

COURAGE/ENCOURAGEMENT/DISCOURAGEMENT

Courage is here understood as the willingness to act in line with COMMUNITY FEELING (SOCIAL INTEREST) in any situation. It is fundamental to successful ADAPTATION. To **encourage** is to promote and activate the COMMUNITY FEELING, that is, the sense of BELONGING, value, worthwhileness, and welcome in the human community. As the loss of **courage**, or **discouragement**, is understood by INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY to be the basis of MISTAKEN and dysfunctional behavior, so **encouragement** is a major part of ADLERIAN PSYCHOTHERAPY and counseling.

The **discouraged** person has the same GOAL as the person with **courage**: to triumph over the INFERIORITY FEELING and to be seen as successful and worthy of respect in the human world. However, he or she lacks the **courage** to operate on the USEFUL SIDE OF LIFE, in the fear of being exposed as deficient. The MOVEMENT toward success is then deflected toward finding a place of personal SUPERIORITY *over* others, a MOVEMENT on the USELESS SIDE, marked by pretense, evasion, DISTANCE, and posturing in NEUROTIC, SOCIOPATHIC, or PSYCHOTIC processes and operations.

The aim of INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY treatment is always to increase an individual's **courage** to meet the problems of life (p. 362).

Courage is but one side of SOCIAL INTEREST (p. 342).

We can understand by **courage** one side of COOPERATION (p. 437).

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

In every step of the treatment, we must not deviate from the path of **encouragement**. This is in accordance with the conviction of INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY, by which so much untenable vanity feels offended, that “everybody can do everything” with the exception of amazingly high achievement, about the structure of which we cannot say very much anyway (p. 342).

NEUROSIS and PSYCHOSIS are modes of expression for human beings who have lost **courage** (p. 343).

All mistaken answers [to the TASKS OF LIFE] are degrees of an infinite series of failures or abnormalities, or of the attempts of more or less **discouraged** people to solve their life-problems without the use of COOPERATION OR SOCIAL INTEREST (p. 299).

The whole outlook [of the criminal] is conditioned by a socially USELESS GOAL, just as the selection of that GOAL is conditioned by a lack of **courage** (p. 140).

Note

SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS indicate cross-references to other entries in the text. **Bold type** is used to highlight the topic of each entry when the topic is referred to in the related discussion and quotations.

Quotations above are from A. Adler (1964), *The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler*, edited and annotated by Heinz L. and Rowena R. Ansbacher, used with permission of the publisher.