

Jason Ronda

1. Adler defined social interest as “a striving for a form of community which must be thought of as everlasting, as it could be thought of as if mankind had reached the goal of perfection.” This quote can be interpreted as a sense of kinship and belonging with other people and was the ultimate goal according to Adler. If we help other people with their goals, we help ourselves. Part of social interest implies that we should respect all other human beings and at the very least give everyone some form of consideration, as while we all have the potential for social interest, it means nothing without respect or consideration.

Adler probably believes that social interest is good for people because he studied the traits of people with high social interest, believing them to not only be better for other people, but were happier overall. People with a strong sense of social interest tend to be more altruistic, trustworthy, socially adjusted, nurturant, cooperative, and helpful compared to those who don't have a hush sense of social interest. Those who have high social interest also report that they have less depression, anxiety, emotional instability, loneliness, destructive narcissism, and hostility compared to those who have low social interest. To support this theory, several studies of jailed criminals reported that the inmates who have done a bunch of things had lower scores of social interest than those who weren't criminals. In another study, college students who with a strong sense of social interest were supposedly more satisfied with the way their lives were going, and had closer relationships; while those with lower social interest had less close relationships and were reportedly not as satisfied. In relationships, those with social interest are more mature than their lower social interest counterparts, who are also more likely to manipulate and be selfish with their partners.

2. The first major lifestyle type is the Ruling Type. People who are from the ruling type tend to be aggressive and dominant towards others. Members of the ruling type lack social interest and courage. When they try to be superior to others, they do whatever they can to get there, that includes exploitation, manipulation, and other harmful methods to get what they desire. When ruling type people are children, they want to be portrayed as strongest, leaving out children they believe are stronger than them, and including those they believe to be weaker than them. When they get upset, they get angry and act exactly how one would describe having a tantrum. When ruling types become adults, they still want to be a dominant force in their lives in multiple aspects, whether it be work, family, or any other aspect of their life.

The second major type is the getting type. Getting type people tend to be somewhat passive in their life, dependent on others, not wanting to solve their own problems, and wanting others to take that responsibility from them. You would think of them as spoiled children, or at least very dependent growing up, not really knowing how to do things, nor do they have confidence in doing things for themselves. They tend to be charming, and get what they want through persuasion.

The third major type is the avoiding type. People from the avoiding type try to avoid the problems in their lives, mostly because they lack the confidence to actually confront their problems head on. They may tend to sidestep their problems, by which they technically do not fail. Other than conflict, they also try avoiding people and the parts of life that can potentially bring conflict. They may be self absorbed, or even delude themselves into thinking that they are superior than what they truly are.

The last major type is the socially useful type. People from the socially useful types tend to actually exhibit healthy behavior due to having a relatively happy upbringing. These people also tend to show more social interest than members of the other three groups, showing more consideration and respect to others, unlike the ruling type. They are more likely to solve their problems head on compared to the avoidant and getting type. They tend to be better people overall and are more likely to indulge in activities that increase social interest.

8. Explain the origins of neurotic behavior in early family experiences.

According to Adler, people who exhibit neurotic behavior usually developed faulty styles of life. This type of behavior can develop from being raised in ways that were either full of neglect, pampering, or rejection. The parents may have been incongruent when raising their child; sometimes being pampering and rejecting them. The parent could have also been neglectful, detached, or even followed an authoritarian parenting style. Because of this inconsistent behavior, the children grow up to be anxious and insecure. To deal with these feelings, they develop coping mechanisms, ways to protect themselves from the world. Pampering children can also lead to this type of behavior. While pampering on the surface level sounds like a harmless way to parent, indulging in whatever whims they desire, it can be very troubling during their development. The child can grow up to be narcissistic or entitled when they don't have to work for anything that they want, they also develop no sense of social interest. They are afraid of their inferiority, not wanting anyone to discover they are inferior, nor do they want anyone, including themselves, to feel like they are inferior. They would rather spend their time protecting themselves and their image, than trying to participate in society. They do not care as much about society because they are too afraid of what society thinks of them, afraid of what will happen when their mask drops.