secure ."

This client eventually completed a bachelor of arts degree in journalism and entered law school.

CAREER-STYLE COUNSELING

Having completed a career-style assessment, the counselor is ready to begin career-style counseling with the client. Career-style counseling has a structured agenda that deals with five topics:

1. career style and path,
2. decision-making difficulties,
3. interests,
4. occupational prospects, and
5. choice barriers.

Usually, counselors can address career style, decision making, and interests during the first counseling session. During a second counseling session scheduled about a week later, they discuss occupational prospects and how clients can explore them. About a month later, counselors use a final session to confirm a client's choice or deal with barriers that block a choice. The pace of counseling can vary. Occasionally, counselors may deal with the first four topics during one session or deal with only the first topic during one session.

In pursuing the career-style counseling agenda, Adlerian counselors use the IP counseling methods described in Chapter 8. Their methods differ for the two dimensions of counseling. Along the **relationship dimension**, they use *empathy*, *encouragement*, and *humor* to maintain collaboration and keep the client's attention on what needs to be done. Along the **communication dimension**, they use *interpretation*, *facilitative confrontation*, *suggestion*, *teaching*, and *clarification* to increase self-knowledge and vocational development as well as to facilitate career choice and commitment to that choice.

Topic 1: Career Style and Path

The first counseling session begins with a direct presentation of a summary of the client's career style. In presenting this summation of understanding, Adlerian counselors follow principles taught by Dreikurs (Powers & Griffith, 1987, Part 4). Counselors thoroughly address the strengths and limitations in clients' career styles. They relate clients' ways of doing things to their work habits and attitudes in general and their educational-vocational successes and failures in particular.

Two techniques make the discussion concrete. One technique is to **identify examples of clients' career styles** as expressed in their present behavior, preferably during the last five minutes or, if not, some things they said or did during the career-style interview. The other technique is to **ask clients to cite an example** of something they have done during the last week that also expresses their career styles. Clients are so embedded in their own style, that they do not realize they have a style. Counselors must be sure that clients recognize their career styles before discussing where they are heading.

Counselors may move the discussion from **career styles** to **career paths** by explaining to clients that the more clearly they envision where they are heading, the more evident will be their choices. They may begin by telling clients that path is the basic meaning of career. In fact, the term career path is somewhat redundant because the word career denotes course or passage having evolved from the medieval Latin word "carraria," meaning road for vehicles and the middle French word "carriere," meaning street. Counselors may continue by describing clients' current career decision-making task as choosing a direction at a crossroads or turning point. Then counselors may relate this metaphor to clients' vocational experiences by describing the career paths that they have already traveled and project the paths over the horizon. Of course, a most useful procedure is to use simple words and specific examples to describe clients' career paths and crossroads so that they can recognize and understand them.

To make a client's career path concrete and memorable, some counselors use success formula materials to describe a career path. I use the contents of Table 9.1 to help clients state their success formula. Together we select the three roles that best

TABLE 9.1
SUCCESS FORMULA ELEMENTS
GROUPED BY ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES*

DOER	HELPER
WORK WITH TOOLS	HELP OTHERS
THINK WITH MY HANDS	WORK WITH PEOPLE
MAKE OR REPAIR THINGS	PROVIDE A SERVICE
USE MECHANICAL ABILITY	BE OUTGOING AND PLEASANT
APPLY PHYSICAL SKILL	HELP CHILDREN
WORK OUTDOORS	HELP THE ELDERLY
WORK WITH ANIMALS	TEACH
WORK WITH NATURE	COUNSEL
	ADVISE
THINKER	INFLUENCER
SOLVE PROBLEMS	MAKE DECISIONS
WORK WITH SCIENCE	CONVINCE OTHERS
WORK WITH MATH	LEAD A GROUP
USE LOGIC	USE POWER
RESEARCH IDEAS	ACT WITH ENTHUSIASM
FIGURE OUT HOW THINGS WORK	SELL THINGS
READ	BE THE CENTER OF ATTENTION
ANALYZE PEOPLE	BE DYNAMIC
	HAVE A LOT OF VARIETY
CREATOR	ORGANIZER
BE INDEPENDENT	BE PRECISE
SHARE FEELINGS	BE PART OF A TEAM
BE SENSITIVE	RECORD DATA
PAINT	TYPE
PLAY AN INSTRUMENT	ORGANIZE FILE MATERIAL
WRITE	HAVE A SET ROUTINE
APPLY ARTISTIC FLAIR	KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED
DECORATE	CARRY OUT ORDERS
DESIGN	

*For more information about the six roles, consult Holland (1985a).

characterize the client's career style and fictional goal. Then I ask the client to complete the following sentence with one phrase from each of the three role clusters: "I feel successful and satisfied when I _____."

The client picks the phrases and together we arrange them into a success sentence which the client can use to identify and evaluate prospective occupations. For example, one client selected solve problems from the thinker role cluster, help others from the helper role cluster, and share feelings from the creator role cluster. She combined them into her success formula: "I feel successful and satisfied when I help others solve their problems and feel better."

Topic 2: Decision-Making Difficulties

After clients recognize their career styles and envision their career paths, counselors direct their attention to how clients' use private logic to process career decision-making tasks. On the one hand, if common sense can comprehend and validate their private logic, then counselors may reinforce clients' private logic and apply it to their career decision-making tasks. On the other hand, if common sense cannot comprehend or validate their private logic, then counselors reveal this to clients and explain how the guiding fictions in their private logic cause their career indecision or unrealism. Invalid ideas in a guiding fiction usually take the form of preemptive distinctions, oversimplifications, or over-generalizations (for examples see Shulman, 1973) in a client's fictional goal (e.g., If I were _____, then I would be safe, secure, and significant). The more exaggerated these invalid ideas become, the more they delay or distort career decision making.

An example of how a client's private logic can delay or distort career decision making may be useful here. I recall one client whose ambition was to be respected. However, in his fictional goal he oversimplified respect to mean control: "If people obey me, I will be safe, secure, and significant." He succinctly expressed this mistaken idea in his motto, "my way or the highway." This exaggerated distinction distorted his career decision-making process in that he considered only occupations that offered him respect in the form of power, possessions, and prestige. Because it was irrelevant to his goal, he had not considered how he would contribute to society or how his need to

control other people would impair his relations with coworkers and family members.

A client's private logic enters common sense when two people talk about it during a counseling session. By representing common sense, counselors help counselors reevaluate mistaken ideas. A counselor may begin by explaining to the client that the mistaken idea is understandable but not necessary. This may take the form of explicating where the idea came from and why it is no longer needed. With clients who mistake respect for control, a counselor might explain how the need to control people served an adaptive purpose earlier in their lives yet how it is now maladaptive. Thus, the need to control people is understandable in light of past circumstances but not necessary in present situations.

In confronting the previous client's mistaken idea (i.e., respect equals control), the counselor should use a phrase that captures the client's imagination and compels him to reconsider the idea. For example, the counselor might impress upon the client that "our way is the highway" leads people to respect him whereas "my way or the highway" leads people to fear him. Adlerian counselors might also consider **spitting in the soup** by telling the client that his equating respect with control causes something he dislikes; maybe his hypertension, insomnia, or free-floating anger (Mosak, 1977).

Another Adlerian method that a counselor might use is to confront the client with a negative picture of his future if he continues to dominate other people (Shulman, 1971, p. 174). Other counseling methods for correcting mistaken ideas have been presented by Adlerians in writing about mistaken assumptions (Shulman, 1968), basic mistakes (Dreikurs, 1973), or interfering ideas (Powers & Griffith, 1987), and by other counselors in writing about neurotic convictions (Horney, 1945), irrational ideas (Ellis & Greiger 1977), private rules (Krumboltz, 1983), or irrational expectations (Nevo, 1987).

Topic 3: Interests

The third career-style counseling topic deals with interests as criteria in making occupational choices. After helping clients

recognize their career styles and examine their private logic as it affects decision making, counselors discuss interests that clients can use to move toward their goals. Counselors may start by explaining that interests are not simply feelings, they have meanings, both public and private. Then counselors may discuss how an interest connects a career style to the environment. This lays the groundwork for naming clients' interests, discussing the hidden meanings that their interests hold, and explaining how these interests can be useful to them. In discussing how well various interests serve fictional goals and express career styles, counselors should be as specific as possible and cite examples from the client's life experience.

Next counselors explain to clients how they can use their interests to identify occupations to explore. No one has time to explore every occupation so each client must identify a set of plausible occupations to investigate. Some counselors help clients do this by systematically describing their preferred work roles, activities, and settings. This discussion develops implicit interests into explicit criteria for screening occupational prospects. For example, following a discussion of this type, one client came to say that he was interested in a job that would allow him to play a leader role, use intellectual and persuasive abilities, and work in an entrepreneurial setting.

To keep clients actively involved in the career decision-making process between counseling sessions, counselors close this first counseling session by assigning two tasks as homework. The first **homework task** has clients think about what they discussed during the counseling session because the next session will begin with a discussion of their reflections on their career styles, career paths, and interests so as to reinforce, refine, or clarify their self-knowledge as it relates to career choice. The second homework task has clients learn an occupational classification system and prepare a list of occupations to discuss during the next counseling session. Counselors can select one of four different materials to assign as client homework: (1) *The Self-Directed Search* (Holland, 1985b), (2) *Career Decision-Making System* (Harrington & O'Shea, 1982), (3) *The Career Key* (Jones, 1987), or (4) *Individual Career Exploration* (Miller-Tiedeman, 1976). Counselors may augment this assignment by asking clients to examine the *Encyclopedia of Career*

and Vocational Guidance (Hopke, 1987) or the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (U.S. Department of Labor, 1988). An alternative to this assignment is to ask clients to work through computer-assisted career exploration programs such as *SIGI* or *DISCOVER* (Harris-Bowlsbey, 1984).

Topic 4: Occupational Prospects

The second session in career-style counseling is devoted to selecting a short list of occupations to investigate and devising an exploration plan. Counselors start the session by discussing clients' reactions to the previous session. This discussion usually leads naturally to the occupations that appeal to clients. At this point, counselors inquire about the second homework assignment by asking clients to relate the occupations that they considered and to share their thoughts about how each one implements their success formulas. Then counselors may ask clients to think aloud about each occupation that they mentioned during the career-style interview which they have not commented on during this counseling session. Next, counselors may add to the discussion, occupations identified in the career-style assessment. This first half of the second counseling session usually will produce a list of about six occupations for clients to explore in-depth and another six occupations to hold in reserve.

Having a short list of occupations to investigate allows the counselor and client to collaborate on constructing an exploration plan during the second half of the counseling session. A plan consists of activities that will help clients see choices clearly so that their ability to decide is enhanced. Most clients do not know how to explore and clarify their choice alternatives. Therefore, counselors must teach them about exploratory behavior in conjunction with suggesting specific activities that will increase the clarity of their choices. Stewart (1969, pp. 218-221) prepared materials that are particularly useful to counselors who wish to teach clients the principles of exploration as they collaborate on constructing an exploration plan. The materials consist of four pages which counselors may give to clients. One page presents examples of information sources, two pages explain how to get helpful information, and the fourth page structures a process for using information in career decision

making. To end the second counseling session, counselors use Adlerian encouragement methods to move clients to enact their exploration plans. Counselors schedule a third career-style counseling session about a month later to allow clients time to enact their exploration plans.

Topic 5: Choice Barriers

When the client and counselor reach the fifth topic (usually during the third counseling session) career-style counseling concludes, one way or another. For most clients this final session is almost casual. They tell the counselor how exploration clarified their alternatives and led them to a choice. Counselors reinforce that choice and discuss practical matters that will increase clients' commitment to their choices and help them implement their choices.

For other clients, this final session is far from casual; in fact, it may be the most moving of all sessions. They begin this session by announcing that they still cannot make a choice. In these instances, distinguishing between a preference and a choice helps counselors recognize the decision-making difficulty. A **preference** expresses what a client would like to do whereas a **choice** expresses what a client probably will do (Crites, 1969, p. 129). for example, a person may prefer vanilla ice cream yet choose chocolate to make it easier for the server.

The fact that some people make choices that they do not prefer makes the distinction between preference and choice critical in career counseling. If a barrier blocks turning a preference into a choice, then career-style counseling is complete because clients can state viable and suitable occupational preferences. The client and counselor spend the session problem-solving how to deal with the barrier. The most frequent barrier encountered is **family opposition**. This occurs when family members press clients not to choose the occupations that clients prefer.

Other common choice barriers include **financial strain**, **training** or **entry requirements**, **prejudice**, and **dilemmas** involving consorts or children. Common solutions include talking to the family in the counselor's office, moving out from the

parents' home, getting a part-time job, or letting some time pass. If the client cannot state a preference during the third session, then counselors try to determine whether the inability to decide on a preference is **situational undecidedness** or **trait indecisiveness** (Cooper, Fuqua, & Hartman, 1984). In the case of indecision, many counselors recommend to clients that they engage in specified maturational or self-development experiences. In the case of indecisiveness, Adlerian counselors recommend life style counseling and, if the client agrees, begin by collecting family constellation information and early recollections.

SUMMARY

The present chapter asserted that Adler's Individual Psychology enriches the classic model for career counseling by elaborating its constructs and extending its applicability to a wider range of clients. Furthermore, the chapter explained how an approach called career-style counseling resolves problems that arise in adapting Adlerian life style methods and materials for clients who want to make a career choice. In describing career-style counseling, the chapter dealt with the assessment of career styles, the identification of career paths, and the recognition of private logic in career decision making. It presented counseling methods for interpreting clients' career styles to them and correcting mistaken ideas that delay or distort their career decision making. It also presented materials which counselors may use to perform and assess career-style interviews with clients and articulate their success formulas. Hopefully, as more counselors do career-style counseling, they will increase its effectiveness by developing its methods and devising additional materials.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Explain how the rationale for the Adlerian Matching Model of career counseling expands the classic Parsonian Matching Model.

Why is Adler's "psychology of use" an improvement over the "psychology of possession" that is manifest in interest inventories?

Use Adler's Individual Psychology to explain the origin of interests.

The essence of Adlerian career counseling is to clarify choices so that a client's ability to decide is enhanced. How does Career Style Counseling clarify choices?