

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

ScholarWorks@UARK

Rehabilitation, Human Resources and
Communication Disorders Faculty Publications
and Presentations

Rehabilitation, Human Resources and
Communication Disorders

2020

Using an Adventure Therapy Activity to Assess the Adlerian Lifestyle

Danny L. McCarty
University of South Alabama

David D. Christian
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, ddchrist@uark.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/rhrcpub>

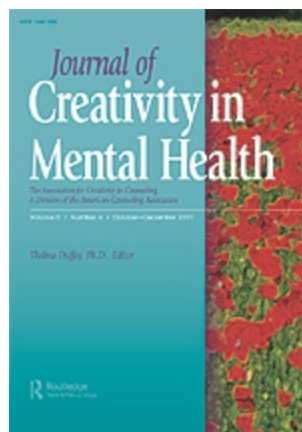


Part of the [Applied Behavior Analysis Commons](#), [Counseling Psychology Commons](#), and the [Counselor Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Danny L. McCarty & David D. Christian (2020) Using an Adventure Therapy Activity to Assess the Adlerian Lifestyle, *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 15:3, 393-404, DOI: 10.1080/15401383.2019.1697405

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Rehabilitation, Human Resources and Communication Disorders at ScholarWorks@UARK. It has been accepted for inclusion in Rehabilitation, Human Resources and Communication Disorders Faculty Publications and Presentations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UARK. For more information, please contact scholar@uark.edu.



Ubuntu: Using an Adventure Therapy Activity to Assess the Adlerian Lifestyle

Journal:	<i>Journal of Creativity in Mental Health</i>
Manuscript ID	WCMH-2018-0080
Manuscript Type:	Creative Interventions in Counseling
Keywords:	Adlerian theory, Adventure therapy, Lifestyle analysis, Ubuntu, Creative assessments



Abstract

The lifestyle is a central concept in Adlerian theory necessary for understanding a client and the purpose of behavior. Although there are a variety of methods counselors can employ to explore the lifestyle, to date, no literature addressing the use of Adventure Therapy (AT) exists.

Adventure Therapy is a creative and interactive mode of counseling consistent with Adlerian theory that uses creativity and experiential activities to foster insight, awareness, and growth in clients. This article introduces a creative way to explore the client's lifestyle using an AT activity called Ubuntu cards. The authors provide an overview of Adlerian theory, define Adlerian lifestyle, and explore traditional methods of assessing the lifestyle. The article also includes a detailed outline for using Ubuntu cards to assess a client's lifestyle.

Keywords: Adlerian theory, adventure therapy, lifestyle analysis, Ubuntu, creative assessments

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

2

Ubuntu: Using Adventure Therapy to Assess the Adlerian Lifestyle

Adlerian theory has a long history of valuing creativity. According to Adler (1938), creativity is the way that people move toward goals. He asserted that observing children at play reveals how they approach life's struggles. Adler (1929) also believed that people use creativity as they strive to overcome feelings of inferiority and find a significant place in society. Since Adler emphasized the importance of individual's creative power, it follows that current practitioners of Adlerian theory continue to value its therapeutic use.

Adler (1938) wrote about creative power in two ways: as free-creative power and as restricted-creative power. He proposed that the child begins with free-creative power. There are a multitude of paths to reach any goal, and the child uses free-creative power to choose any of these paths. He pointed out that a template for living begins to form as the child makes choices using free-creative power. Adlerian counselors would call this template a lifestyle (Shulman & Mosak, 1995). Adler (1938) further explained that once the child forms a lifestyle, the child uses restricted-creative power to maintain that chosen lifestyle. Therefore, creative power both creates the lifestyle and, later, becomes bound to the lifestyle in such a way that creativity is now used to maintain the lifestyle—thus moving the creative power from free to restricted.

Interestingly, Adler (1927) did not view creativity only as a useful tool people use to create their lifestyles, he also equated it with the soul. The soul is the creative force that people use to move toward their goals. He taught that the soul is where free will resides, and that free will becomes bound to developed lifestyles. The soul, therefore, shapes itself by creatively seeking to meet its goal (Adler, 1927).

According to Adlerian theorists, creativity in the counseling process is key to therapeutic progress (Chandler, 1991; Kern & Curlette, 2006). Because children use play to creatively form

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

3

1
2
3 and maintain their lifestyles, it follows that Adlerian counselors can use creative play, in the
4 form of Adventure Therapy (AT), to alter the lifestyle of an adult. Adlerian therapists often use
5 AT concepts to guide the therapeutic process (Christian, Perryman, & Portrie-Bethke, 2017;
6 Gillis & Dagley, 1985; Glass & Myers, 2001). Adventure Therapy utilizes the creativity of play
7 through the intentional, prescriptive use of kinesthetic activities that foster therapeutic growth in
8 participants (Folan, 2012; Gass, Gillis, & Russell, 2012). One of the key elements of both AT
9 and Adlerian theory is the prescriptive use of metaphors (Folan et al., 2012; Mosak & Pietro,
10 2006; Schoel & Maizell, 2002).

11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22 The purpose of this article is to outline the use of Ubuntu cards, a well-known AT
23 activity, in assessing and altering the client's lifestyle. McCormick and Ortiz (2014) created
24 Ubuntu cards, a deck of 54 uniquely imaged, double-sided playing cards, that counselors can use
25 in AT. One side has multiple images, while the other side has a single image. All cards are
26 connected and share at least one image on the multi-image side in common with every other card
27 in the deck. An example of an activity is for clients to use the single imaged side as a metaphor
28 for something important in their lives (McCormick & Ortiz, 2014). In this article we will
29 describe how Adlerian counselors can use Ubuntu cards to explore a client's lifestyle through the
30 use of metaphor.
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41

42 Before explaining the Ubuntu card method, it is important to first outline theoretical
43 foundations of Adlerian theory and explore the concept of Adlerian lifestyle. Next, we will
44 discuss traditional methods of assessing the lifestyle. Finally, we will explain the rationale,
45 assumptions, objectives, and process of using Ubuntu cards.
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Theoretical Foundations

Teleology is a major theoretical component for Adlerian counselors. Behavior has no meaning apart from a goal—people choose behavior they believe will help them belong and move from a position of inferiority to one of superiority (Adler, 1929; Sweeny, 2009). Shulman and Mosak (1995) wrote: “the wish to belong and to be accepted is a basic goal of human behavior” (p. 29). Thus, Adlerian counselors view all behavior as purposeful movement toward the goal of belonging and acceptance.

Adlerians also use phenomenology as a major theoretical component. According to Adler (1938), our senses alter the objective data we receive from the external world, resulting in imperfect interpretations of reality. Adler (1927, 1938) suggested that there are a multitude of interpretations for every experience and that the way people interpret reality affects them in the same way as if their interpretations of reality were accurate. For example: if a person mistakenly believed his wife was having an affair, then he would experience the same jealousy or anger that he would experience if his wife was actually having an affair. The subjective view of the world that each individual holds is of utmost importance to Adlerian theory (Manaster & Corsini, 2009).

Holism also undergirds Adlerian theory. According to Sweeney (2009), Adlerian theorists conceptualize the mind and body as a whole rather than separate parts. The concept of holism is not limited to the individual person, but includes the complete set of relationships people have, along with the cultural context in which people live. The concepts of holism and teleology combine to explain that all of people’s thoughts, feelings, and actions move toward the same goal. At the same time, the concepts of holism, teleology, and phenomenology combine to

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

5

1
2
3 explain that the way people construct their methods of striving toward their goals is dependent
4
5 on their unique interpretations of themselves, others, and the world.
6

Lifestyle

7
8
9
10 Mosak and Pietro (2006) explained that the lifestyle is similar to a person's personality.
11
12 Each person's lifestyle is unique and the unified whole of an individual's thoughts, behaviors,
13
14 and emotions (Sweeney, 2009). Using a metaphor of a tree to describe a person's lifestyle, Adler
15
16 (1929) explained that a tree does not grow the same in every environment. He pointed out that
17
18 people often only notice the pattern of the tree when seeing the tree in an unusual environment.
19
20 Likewise, people often do not notice their lifestyles until they encounter difficulties in life that
21
22 bring them to counseling. In order to help clients, Adlerian counselors must understand the
23
24 person; but to understand the person, counselors must first assess the lifestyle (Adler, 1929).
25
26
27

Birth of a Lifestyle

28
29
30
31 The lifestyle is born from social interest and feelings of inferiority (Murdock, 2009).
32
33 Social interest is the desire to belong in a way that contributes to the overall good of society
34
35 (Sweeney, 2009). Although Adlerian counselors believe that the potential for social interest is
36
37 inborn in all people, it must be fostered for it to develop and be present in everyday interactions
38
39 (Adler, 1927). The root of feelings of inferiority is people's inability to survive alone (Adler,
40
41 1929). Infants and small children are completely dependent on others for survival. People begin
42
43 life literally inferior, and strive for superiority in order to cope with life and overcome its
44
45 difficulties (Adler, 1929).
46
47
48

49
50 Adler (1927) asserted that the only meaningful way to solve the problem of inferiority is
51
52 through a socially-interested striving for community. When people strive for superiority with
53
54 social interest, their lifestyle is functioning in a useful way (Adler, 1929). In summary, people
55
56
57
58
59

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

6

begin life with a need to bridge the gap between feeling inferior and striving for superiority, and construct their lifestyle through this striving. The lifestyle is the bridge people construct so that they can move from a place of inferiority to a place of superiority (Shulman & Mosak, 1995).

Mental health can be measured by the extent to which people strive to meet life's difficulties through social interest (Adler, 1929). The lifestyle is composed of convictions about people, the world, and the self. When counselors understand these convictions, they can know the purpose behind client behavior (Shulman & Mosak, 1995).

Lifestyle Convictions

Mosak and Pietro (2006) conceptualized the lifestyle as the total collection of a person's life-convictions. Sweeney (2009) divided lifestyle convictions into four major categories. The first three, (1) *I am*, (2) *others are*, and (3) *life or the world is*, expose the client's goal, resulting in the fourth category, a *therefore I* statement. An example of these four categories is (1) *I am incompetent*, (2) *people are judgmental*, (3) *the world is a hard place that favors the strong*, (4) *therefore, I must not allow anyone to know my deficiencies*. As the example shows, a person's beliefs about self, others, and the world is a syllogism that reveals a person's lifestyle. Before outlining our new method, we will first discuss traditional methods of exploring the lifestyle.

Lifestyle Assessment

There are three traditional methods for assessing the lifestyle: the family constellation, early recollections, and the life tasks (Adler, 1938; Shulman & Mosak, 1995; Sweeney, 2009). The first method Shulman and Mosak (1995) discussed was the family constellation. They prescribed a formal interview process for the collection of a five-part family constellation: sibling constellation, family values, family atmosphere, parental behavior, and family roles.

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

7

1
2
3 According to Shulman and Mosak (1995), while receiving the sibling constellation it is
4 important to pay attention to competition between siblings and birth order. In assessing the
5 client's family values, it is important to pay attention to implicit versus explicit values. They
6 also suggested that clinicians look for any unsatisfactory values and contradicting values.
7
8 Important things to consider while assessing the family atmosphere are the overall mood that was
9 present in the family of origin and the nature of rank order among the family members. In
10 addition, they suggested that clinicians should look for family myths and family secrets, and the
11 way that parents interacted with each other. Another important piece is family roles, which are
12 prescribed behaviors for each person of the family dependent on whether they are the father,
13 mother, or child, and dependent on their birth order (Shulman & Mosak, 1995).
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

26 The second method prescribed for assessing the lifestyle is the method of receiving early
27 recollections (Shuman & Mosak, 1995; Sweeney, 2009). Adler (1929) indicated that early
28 recollections might be the most effective method for uncovering and understanding the central
29 parts of people's lifestyle. People develop their lifestyle by their efforts in moving away from
30 feelings of inferiority toward feelings of superiority. All behavior, even emotions, combine as a
31 unified movement toward superiority that is evident in early recollections. These memories
32 provide hints about what difficulties people encountered in early development as well as how
33 they moved toward their life goal (Adler, 1929).
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44

45 Early Recollections are a projection test that require no materials. Mosak and Pietro
46 (2006) noted that the reason early recollections are considered a projective test is because of the
47 way memory works. They explained that memory is encoded in the short-term memory storage.
48 Once the memory is encoded, it is sent to the long-term memory storage. They further explained
49 that when clients remember an event, they are retrieving the memory from the long-term storage
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

8

1
2
3 and bringing it back into their short-term storage. Because the short-term memory storage
4 encodes memory, the memories that are recalled to the short-term storage will be recoded;
5 therefore, memories likely change every time clients recall them (Gordon, 1989; Mosak &
6 Pietro, 2006).
7
8
9
10
11

12 It is important to note that early recollections reveal more information than other
13 projective tests because other tests reveal the present, while early recollections reveal the past,
14 present, and future (Mosak & Pietro, 2006). Clark (2002) described three benefits of exploring
15 early recollections as a projective test. First, in contrast with other projective tests, exploring
16 early recollections do not require much effort from clients. Second, while clients can experience
17 other projective tests as an interruption to the therapy process, they are more likely to experience
18 the exploration of early recollections as a natural flow of therapy. Third, this technique can be
19 especially useful in counseling people from cultures where story telling is a valued part of their
20 experience (Clark, 2002).
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32

33 Due to the fact that continuous memory does not develop until after the age of nine,
34 Adlerian counselors ask clients to share memories prior to that age (Mosak & Pietro, 2006;
35 Shuman & Mosak, 1995). Specifically, before continuous memory, fewer details of events are
36 retained resulting in memories more susceptible to reprocessing when brought back into the
37 short-term memory storage. Clients remember only part of the experience and thus must fill in
38 the missing parts, often with added emotions. Thus, it is more accurate to say that clients are
39 reconstructing events than simply remembering them (Mosak & Pietro, 2006).
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48

49 Mosak and Pietro (2006) explained that early recollections inform people about what
50 behaviors go with certain situations and reveal issues needing attention. Early recollections give
51 a holistic representation of what clients perceive to be important, of how they should act, and of
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

9

1
2
3 what they believe. Mosak and Pietro (2006) gave three specific reasons why early recollections
4 reveal lifestyle that included the short-term memory's role in reprocessing, the holistic nature of
5 humans, and the purposive nature of behavior moving people toward specific goals. Therefore,
6 the behavior of encoding and reprocessing memories also serves a purpose: it reinforces lifestyle.
7
8
9

10
11
12 Another way to view a person's lifestyle is to consider the major life tasks. Adler (1938)
13 suggested that the exploration of these tasks will reveal the usefulness of a person's lifestyle. He
14 discussed three major life tasks that everyone encounters: work, communal life, and love. Over
15 time, Adlerian theorists have modified and added to these tasks, resulting in five major life tasks:
16 work, friendship, spirituality, self, and love (Sweeney, 2009). Adler (1938) stressed that an
17 acceptable degree of social interest is necessary to appropriately meet these tasks and that the
18 attitude in which people work on these tasks reveals their lifestyle.
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27

28 According to Mosak and Pietro (2006) the work-task highlights how a person strives to
29 meet the common needs of society, and satisfaction comes from the lifestyle matching the
30 chosen profession. The friendship-task is how people strive to belong and interact with others.
31 The spiritual-task concerns people's relationship with God or with the universe and includes any
32 meaning they give to life. And the self-task highlights people's relationship with themselves,
33 which can be revealed by completing the following sentence: "I _____ me" (Mosak & Pietro, p.
34 17). Manaster and Corsini (2009) suggested that a healthy relationship with the self requires
35 people to accept their imperfections. According to Adler (1938), the love-task, perhaps the
36 purest example of social interest, is met by a complete devotion to another person. After the
37 lifestyle assessment is completed, a lifestyle summary is given clients in the form of the lifestyle
38 syllogism mentioned above.
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Ubuntu Cards

Rationale

There are a variety of ways to assess the lifestyle. For example, Disque and Bitter (1998) proposed using the narrative concept of dominant stories to explore the lifestyle where the client and counselor co-create a different story or another lifestyle. It is important to remember that counselors assess the lifestyle by how clients express their story, not just by the content of the story. Clients describe their lifestyle as if it is an actual entity and verbally interact with it, thus creating a bond with their lifestyle; and as this relationship changes, so does their approach to life (Disque & Bitter, 1998).

Cosgrove and Ballou (2006) posited that the Montessori concept of sensorial material can intensify clients' expression of feelings during the gathering of early recollections. During this process, counselors work with clients to assess memories from early childhood through more than verbal means, such as by introducing smells to clients. When clients give sensory descriptions in their early recollections, the accounts are more apt to display the feelings associated with those memories (Cosgrove & Ballou, 2006).

Using the Ubuntu card activity to explore lifestyle themes through metaphor is consistent with the aforementioned Adlerian concepts of teleology, phenomenology, and holism. Recall that based on those three theoretical foundations, all thoughts, feelings, and actions combine as one force striving for the same goal, and the way people construct their method of striving toward their goal is dependent on their unique interpretation of themselves and of the world. Similarly, clients purposefully choose metaphors in the Ubuntu card activity that help explain the goal(s) of maintaining their lifestyles. Thus, counselors can expect lifestyle themes to be imbedded within the activity, ready to be harvested within cooperative therapeutic relationships.

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

11

Objectives

The creative use of Ubuntu cards aims to accomplish the following four objectives:

- (1) Activate the creative power within the client.
- (2) Reveal the client's lifestyle.
- (3) Summarize the client's lifestyle into the form of the lifestyle syllogism.
- (4) Identify goals to pursue within the context of a cooperative therapeutic relationship.

Assumptions

The creative use of Ubuntu cards includes the following two assumptions:

- (1) People are holistic beings who view life in their own unique ways and who act in accordance with their lifestyles.
- (2) Clients will project their lifestyles onto the Ubuntu cards via their identified metaphors.

The Process

In this section we will provide a brief description of the how to explore clients' lifestyles using Ubuntu cards. For detailed instructions on the process, refer to Table 1. First, the counselor should introduce the Ubuntu cards as a way to help tell stories. Next, the counselor hands half the deck of cards to the client, both spread the Ubuntu cards on the table, single-image side up, so that all cards are visible. Inviting the client to help lay out the cards expedites the process and fosters a cooperative therapeutic relationship. The counselor then invites the client to pick cards with an image that helps them tell a story about self, others, and the world.

The first prompt to pick cards is meant to uncover the client's self-concept—i.e., beliefs about who they are and what they are like. The second prompt is meant to uncover their self-ideal—i.e., beliefs about what they should be, or do, to belong. The third and fourth prompts are

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

12

1
2
3 meant to uncover their perception of life and others. Detailed instructions for this process are
4
5 outlined in Table 1.
6

7
8 Finally, the counselor and client discover a set of lifestyle convictions from the stories
9
10 told through the four to twelve cards. Recall that the goal is to formulate, from the cards chosen,
11
12 a summary lifestyle syllogism. Although the syllogism should be organized in a way that best
13
14 fits each particular client, a flexible template that counselors might use is: “*I am _____, others*
15
16 *are _____, the world is _____, therefore I must _____.*” The counselor and client use the
17
18 metaphors gained through this activity to establish therapeutic goals that guide the counseling
19
20 process.
21
22

23
24 For additional exploration, counselors can use prompts to reveal clients’ positions in
25
26 relation to each of the major life tasks. For this step, the counselor prompts the client to pick
27
28 cards showing their perception of work, love, friendship, and spirituality. The prompt for the
29
30 task of self should be to ask them to pick a card that completes the sentence “*I _____ me.*”
31
32 Having the client complete this statement reveals information regarding their level of satisfaction
33
34 with their lifestyle.
35
36

Case Example

Self-Concept

37
38
39
40
41
42 Clark is a 43-year old, Caucasian male construction worker. After losing his wife 9 years
43
44 ago, he has focused his attention on being a single parent to his teenage daughter. This is Clark’s
45
46 second counseling session with Elizabeth, who, after establishing therapeutic rapport has decided
47
48 to conduct a life-style assessment with Clark using Ubuntu cards. Elizabeth begins by
49
50 introducing the activity and then both her and Clark lay the cards single-image side up. She
51
52 invites Clark to pick cards to help him tell a story about who he is and what he is like. Clark
53
54
55
56
57
58
59

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

13

1
2
3 chooses cards with images of a squirrel, a safety hook, a nail, a stirrer, and a fire extinguisher.
4
5 He explains that he picked a squirrel first saying, "I like animals and the outdoors, I like hunting.
6
7 I spent a lot of my childhood hunting squirrels with my dog. It was one of the most enjoyable
8
9 times of my life. I'm a hunter. It's the thrill of the chase, the enjoyment of watching my dog
10
11 work. He was my companion and best friend. I never got bored doing it."
12
13

14
15 Next, he explains that he picked the safety hook because it reminded him of hiking and of
16
17 its utility. He says that he picked the nail because he likes building things. Further, it reminded
18
19 him of his faith and family, stating that, "I like carpentry and Jesus was a carpenter. My dad was
20
21 always building stuff and he taught me how when I was young." Further, he thinks the nail
22
23 highlights a strength, saying, "I'm good at building stuff. I can build a porch or shed or tables or
24
25 chairs" as well as a weakness, "I'm not good at the craftsmanship, the finishing side of it. I can't
26
27 make stuff look pretty, I don't have the patience."
28
29

30
31 As Elizabeth attempts to move to the next step, exploring Clark's view of others, he
32
33 instead chooses two additional cards: the stirrer because he likes to cook and the fire extinguisher
34
35 because he prioritizes safety saying, "I keep a first aid kit with me at all times. When I enter a
36
37 building, I pay attention to where the emergency exits, fire extinguishers, and first aid kits are."
38
39

Perception of Others and the World/Life

40
41
42 Elizabeth then asks him to pick cards to help him tell a story about what others are like.
43
44 He selects cards with images of an ant, a magnifying glass, a vinyl record, and a calculator.
45
46 Regarding the ant, Clark says, "People are always busy running around doing stuff that doesn't
47
48 matter. They're annoying. It's crowded. Too much traffic." He uses the image of the
49
50 magnifying glass to say, "People are nosy, like trying to tell me how to raise my child or
51
52 something, it's really none of their business." The vinyl record applies to his view of people as
53
54
55
56
57
58
59

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

14

1
2
3 loud and obnoxious. He reports that the calculator represents technology and that “people are
4
5 becoming dependent on technology doing stuff for them, instead of using their brain.”
6

7
8 Next, Clark uses two cards to help tell a story about what life and the world are like: a
9
10 dice and a race car. He uses the image of dice to describe how life is a gamble and you never
11
12 know what will happen. He uses the image of the race car to describe the speed of life saying,
13
14 “Life moves really fast. If you really think about it, you'll do the same thing over and over.
15
16 Bills, work, money. You buy things you can afford, but then something happens and you can't
17
18 afford it anymore.”
19
20

Self-Ideal

21
22
23
24 Next, Elizabeth asks Clark to select cards that help tell a story about what he should do or
25
26 be to belong in the world. He chooses cards with images of a rabbit, a hammer, and an army
27
28 figurine. He uses the rabbit to describe how he could be more loving and sensitive to the desires
29
30 of his family and others. He uses the image of the hammer to state that he should work hard and
31
32 be productive. He then uses the army figurine to speak of leadership stating “I should've been a
33
34 soldier. I might've felt better about myself. I think about doing things with the mentality of a
35
36 soldier.” When Elizabeth invites him to tell about times he has thought of doing things like a
37
38 soldier, Clark states, “It has to do with leadership and with obeying orders. When it comes to
39
40 leadership, I try to lead the way I would expect someone to lead me.” He explains that there are
41
42 three styles of leadership: directive, participating, and delegating. When Elizabeth asks him
43
44 which leadership style he thinks is best for people to follow, Clark responds, “When you're
45
46 interacting with people, all three styles of leadership need to be in place. Different situations call
47
48 for different styles of leadership.”
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

15

Syllogism

Elizabeth and Clark then attempt to create a lifestyle syllogism. At first Clark is unsure how to proceed. Elizabeth mentions that some things that stood out to her were the outdoors and safety. She then encourages Clark to use the cards to create a sentence by moving them into a line in front of him. Clark says, "I am a faithful protector and provider." He explains that the fire extinguisher is a metaphor for protector, while the stirrer, nail, and squirrel are metaphors for provider.

Elizabeth then invites Clark to form a sentence that describes other people. Clark quickly responds, "There's too many nosy, loud, obnoxious people in the world." Next, Elizabeth invites him to make a sentence with his cards about life and the world to which he responds, "You never know what you're going to get. But it will happen fast. And it will happen over and over again." Finally, in response to what he should do or be, Clark states, "I should work hard and be more sensitive."

In response to Clark's statements, Elizabeth says, "On the one hand, you protect and provide. That's a big part of who you are. On the other hand, people are annoying, and they can't take care of themselves." Clark replies, "Sometimes I feel obligated to take care of people, because I see that they can't take care of themselves." Elizabeth then attempts to complete the syllogism by saying, "You are prepared for life. You are a protector and provider. The world's a dangerous and unpredictable place that others are unprepared for and thus in need of rescue. Therefore, you feel obligated to protect and provide for them."

Degree of Contentment with Lifestyle

Clark agrees with the syllogism and Elizabeth asks him to pick a card to complete the sentence, "I ____ me." He selects two cards, one with the image of a frog and one with a

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

16

1
2
3 scorpion. He says the frog represents a poisonous frog because he poisons himself and the
4
5 scorpion represents biting insects because people hate them. He tells Elizabeth, "I hate me. Not
6
7 all the time, but sometimes because of the way I am with other people."
8
9

10 Elizabeth then asks him how content he is with his approach to life. Clark responds by
11
12 telling a story about helping someone out when he really did not want to and when it interfered
13
14 with his ability to care for himself. He says that, "I felt good that I helped someone, but I felt
15
16 sorry for them because they could not do something that simple for themselves. It seemed like I
17
18 was having to save them from their own stupidity." Elizabeth added to the syllogism by stating,
19
20 "Although you feel obligated to protect and provide for people, you resent their need for help
21
22 and hate your inability to protect and provide for yourself, while doing so for others." Clark
23
24 agreed. They were then able to formulate counseling goals relevant to Clark's lifestyle.
25
26
27

Psychology of Use

28
29
30 In keeping with the teleological nature of Adlerian theory, Clark and Elizabeth used
31
32 Ubuntu cards to gauge his level of social interest and the usefulness of his approach to life.
33
34 Although Clark's behavior often meets the physical needs of others, he is discouraging them and
35
36 perpetuating their inability to approach life by not allowing them to care for themselves. As a
37
38 result, Clark is also discouraged. Elizabeth and Clark discuss how his approach to life allows
39
40 him to avoid caring for himself. Specifically, by protecting and providing for others in a
41
42 dangerous and unpredictable world, he has created an alibi for his perceived inability or
43
44 unwillingness to care for himself.
45
46
47

48
49 Clark states that he wants to continue helping others, without overextending himself.
50
51 Thus, they establish the following goal of counseling: increase Clark's courage to approach life,
52
53 specifically the task of self, as well as his belief in the ability of others to approach life.
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

17

1
2
3 . As steps toward that goal, they decide to focus on Clark's motivation by exploring what
4 he gains from helping people, as well as his methods by exploring how he can help people
5 prepare to meet their own needs in a dangerous and unpredictable world. Ultimately, Clark's
6 social interest will increase as he develops courage to approach the task of self, and learns to help
7 others while not allowing them to abuse his goodwill (Adler, 1979).
8
9
10
11
12
13

Conclusion

14
15 In conclusion, people's thoughts, feelings, and actions all act as one force striving for the
16 same goal(s). The way people seek to obtain their goal(s) depends on their unique perspectives
17 of self, others, and the world. People use their unique perspectives to creatively navigate the
18 world, and as they do so, they create and solidify their lifestyle. This lifestyle, or template for
19 seeking one's goal, is formed early in life and remains stable over time. An important part of the
20 Adlerian counseling process is to assess the lifestyle. After assessing the lifestyle, therapists can
21 summarize it using the following lifestyle syllogism: (1) *I am* ____, (2) *others are* ____, (3) *life*
22 *or the world is* ____, (4) *therefore I must* ____. Although there are traditional methods for
23 assessing the lifestyle this article introduced a new and creative way using Ubuntu cards. Clients
24 explore their lifestyles by choosing cards that contain images that serve as metaphors. Through
25 open dialogue about the metaphoric images, counselors and clients uncover lifestyle themes and
26 patterns that lead to counseling goals. Finally, through a collaborative therapeutic relationship,
27 clients increase their social interest thereby creating more useful lifestyles.
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

References

- Adler, A. (1927). *Understanding human nature*. Oxford, England: Greenberg.
- Adler, A. (1929). *The science of living*. Oxford, England: Greenberg.
- Adler, A. (1938). *Social interest: a challenge to mankind*. Oxford, England: Faber & Faber.
- Adler, A. (1979). *Superiority and social interest: A collection of later writings* (3rd ed.) (H. L. Ansbacher & R. R. Ansbacher, Eds.). New York: Norton.
- Chandler, C.K. (1991). Tapping creative personal power. *Individual Psychology: The Journal of Adlerian Theory, Research & Practice*, 47(2), 223-228.
- Christian, D. D., Perryman, K. L., & Portrie-Bethke, T. L. (2017). Improving the parent–adolescent relationship with adventure-based counseling: An Adlerian perspective. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Counseling*, 3(1), 44-58.
- Clark, A. J. (2002). *Early recollections: theory and practice in counseling and psychotherapy*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.
- Cosgrove, S. A., & Ballou, R. A. (2006). A complement to lifestyle assessment: Using Montessori sensorial experiences to enhance and intensify early recollections. *Journal Of Individual Psychology*, 62(1), 47-58.
- Disque, J. G., & Bitter, J. R. (1998). Integrating narrative therapy with adlerian lifestyle assessment: A case study. *Journal Of Individual Psychology*, 54(4), 431.
- Folan, N., Aubry, P., Cavaluzzi, R., Childs, L., Collinson-Runnells, S., Krimm, A., . . . Wilson, M. (2012). *The hundredth monkey: activities that inspire playful learning*. Beverly, MA: Project Adventure.
- Gillis, H. L., & Dagley, J. (1985). *Adventure-based counseling: An adlerian "Natural high."*

USING UBUNTU TO EXPLORE THE LIFESTYLE

19

- 1
2
3 Gass, M. A., Gillis, H. L., & Russell, K. C. (2012). *Adventure therapy: Theory, Research, and*
4
5 *Practice New York: Taylor and Francis, Kindle Edition.*
6
7
8 Glass, J. S., & Myers, J. E. (2001). Combining the old and the new to help adolescents:
9
10 Individual psychology and adventure-based counseling. *Journal of Mental Health*
11
12 *Counseling, 23(2)*, 104.
13
14
15 Gordon, W. C. (1989). *Learning and memory*. Belmont, CA, US: Thomson Brooks/Cole
16
17 Publishing Co.
18
19 Kern, R. M., & Curlette, W. L. (2006). Creative applications and conceptualization of individual
20
21 psychology. *Journal of Individual Psychology, 62(1)*, 1-2.
22
23
24 Manaster, G. J., & Corsini, R. J. (2009). *Individual psychology: theory and practice*. Chicago:
25
26 Adler School of Professional Psychology.
27
28 McCormick, R., & Ortiz, C. (2014). *Ubuntu activity guide*. United States: High Five Adventure
29
30 Learning Center Inc.
31
32
33 Mosak, H. H., & Pietro, R. D. (2006). *Early recollections: Interpretative method and*
34
35 *application*. New York, NY, US: Routledge.
36
37
38 Murdock, N. L. (2009). *Theories of counseling and psychotherapy: A case approach*. Upper
39
40 Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
41
42 Schoel, J., & Maizell, R. (2002). *Exploring islands of healing: New perspectives on adventure*
43
44 *based counseling*. Beverly, MA: Project Adventure.
45
46
47 Shulman, B. H., & Mosak, H. H. (1995). *Manual for life style assessment*. Bristol, PA:
48
49 Accelerated Development.
50
51 Sweeney, T. J. (2009). *Adlerian counseling and psychotherapy: A practitioner's approach* (5th
52
53 ed.). Routledge.
54
55
56
57
58
59

Table 1

A Guide for Using Ubuntu Cards to Explore the Lifestyle.

	Materials: Deck of Ubuntu; Large flat surface
STEP 1	<p>Activate the creative power within the client:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the concept of the Adlerian lifestyle. • Introduce the activity (emphasize creativity and fun) • Provide a description of the Ubuntu cards and how you will use them • For each of the following prompts, instruct the client to pick one to three cards that help tell their story. • Invite the client to help lay out cards <p>Sample statement: <i>"Today we are going to do something a bit creative and fun to help tell your story about how you view yourself, others, and the world. We are going to use these Ubuntu cards. Ubuntu cards have a multi-image side and a single image side. We will use the single image side for this activity. The images on the cards serve as metaphors that help tell a story about each prompt I give you. I'd like you to take this half of the deck and help me lay them single image side up?"</i></p>
Step 2	<p>Reveal the client's lifestyle:</p> <p><i>Self</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct the client to pick 1 to 3 cards that represents what they are like and who they are. (Remind them to take their time.) Then have client use their card(s) to tell a story about self. <p><i>Belonging</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct the client to pick 1 to 3 cards that represents what they should be or do to belong in the world. Then have client use their card(s) to tell a story about what helps them feel that they belong in the world. <p><i>Others</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct the client to pick 1 to 3 cards that represents what other people are like. Then have client use their card(s) to tell a story about what others are like. <p><i>Life/The World</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct the client to pick 1 to 3 cards that represents what the world is like. Then have client use their card(s) to tell a story about what the world is like. <p><i>Lifestyle Contentment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct the client to pick a card that completes the statement "I _____ me." <p>Sample Statement: <i>"Pick 1 to 3 cards that represents what you are like and who you are. Use the picture on the card to tell your story. Please take your time."</i> (Repeat similar statement for other prompts).</p>
Step 3	<p>Summarize the client's lifestyle by creating lifestyle syllogism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use themes and patterns present in the stories to complete blanks in the flexible template. • Flexible template: "I am _____, others are _____, the world is _____, therefore I must _____." <p>Sample statement: <i>"I am <u>vulnerable</u>, others are <u>untrustworthy</u>, the world is <u>dangerous</u>, therefore I must <u>distance myself from others to stay safe</u>."</i></p>
Step 4	<p>Identify goals of counseling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine client's level of social interest and usefulness of their lifestyle • Collaborate with client to create goal(s) of counseling • Identify specific steps to aid in goal achievement. • Keep in mind that the ultimate goal of Adlerian counseling is to foster social interest and encourage clients. <p>Sample Goal and Steps: <i>Goal: Increase client's courage to make meaningful connections with others and to engage with her community in a way that has a reciprocal positive impact.</i></p> <p><i>Steps: First, client will initiate contact with a trustworthy person in her life that she has distanced herself from. After re-establishing contact, client will invite that person to volunteer with her at a local foodbank.</i></p>

Note: Ubuntu Cards are available from <https://www.high5adventure.org>