Adler Graduate School
1550 East 78th Street

AGS Course 537
Advanced Counseling Skills

Summer 2015

1. Course Designation and Identifier

1.1 Adler Graduate School
1.2 Course number 537
1.3 Title Advanced Counseling Skills
1.4 Three (3) credits
1.5 Prerequisite: None

2. Course Description

This course will advance students through a process of Adlerian basic skills review, middle-level skills development, and move to an advanced understanding of more mature clinical knowledge, awareness, and skills. The class will focus on skills related to creating and maintaining change with the use of Life Style Analysis.

3. Texts, Materials and Resources (required and optional)

3.1 Required textbooks:


3.2 Required Articles/Handouts:

See your course binder on a first night of this class
4. **Competencies and Learning Outcomes**

Students in this course learn:

1. Students will review stages of Adlerian psychotherapy and major Adlerian therapeutic assumptions (useful vs. useless side of life, striving; neurotic disposition, compensation and overcompensation, social interest, creative self, soft determinism, holism; optimism; gender guiding lines; purposiveness of behavior, safeguarding, and other assumptions).

2. Students will be able to perform an integrative assessment, including a hypothesis about client’ mistaken beliefs, a direction and usefulness of psychological movement, the three life tasks, and other Life Style data for the purpose of assessing client’s readiness for change, promoting change, fostering treatment-promoting factors, and recognizing and resolving client’s resistance and ambivalence toward the intervention.

3. Students will be able to develop an Individual Psychology case conceptualization, and will create strategies that help the client gain insight into underlying beliefs interfering with one’s optimal well-being and therapeutic changes.

4. Students will learn how to use client’s Life Style to establish and maintain a treatment focus, to modify maladaptive cognitions, behaviors, affects, and interpersonal relations; and to monitor treatment progress.

5. Students will practice Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of change, as well as other change-promoting techniques, such as “The question”, “acting as if”, Push button technique”, encouragement, and others.

6. Students will become aware of self in the process of working with the client in an egalitarian, congruent, and empathetic way, will be able to use self in the process of doing psychotherapy, and to recognize and address therapeutic ruptures.

7. Students will learn to recognize and address cultural impact on treatment outcomes.

With most of the knowledge-based items above, will come a specific awareness, and an opportunity to try out some beginning skills. In the course outline below, these will be identified as K (knowledge), A (Awareness), and S (Skills).

These will be delivered/practiced via direct discussions, various experiential tasks, instructor’s presentation and comments in debates, reading, watching, and listening of various media, in addition to final academic exercises.

5. **AGS Course Overview**
5.1 AGS courses last 7 weeks (5 weeks of coursework plus two weeks for completing final assignments). In this course, you should expect to spend approximately 135 hours on all course-related activities. Your instructor will be actively available for all class activities and individual consultations for the duration of the coursework and as needed until final papers grades are submitted.

5.2 Your course instructor will respond to your questions or comments within 48 hours (barring unforeseen circumstances). You will be expected to observe the same response time--replying within 48 hours. During the class, your instructor will post specific office hours.

5.3 Please stay current in the class. Generally, you will be expected to complete reading assignments, reflective exercises, Life Style analysis as a vehicle for change, and will engage in other experiential activities.

5.4 Although you will likely find that you have a lot of experience in the discussed topics, please remember that the most convincing position is the one supported by the most current and relevant research. You will find these sources in peer-reviewed journals. Use APA style and format requirements in referencing sources.

5.5 Please review the following in preparation for this course – course 511 or 710/712 for general Adlerian terminology and the overview of Lifestyle Analysis; courses 504 and 514 for Adlerian definitions of psychopathology and patterns in developing a neurotic lifestyle; course 525 for effective interviewing skills as these can relate to gathering of the LS data; course 523 for cultural lens in interpreting LS data and hypothesis development; course 505 for developmental aspects of Adlerian view on personality, course 521 for general issues (Adlerian theory as ethics) and for specific issues concerning confidentiality and dealing with risk in this class.

6. Course Outline

6.1 August 17

Unit 1: Review of stages of Adlerian psychotherapy and foundational concepts underlying Life Style and Life Style Analysis (outcome 1)

Reading for the class: OS-Ch. 2; CWM- Ch. 3; AAR – Ch. 2; review Primer by Mosak and Maniacci; review The lexicon.

HW to prepare for this class: reading; self-reflection essay (200-400 words):
Self-reflection. When you completed reading for the unit, and before the first class night, please take a blank piece of a paper, a pen or a pencil. Then, think back as far back as you can and write down the earliest thing that you remember about yourself. Think of the most vivid moment in that memory. Write it down. Think about the feelings that come with that MVM. Write those down. Bring this to a class.

Knowledge (review): useful vs. useless side of life, striving; neurotic disposition, compensation and overcompensation, social interest, idiographic/creative self (self-determination and uniqueness), soft determinism, holism (unity of the individual); optimism; gender guiding lines; teleology (goal orientation, purposiveness of behavior), safeguarding, factionalism (“as if”), phenomenology, social context, family constellation, fundamentals of ERs; and other assumptions

Awareness: self in a process

Skills: observations and discussions: video and instructor’s demonstration of the techniques exemplifying the assumptions; ability to see an assumption underlying the technique and the process.

Activities: intro to a class – logistics, ethics (sign a form), grading, how is that different from 515; all class discussions, small group exercises and role plays, demonstrations, and video cases/demos (genogram); procesing of ERs brought for the class; HW review and discussion; other activities leading to the development of the skills above.

6.2 August 24, 2015

Unit 2: Review of stages of Adlerian psychotherapy and foundational concepts underlying Life Style and Life Style Analysis (outcomes 1 and 2)

Reading for the class: OS-Ch. 3; CWM- Ch. 3, 6; binder Unit 2

HW to prepare for this class: reading; mock case – reading through Adlerian lens; self-reflection essay (200-400 words) – based on questions plus growth/wellness tips.

Self-reflection. As you read the case (HW), please list 3 to 5 most important strengths and 3 most visible challenges in a “case” client’s LS. Where do you feel your own LS might collide with the one of this client? What strategies would you use to deal with the impasse?

Knowledge (review and introduction of new themes): A review of the 4 stages of Adlerian therapy and the therapeutic process. Collaborative assessment of the lifestyle of the client, including a hypothesis about client’s strengths, challenges, mistaken beliefs and purpose of symptoms, a direction and usefulness of psychological movement, safeguarding mechanisms, the fulfillment of the three life tasks, the degree of Social Interest as a measure of one’s health; a therapeutic contract through the use of ERs, and other Life Style data for the purpose of assessing client’s readiness for change, promoting change, fostering treatment-promoting factors,
recognizing and resolving client’s resistance and ambivalence toward the intervention; therapist’s LS in the process of client’s change.

Awareness: self and client in a process – both carrying LS; awareness of limitations of insight-based interventions and appropriateness of LSA for a particular client or a clinical situation; different approaches to LSA.

Skills: A review of the 4 stages of Adlerian therapy and the therapeutic process. Collaborative assessment of the lifestyle of the client, including a hypothesis about client’s strengths, challenges, mistaken beliefs and purpose of symptoms, a direction and usefulness of psychological movement, safeguarding mechanisms, the fulfillment of the three life tasks, a therapeutic contract through the use of ERs, and other Life Style data for the purpose of assessing client’s readiness for change, recognizing the client’s degree of social interest and promoting its increase and associated healthy change, fostering treatment-promoting factors, recognizing and resolving client’s resistance and ambivalence toward the intervention; ability to define and collect elements of Family Constellation (FC) data; assessment of therapist’s LS in the process of client’s change. Ability to define the next question. Ability to define a matching approach to LSA with respect to client’s characteristics, characteristics of a situation, and therapist’s characteristics.

Activities: HW review and discussion; all class discussions, small group exercises and role plays, demonstrations, and video cases/demos (ERs); use a case study with part of the FC data and hypothesize the missing FC elements; then create ERs; other activities leading to the development of the skills above.

August 29 (AM)

6.3 Unit 3: Using Social Interest as a measure of mental health, and a growth/wellness promoting approach in therapy. Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and change. Use of client’s strengths.

Reading for this and the next class: CWM- Ch. 4, 6; AAW – Ch. 5, 7, 24; binder Unit 3

HW to prepare for this class: reading; ER; self-reflection essay (200-400 words)

Self-reflection essay: think of a word “change”. Now, think back as far back as you can and write down the earliest memory that comes to your mind. Think of the MVM. Write it down. Listen to your body, notice any “body talk”, note these sensations in your essay. What are feelings that come with this MVM? Write this down. What do you think are your strengths and the challenges as it comes to building an alliance with and inviting change for a client, as you process this guided ER? Write this down and bring to a class.
Knowledge (new): Social Interest as a measure of mental health, and a growth/wellness promoting approach in therapy. Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and change. Use of client’s strengths in a therapeutic assessment.

Awareness: self and client in a process – both carrying LS; awareness of limitations of insight-based interventions and appropriateness of LSA for a particular client or a clinical situation; different approaches to LSA; reminder about confidentiality

Skills: Life Style Analysis as a change-promoting exercise. Students will learn the importance of helping the client to develop social interest by assessing the client’s interest in others and the community and develop a plan for implementing a gradual increase in social feeling

Activities: HW review and discussion; Life Style Analysis – a full demonstration and a discussion of alliance, data gathering, insight, and change; other activities leading to the development of the skills above.

August 29 (PM)

6.4 Unit 4: Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and a therapeutic change

Knowledge: Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and a therapeutic change (tested by skills)

Awareness: self in a process

Skills: Life style analysis – therapeutic data gathering, and insight development

Activities: Breaking into dyads – data gathering, comments and behavioral observations; and beginning of insight development. Two rounds. Other activities leading to the development of the skills above.

Packets are collected by the instructor (no demographic information). Packets are re-distributed for the HW.

August 31

6.5 Unit 5: Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and a therapeutic change: analysis, developing of therapeutic hypotheses.

Reading for the class: CWM- Ch. 7; AAR – Ch. 6; binder Unit 5

HW for this class: reading; mock case – hypothesis development; self-reflection essay (200-400 words)
**Self-reflection essay:** look at your previous ERs for this class. Where do you see the LSs (your and a client’s) might align or collide? What would be your plan for this?

**Knowledge:** Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and a therapeutic change (tested by skills)

**Awareness:** self in a process

**Skills:** Life style analysis – creating a summary with hypotheses and suggestions; ability to define a degree of SI and define suggestions of its change; use of Socratic questioning.

**Activities:** HW review and discussion; Demonstration (live and video) of creating a summary with hypotheses and suggestions; use of Socratic questioning and other change-promoting approaches. Use two words or phrases to formulate overarching LS beliefs and goals. Demonstrations; small group and all class activities. Other activities leading to the development of the skills above.

**September 11**

**6.6 Unit 6:** Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and a therapeutic change: analysis, working through therapeutic hypotheses, developing an insight, and promoting change.

**Reading for the class:** AAR – Ch. 8, 12; binder Unit 6

**HW for this class:** LSA of the assigned case (hunches, hypotheses, suggestions, questions)

**Knowledge:** Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and a therapeutic change: analysis, working through therapeutic hypotheses, developing an insight, and promoting change.

**Awareness:** self in a process; client’s readiness to change and its impact on a process, resistance and other dynamics in the process

**Skills:** testing/developing the hypothesis and promoting change in one’s degree of SI in a collaborative, egalitarian, empathetic, insight-oriented therapy.

**Activities:** working in dyads – testing hypotheses, and role playing of change-creating techniques (change-promoting techniques, such as “The question”, “acting as if”, Push button technique”, and others) while maintaining encouragement and staying true to the client’s contract at all stages of the process. Round One. End class with reflective exercise and debriefing. Other activities leading to the development of the skills above.

**September 12 (AM)**

**6.7 Unit 7:** Promoting growth, wellness and change in therapy. Developing interventions

**Reading for the class:** AAR – Ch. 14; binder Unit 7
HW for this class; same as before

Knowledge: Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and a therapeutic change: analysis, working through therapeutic hypotheses, developing an insight, and promoting change.

Awareness: self in a process; client’s readiness to change and its impact on a process, resistance and other dynamics in the process

Skills: testing/developing the hypothesis and promoting change in a collaborative, egalitarian, empathetic, insight-oriented therapy.

Activities: working in dyads – testing hypotheses, and role playing of change-creating techniques (change-promoting techniques, such as “The question”, “acting as if”, Push button technique”, and others) while maintaining encouragement and staying true to the client’s contract at all stages of the process. Round Two. End session with reflective exercise and debriefing

September 12 (PM)

6.8 Unit 8: Promoting growth, wellness and change in therapy. Developing interventions

HW to prepare for this class: create questions for the assessors (practice professional consultation). Create 3-5 clarifying questions. You can’t ask any identifiable information. You also can’t ask close-ended questions. For each question, please explain the purpose of your questioning.

Knowledge: Life Style Analysis as a vehicle of insight and a therapeutic change: analysis, working through therapeutic hypotheses, developing an insight, and promoting change.

Awareness: self in a process; client’s readiness to change and its impact on a process, resistance and other dynamics in the process

Skills: testing/developing the hypothesis and promoting change in a collaborative, egalitarian, empathetic, insight-oriented therapy.

Activities: a) questions for the assessors (practice professional consultation); b) demo of the master Adlerians promoting change (this will help with HW); small group exercises, and discussions on how to use client’s Life Style to establish and maintain a treatment focus, to modify maladaptive cognitions, behaviors, affects, and interpersonal relations; and to monitor treatment progress; other activities leading to the development of the skills above; c) everyone gets their own packet home.

September 21
6.9 Unit 9: Self in a process. Own LS and stage of insight and their impact on the therapeutic process. Review of techniques used in a class.

Reading for the class: journal articles and other handouts in binder Unit 9

HW to prepare for this class: self-reflection essay (400 - 500 words) – professional growth and wellness plan for self, based on self-, others-, and others-of-the-self observations around two pieces of private logic as they may relate to the development of professional self. Go over your packet and all the notes that you have taken during this class. What are the personal strengths suggested by the full LSA and the glimpses that you can gather from your notes? How would these translate into therapeutic strengths? What are your LS challenges? What would you do to encourage movement to creating and maintaining an authentic and socially useful therapeutic environment? How would this plan help you in separating your private logic from the one of your client? Please choose the one that is non-threatening and that you will be willing to discuss with peers.

Activities: reflections, additional debriefing (if needed), process of a process, reviews, and a video case that will test major competencies learned in the class; other activities leading to the development of the skills above.

7. Assessment/Evaluation Procedures

7.1 Assignment Overview

There are different types of assessment in this course, aimed to assess your knowledge, awareness, and/or various academic and experiential skills.

A. LSA

1) Gathering data – 20 pts
2) Hypothesis formation and trying it out – 20 points
3) Growth and Wellness plan – 20 points

B. Reflections – P (should be completed, but will be used in creating your Growth and Wellness plan)
C. SPT – 20 points
D. Final paper – 20 points

7.2 Grading

A 91-100 points
B 81-90 points
C  71-80 points
R  Retake- Needs more time or instruction to master the requirements of the class
NC Quality of work or participation falls below minimum expectations, including:
  • Not attending class.
  • Not properly notifying registrar of a withdrawal
  • Missing class periods in excess of the number allowed by AGS’s course attendance policy (see section 9 below)
  • Not resolving a grade of incomplete within 45 days after the last class meeting (not the assignment due date) and an agreed upon extension has not been arranged by the student and instructor. The Incomplete turns to No Credit (NC) and the course must be repeated at full price.

8. Special Project Time

Special Project Time (SPT) allows students the opportunity to integrate course materials. SPT is meant to be a self-contained experience, requiring at least 30 hours to complete.

SPT experiences may be constructed in such a way that they pertain to students’ unique degree plans. This is done in consultation with the course instructor.

SPT

Create a video that would translate the benefits of LSA into a mainstream clinical language for a non-Adlerian clinician, with an emphasis on treatment and change. Send this video to one clinician or a clinician in training that is not Adlerian and solicit his or her feedback. Share the feedback (please do not use any identifiable information without permission) and the video link with the course instructor. Find an Adlerian quote, from your reading or elsewhere, that would make an attractive title for your video.

Final assignment:

Create a LSA template and a LSA decision process flow, from the data gathering to the treatment plan) to use with a special population. This can be a unique ethnic/racial/linguistic group; or a special clinical population; or a special age population. Please include an ongoing assessment of therapist-client Life Style alignment. Write a 200-400 word summary justifying your project. Create a reference list with at least 5 references from peer reviewed literature.
10. Writing Guidelines including APA Format

10.1 All written assignments in courses at the Adler Graduate School, including those submitted in online courses, must be in APA format unless specifically noted by the course instructor (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition), 2009, American Psychological Association. ISBN 1-4338-0561-8).

10.2 Strict APA publication rules in Online Peer Discussions might prove difficult, if not impossible, to maintain. Following the “letter” of the Manual (i.e., not using “I”, or passive voice, keeping proper margins, or complying with headings requirements) may be either difficult or counterproductive in forums such as peer discussions. However, it is still important to adhere to the “spirit” of the APA Manual (i.e., grammar, orderly presentation of ideas, reducing bias in language, and presenting scholarly statements and arguments).

10.3 Prior to submitting a response, please proofread carefully. Grammar and spelling errors may make your response difficult for other students to appreciate.

10.4 Please keep in mind that, while the internet offers a lot of exciting and up-to-date information, not all internet sources are considered scholarly. For example, Wikipedia is not an academically peer-reviewed source. Rather, it is an “anybody-reviewed” source and, therefore, can’t be used in presenting your argument in AGS classes-related tasks.

11. Attendance and Participation Policy

Since courses are structured according to an intensive five-week format, regular and punctual attendance is of prime importance. Students are expected to attend all class meetings.

The AGS three credit courses are divided into nine units. One unit is equal to one evening class session, ½ of a weekend day session, one unit/posting in an online class or, roughly, 3 ¼ hours of class time. Students who miss any class and notify the course instructor ahead of time may be given an opportunity to retake a class. Students who miss any class without notification will automatically receive a grade of NC (No credit) for the class and are expected to retake the class at full price.

In online classes, the student fulfills the class session or unit by complying with posting and other submission deadlines.

Questions or appeals about the implementation of the attendance policy may be directed to the Academic Vice President.
12. **Participation Disclaimer**

Active participation in class discussions/exercises/demonstrations is expected.

As with other AGS courses, in this course, individual students must determine for themselves the level of personal disclosure/intimacy that is appropriate for them.

Faculty members and students do not disclose confidential, personally identifiable information concerning their clients, students, research participants, organizational clients, or other recipients of their services.

Whenever confidential information/material is used in any AGS course, students and faculty members are expected to observe AGS policy concerning the handling of confidential information/material. Full descriptions of these policies are readily available on Moodle main page.

13. **Academic Integrity Policy**

Honesty and trust among students and between students and faculty are essential for a strong, functioning academic community. Consequently, students are expected to do their own work on all academic assignments, tests, projects, and research/term papers. Academic dishonesty, whether cheating, plagiarism, or some other form of dishonest conduct may result in failure for the work involved. Academic dishonesty could also result in failure for the course and, in the event of a second incident of academic dishonesty, suspension from the Adler Graduate School. Here are examples of academic dishonesty:

- **Cheating** - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit.

- **Fabrication** - Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

- **Facilitating academic dishonesty** - Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of academic integrity.

- **Plagiarism** - The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas or words or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgment.

14. **Nondiscrimination Clause**

The Adler Graduate School is an equal opportunity educator and employer. The Adler Graduate School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin,
sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or physical disability in the employment of faculty or staff, the admission or treatment of students, or in the operation of its educational programs and activities. The institution is committed to providing equal education and employment opportunities in accordance with all applicable State and federal laws.

15. Learning Accommodations (including students with disabilities)

If a student in this course has a documented learning disability, tell the instructor during the first week of class. The instructor needs to know on the front end so that he or she can work with you. The Adler Graduate School is committed to helping all students be successful, as best as can be reasonably accommodated. Documenting a learning disability occurs at the student’s expense. When documented appropriately, the Adler Graduate School makes all reasonable accommodations.

16. Instructor Contact Information

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