NASAP 2012 Community Roundtable:  
Identifying Countertransference through Adlerian Concepts and Language  

Useful Quotes and Terms

The proper therapeutic relationship. . . does not require **transference** but a relationship of mutual trust and respect (Dreikurs, p. 7).

When the goals and interests of the patient and therapist clash, no satisfactory relationship can be established. . . What appears as **resistance** constitutes a discrepancy between the goals of the therapist and those of the patient (Dreikurs, p. 7).

*Psychotherapy is an exercise in cooperation and a test of cooperation. . . . We must work out [the client’s] attitudes and difficulties together. . . We must cooperate with him in finding his **mistakes*** (Adler, 1964, p. 340). Beames comments: *the therapist striving for more growth toward social interest, the client feeling discouraged at the thought of further forward movement (“resistance”)*

*Only the activity of an individual who plays the game, cooperates, and shares in life can be designated as **courage*** (Adler, 1964, p. 166).

**Courage** is but one side of **social interest**. (Adler, 1964, p. 342).

**Feelings** always agree with the **goal of superiority**, and should not be regarded as arguments (Adler, 1969, p. 216).

. . . the various ways individuals struggle to **compensate** for assumed ideas of **inferiority** (Adler, as cited in Griffith & Powers, p. 12).

**Emotions**. . . have a definite goal and direction (Adler, 1957, p. 209).

Adlerians are . . . interested in **emotions** . . . as signposts to the individual’s **mistaken notions** and their intentions. It is the messages individuals send themselves that build the energy they use to act (Sweeney, p. 20).

Client **disturbances in the relationship**: fear of being defective or exposed, of disapproval. **Client defenses**: externalization, blind spots, excessive self-control, arbitrary rightness, elusiveness and confusion, contrition and self-disparagement, suffering as manipulation (Dinkmeyer & Sperry).

**Immediacy**, [which] means expressing how you are experiencing the client in the here and now, is used to help clients become aware of what they are communicating both verbally and nonverbally (Dinkmeyer & Sperry, p. 195).

**Private or faulty logic**: Convictions that run counter to social interest, that are unique to the individual and do not facilitate useful, constructive belonging (Carlson, Watts, & Maniacci, p. 278).

**Safeguarding** refers to the mistaken movement of the discouraged person in thought, feeling, and action in response to perceived threats to his or her self-esteem . . . Safeguards may be expressed . . . relative to the individual’s . . . diminished sense of and connectedness (Griffith & Powers, p. 89). Ansbacher & Ansbacher comment: *All neurotic symptoms have as their object safeguarding the patient’s self-esteem and thereby also the life-line* (p. 263).
Transferential reaction is when a client moves away from the [treatment] goals. . . [and] may be displaying in-session dynamics that are mirroring their life style issues (Carlson, Watts, & Maniacci, p. 114).

Biased perception: People tend to filter new experiences according to their expectations; . . . [they] create new experiences that will reinforce their self-fulfilling prophesies about themselves, others, and life (Sweeney, p. 129).

Life style: The attitudes and convictions people have about how to find their place in the world; the instructions for how to belong (Carlson, Watts, & Maniacci, p. 277).

Felt minus: the universally-experienced inferiority feelings of incompleteness, of being below, of being . . . ‘less than’ others or . . . what life requires. Fictional plus: subjectively-constructed image of maturity, mastery, completion, fulfillment, or perfection which the individual strives to attain is his or struggle to move away from the felt minus situation (Griffith & Powers, p. 39).

Dreikurs (1967). Psychodynamics, psychotherapy, and counseling.
Griffith & Powers (2007). The lexicon of Adlerian psychology: 106 terms associated with the individual psychology of Alfred Adler (2nd Ed.).

Judith Pinke, LMFT
LifeSeasons Psychotherapy, LLC
courageothrive@gmail.com 612.518.8840

Renee Segal, LMFT
Segal Psychotherapy, LLC
segalpsychotherapy@gmail.com 612.875.6416

Kurt M. Gehlert, PhD, LP
University of St. Thomas
gehl6119@stthomas.edu 651.962.4656