

Guiding the Child

**On the principles of Individual
Psychology**

Alfred Adler

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On the principles of Individual Psychology

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Guiding the Child

First published in 1930 this book was written under the leadership and inspiration of Alfred Adler. He and a group of physicians and educators organized twenty-eight child guidance clinics in Vienna, Berlin and Munich in the years prior to publication. Conducted according to the tenets of Individual Psychology, these clinics revealed many new and stimulating problems that they felt were as applicable to conditions in America and England at the time as in the experimental countries. The book was designed as an organized and connected account of the problems, accomplishments and failures encountered in the daily work, reported from actual experience by the experts in charge. Adler edited the volume and assigned each subject to the specialist in that field. The result was designed to be of value to the welfare worker, the physician, and the forward-looking parent of the time. Today it can be read and enjoyed in its historical context.

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GUIDING THE CHILD

**ON THE PRINCIPLES OF
INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY**

By the same Author

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN NATURE

THE CASE OF MISS R;

THE INTERPRETATION OF A LIFE STORY

THE SCIENCE OF LIVING

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

By Alfred Adler and Associates

WHAT LIFE SHOULD MEAN TO YOU

GUIDING THE CHILD

ON THE PRINCIPLES OF
INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY

by

ALFRED ADLER

and Associates

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

BENJAMIN GINZBURG

PH.D.

LONDON

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PREFATORY NOTE

Under the leadership and inspiration of Dr. Alfred Adler, a group of physicians and educators have in the last few years organized twenty-eight child guidance clinics in Vienna, Berlin and Munich. Conducted according to the tenets of Individual Psychology, these clinics have revealed many new and stimulating problems that are as applicable to conditions in America and England as in the experimental countries. The procedure and results of the actual day-by-day work is given in this volume.

GUIDING THE CHILD is not a symposium. It is designed as an organized and connected account of the problems, accomplishments and failures encountered in the daily work, reported from actual experience by the experts in charge. Dr. Adler has edited the volume and assigned each subject to the specialist in that field, to the end that there may be no omission and no repetition. The result is a closely knit account of inestimable

PREFATORY NOTE

value to the welfare worker, the physician, and the forward-looking parent. The book does not sacrifice fact to popular appeal, but at the same time, it has been carefully prepared to meet the needs of the individual parent as well as the progressive group worker.

THE VIENNA CHILD GUIDANCE CLINICS

By

REGINE SEIDLER *and* DR. LADISLAUS ZILAH

THE first child guidance clinic along the lines of Individual Psychology was organized in Vienna by Dr. Alfred Adler. The example of Dr. Adler was followed by Dr. Leonard Seif, the chairman of the Munich Section of the International Association for Individual Psychology, who in 1922 established a similar center in Munich. Since then the number of such clinics has been rapidly growing, not only in Vienna and Munich, but also in other cities.

The establishment of the Vienna clinics owes its origin to a general need of social service as well as to a pedagogical problem. The enormous mental and material devastations brought about by the world war made it necessary for the state, for the communities, and for a large number of social and charitable organizations to turn their

GUIDING THE CHILD

attention to the prevention of delinquency among children and youths. This task was approached with great understanding and devotion, especially in the case of the Vienna community and of certain other cities both in Austria and in Germany. If the work was not crowned with full success, it is partly because of the organizational defects of human society, partly because the methods employed for the discovery of the mental sources of delinquency and for the removal of the factors which cause delinquency, were not always the proper ones. It was Individual Psychology which threw proper light upon the sources of backwardness, delinquency, criminality; which traced the direct line connecting delinquency and backwardness with neurosis, and which thus discovered preventive methods in its pedagogy and therapy of encouragement. Individual Psychology naturally felt qualified to deal with these larger circles of children which are not reached by the customary agencies for social welfare, circles whose members as a rule do not deem it necessary to consult a specialist whenever they are confronted with backwardness.

THE VIENNA CHILD GUIDANCE CLINICS

The establishment of educational centers for Individual Psychology sprang from the conviction that the further fate of children suffering from backwardness, character defects, and delinquency, is above all determined by the enlightenment and education of their educators through the methods of Individual Psychology. The work of the child guidance clinic begins wherever the knowledge of the “professional” educators—of parents, teachers, and to a certain extent of physicians—is not sufficient to remove the educational difficulties of the child so as to encourage the child to remain on the useful side of life or to return to it.

That these clinics answer urgent needs, can best be seen from the interest which the Vienna teachers’ and parents’ associations take in them, constantly trying to increase their numbers. The fact that the importance of the pedagogical need—which was one of the factors in the establishment of our Vienna clinics—was recognized by a large number of the Vienna teachers as early as 1920, is proof of their understanding of educational problems, their professional idealism, their social sympathy and devotion. As