The Development and Expansion of Individual Psychology in Japan

A Research Paper

Presented to

The Faculty of the Adler Graduate School

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree of Master of Arts in

Adlerian Counseling and Psychotherapy

By:

Makoto Kajino

April, 2014
Abstract

The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler has gradually developed and expanded in Japan. The following manuscript describes the application of Individual Psychology and Adlerian Psychotherapy and the author reviews the interaction between Individual Psychology and the Japanese population and culture. In addition to this assessment, the author also discusses challenges and difficulties of Individual Psychology based on a survey with Adlerians. Finally, the strategies and methods for the development and expansion of Individual Psychology in Japan are introduced.
Acknowledgements

I wish to express sincere appreciation and thank to my Chair and President of Adler Graduate School, Dr. Daniel Haugen, for his assistance and direction with this project. His brilliant comments and suggestions allowed me to attain more productive results. I would also like to show my appreciation to the Director of Career Development, Carmen Croonquist, for her advice and commitment during my year as her intern on this project regarding “Career Development” and for her help with my career, which has been priceless.

I would also like to thank all of the faculty, staff and classmates at Adler Graduate School, and my friends who supported me in writing and encouraged me to strive toward my goal. Furthermore, I would like to thank Adlerians in the United States for providing their ideas and experiences in response to my survey for this project. One of them, Jon Carlson gave me an opportunity to publish my article, Individual Psychology in Japan in the Journal of Individual Psychology.

A special thanks to my parents in Japan and my sister in Seattle, my brother-in-law in Chicago, and my second family, the Scanlon family, in Minnesota for their unending love, support and encouragement. I do not have words to adequately describe my deep gratitude for all they have provided me. Their existence in my life means more to me than anything else.

At the end, I would like to express an extra appreciation to Media Center Coordinator, Earl Heinrich. This manuscript and its original publication, Individual Psychology in Japan would not have been possible without his tremendous assistance and advice to finalize them.
This manuscript partially derived from my publication, *Individual Psychology in Japan* published in the Journal of Individual Psychology in 2012.
# Table of Contents

Abstract | 2  
---|---
Acknowledgements | 3  
Introduction | 7  
Alfred Adler: Father of Individual Psychology | 7  
Theories and Practices of Individual Psychology | 20  
  The Motivating and Striving Forces by Alfred Adler | 21  
Individual Psychology as a Father of Modern Psychotherapy | 26  
Adler’s Effort to Develop and Expand Individual Psychology | 29  
  Rudolf Dreikurs: A Successor of Alfred Adler | 31  
Advancing to Japan: Brief History of Individual Psychology in Japan | 37  
  Origin of Individual Psychology in Japan | 37  
  Current situation of Individual Psychology in Japan | 39  
  Challenges for Individual Psychology in Japan | 40  
The relationship between Individual Psychology and Japanese Culture | 42  
  The Recent Events in Japan | 42  
  The Highlights for Japanese Cultures | 43  
  *Hikikomori* and *NEET* | 53  
    Characteristic of *Hikikomori* | 53  
    Characteristic of *NEET* | 55
Suicidal Country: Japan 55

Adlerian Views for Suicide 58

The Application of Individual Psychology 61

Adlerian Psychotherapy with Japanese Populations, *Hikicomori* and *NEET* 64

Survey from Adlerians in the United States 69

Finding 71

Recommendation and Plan for Expanding Individual Psychology in Japan 73

Conclusion 79

References 81
The Development and Expansion of Individual Psychology in Japan

Despite having a huge impact and being partially incorporated in contemporary psychotherapies, the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler, an integrated approach to counseling and psychotherapy, has developed and expanded in a limited fashion in Japan. This phenomenon occurs in other countries and Adlerians have faced a variety of challenges since the birth of Individual Psychology. In this article, to overcome the challenges and achieve a better society, I would like to assess the obstacles and difficulties that block the development and expansion of Individual Psychology in Japan. First, I would like to focus on Alfred Adler and Individual Psychology, along with Rudolf Dreikurs’ work in the United States, and describe the demographic aspects of Japan, a brief overview of the country, its culture and worldview. Then, the application of Individual Psychology and Adlerian Psychotherapy with Japanese populations will follow. Individual Psychology will be evaluated as to its effectiveness and applicability to Japanese people and the country of Japan. Finally, the challenges and obstacles will be discussed based on a survey with Adlerians. Strategies and methods for the development and expansion of Individual Psychology in Japan will be recommended.

Alfred Adler: Father of Individual Psychology

Throughout human history people constantly develop self and others, society, the world and some aspects of the planet in an evolitional process. They have explored possibilities and potentials, by trial and error, to turn them into objective reality. Whether practical, useful, constructive or not, these processes have allowed human beings to evolve and develop for the
One of the breakthroughs in our evolution is information technology. Information technology has given us an opportunity to develop and improve our society by facilitating networking throughout the world. In both private and business contexts, people can gather, store, retrieve, transfer and exchange information and data through the internet, and they can connect with each other through the telecommunication devices that make our society smooth and manageable in our fast-paced world environment.

Scientific innovation has also contributed to developing our society and to creating new knowledge and experience. It has a long history of improving our understanding of the world. The practice and process repeats itself and gradually becomes more effective at generating and improving new knowledge and intellectual resources. In the field of counseling and psychotherapy, a scientific approach becomes one of the main sources of the evidence in building an objective point of view.

After these technological advancements and scientific innovations, where do human beings go next? We question the goals of human beings, the meanings of their languages and the significance of factors such as evolution, innovation, advancement, development, expansion and growth as we gain understanding of human beings and the world. What are the goals, purposes and meanings of human beings?

In the early 20th century, there was a psychiatrist who answered these questions clearly and was challenged to develop his ideas in Vienna and other countries. He actively planted a
small, but potent scientific seed in this world and society. Though the seed has strongly influenced the creation of contemporary approaches to counseling and psychotherapy, his contributions are still not well known in modern times. He created a breakthrough in the 20th century and it has been slowly promoted and expanded by his successors.

The name of this psychiatrist is Alfred Adler, the father of Individual Psychology. During his career, he published more than 300 books and articles, and was the first to work publicly with clients as he practiced group and family therapy in front of large audiences of professionals. He had great foresight and evolutional ideas, and lived courageously and passionately. In describing Adler, Corsini (as cited in Manaster, Painter, Deutsch, & Overhold, 1977, p. 86) stated, “He was so calm, reasonable, precise, and a humble and kind person. I knew we were in the presence of a great man.” Adler focused on the social context and a feeling of connectedness as indicators of success and happiness. Adler believed that a sense of belonging, safety and significance are essential in dealing with life’s difficulties, and he described central life tasks and the need to act with courage in confronting them.

Adler stated that Individual Psychology firmly stands on the ground of evolution, and that all human beings strive for perfection, both psychologically and physically. This is an innate and ultimate adaptation (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). In terms of striving for perfection, “Each person strives for self-improvement, having an innate desire to become better, to become superior, to move forward and onward” (Manaster & Corsini, 1982, p.14).

As a path to perfection, Adler promoted a paradigm shift from the autocratic, mechanistic
and material world in his era to a more democratic, humanistic and existential world in the next era. He said every human being is a unique individual, only understood as a whole through the social context. His theories and practices were ahead of his time, and are still ahead of our time. Time and human beings have not always been prepared to accept his teachings and methods.

Adler was born on February 7th, 1870, at Rudolfsheim in Vienna, Austria and died on May 27, 1937 while on a lecture tour in Aberdeen, Scotland. His 67 years might not have offered enough time to pass on his theories and practices to his students. However, he was a living encyclopedia for his Individual Psychology and we can imagine that his early childhood experiences were a foundation for the path of developing his Individual Psychology.

He was born to Leopold and Pauline, who married in 1866. He was the second of six children, although there are some arguments that he was the second of seven children, or the third of eight children. His father, Leopold, ran a family grain business as a corn trader and his mother was a hard-working homemaker who helped Leopold with the business. The Adler family was not a wealthy family, and lived away from the Jewish district. Their first child, Sigmund, was born in 1868; coincidentally and ironically, Sigmund is the same name as the father of Psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, with whom Adler later worked. Adler recognized Sigmund, their mother’s favorite child, as a sibling rival. One of Adler’s early recollections describes the relationship, “I am of sitting on a bench and bandaged up on account of rickets, with my healthy older brother sitting opposite me, he could run, jump and move about quite effortlessly, while for
me movement of any sort was a strain…Everyone went to great pains to help me” (Hoffman, 1994, p. 6).

After the birth of Alfred, Hermine (1871), Rudolf (1873), Irma (1874), Max (1877) and Richard (1884) were born to the family (Hoffman, 1994). Although based on uncertain information, before Sigmund, Adler had one more brother, Albert who was stillborn. If accurate, Adler was actually the third child, but usually Albert is not counted. Though the family may have had eight siblings, Sigmund was usually described as the oldest and Alfred as the second child in the birth order.

**Early Childhood**

Adler spent his early years in this large family. He was not a healthy child and suffered from rickets and other sicknesses. In his time, rickets was a common sickness for young children. Adler also suffered from a mild spasm of brethlensenn caused by the contraction of the glottis (Hoffman, 1994). At the age of four, he encountered a miserable incident. One morning, his little brother, Rudolf, the same name as Adler’s student, Rudolf Dreikurs, died in the bed beside him because of his diphtheria. At the age of five, Adler contracted pneumonia, and a physician actually gave up on him. He heard the doctor tell his parent, “Give yourself no more trouble. The boy is lost” (Hoffman, 1994, p. 8). After he won the fight with pneumonia, Adler decided to become a physician himself and started taking an interest in medicine and science.

Despite these awful experiences, little Adler showed his courage to overcome his physical weaknesses, disease and the death in his family. To challenge his physical weaknesses,
he spent his time outside, played games, and became part of a wide social milieu. This helped him socialize with his peers and become popular among them. One of his early memories focused on his socialization,

As far as I can look back, I was always surrounded by friends and comrades, and for the most part, I was a well loved playmate. This development began early and has never ceased. It is probably this feeling of solidarity with others that my understanding of the need for cooperation arose, a motive which has become the key to Individual Psychology. (Hoffman, 1994, p. 5)

These experiences also influenced his later ideas about man’s social nature and his feeling of being “at home” among his fellow-men (Terner & Pew, 1978).

In 1879, Adler attended the Communales Real-und Obergymnasium at his parents’ suggestion, located in the Sperlgasse section of Vienna. After successfully completing elementary school, his parents sent him to go to a Gymnasium for eight years of study prior to his admission to the University of Vienna. His parents wanted Adler to pursue law or medicine, which would provide lifetime security and financial success. Coincidently, again, Sigmund Freud had attended the same school fourteen years earlier. The requirements for admission included the minimum age of ten, but at the age of nine, Adler enrolled in the school (Hoffman, 1994).

Adler later transferred to the Heralser Gymnasium due to the Leoparld’s business activity. The family moved to Hernals and he continued to attend this Gymnasium. He received his degree at the age of eighteen. During his eight years of Gymnasium time, Adler didn’t seem to be
satisfied with his teachers and learning experience. Their dominating teaching methods inhibited student’s performance (Hoffman, 1994). In spring of 1888, he received his graduation certificate from the Henals Gymnasium. Since his older brother, Sigmund, had already left Gymnasium, Adler’s parents hoped Adler would become a successful physician in the future (Hoffman, 1994).

**University of Vienna Medical School**

Adler started his medical studies at the University of Vienna Medical School in 1888. He completed medical studies in the average length of seven years. However, Adler could not remember anything inspiring, exciting or intellectually stimulating about his medical training (Hoffman, 1994). Since “Therapeutic nihilism” was in the main stream of the medical philosophy by the nineteenth century, Adler found that he disliked the approaches of his professors’ diagnostic and experimental methods. Though unsatisfied with the curriculum, he was determined to reach his goal of becoming a physician.

In the curriculum at the university, he did not receive formal psychiatric training aside from hearing the lectures of Sigmund Freud on hysteria. Instead, he took courses about the most important diseases of the nervous system, the pathology of the nervous system, surgery and medicine. Those courses stimulated his interest and Adler found the lectures of Hermann Nothnagel most interesting. He presented materials from the perspective of neurological disorders and was an innovative researcher of brain diseases and the first to perfect the measurement of blood pressure.
During his college life, Adler enjoyed socializing with friends at a coffee shop, Café Griensteidl. He and his friends were excited to discuss ideas about philosophy and society. At that time, a German nationalist student group became increasingly anti-Semitic, racist and conservative. A minority of the student body was interested in the concepts of socialist philosophy and discussed Marxism in the group that Adler and his close friend, Carl Furtmuller, joined. In these meetings, Adler met Raissa Timofeyvna Epstein, a young Russian woman, whom Adler married in 1897. Adler developed his idea of “Masculine Protest” and equality between sexes, clearly influenced by her independence, fearlessness and political activism (Terner & Pew, 1978).

After receiving his medical degree in 1895, Adler worked in the ophthalmology department of the Vienna Poliklinik. According to Hoffman (1994), because of Hungarian citizenship (he gained Austrian citizenship in 1911), he could not choose the other institution at the aforementioned general hospital becomes it was only available to Austrian citizens. Two years later, in 1897, Adler became a general medical practitioner in a lower-middle class, mostly Jewish area. After a Jewish wedding in Smolensk, Russia on December 23, Adler and Raissa went back to Vienna and settled down into the heart of Vienna.

In 1898, Adler’s first publication, Health Book for the Tailoring Trade, condemned the poor health, working and economic conditions of the garment workers in Vienna (Adler, K. A, 1994). It was a thirty-one page monograph, the goal of which was “to describe the connection between the economic condition of a trade and transmitting infectious disease, and the dangers
for public health of a lowered standard of living” (Hoffman, 1994, p.35). He saw the role of physician as one of social activist and reformer.

Close to Adler’s office in the Leopoldstadt, there was a famous amusement park in the Prater area. The artists and acrobats working there came to visit Adler’s office and seek advice and treatment for their life problems, desires, frustrations and goals. Adler had various patients who exhibited extraordinary bodily strength and a variety of skills. By treating them, Adler found out that many of the amusement park’s entertainers had suffered from physical weakness in their childhood and overcome it through athletic activities. The bonds between mind and body were a mystery to young Adler; therefore, he began to ponder the role of organ inferiority in determining adult personality and habitual behavior (Sperber, 1974; Hoffman, 1994). Adler was also confident in his earliest ideas about physical and mental compensation and overcompensation.

**Vienna Psychoanalytic Society**

In 1902, Adler received an invitation from Freud to join a discussion group on neurosis. This was the Wednesday Psychological Society, held at Freud’s home, which later developed into the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. When Adler was thirty years old, Freud published *Interpretation of Dreams*. Adler realized that Freud had made a significant breakthrough that could open new paths in psychiatry (Terner & Pew, 1978). However, the book was subjected to a caustic attack in the local press because every new idea was traditionally denied in the arts and sciences (Hoffman, 1994). Adler defended his theories, which lead to his joining Freud’s circle
(Mosak, 2005). In addition, Adler was well known as an excellent diagnostician and internist, and Freud asked him to treat his half-brother who had pneumonia and was given up on by his doctor Adler cured him (Adler, 1994).

Although Adler was fourteen years younger than Freud, both had many things in common; growing up in a Jewish family, emigrating to Vienna, pursuing the medical profession, studying many of the same subjects at the University of Vienna and attending the same gymnasium, having a strong interest in the human mind and character, and so on. Despite these commonalities, the two men never became friends or became emotionally close to each other. Besides the age difference, Adler’s intense sibling rivalry with his older brother, Sigmund, unconsciously pushed him away from Freud (Hoffman, 1994).

Most textbooks wrongly indicate that Adler was a student or disciple of Freud. He was only a colleague (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964; Hoffman, 1994; Mosak, 2005; Manaster & Corsini, 1982). Maslow (1962) mentioned a time when having dinner with Adler in the restaurant of the Gramercy Park Hotel, New York, “He lived a year or two before his death. I recall asking him some question that implied his discipleship under Freud. He became very angry, flushed and talked loudly enough so that other people’s attention was attracted. He said that this was a lie and a swindle for which he blamed Freud entirely; whom he then called names like swindler, sly, schemer, as nearly as I can recall. He said that he had never been a student of Freud, or a disciple or a follower” (p. 125).
In 1903, Adler wrote two articles, *City and Country* and *State Help or Self-Help*, both regarding social medicine, for Aertzliche Standeszeitung. In 1904, he published the most important article of his career to date, *The Physician as Educator*, in which Adler mentioned, for the first time, the physician becoming an educator by helping teachers and parents to prevent emotional problems so as to raise healthy children (Hoffman, 1994). Adler went his own way to create his original ideas in the discussion group, using his medical career and experiences.

His publication, *Study of Organ Inferiority*, in 1907, had a great impact on the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. It was about a compensatory mechanism of the body, an illness from inferior organs and compensation. Freud, recorded by young Otto Rank, was impressed by Adler’s work and felt that much of what Adler said may be correct (Hoffman, 1994). Though Adler abandoned this idea within just a few years, Hoffman (1994) stated that he might already have sensed the power of this drive; that a natural, inborn drive for mastery and competence in the social world was more important than sexuality.

**Separation**

While his book was widely accepted by fellow members and medical colleges, the total membership of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society had only risen to twenty-one (Hoffman, 1994). In 1908, Adler wrote a paper, *The Aggression Drive in Life and in Neurosis*. This appeared in a major medical journal and argued two key personality drives: sexuality and aggression aimed at satisfying physiological needs and garnering pleasure from the environment (Hoffman, 1994).
Adler’s ideas were often in conflict with Freud’s and, according to Mosak (2005), their disagreements centered on (1) the unity of neurosis (2) penis envy versus masculine protest (3) the defensive role of the ego in neurosis and (4) the role of the unconscious. Despite these disagreements between two men, in 1910, Adler became the president of the Vienna Psychoanalytical Association; nominated by Freud and co-founder and co-editor of the Journal of Psychoanalysis, Wilhelm Stekel (Manaster & Corsini, 1984). Freud described Adler to Carl Jung, “Adler is a theoretician, astute and original, but not oriented to the psychological; he aims for the biological,” and he regarded Adler as “decent” and said, “We must hold on to him” (Hoffman, 1994).

In the same year, Adler published *Psychic Hermaphroditism in Life and in the Neurosis* that focused on masculine and feminine traits associated with neurosis. He added a view of his psychology system; a subjective feeling of inferiority in his theory of organ inferiority and its focus on compensation and overcompensation. Adler called this sense of inferiority masculine protest in the male-dominated society of contemporary Europe (Hoffman, 1994).

After a series of meetings, Adler resigned as president of the society. Furtmuller (As cited in Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1979) mentioned in his article about Adler’s and Freud’s separation:

The final crisis came during the summer when the group was in recess. Freud wrote a letter to the publisher of the Zentralblatt announcing that he could no longer be editor with Adler, so the publisher would have to choose between them. The publisher communicated the letter to Adler, who spared him the embarrassment of choice by
resigning. As a logical consequence he also resigned from the presidency of the Vienna
Society and from membership in it. (p. 344)

The Birth of Individual Psychology

In 1912, after the separation from Freud, Adler developed a society for Individual
Psychology with about ten members who belonged to Freud’s Society (Manaster & Corsini,
1984). The actual name of Adler’s society is called “The Society for Free Psycho-Analysis”
(Leipold-Lowenthal & Lobner, 1975). The “free” meant free of Freud (Mosak, 2005). The seed
of Individual Psychology was first planted in the garden that was Vienna. After the separation,
Adler gained supporters and the popularity of his theory grew quickly. Medical colleagues in
such countries as France, Germany, Serbia and Russia showed strong interest in Adler’s works
and a Moscow psychiatrist, N. A. Vyrubow, eagerly published several of Adler’s articles and
book reviews which described his professional activities. In the business of his life, on the other
hand, Raissa felt overburdened by raising four children and being a doctor’s wife. Ironically, as
Adler’s new society was growing up, Raissa was distancing herself from Adler’s work (Hoffman,
1994).

In the same year as the separation, Adler’s major work was issued, The Neurotic
Constitution. It was published in the United States five years later. This book was completely
different from Freud’s theory and system; demonstrating the independence of his psychological
theory. In addition to the influence of socialism and Marxism, the book also showed the
influence of Nietzsche’s belief in the importance of will, as a powerful force guiding individual
and social life, and the influence of German philosopher Hans Vinhinger’s ideas and viewpoints such as his Philosophy of “As if” and fictions. Adler developed his ideas from those philosophers such as fictional finalism, superiority and guiding goals. Because of the interest in the book, his innovative ideas and disassociation from psychoanalysis, he decided to change the organization’s name to the Society for Individual Psychology. In 1914, Adler and his colleagues launched the Journal for Individual Psychology; Adler served as editor in chief (Hoffman, 1994).

**Theories and Practices of Individual Psychology**

Individual Psychology is a theory of personality and a therapeutic system which developed during the time when Adler was breaking with Freud. It is also a science of living system for the understanding of human nature, which purports that people cannot be understood in isolation, but only in the social context. Holism is the focus and the Latin word, *Individuum* means “indivisible” (Rattner, 1983), which emphasizes a holistic view or unity of personality. From this holistic stance, Adler (2011) wrote, “Individual Psychology tries to see individual lives as a whole and regards each single reaction, each movement and impulse as an articulated part of an individual attitude towards life” (p. 31).

Human beings are unique and indivisible, and their actions have a purpose and goal. An Adlerian considers people as creative, with the ability to make decisions and freedom of choice. They see each person as different from every other person in that each individual has a different personality with a unique way of thinking, feeling, speaking or acting (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964; Manaster & Corsini, 1982). This holistic, teleological, phenomenological, socially-
embedded, creative and unique view of Individual Psychology provides a psychotherapeutic approach, as well as a philosophical framework for understanding human beings.

**The Motivating and Striving Forces by Alfred Adler**

**Organ Inferiority**

Adler published *Study of Organ Inferiority* in 1907, stating that organ inferiority is an incomplete development or functional insufficiency in some part of body. Because of his unhealthy childhood, Adler focused on inferior organs and found that an inferior organ can be compensated for by the symmetrical organ or another part of the affected organ or other organs that can function in a similar way. Adler also believed that human beings strive to overcome organ inferiorities by physical compensation, and organ inferiorities are the basis for the human striving factor (Griffith & Powers, 2007). This was the primary motivating force for human beings.

Compensation is, for Adler, a part of the human condition. He viewed it from a psychological point of view in that human beings strive to make up for their deficiencies, and perceived or felt inferiorities. To be a human being means to have inferiority feelings (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). Everyone begins life with physical deficiencies that can develop into feelings of inferiority. As a different term for inferiority feeling and compensation, Adler used the terms felt minus and perceived plus and believed that the individual struggles to move from a felt minus position or situation, such as a defeat, to the fictional plus personality ideal, which is a subjectively perceived and constructed image of maturity, completion, mastery, fulfillment and
perfection (Griffith & Powers, 2007, p. 39). Adler also stated (1992), “The whole of human life proceeds along this great line of action--- from below to above, from minus to plus, from defeat to victory” (p. 67).

**Aggression Drive**

Adler developed his concept of the aggression drive in his paper, *The Aggression Drive in Life and in Neurosis* in 1908. This was his second idea about the motivating forces for human development. Although the word aggression may indicate both physical and nonphysical actions, Ansbacher and Ansbacher (1956) mentioned that Adler gave up this concept and later subsumed aggression under the larger concepts of overcoming, and striving for superiority, success and, ultimately, perfection or completion in a socially useful, contributing direction. May (1972) credits Adler with first mentioning aggression, which he originally called “will to power.” Freud incorporated the aggression instinct into Psychoanalysis after Adler discarded this idea. According to Bottome (1939), “I enriched psychoanalysis,” Adler told his friends with a grim smile, “by the aggression drive. I gladly make them a present of it.” (p. 64)

**Masculine Protest**

In his publication, *Psychic Hermaphroditism in Life and in the Neurosis*, Adler wrote about masculine and feminine traits. During Adler’s lifetime, men dominated society and traits associated with masculinity, such as aggression, power, superiority and strength, were admired, while feminine traits such as crying, passivity, submissiveness and weakness were not. Males fear that they will be unable to live up to the perception of true masculinity, while females reject
being subordinated by the idea that females are inferior to males (Borkon, Gill & Ballou, 2006). Adler called this sense of inferiority masculine protest in the male dominated society of Edwardian Europe.

**Striving for Superiority**

Instead of masculine protest, Adler began using the term striving for superiority. This is his fourth central motivating force, later called striving for perfection. This concept is very close to Goldstein’s self-actualization (White, 1957). All living things are involved in an evolitional struggle and Adler found that human beings have the goal of success, which motivates individuals to move forward toward mastery.

Striving for superiority is sometimes misunderstood. It is not an attempt to be better than everyone else, to be domineering or have power over others. Discouraged individuals usually acquire a striving for power or superiority over others. Due to the failure of overcoming their inferiority, they switch from the useful side of life to the useless side of life. Those who are discouraged may experience increased inferiority feelings and may express superiority by striving for self-elevation, depreciation of others and self-aggrandizement (Griffiths & Powers, 2007). By contrast, healthy individuals overcome their obstacles and contribute to developing the welfare of the community, showing that their goal of superiority is on the useful side of life.

**Striving for Perfection**

Adler developed a fifth motivating and striving force, striving for perfection, which is the ultimate and innate goal of human beings. The word “perfection” was taken from Latin, meaning
to complete, finish and fulfill. Adler stated that the goal best suited to perfection must be a goal that leads to an ideal society for all mankind, not only for individuals. This benefits societies and is the ultimate fulfillment of evolution (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). Schultz and Schultz (2008) say that we strive for superiority in an effort to perfect ourselves, our culture, society, world, cosmos and universe; to make them compete or whole.

Striving for perfection is the positive side of compensation and implies achieving a feeling of equality, of equal worth, self-esteem and esteem of others (Oberst & Stewart, 2003). In order to achieve this, each individual expresses striving for perfection or superiority in a different way. He or she creates a unique pattern of characteristics, thoughts, emotions, behaviors and habits, which is called style of life or life style. We strive for the fictional ideal of perfection to compensate for inferiority feelings, and we sometimes overcompensate. Adler warns that we must be aware this absolute ideal can never be attained because no one knows which is the best way to perfection (Ansbacher & Ansbacher 1964). Adler discussed the image of perfection, “Mankind has variously made the attempt to imagine this final goal of human development. The best conception gained so far of the ideal elevation of mankind is God” (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964, p. 107).

**Gemeinschaftsgefühl: Social Interest/Community Feeling**

Gemeinschaftsgefühl has been translated in a variety of ways; community feeling, social feeling and social interest. It is a key to success and fulfillment in life, and a measurement of psychological health. Adlerian authors use various terms to translate it, so the definition varies
and sometimes it is hard to understand the meaning. Ansbacher (1992) found that Adler’s first real definition of community feeling appeared in 1922. Adler described community feeling as;

basic to any relationship of the child toward people, animals, plants and objects. It signifies being at one with our life, its affirmation and the conciliation with it. Through community feeling in its rich differentiations (parental love, filial love, sexual love, love of one’s county, love of nature, art, science, love of humanity) acting together with the aggression drive, there comes about person’s general attitude, hence in fact the person’s psychological life (p. 62).

Adler later added these concepts, “community feeling is actually a cosmic feeling,” “being in harmony with universe,” “feeling with the whole,” and “it could be thought of as if humanity had reached the goal of perfection” (Ansbacher, 1992). This concept, community feeling, is a sense of belonging. It is a feeling of being at home, and a part of a community, group and the universe. It is a feeling of safety and being socially connected and reflects the willingness to contribute and to participate in the communal life for the common benefit.

The term social interest first appeared in one of Adler’s first books originally published in English (Ansbacher, 1992) and also in Adler’s final translation. Adler stated that social interest (interest in others and other’s interest) is the action line of community feeling (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1992). According to Kurt Adler (1994), Gemeinschaftsgefühl was translated into English as social interest because in their book, *The Holy Family*, Marx and Engels stated, “If correctly understood, ‘interest’ is the basis for all morality. The issue is, to make one’s private
interest coincide or be in harmony with social interest, interest in mankind.” Kurt Adler (1994) later described the meaning of Gemeinschaftsgefühl as a feeling of and for the community of man as the necessary condition for the survival of mankind. It is neither self-interest nor only interest in others, but contains both self-interest and interest in others.

There are additional definitions for social interest. White (1957) said that social interest was finally conceived not as a force opposed to the striving for superiority but as an innate potential which had to be developed in human relationships, starting with the mother, and which in healthy people became included in the goals of perfection. Mosak (1991) had another view, “social interest is an inverse of inferiority feeling” (p. 440). Maslow (1954) uniquely stated that social interest is “the flavor of the feelings for mankind expressed by self-actualizing subjects” and human beings who have a genuine desire to help the human race through a deep feeling of identification, sympathy and acceptation in spite of this anger, impatience or disgust.

Adler (1964) found an English author “whose phrase expresses clearly what could contribute to our explanation, ‘To see with the eyes of another, to hear with the ears of another, to feel with the heart of another.’ For the time being, this seems to me an admissible definition of what we call social feeling. We see at first glance that this gift coincides in part with another which we call identification or empathy. This identification occurs always according to the degree of social interest” (p. 42).

**Individual Psychology and the Origin of Modern Psychotherapy**

Contemporary approaches to counseling and psychotherapy were greatly influenced by
Adler’s Individual Psychology. According to Corey (2009), Albert Ellis, Abraham Maslow, Viktor Frankl, Rollo May and Aaron T. Beck have all recognized their use of the concepts of Individual Psychology. They incorporated some aspects of Adler’s theories and practices into their own approaches, and created unique styles of therapeutic practice. Albert Ellis (1970) believed that Adler is probably the true father of modern psychotherapy, and that he strongly influenced the work of Sullivan, Horney, Fromm, Rogers, May, Maslow and many other writers on psychotherapy, some of whom are often wrongly called neo-Freudians, when they more correctly could be called neo-Adlerians. Ellis (1973) also stated that his Rational-Emotive Therapy (RET) owes a great debt to Alfred Adler and that Adler was one of the main contributors in the formulation of RET.

In the Journal of Individual Psychology, Abraham Maslow, who was associated with Adler between 1935 and 1937 and attended his informal seminars at the Gramercy Park Hotel in New York City (Ansbacher, 1990), stated,

For me, Alfred Adler becomes more and more correct year by year. As the facts come in, they give stronger and stronger support to his image of man. I should say that in one respect especially the times have not yet caught up with him. I refer to his holistic emphasis. (Maslow, 1970, p. 13)

Albert Ellis stated,

My own system of rational-emotive psychotherapy was profoundly influenced by Adler; and the public demonstrations of psychotherapy which are so often given today by
Moreno, the late Perls, Schutz, Dreikurs, Ackerman, me, and many other therapists also owing much to Adler’s pioneering methods. It is difficult to find any leading therapist today who in some respect does not owe a great debt to the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler. (Ellis, 1970 p. 11)

Rollo May, who also studied with Adler, noted,

My concepts of myth are very much what Adler had in mind by guiding fiction. As a matter of fact, I appreciate Adler more and more (after my tendency to overlook him for a few years). Adler’s thoughts as I learned them in studying with him in Vienna in the summers of 1932 and 1933 led me indirectly into psychology, and were very influential in the later work in this county of Sullivan and William Alanson White, etc. (May, 1970, p. 13).

Victor E. Frankl stated,

I met Alfred Adler in 1924. How, then could I but love him as a person? And I worked with him until 1927. How, then, could I but admire him as a scientist? In Alfred Adler I see the man who was the first creativity to oppose Sigmund Freud. What he, in so doing, achieved and accomplished was no less than a Copernican Switch. No longer could man be considered as the product, pawn and victim of drives and instincts; on the contrary, drives and instincts from the material that serves man in expression and in action. Beyond this, Alfred Adler may well be by regarded as an existential thinker and as a fore-runner of the existential-psychiatric movement (Frankl, 1970, p.12).
In addition to these famous humanistic psychologists, we must not forget Carl Rogers, who created the Person-Centered approach. He was one of the early humanistic psychologists and a founder of the humanistic movement. Watts (1998) found that Carl Rogers, when he was an intern at the Institute for Child Guidance in New York City, studied with Alfred Adler in 1927-1928. According to Ansbacher (1990), Rogers acknowledged this with a memory of Adler, “I had the privilege of meeting, listening to, and observing Dr. Alfred Adler…I was shocked by Dr. Adler’s very direct and deceptively simple manner of immediately relating to the child and the parent. It took me some time to realize how much I had learned from him (p. 47). Although Rogers didn’t mention Adler in his writing, Watts (1998) was impressed by the apparent similarity between Adler’s social interest and Roger’s core conditions of therapeutic change. From these points, it could be said that Rogers was influenced by Adler in a certain degree.

Rogers also met Dreikurs in Chicago in 1945 and recollected that he “developed a deep respect for the man, and for his work in furthering the approach of Alfred Adler” and “Through my occasional contacts with Dr. Dreikurs I came to admire his courage, persistence, and independence” (Ansbacher, 1990).

William Glasser, the founder of Reality therapy, was also influenced by Adler. When Dreikurs was invited to the annual University of British Columbia Counselor’s Conference, Beames asked him about William Glasser, “Oh, Glasser is an Adlerian without benefit of theory” (Bullard & Corsini, 1999, p. 19).
Adler’s Effort to Develop and Expand Individual Psychology

Adler tried to use simple and well-known words and terms, and avoided technical jargon and the use of too many symbolisms to describe his Individual Psychology. As Adler (cited in Terner & Pew, 1978) stated, “I have taken forty years to make my psychology simple. I might make it still more simple by saying ‘all neurosis is vanity’ but that also might not be understood” (p. 86).

Kurt Adler (1993) said in his article, Socialist Influences on Adlerian Psychology, that Adler was inspired by the words of Goethe, a German novelist, who wrote “Where concepts are lacking, words promptly step in to take their place.” Mosak and Maniaci (1991) wrote in their book, A Primer of Adlerian Psychology, that Adler wanted to appeal to people who were not necessarily academically trained. There is a famous story about Adler’s reference to common sense. An audience proclaimed in one of his lectures, “But Dr. Adler, all you speak is common sense!” Adler replied, “And what is wrong with that? I wish more psychiatrists did” (p.163). He hoped to make his theory and system accessible to common people. Adler set out to explain his principles and make it possible to train teachers, social workers, clergy and even psychologists to work with people in trouble. He went in a different direction from Freud, who thought that only those who were medically trained had to practice therapy.

Adler spread his ideas by lecturing throughout Vienna and Europe, and eventually his work expanded to the United States. Adler made a first lecture tour in the United States in 1926. In Vienna, he developed a child guidance clinic and developed thirty-two clinics by the early
1930s, but most of them were closed after 1934. Due to the fall of the democratic government in Austria, all of the clinics in Europe ceased to exist due to the hostility of the Nazi movement. World War II forced Adlerians to flee mainland Europe and go to England and North and South America. In 1935, Adler and his family left Europe and settled in the United States (Mosak, 2005).

In February 1937, after settling with Raissa and Kurt in the United States in 1935, Adler’s eldest daughter, Valentine was arrested. According to Manaster et al. (1977), in April, Adler wrote that “Vali causes me sleepless nights. I am surprised how I can endure it” (p. 23). A few weeks later, he said, “I cannot sleep and cannot eat, I do not know how much longer I can endure it” (p. 20). A few days later, on May 28, 1937 at the age of 67, Adler died of a heart attack on a street, in Aberdeen, Scotland, while on a lecture tour (Hoffman, 1994).

Adler planted the seeds of Individual Psychology in the United States during his travels. In New York, Adler’s children, Kurt and Alexandra developed successful psychiatric careers, and helped develop an international organization focusing on Individual Psychology in the 1950s (Hoffman, 1994). In addition, the Alfred Adler Institute of New York has been existence since 1948, and offers training based on the philosophy of Alfred Adler.

Rudolf Dreikurs: A Successor of Alfred Adler

Rudolf Dreikurs, one of Adler’s students, was one of the most well-known contributors to the development and expansion of Individual Psychology in the United States and globally. He worked with Adler in Vienna, first as a student and later as a colleague. Adler explained about
Dreikurs that he was a talented and dedicated colleague and was known by Adlerians in both Europe and America as an excellent clinician and theoretician (Terner & Pew, 1978). Dreikurs received his medical degree in 1923 from the University of Vienna, and started clinics for child guidance, alcoholics and psychopaths, and worked in mental hygiene and welfare (Terner & Pew, 1978). He moved to Chicago in the fall of 1937 right after the death of Adler.

Through his collaboration and studies with Adler, he shared in Adler’s dream to inform and educate people. Dreikurs (1943) stated that Adler always had hopes of further developing and following up his work in the United States. Dreikurs determined to take over Adler’s hopes and passion after the death of his mentor. According to Diaz and Shimelevich (2001), when the Adlerian family education centers were suppressed by fascists in Austria, Adler urged Dreikurs to go to Chicago and work with the Individual Psychology Society that Adler had already established there.

After a lecture tour in Brazil that Adler was supposed to conduct, Dreikurs joined the Individual Psychology Society in Chicago that consisted of a small number of professionals who were already studying Individual Psychology. It was founded in 1933 under the leadership of Nita Mieth Arnold as chairman. He organized classes open to the public at the Art Institute of Chicago. The members of the group regularly met and discussed problems from the perspective of Individual Psychology. Dreikurs established Individual Psychology centers and study groups in Chicago.

Upon his arrival in the United States, Dreikurs visited his colleagues from the Individual
Psychology Society of New York. He sought advice and information regarding continuing
Adler’s work and achieving his goals in the United States. Dreikurs decided not to declare
himself as an Adlerian psychologist, so as to avoid the obstacles that Adlerians in New York
faced. He felt he would be risking future hospital appointments and professional viability if
identified with Adler’s ideas. However, he later felt disappointed at his behavior and, with shock
and anger, stated; “I was pretty furious. What kind of cowards are they? I couldn’t imagine that
in the land of democracy you would be ashamed to declare your own professional orientation”

Adler School of Professional Psychology in Chicago

In 1952, Dreikurs founded the Institute of Adlerian Psychology (later re-named the Alfred
Adler Institute of Chicago in 1954, and then the Adler School of Professional Psychology in
1991). Early instructors and founders of the Institute include Bernard Shulman, Harold Mosak,
Bina Rosenberg, and Robert Powers (Adler School of Professional Psychology, n. d.). Along
with these Adlerians, Dreikurs was in the center of the child guidance movement in the United
States. He opened the first Child Guidance Center in the United States, which provided an open
forum counseling model and offered parenting education and training in the community.

Dreikurs (1943) stated that without child guidance clinics, our whole endeavor is
“incomplete,” and Dreikurs utilized unique methods and procedures in child guidance, including
the analysis of the individual child and his unique personal development and the use of
interview, and examinations and other impersonal tests.
Dreikurs edited the Individual Psychology Newsletter in 1940, which later became the Individual Psychology Bulletin. He also helped to create the Individual Psychology Association of Chicago in 1941, the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology (NASAP) in 1952, and the International Congress for Adlerian Summer Schools and Institutes (ICASSI) in 1963.

In the same year, the Institute was chartered as a not-for-profit Illinois corporation and approved as a post-secondary educational provider. In 1978, the Institute received full accreditation for master’s-level programs and awarded its first M.A. degrees. It received doctoral level accreditation in 1987, and awarded its first Psy. D. degrees in 1990. The doctoral program was accredited by the American Psychological Association in 1998. Through the auspices of the Institute, they offered a group therapy program to those incarcerated at Cook County Jail, a program that was a precursor to the school’s later focus on the incarcerated and the formerly incarcerated. In 1972, the Institute established its on-campus Dreikurs Psychological Services Center, a community mental health center and training site for students that was the precursor to today’s Adler Community Health Services (ACHS). The Adler School now offers 11 graduate-level programs, enrolling more than 1,000 students at campuses in Chicago, Illinois, and Vancouver, British Columbia (Adler School of Professional Psychology, n. d.).

NASAP is now the central Adlerian institution in the United States and North America, and provides an annual conference open to all Adlerians. Their annual conferences are held in diverse locations and they facilitate Adlerian networking through communication and an exchange of opinions and cultures. NASAP also publishes the Journal of Individual Psychology.
(JIP) and a monthly newsletter, which also aid in disseminating Adlerian ideas.

Another institute, ICASSI, organizes the summer schools called The Rudolf Dreikurs Summer Institute. The first International Summer School took place in Denmark in 1962. Since then, the Summer School has been held annually in a variety of countries. They have an international mission to promote Individual Psychology as taught by Adler and Dreikurs, encouraging development of Adlerian Associations in various nations (The International Committee of Adlerian Summer Schools and Institutes, 2012).

**Adler Graduate School in Minnesota**

Dreikurs encouraged and supported his students, as well as co-workers, Bob Bartholow, Susan Pye Brokaw, Bill and Mim Pew and Bob Willhite as they founded the Minnesota Adlerian Society in 1967. Two years later, in 1969, due to their dedication and community involvement, the organization grew and the name of society was changed to the Alfred Adler Institute of Minnesota. As a sister intuition of the Adler School of Professional Psychology in Chicago, the Alfred Adler Institute of Minnesota started offering an MA program in 1982. In 1991, the Alfred Adler Institute of Minnesota was independently accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, a branch of the Higher Learning Commission. The institute started offering various paths toward the Master of Arts Degree in Adlerian Counseling and Psychotherapy.

In 1998, the Alfred Adler Institute of Minnesota became known as the Alfred Adler Graduate School (AAGS), and then changed its name to the Adler Graduate School (AGS) in
2004. The institution offers various certificate programs and other specialty study programs, as well as the Master of Arts in Adlerian Counseling and Psychotherapy. Based on the Adlerian philosophy of encouragement, open-mindedness and mutual support to advance the public interest, the school has contributed to the development of Individual Psychology by offering training for mental health practitioners (Adler Graduate School, 2014).

In 1937, Adler was invited by the St. Paul Women’s City Club to give a lecture. On March 8, 1937, he arrived in St. Paul by train from New York. He had a busy schedule because he was planning for a major European lecture, including the University of Utrecht in Holland, Uppsala University in Sweden, and the University of Copenhagen. The title of his lecture was “The Three Great Problems of Life.” He was planting the seed of Individual Psychology in St. Paul, Minnesota and Dreikurs passed it to the next generation when he arrived.

Adler left St. Paul for New York on Wednesday, March 10, two days after the lecture. He planned to devote his efforts to a series of lecture and teaching engagements in London, Edinburgh, Exeter, Liverpool, Hull and Manchester in England, and the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. The lecture at St. Paul Women’s City Club took place just two months before Adler passed away due to a massive heart attack during his morning walk in Aberdeen (Hoffman, 1994). Ballou (2001) stated “Adler’s contributions and achievements in the fields of child guidance, parent training and the education of mental health professionals survive and thrive today, evidenced by the success locally of the Adler Graduate School in Minnesota” (p. 15).

In addition to Adlerian based schools in Chicago and Minnesota, and the Adlerian Society
of New York, the Alfred Adler Institutes of San Francisco & Northwestern originated from the works of Adler’s students such as Erwin Wexberg, Sophia DeVries, Lucy Ackernecht and Henry Stein. There are a number of training institutes of Individual Psychology across North America. For example, institutes exist in South Carolina, Seattle-Tacoma, Maryland/Washington DC, Florida, Arizona, Idaho, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Fort Wayne, Milwaukee, Ontario, British Columbia, and so on. Indeed, the Adlerian movement in North America is widespread.

Advancing to Japan: Brief History of Individual Psychology in Japan

Origin of Individual Psychology in Japan

The seed of individual Psychology was imported into Japan in 1982 by Dr. Shunsaku Noda, a psychiatrist who learned Individual Psychology at the Alfred Adler Institute in Chicago; later named the Adler School of Professional Psychology. After going back to Japan, he and his associates organized a study group for Individual Psychology and, after creating basic syllabi, and educational papers, began offering counseling and psychotherapy courses across a wide area of Japan (Noda, 1984). On Feb 7, 1984, Dr. Noda and his company founded the Japanese Society of Adlerian Psychology in Osaka. He was the first President of the society and contributed to the development of Individual Psychology in Japan.

Soon after the foundation of the society, the main branches of the tree-two Adlerian institutes; the Adler Guild in Osaka, in western Japan, and the Alfred Adler Institute (AAI) of Tokyo (later named the Human Guild), in eastern Japan, were established. There were almost 100 Adlerians in Japan (Groner, 1984) and these two branches provided many opportunities to
teach Individual Psychology as an educational and therapeutic institute. Due to their contributions, the number of active local study groups reached about forty over the next ten years (Hironori, Kamata, Kishimi & Noda, 2000). The seed had grown without any trouble or problems up to that point.

Though it should have grown to a big tree in full bloom, things didn’t always go smoothly. In 1993, friction started developing when differences between the two institutes began to emerge in the interpretation and understanding of Individual Psychology (Nakajima et al., 2000). Controversy continued for almost six years, covering not only the interpretation and understanding of Individual Psychology, but also the strategies for developing and expanding Individual Psychology in Japan. In the opinion of the west Adlerians, the east Adlerians used Individual Psychology as a means of making a profit, as they taught not only Individual Psychology, but also various theories such as Psychoanalysis and Transpersonal Analysis (Nakajima et al., 2000). During this time, Dr. Noda resigned as President of the society, as did his successor.

The more severe the friction and conflict was, the more separated the eastern and western branches became. There was no mutual trust and respect between the two and, as a result, the blossoms on the tree fell to the ground. Finally, in 1999, the Adler Guild brought this controversy to the International Congress of Individual Psychology in Chicago (Nakajima, Hattori, Kamata, Kishi & Noda, 2003). In their presentation, other Adlerians asked questions such as, “What are you so worried about?” (p.1) “Why don’t you bring this matter to the court and file a lawsuit?”
“Why are you so stuck to this issue? It is the process of development that we can avoid this issue” (Nakajima, et al., 2003).

**Current Situation of Individual Psychology in Japan**

After the congress, a representative of the Human Guild offered segregation to the society (Nakajima, et al., 2003). Though he and his Human Guild colleagues left the Japanese Society of Individual Psychology, silent controversy between the two institutes has continued. The relationship between the two institutes has been distant and no information has been exchanged.

All the information regarding this incident has come from the west Adlerians. Therefore, it is not appropriate that any judgment be made without the opinions of east Adlerians. Nevertheless, it is clear that this controversy and separation have influenced the progress of Individual Psychology in Japan. As one overseas Adlerian has stated, it was part of an evolitional and developmental process to achieve a more perfect and ideal society.

The Japanese Society of Adlerian Psychology is officially a member of the International Association of Individual Psychology and has 24 local study groups in a variety of regions in Japan (Japanese Society of Adlerian Psychology, 2014). Under this circumstance, both the Adler Guild and the Human Guild are places where people can study and learn Individual Psychology. These two institutes have made huge contributions to the development and expansion of Individual Psychology for thirty years. Unfortunately, they only offer a certification and are not eligible to offer any degree or credit like the Adler School of Professional Psychology in Chicago or the Adler Graduate School in Minnesota.
Based on the tree of the Japanese Society of Adlerian Psychology, even though the two main branches are disconnected, new branches have been strongly encouraged. In 2011, one of the newest branches, the Japanese Society of Clinical and Educational Adlerian Psychology, was established. To advance the expertise in fostering individual social interest in Japan, the institute constantly holds meetings and invites a variety of professors, teachers, students, school counselors, caseworkers and other people who are interested in Individual Psychology.

**Challenges for Individual Psychology in Japan**

Despite the increasing demand for counseling and psychotherapy in Japan, the tree of Individual Psychology has been slow to develop over the past 30 years. The seed has grown to become a tree, with two big branches and a number of blossoms, but the name Alfred Adler and his theories and practices are less well known to Japanese people than the names and theories of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, for example.

This phenomenon has occurred world-wide. Individual Psychology has gradually become well known, but has not necessarily become part of mainstream counseling and psychotherapy. Even in the United States, while the name Alfred Adler can be recognized, his works and contributions are unfamiliar to many people in the field of counseling and psychotherapy.

One critical reason for the under-appreciation of Adler’s theories and practices is because they were incorporated into the works of later theorists such as Maslow, Rogers, Ellis, May, Frankle and Glasser, and, to some extent, were no longer associated with Adler’s name. Maslow (1954) described this phenomenon, when he said, “I have felt through these years that the
Adlerian insights were not sufficiently appreciated by American psychologists, psychoanalysts, and clinicians” (p. x).

Another reason for this under-appreciation is that Adler didn’t organize and establish his theories and practices in a systematic way. Some of his publications were written in his native German language and were poorly translated into English. In addition, most of his books were published by editors who collected his lectures in a rather scattered way. Besides, Adler was not a gifted writer and his English writings often gave erroneous perceptions of Adler’s ideas.

Adler (as cited in Adler, 1994) speculated on the future of Individual Psychology as if he were a prophet:

It will attract many enlightened disciples, and many more who will hardly know the names of its pioneers. It will be understood by some, but the number of those who will misunderstand it will be greater. It will have many adherents, and still more enemies. Because of its simplicity many will think it too easy, whereas those who know it will recognize how difficult it is. It will bring its followers neither wealth nor position, but they will have the satisfaction of learning from their opponents' mistakes. It will draw a dividing line between those who use their knowledge for the purpose of establishing a more ideal community, and those who do not and it will ensure that this hard-earned capacity shall be placed in the service of human progress. (p. 140)

Despite these challenges to the development and expansion of Individual Psychology in Japan, the uniqueness and diversity of Individual Psychology has allowed Adlerians to apply and
expand Individual Psychology to multicultural societies. Consistent with this trend, and deriving from ideas and concepts discussed in my publication, *Individual Psychology in Japan* (Kajino, 2012), Individual Psychology is believed to be effective and applicable to Japanese people and to the country of Japan and its cultural perspectives and concepts.

**Relationship between Individual Psychology and Japanese Culture**

**The Recent Events in Japan**

While still fresh in our memory, it has been three years since the massive earthquake that struck Japan on March 11, 2011. The earthquake caused a global concern due to the leakage of radioactive material following the Tsunami that swallowed Sendai City and damaged the cooling system of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant (Murai, 2011). The earthquake had a huge impact on Japan and other countries and many people needed treatment as a result of this traumatic disaster.

The world changes rapidly and is constantly moving forward as a human society. Despite this positive change, however, the worst natural disaster in the history of Japan has gradually been dismissed from most people's minds. It was as if the world felt cosmic inferiority; an awareness of the vastness of the universe that engendered a sense of helplessness, powerlessness, smallness, and personal insignificance (Dreikurs, 1983). A sense of biological inferiority, and the physical weakness of human beings, in general, was on people’s minds.

It didn’t matter whether or not we possess these inferiorities. Adler explained that “To be a human being means to have inferiority feelings. One recognizes one's powerlessness in the face
of nature” (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1979, p. 54). However, people can use these feelings of inferiority as a motive to overcome, evolve and achieve perfection.

On Dec 16 2012, the 46th general election was held in Japan. This is an election focused on members of the House of Representatives. Voters supported the Jimin-Tō (Liberal Democratic Party); replacing the Minshu-Tō (Democratic Party) for the first time in three years. The Jimin-Tō won a definitive victory. However, the voter turnout was only 59.3%, which was the lowest turnout one since World War II (Japan Times, 2012). In addition, since 2000, the Prime Minister has changed ten times. These factors reflect the Japanese people’s low expectations of politics. Nevertheless, in response to his landslide victory, Shinzo Abe, the new Prime Minster catalyzed a significant change in the value of the yen, which fell to 91.00 against the US dollar within two weeks after the election (102.00, as of Feb, 2014). Japanese people had hoped that this election would have a huge impact on the economic depression and financial distress in Japan.

The Highlights for Japanese Culture

Japan is a very unique, mono-cultural and geographically independent country. Japanese people have developed particular social skills, attitudes and communication styles and language, for example. The word Wa is commonly used in Japanese as an expression of one of the main concepts of Japanese culture. There are the examples: Wafuku (means traditional Japanese clothing, Kimono), Washoku (Japanese foods), Washiki or Wafū (Japanese style), Wago (Japanese word), Waka (Classic Japanese poems, Tanka, Haiku) and Wagashi (Japanese
confectionary). By contrast, the word Yō is used to stand for western influences such as Yōfuku (Western clothing), Yōshoku (Western foods), Yōshiki or Yōfū (Western style) and Yōgashi (Western confectionary). In addition, the word Yamato, a location in Japan, also known as the Nara region, expresses Japanese culture in words such as Yamato-Damashī (Japanese spirit) and Yamato-Nadeshiko (Ideal Japanese women).

Japanese language is very unique, especially in the written form of the language. It has a combination of three scripts; Kanji, Hiragana, and Katakana. All of them originated from China; Kanji was transmitted from the Chinese writing system, and Hiragana and Katakana were developed from Chinese Kanji. Each was developed in different ways. Hiragana was derived from the quickly written cursive Kanji script, whereas Katakana derived as shorthand and abbreviated Chinese characters. Sometimes a single Chinese Kanji serves as the base of both Hiragana and Katakana (UCLA International Institute, n.d.). Japanese people’s names, for example, are based on a combination of Kanji script. Interestingly, based on the number of stokes of each word of Kanji, Japanese people decide their given name. This is onomancy, a way of fortune telling that is widely accepted in Japan.

Collectivism. Like other Asian countries, Japanese people think, feel and act based on collectivism. Derived from Confucian and Buddhist principles, collectivism emphasizes harmony, togetherness, belonging, and personal commitment to the social group to maintain balance and peace. There are some general virtues and traits such as patience, perseverance, self-
sacrifice, maintenance of inner strength, self-restraint and discipline that are associated with the philosophy of collectivism.

As already mentioned, *Wa* is the best word to explain the virtues of Japanese character and personality. *Wa* represents “circle” in another meaning; like connecting and cooperating with each other, maintaining peace and harmony, taking good care of one another, living together, and sharing limited resources. These things express the essence of Japanese character (Parry, 2006).

One example showing these personality traits appeared at the disaster area associated with the Great East Japan Earthquake. In freezing weather, evacuees waited in kilometers-long lines at shelters and on school grounds to share and receive limited resources such as water and food after the earthquake (Beech, Birmingham & Dirkse, 2011). They stayed calm and showed little anger, even during the aftershocks. Under the virtue of *Wa*, they displayed harmony, cooperation, sharing and living together.

Interdependence, both vertically and horizontally, is another trait of Japanese people. *Wa* stands for the circle that allows them to be interdependent. For example, Japanese children are encouraged to be completely dependent on parents and to develop a sense of interdependence that will stay with them throughout life. However, this strong interdependence among all members of a group sometimes goes to the useless side of life. *Hikikomori* and *NEET* (later explained) are the populations that tend to display this trait.

Since Japanese people act based on collectivism, they have a fear of being rejected by other group members. In order to avoid being rejected by the group and society, they tend to hide
their true thoughts and feelings inside of them and try to display the same opinions, feelings and behaviors as others. Once feeling the same as others, they release fear and anxiety. Otherwise, the fear of being different and being rejected increases and may cause mental illness and dysfunction. Once rejected by the group or society, Japanese people understand the difficulty in going back to the group or society, which means losing a place to belong.

**Religion.** Japan has a complex religious system based on *Shinto* and Buddhism. Japanese people usually follow the rituals from these two religions, though most Japanese people do not express any concern about them. Rather, they merely enjoy incorporating elements of various religions into their practices or events and creating their meanings. For example, they celebrate Christmas, a Christian custom, which is one of the popular events among the non-Christian population in Japan. Most Japanese people are not aware of the reason for celebrating Christmas due to having no interest in religions. However, people have created their own traditions and now, for example, most of the population consumes Kentucky Fried Chicken and champagne on Christmas as they simply enjoy the company of their significant others.

*Shinto* means the way of the gods, directly translated from the script of *Kanji*. God is *Kami*, and Japanese people go to a *Shinto* shrine for worship. As a most popular event, Japanese people celebrate *Oshōgatsu*, the first three days of the New Year. They go to a shrine to make a wish for the year and cook traditional foods to celebrate. They also place *Kamidana*, (a household shrine alter) in a specific location in their house. Like *Shinto* shrines, even though there are many Buddhist temples in Japan, the influence of religion has diminished in power and
much of the population no longer worships. Shrines and temples are now crowded with tourists as sightseeing spots.

**Communication style.** The Japanese communication style is based on high-context, nonverbal, and indirect communication. This unique style of communication could be confusing to an outsider and it is easy to misunderstand Japanese people. They have a high tendency to read nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, tones of voices and body reactions. Therefore, for the training of counseling and therapy in Japan, Japanese students try to mirror the body movements of clients in the learning process. On the other hand, in American culture, the communication style is completely opposite. It is based on low-context, verbal and direct communication. Clearly, there are some unique elements in the Japanese communication style.

**Honne and Tatemae.** Honne (true desires, feelings, or real intentions) and Tatemae (stated reason, public position, or facade) is a famous expression in Japan. Most Japanese people use their words to speak carefully in general conversation to avoid Wa-o-Midasu (disturb the harmony and peace in the group; avoid the conflict and friction with others). In order to maintain harmony within the group, they tend to hide their opinions and may even change their opinions to fit the atmosphere. For them, yes doesn’t always mean yes and no doesn’t always mean no. They consider the voicing of opposing opinions to be disrespectful; therefore, they have to emphasize Wa on the surface of the communication.

**Omoiyari.** Omoiyari is a unique attitude towards other people. It means to pay attention to other people's feelings and, to understand and esteem other people's thought. Generally,
Japanese people are passive and see reserved attitudes as a virtue. They tend to prioritize other people’s thoughts and feelings more than their own feelings. *Omoiyari* creates a sense of acceptance and connectedness in relationships and nurtures *Wa*, which is considered a peaceful and committed relationship. Though Japanese people use *Honne* and *Tatemae*, they expect one another to understand, *Honne* hidden by *Tatemae*.

**Ishin-Denshin.** *Ishin-Denshin* derives from Buddhism. Japanese people emphasize *Ishin-denshin* which means heart-to-heart communication, telepathy and tacit understanding. They regard it as a virtue, and emphasize mutual understanding without words. Having *Omoiyari* is necessary to perform *Ishin-denshin*.

**Yuzurai.** *Yuzurai* means a spirit of give and take; giving way to each other to show respect to others in a gentle manner. Japanese people regard a reserved attitude as a virtue and perform *Yuzurai* in many occasions. They hesitate to show egoistic behaviors, avoid breaking *Wa*, and try to maintain peaceful relationships in the group.

**Age, seniority and authority.** Japanese people highly respect older people. They use *Keigo*; honorific languages to show their respect. Another way to show their respect and appreciation is obeisance. Sometimes a deep obeisance to persons who are authorities creates the atmosphere where one can never say no to elders and this can lead to power harassment. Once again, the concept of *Honne* and *Tatemae* suggests that there may be a possibility to show respect as a *Tatemae*. 
In this vertical culture, traditional Japanese relationships show up in educational settings. In American culture, students are expected to be open and share their opinions and experiences in class. They are strongly encouraged to express themselves verbally. On the other hand, the relationship between teacher and student in Japan is quite different. They play exact roles in class; “teacher talks and student listens.”

Japanese people have a unique desire to feel connected with their ancestors. For example, they have a Buddhist memorial ceremony for wakes and funeral services, which includes cremation. On the forty-ninth day after a person’s death, a memorial service takes place to say good bye to one’s soul. According to Buddhism, one’s soul meets Yama (a king of hell) to be judged about one’s life every seven days, for forty-nine days. This process determines if one’s soul is eligible to go to heaven or not. This service continues at various intervals: one-hundred-days, one-year, three-years, seven-years, thirteen-years and more. In addition to these specific opportunities, Japanese people occasionally visit elders’ graves to value and feel connected to their souls.

Shame and shyness. Shame is another aspect in explaining Japanese culture. Japanese people feel a social pressure and use their neighbor’s eyes in evaluating their thinking, feeling and behaving as a report card giver. It usually provides an opportunity for them to feel shame in many situations, especially when making mistakes. They consider themselves as a person lacking competence, efficiency, confidence and goodness. It is hard to shake off their mistakes; therefore, they regret their mistakes and cling to the regrets for a long period of time.
At the time of feeling shame, Japanese people start feeling different from other people in a negative manner. In their minds, other people are superior and don’t make mistakes. This makes them feel more pressure to not make mistakes. They depreciate themselves and don’t focus on their strengths and contributions as other people might. The fear and anxiety of difference may create a fear of rejection by the society and group. As a result, they may lose their sense of belongingness in the society and group. Japanese people behave very conservatively to avoid making mistakes for this reason.

This shame-based culture is strongly connected to suicide in Japan. In the history of suicide, *Seppuku* or *Hara-kiri* was conducted in some circumstances. For example, it was shameful for Samurai to be killed by their enemies. As an honorable act, they chose *Seppuku* to keep their face. Japanese people would rather die than feel shame. The relationship between shame and suicide influences the suicide rate and suggests that Japan is a suicidal country.

Along with the shame culture, Japanese people hardly keep their eyes on others during conversations. Their gazes are usually lower and they tend to not have eye contact with others. People in other countries may think they lack communication and public speaking skills, or are people with a social anxiety disorder. However, this is normal behavior and they regard a reserved attitude as a virtue and as politeness in the group.

**Education and social system.** The education system in Japan is completely different from that of other countries. The system consists of six years of elementary school, three years of junior high school, three years of high school and two or four years of university. Most
Japanese parents expect their children to gain an opportunity for higher education. To get into good junior high schools and high schools, they must pass entrance exams in a highly competitive environment. For this reason, parents send their children to Juku (clam school) after their elementary school days, and spend more than eight hours a day studying. Economic repression has also added to the stress and importance of entrance exams. The competition on school entrance exams for colleges and universities is very famous and puts teenagers under great pressure to study for exams.

In general, colleges and universities are the extension of a high school education in Japan. They are open for younger people like teenagers and students in their early twenties. However, if people over thirty enroll in colleges or universities, they are considered as different and strange. Therefore, Japanese people who are older are not culturally accepted or honored for enrolling in and going back to colleges and universities to earn a new degree.

While the American education system allows people to study and learn new knowledge and skills at colleges and universities when needed, the Japanese education and social system is very strict and creates an environment that does not accept failure or mistakes. Once the person has dropped out of the Japanese system, their future is shattered because society will consider them to be failures. Therefore, this system creates a sense of hopelessness and worthlessness among people and discourages them from re-entering the system.

**External control and internal responsibility (EC-IR).** Another characteristic of Japanese people can be explained by the theory of locus of control and responsibility. Japanese
people tend to display external control and internal responsibility (EC-IR). Individuals who are in the collectivism are likely to accept the dominant culture’s definition of self-responsibility but have very little real control over how they are defined by others (Sue & Sue, 2008). In their mindset, when having hardship, they usually say *Shōganai*, which means it cannot be helped or is beyond their power. This thought process sounds very passive and powerless and suggests little control over the specific situation, but it does require a lot of inner strength and discipline to stay calm in the face of fear.

Japanese people display IR in situations and tend to take responsibility for their mistakes and failures. They strongly value harmony in the family or group as collectivism, and may feel pressured by other people to harmonize with them and take responsibility for their behaviors. In the worst case scenario, they choose to commit suicide due to a strong IR. One of the traditional psychological treatments in Japan, *Naikan* Therapy, also demonstrates the importance of taking responsibility.

*Naikan* means inside-looking, and Ishin Yoshimoto, the founder of the *Naikan* method, defines it as a way to explore your real self (Maeshiro, 2009). The *Naikan* method increases the level of awareness of individuals and of the relationships with his or her important persons. It is a way to explore your inner world and develop social reciprocity. It is usually practiced in a setting where the client is isolated in a quiet room. Meals are served by *Naikan* therapists and the client is not allowed to leave the room and must avoid outside stimulation. Clients spend a week in this strict setting and must ask themselves three questions: “What have I received from (person X)?”
“What have I given to (person X)?” and “What troubles and difficulties have I caused to (person X)?” Using these three questions, clients examine themselves in the context of their personal relationships; this approach is called the question-association-search method (Maeshiro, 2009).

**Hikikomori and NEET**

Since November 2007, the Japanese government has announced that the economy has gone downhill. Due to this fact, some distinct populations have come to light. They are *Hikikomori* and *NEET*. The term *Hikikomori* refers to people who refuse to leave their house and isolate themselves from society in their homes for more than six months (Ito, 2003). This term has been added to the Oxford Dictionary and defined as, “The abnormal avoidance of social contact, typically by adolescent males.” Persons displaying these characteristics do not go to school or work, which is importantly associated with the depressed economy and strong competition in academic and business areas.

Conversely, *NEET* was first used in the United Kingdom as an acronym meaning Not in Education, Employment and Training. The definitions of *NEET* used by the United Kingdom and Japan are a slightly different. *NEET* refers to young people who are between the ages of 16 and 24 in the United Kingdom. In Japan it refers to those people who are between 15 and 34, not in employment, education and work-related training, and not engaged in housework or seeking a job.

**Characteristics of Hikikomori.** *Hikikomori* first appeared in the public in 1998 when a Japanese psychiatrist, Tamaki Saito, published a book *Social Withdrawal*. He defined the term as
“A state that has become a problem by the late twenties, that involves cooping oneself up in one’s own home and not participating in society for six months or longer, but that does not seem to have another psychological problem as its principal source” (Saito, 2012). Persons displaying *Hikikomori* are also usually described as being unhappy, mild, insecure, shy and talk less. The Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare identified the following criteria for *Hikikomori*: (1) shutting himself or herself at home for at least six months; (2) no intimate relationships with persons other than family members; (3) the social withdrawal is not a symptom of other psychotic disorders; (4) the social withdrawal refers to not taking part in any social activities, such as school and work settings (Itou, 2003).

Most persons with *Hikikomori* begin with the refusal to go to school. Some suffer mental or physical illness, and others experience the failure to keep up with peers in classes; getting bad grades which eventually compels them to stay in their home (Furlong, 2008). There are also cases of adults who display *Hikikomori* in business areas. Under strong social pressure, they struggle to make profits in business, or to build effective relationships with bosses and colleagues. These outcomes suggest a relationship with poor social adjustment. As such, those who are affected by this phenomenon commonly display low self-esteem and self-worth, a lack of confidence and hopelessness about their future life.

According to Japan’s Cabinet Office (2011), the number of persons displaying *Hikikomori* has increased to 69.6 million people as of 2011. Including the post-*Hikikomori* group, the total number is estimated to be 1.55 million people who are more or less on the verge
In general, *Hikikomori* means social withdrawal and some researchers say acute social withdrawal, is not a mental disease. Often researchers suggest that *Hikikomori* is a diagnosis and should appear in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V). They consider *Hikikomori* as a cultural-bound syndrome and one of the psychiatric disorders. For example, one cultural syndrome, *Taijin kyōfushō* (interpersonal fear disorder in Japanese), is already listed in DSM-V, and has a slightly different meaning than disorders characterized by “anxiety about and avoidance of interpersonal situations due to the thought, feeling, or conviction that one’s appearance and actions in social interactions are inadequate or offensive to others” (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, p. 837).

**Characteristics of NEET.** Though the symptoms are similar between *Hikikomori* and *NEET*, *NEET* is simply a work-related problem and is not concerned with the individual’s mental status. *Hikikomori* is a psychological problem as well as a behavioral problem (Suwa & Hara, 2007). Approximately 600,000 Japanese people displayed *NEET* in 2011 (The Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2012). As an additional classification, the *Freeter* is someone who works part-time jobs after high school or college when only full-time jobs are socially accepted as a *Shakai-Jin* (a mature adult). This is different from the *Freelance* classification, which refers to someone who owns a business.

**Suicidal Country: Japan**

The National Police Agency of Japan (2013) announced there were 27,858 (Male 19,273,
Female 8,585) suicides in Japan during 2012. Compared to 2010 (31,690: Male 19,273, Female 8,585), the number decreased and was below 30,000 for the first time in twelve years.

Nevertheless, the number of suicides has increased since 1997 (24,931) and is expected to be higher each year. In contrast, according to McIntosh and Drapeau (American Association of Suicidology, 2012), the number of suicides in the United States was 38,364 in 2010, increasing from 2007 (34,594). However, from the point of gross population, the suicide rate per 100,000 persons of Japan (21.8%) is nearly twice that of United States (12.4%).

Of these Japanese suicides, physical and mental issues were associated with almost 50 percent (13,629) in 2012, followed by economic and daily life issues (5,219), family issues (4,089), work issues (2,472), men and women issues (1,035), school issues (417) and other issues (1,535). Of the 8,571 suicides concerned with mental issues, 5,904 of these suicides were associated with depression. Other mental health condition were schizophrenia (1,150), alcoholism (234), substance abuse (39) and other related mental illnesses (1,244) (National Police Agency of Japan, 2013).

The methods of suicide used are different in Japan and the United States. In Japan, hanging is the most common method for both men and women, while in the United States half of the suicides are by use of firearms. People in Japan are not allowed to own a firearm. As such, they use some unique methods of suicide like jumping in front of a train, inhaling gas, and overdosing.
In general, suicide rates rise significantly in periods of financial and economic distress. An economic depression may increase the possibility of mental distress, producing feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness and a sense of not belonging that lead people to suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Teenagers and the elderly typically account for much of the increase in the number of suicides. However, the suicide rate has also risen sharply among middle-aged Americans, for example, who are part of the baby boomer generation and are often coping with the stress of caring for aging parents, while still providing financial and emotional support to adult children (Tara, 2013).

Japanese people have comparatively positive views of the meaning of death. It gives honor and respect, and is tolerable in certain situations. In the Warring States Period of Japan, the Samurai warriors had a ritual, Seppuku, or Hara-kiri; killing themselves by cutting the abdomen. It was the way they avoided leaking information because of their great loyalty to their lord. Even their enemies understood and respected the Samurai’s need to keep face, and honored the ritual.

Suicide is seen as a morally responsible action in Japan. Japanese people use suicide as a means of taking responsibility for their troubles, failures, mistakes and inconveniences. For example, if a person is failing in his or her business and creating a big loss for the company, that person might feel guilty enough to choose death without any hesitation. The Japanese agriculture minister, Toshikatsu Matsuoka, who hanged himself in 2005, left eight notes about taking responsibility for his trouble, failure, and inconvenience (Beam, 2007).
Adlerian Views for Suicide

Suicide emerged as a public health concern in Adler’s time. It seemed a mystery; especially the suicide of young people in Germany and Austria in 1910 (Stepansky, 1983). Generally, suicidal individuals are regarded as mentally disordered or depressed at the time of their suicides. This phenomenon grabbed the attention of psychologists and psychiatrists who began to study the dynamics of suicide.

In 1910, a symposium on suicide was held in Vienna, where Adler was elected President of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society two weeks later. At the symposium, Adler described the dynamics of suicide as a form of communication. “Sickness, even death, is desired, partly in order to hurt the relatives, and partly to show them what they have lost in the one they have always slighted…In later years it is no longer the parents, but the teacher, or some beloved person, or society, or the world at large, that is taken as the object of this act of revenge” (Ansbacher, 1968, p. 184).

Adler added another manifestation of the neurotic disposition to the dynamics of suicide, which is the pampered style of life. He concluded in the symposium, “Suicide like neurosis is a child’s form of reaction to a childish overestimation of motives, humiliations, and disappointments. And thus suicide---exactly like neurosis, and psychosis ---represents a safeguard to avoid by social means the struggle of life with its frustration” (Ansbacher, 1968, p. 184).

From Adler’s explanations, suicidal persons always seem to be pampered and spoiled
children. They are poor losers, very complacent and oversensitive, and they hardly ever make a direct attack against others. They always show a style of life which attempts to influence others through increased complaining, sadness and suffering (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964).

Adler found similar traits in the early history of pampering experienced by melancholic, alcoholic and drug addicted persons. Clinicians must assume the possibility of suicide for people with depression. Kurt Adler (1961) said the suicidal patient with depression expects persons involved to be shattered by his or her suicide and suffer guilt. Thus, suicidal persons hurt themselves in order to hurt others for not having achieved his or her goal of superiority.

Adler also offered an idea concerning the purpose of suicide, stating that it is similar to that of a murderer. They can feel a heightened sense of superiority (I have done what not everyone could do). They become the master over life and death, bringing them closer to God (As cited in Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). This goal of superiority is apparently on the useless side of life.

In his later writing, Adler, in 1937, finally summarized the dynamic of suicide as a mistaken solution:

Reduced to the simplest form, the life style of the potential suicide is characterized by the fact that he hurts others by dreaming himself into injuries, or by administering them to himself…the type of suicide who thinks too much of himself or herself, too little of others, and who is unable to sufficiently play, function, live and die with others…the idea of suicide, like any mistaken solutions, arises when the individual is confronted with
an urgent exogenous problem for which his social interest is insufficient. (1958, p. 61)

For the dynamics of suicide of young people, Frank Walton (1988) suggested they many choose suicide as a method of revenge to punish others by taking his or her own life; usually directed towards a loved one who is not treating them as they should be treated, or used as an escape to excuse themselves from dealing with criticism or failure or lack of approval. We can assume that no patient really wants to die if they could accomplish their goals in some way other than by taking their life.

During therapy, to depreciate the therapist, the patient may make use of suicidal threat. Adler warned that our goal is “to knock the weapon out of his hand” and to not let him or her make us vulnerable or intimidate us with his or her threats (Mosak, cited in 2005). Adler tells the patient, in such a case, after the client asks, “Has anyone ever taken his life while being treated by you?” that “I am prepared for a suicide to happen at any time” (As cited in Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). Kurt Adler (1961) described his way of knocking the weapon out of the patient’s hand, when he said, “Patients have tested me with the question of how would I feel if I were to read of their suicide in the newspaper. I answer that it possible that some reporter hungry for news would pick up such an item from a police blotter. But, the next day, the paper will already be old, and only a dog perhaps may honor their suicide notice by lifting a leg over it in some corner” (p. 66). He also was known to say, “Nobody will feel guilty on account of his action. People quickly try to forget suicides, shy away from talking about them; and that many religions do not allow suicides even to be buried beside other people” (1961, p. 66).
Ansbacher (1969) designed three direct points of intervention when addressing “hurting others by hurting oneself,” using the general process of encouragement and development of social interest. They are: (1) Is it worth the price? (2) Will you really accomplish what you intended? (3) Do you really want to hurt them? These three interventions could reveal the purpose of the suicide and the target of the hurting.

To summarize suicide from an Adlerian point of view, the purpose of suicide has a social intention to hurt, harm and trouble others, to blame and accuse them, to produce pain, sorrow and regret, and to grieve and arouse their sympathy.

**The Application of Individual Psychology**

The theories and practices of Individual Psychology and the characteristics of Japanese culture have much in common. For example, Adler’s central concept, social interest, can easily be applied to Japanese people and their daily lives. They are familiar with this concept in their culture, through *Wa* and collectivism. As Stasio (1998) declared, collectivism can easily be connected with the other-centered attitude and group-oriented behavior of social interest. This statement is borne out by how the Japanese people reacted to the Great East Japan Earthquake.

The effect of the Great East Japan Earthquake, was to create feelings of cosmic and biological inferiority among Japanese people. These inferiority feelings created mixed emotions such as anger, irritation, anxiety, sorrow, despair, fear and grief that people struggled to cope with. We consciously or unconsciously know that people are powerless to avert natural disasters, but after the earthquake these emotions had nowhere to go and stuck to people internally.
Therefore, they were ambivalent about the situation and felt confusion. One example of this ambivalence was seen among people living in the Kanto area. On the day of the earthquake, a temporary blackout limited the means of transportation. Many people were not able to use trains in the evening, so some people decided to walk home, even though it was a great distance. Others were picked up by a taxi or by their family. Because the blackout affected the functioning of street signals, people were forced to be patient in the heavy traffic and to remain calm on their way home. Despite these stressful circumstances, they showed Yuzuriai, a spirit of give and take, so as to support each other and to avoid confusion and trouble. According to Adler (1964), “As long as a person is in a favorable situation, we cannot see his style of life clearly. In new situations, however, he is confronted with difficulties; the style of life appears clearly and distinctly” (p. 173). These examples clearly and distinctively demonstrated Japanese culture and the Japanese people’s style of life.

Dreikurs (1950) explained that “social interest is expressed subjectively in the consciousness of having something in common with other people and of being one of them” (p.6). In addition, according to Carlson, Watts and Maniaci (2005, p.11), social interest is “one’s willingness to participate in the give-and-take of life and to cooperate with others” (p.11). Among Japanese people, as already mentioned, Yuzuriai, a spirit of give-and-take, represents an expression of Adleian social interest. Japanese people display Omoiyari and Yuzurial, and communicate with each other through Ishin-Densin, in order to keep the virtue of Wa.

The theory of Holism, which is at the root of Individual Psychology, can be compatible
with the communication styles of the Japanese people. A high-context, non-verbal, and indirect style of communication makes it harder to understand the whole individual. Adler perceived man as a whole, indivisible social being and believed that single psychological mechanisms cannot explain the total individual (Dreikurs, Shulman & Mosak, 1984). Because these elements are indivisible and inseparable in understanding the total individual, Japanese people have a holistic view regarding each other.

Based on the virtue of Wa and collectivism, Japanese people are group-oriented and harmony-centered. Japanese culture is strongly associated with social-embeddedness, which is also a feature of Adlerian theory. “The individual cannot be considered apart from his social situation” (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964, p. 2) because “Man only sees, hears, and speaks rightly when he is linked to others by his interest in the external world” (Adler, 1964, p. 282). The Japanese people emphasize the importance of family and the goal of group harmony in social interactions. The behavior of one family member affects the family’s position and status.

A sense of equality is something Japanese people do not recognize in the same way Adlerians do. Most Japanese people think that equality is the equivalent of sameness, which leads to an idea that all people have to be the same. This misunderstanding may come from the cultural value of harmoniousness. Japanese people fear being different and do not want to disturb Wa and be rejected by others. As already noted, Japanese people tend to change their opinions in accordance with the group goal and adjust their opinions to fit with others in the group.

According to Grey (2008), equality, if narrowed down to a simple form, means equal
human rights. Each person is unique and “one person’s heart is somehow different from another person’s heart” (Sherman, 1999, p. 105). The important thing is to feel connectedness with others who share similarities through differences (Sherman, 1999). To achieve a sense of equality, Individual Psychology passes on ideas about both the unique individual, as well as equality.

Japanese people might have to develop an internal locus of control (IC). According to Hjelle (1975), high social interest is associated with an internal locus of control. A locus of external control indicates a lack of social interest (Ashby, Kottman & Draper, 2002). The more developed one’s internal locus of control, the more social interest would be displayed in the form of internal responsibility and group-oriented culture. As Japanese culture shows, Japanese people emphasize a hierarchal system and, as such, they usually learn an external locus of control in their childhood. Parents tentatively encourage children to put others first over the environment. This style often produces a dependency on others and a pampered style of life, which may stimulate an external locus of control. Adlerians can facilitate mutual trust and respect among children, adults and elderly people. In addition, Individual Psychology teaches that we have the freedom to choose our decisions out of the limitedness of human beings and the phenomenological point of view.

Adlerian Psychotherapy with Japanese Populations, Hikikomori and NEET

Adlerian psychotherapy is an integrated approach that is applicable to understanding the uniqueness of the individual in diverse cultural contexts. This approach is an educational process that Adlerian psychotherapists use to help clients understand their law of movement, and their
lifestyle which consists of the view of self, others and world. It also emphasizes the uniqueness of individuals in social and cultural contexts and “everything can be different” is a golden rule of Individual Psychology (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). This growth model of psychotherapy can be an effective and practical approach with Japanese clients, displaying *Hikikomori* and *NEET*.

While the primary goal of Adlerian psychotherapy is to assist clients in experiencing new common sense that is discrepant with existing cognitive structures or one’s lifestyle (Watts & Carlson, 1999), another central goal of Adlerian psychotherapy is to increase clients’ social interest and community feeling. Carlson and Carlson (2000) said:

> Adlerian psychotherapists emphasize developing harmonious interpersonal relationships, interdependence, and mutual obligation for creating harmony and peace. Therapists aim to increase the individual client’s social interest and help the client contribute within an interpersonal framework. Therefore, Adlerian psychotherapists tend to focus on cooperation and socially oriented values as opposed to competitive and individualistic values. (p. 219)

One of the definitions of social interest is interest in others and others’ interest. Since people displaying *Hikikomori* and *NEET* are strongly interested in self, Adlerian Psychotherapy helps them develop deep feelings of connectedness inside and outside of their family contexts. Through these relationships with Adlerian psychotherapists, Japanese clients can experience cooperative efforts based on mutual respect and trust, which are the essential elements of
Adlerian psychotherapy. Instead of a doctor-patient relationship, Adlerian-based psychotherapy provides a true sense of equality between clients and Adlerian psychotherapists.

There is another aspect of Adlerian psychotherapy that shows its effectiveness for Japanese clients. Since the Person-Centered approach has long been a main approach in Japan, Watts has identified the similarities between Adler’s social interest and Rogers’ core conditions of therapeutic change (1998). Persons displaying Hikikomori are deeply discouraged from developing effective and meaningful relationships and can benefit from this cooperative experience.

A focus on the mind-body connection is a specific feature of Adlerian psychotherapy. Adler considered how the individual uses body and mind in the pursuit of goals to be important in a holistic and teleological sense (Mosak, 2005). Japanese people have a unique communication style, which is high-context, nonverbal and indirect. The concepts of holism, psychology of use, organ jargon and recognition reflex described by Griffith and Powers (2007) can be significantly effective and useful in understanding and exploring lifestyles and mistaken goals, and in helping people to gain insight and to recognize patterns of motivation, and in encouraging people to tackle their problems. With insight, Japanese people and Hikikomori are challenged to correct mistaken beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, behaviors and feelings about themselves and the world.

Japanese clients can learn to increase their internal locus of control. Adlerian psychotherapists assist clients to become aware that they have the power to change (Dinkmeyer,
Dinkmeyer, Jr. & Sperry, 1987). Human beings are creative, deciding beings, who have freedom of choice and the ability to make decisions and judgments, which are both picture and artist. Therefore, all of our behaviors depend on the creative choices we make in selecting and achieving our goals. On the basis of the concepts of creative self and soft-determinism, Adlerian psychotherapists say, “within the limits established by your biology and the environment, there is a lot you can do” (Manaster & Corsini, 1982).

*Hikikomori* and *NEET* people have a low level of internal control and self-responsibility. Because of their fear of making mistakes, they don’t have the courage to take action. In addition, under conditions of economic depression, these people have low motivation to find meaning and purpose in life and to strive for success. However, their creative power and power to change can be stimulated through Adlerian Psychotherapy. Therapists also help these people to recognize their strengths and to develop the courage to overcome their feelings of inferiority and insecurity and, ultimately, to tackle the tasks of life. This is a process of encouragement, and Adlerians consider encouragement an essential aspect of human growth and development (Carlson, Watts & Manicci, 2005). Since Adlerian psychotherapy is education-oriented, Japanese clients and *Hikikomori* people absolutely need constant encouragement to develop new common sense and to redirect their striving for significance into more socially beneficial areas within Japan’s failure, and mistake-centered culture.

Increasing an internal locus of control and constant encouragement assists people to try new behaviors in new situations, which help people to be able to replace their old private logic
with a new common sense. As a result, they show more social interest and gain a greater sense of belonging. Through the feeling of belonging, equality, mutual trust, respect and encouragement, *Hikikomori* people are encouraged to change and overcome. They can be healthy individuals who find meaning on the useful side of life and are encouraged to contribute to society. These traits can help to reduce helplessness, hopelessness and worthlessness, and may contribute to a decreasing number of suicides in Japan.

The growth of confidence, competency, self-esteem, pride and gratification leads to a greater desire and ability to cooperate. Adler wrote, “the willingness to give, serve, or help brings with it a certain compensation and psychological harmony, like the gold of the gods that comes back to the person who gives it away” (p.172). Japanese people and *Hikikomori* people can feel better about everything and become brave enough to take risks without having fear of mistakes. One of the famous sayings among Adlerians, “courage to be imperfect,” can strongly inspire them.

Human beings are evolitional beings, who strive for perfection in the future. The high expectations of Japanese people have contributed to one of the most advanced countries in the world. However, their perfectionism directs them on a vertical line. For example, *NEET* people are not socially accepted in Japanese society because the concept of *Shakai-Jin* limits who is accepted as a mature adult. As already mentioned, Japanese people, especially young adults, are not fully motivated to succeed in their lives. Therefore, they need to develop both the courage to be imperfect and the courage to strive for perfection.
One of the difficult things about involving Japanese people in Adlerian psychotherapy is that Japanese people like quick solutions and directive advice. Because counseling and psychotherapy are not fully established in Japan, Japanese people often misunderstand therapy as a way to obtain magic advice or to find quick solutions. These requirements run counter to the goals of Adlerian psychotherapy. Carlson and Carlson (2000) said Adlerian psychotherapists are in charge of helping clients to deal with their problems and unmask new meanings and solutions. Therefore, Adlerian psychotherapists must help Japanese clients to know the goals and processes of Adlerian psychotherapy.

Survey from Adlerians in the United States

Throughout this project, about 15 Adlerians in the United States cooperated in answering a questionnaire and providing their perspectives and information. According to their responses, respondents were introduced to Individual Psychology in a variety of ways. For example, a friend taking an Adlerian seminar, a professor talking about Adler in class, or coming across Individual Psychology from an extensive study of the Person-Centered approach. These are the effects of happenstance according to Krumboltz's theory, which stated that indecision is desirable and sensible, as it allows people to benefit from unplanned events. This theory is called planned happenstance.

In regard to their first impressions of Individual Psychology, Adlerians see Individual Psychology as a very useful, practical and understandable model for serving clients. Its values are important, its philosophy makes sense, and its concepts matter. Individual Psychology makes
“uncommon common sense” and is straightforward, and academically sound. Adlerians are often friendly, serious and committed, unlike some persons who are not Adlerian-trained in psychological theory and practice. Many Adlerians are particularly impressed by the theory’s charismatic and strong leaders such as Dreikurs, Mosak and Powers.

To successfully establish an Individual Psychology group, the interest and hard work of one or two individuals is often necessary. These people offer personal devotion, get things going and are marked by a sense of urgency and task-orientation. Under the leadership of a dedicated leader, Adlerians teach and offer workshops and meetings, make presentations, offer case supervision, work with teachers and educators, publish books, create mentor groups and parenting groups, and plan conferences and workshops. Counseling demonstrations motivate people to learn more about Individual Psychology. Since communities come and go over, and people move from place to place, dedicated Adlerians can also write and interface with communities and inspire those communities to behave in alternative ways.

To maintain an Individual Psychology group, Adlerians should adopt cooperative and collaborative leadership, focusing on shared values and goals, such as encouraging young people and mentoring them, supporting same sex relationships and inviting Adlerians to offer seminars, weekend classes and lectures. The NASAP conference, its affiliates and ICASSI offer great opportunities to make connections with Adlerian organizations across the globe, which are also useful and beneficial. Furthermore, these gatherings provide the chance to study and learn more about Individual Psychology and to exchange cultural perspectives with each other.
Since human beings go back and forth on both horizontal and vertical plains, Adlerian organizations frequently have strains, conflicts and disconnections. When this inevitable consequence of vanity and possessiveness comes up, we should study the beginnings of Individual Psychology and go back to its roots as we continue the grass roots movement.

**Findings**

Judging from the assessments of Japanese culture and Individual Psychology, Individual Psychology is apparently compatible and applicable to Japanese populations. Adlerian Psychotherapy can be an effective, essential, practical and understandable model for the treatment of Japanese clients. Despite these findings, there are still some obstacles. Since the United States and other countries have also encountered difficulty in developing and expanding Individual Psychology, Japanese Adlerians will presumably share some common challenges.

One challenge is how best to introduce and explain Individual Psychology in Japan. The uniqueness and diversity of Individual Psychology sometimes blocks its development and expansion. Corsini (1987) discovered the difficulty in understating Individual Psychology when he explained that all three giants in the Adlerian movement, Heinz Ansbacher, Kurt Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs, defined it differently.

Another challenge is that Adlerians should perhaps act more boldly and use their influence in the media and society. For example, Dreikurs didn’t declare that he was Adlerian when he first came to the United States, which he regretted. Some Japanese Adlerians, however, have already publicly shown their dedication in the media and in society and this has helped to
facilitate the growth of Individual Psychology.

To overcome these challenges, two questions must be considered. First, what is an Adlerian? Second, what is Individual (Adlerian) Psychology? From my experiences as an Adlerian for about seven years, I have sometimes wondered what an Adlerian is and what Individual Psychology is. Corsini (1987) wrote in his article, *What is an Adlerian?* “I am personally convinced that Adlerian psychology basically is primarily a philosophy rather than a theory, since it combines two basic concepts: ‘Know thyself’ and ‘Do good works.’ And to repeat myself, a real Adlerian may never have heard of Adler, but if that person is able to combine common sense with concern for others, that person is an Adlerian” (p. 276). Common sense and care for other people (*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*) defines Adlerian Psychology.

Manaster and Corsini explained what an Adlerian looks like. People who accept Adlerian theory exhibit the social, active and optimistic tenets of the theory. People are friendly and they are engaged in laughter and seriousness in all settings. There are no “big shots” or “little shots”; everyone is, and seems to feel, equal and has value. Everyone is teaching and learning and interested in each other, the task, and the living of the theory (1982, 1993).

The current Executive Director of NASAP, John Newbauer (2011), wrote, “They work in schools, clinics, businesses and communities. They counsel and encourage people who need the most encouragement. They create learning environments where children thrive because they feel a sense of belonging, and know that they are respected and challenged at the same time. They write books and training manuals that help people learn how to live together, learn together, and
work together in cooperation and mutual respect.”

The speed of innovation and evolution provides many possibilities and the potential to achieve a more perfect society. Individual Psychology is ahead of its time and it has helped both individuals and society become more perfect. The challenge we have is that Adlerians must now pass Individual Psychology onto the next generation. Most Adlerians consider Individual Psychology to be a philosophy of life, as well as a set of clinical tools for professionals to use as they work with their clients. Cooperative activities and collaborative efforts across the world can help us to realize the integration, development and expansion of Individual Psychology.

**Recommendation and Plan for Expanding Individual Psychology in Japan**

In addition to Japanese Adlerians’ original efforts to develop and expand Individual Psychology in Japan, there are some clear recommendations and plans for the future work and progress.

**Focus on Work/Career task of life**

The Japanese economy has declined since 1995 and, in fact, the whole world is filled with its uncertainty. While people appreciate the rise of economic globalization, technological advancements and scientific innovation, the economic outlook is increasingly less predictable. In the workplace, we rely on change and new developments. However, due to organizational downsizing and decreasing job security, job satisfaction and vocational success are difficult to achieve. There are no guarantees for lifetime employment and opportunities. In the face of this economic depression and an unhealthy job market, people are struggling to find jobs and seem to
have less time to discover their careers and career choices.

In Individual psychology, work/occupation is one of the life tasks that people need to tackle. More than the other two life tasks, friendship and love, the work task is the essential one that comes first for living. In December, 2013, the unemployment rate in Japan was 3.7 percent (Ministry of Internal Affairs & Communications, 2014) reflecting economic recovery. However, the job market still seems to be far from the one back in the 1980’s and 90’s. While the demands of counseling services for mental health increase, the services for job related issues such as career development and planning, job searching and decision-making are also indispensable. To achieve the satisfaction that careers can provide, mental wellness and well-being are necessary as well.

Career counseling offers a unique approach which differs from other types of counseling. It depends on a clients’ readiness to choose careers, needs and settings. For example, in the college and university setting, most graduate students have a specific demand for career counseling. Their readiness is high and they seek help in finding jobs or internships, with resume and cover letter writing and in developing job interview techniques. Counseling sessions are a mix of teaching and counseling/coaching. Therefore, the main activity is to teach people how to write a resume and cover letter, and to provide information regarding networking, social media and the benefits and opportunities of informational interviews.

Others whose readiness for a career is low ask assistance in exploring and becoming aware of self and in gaining insight into their purposes, goals, visions, aptitudes, interests, values
and priorities as they choose their jobs and careers. Career counselors can utilize various assessment tools to reveal information that is relevant to behavioral tendencies.

**Adlerian Career Counseling**

Individual Psychology provides a framework for understanding unique characteristics that are important in choosing and managing careers (Taber & Briddick, 2011). Adlerian counselors must cooperate with clients in finding their mistaken beliefs, private logic and lifestyle, both for their own benefit and for the welfare of others (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). According to Del Corso, Refuss and Galvin (2011), career choices are a compensation for feelings of inferiority, and specific work roles and occupations make people feel more secure, powerful or significant. To awaken a client’s social interest in the process of any counseling session, therefore, the private logic, fictional goal or guiding fiction offers an important piece of information for both counselor and clients. Stone (2007) said that Adler believed work is a psychic compensatory mechanism.

The Career Style Interview (CSI) is a very effective and useful tool. There are seven questions that reveal information about the client’s choice and movement in life (Taber & Briddick, 2011). In the CSI, counselors make an interpretation of the client’s responses to the questions, and provide a summary for the client to retain. (Taber, Hartung, Briddick, Briddick & Rehfuss, 2011). Therefore, counselors can obtain a life theme through the client’s story. For example, a client who admires beautiful people may have the guiding fiction of “When I create something beautiful, I feel important,” or “When I am beautiful, I feel powerful” (Del Corso,
Career Adaptability Resources are also very effective in helping clients gain insight into their career potential. Each question has a specific purpose and counselors can work with clients during sessions or give them the assessment as an assignment. Career Adaptability Resources can help to explore a client’s concerns, controls, confidences and cooperation, as well give the client an assessment.

**Adlerian Life Coaching: Mind, Body, and Brain**

Life coaching has gradually become popular in Japan. The purposes of coaching are to explore life goals and the methods to achieve them. Everyone has some change to make in life; an improvement we want to make. The life goals, purposes of life, values and meanings are important features in making progress with Adlerian concepts.

According to Rock (2006), scientific research shows there are four main areas that explain how coaching impacts the brain. These are Attention, Reflection, Insight and Action. In the process of coaching, a coach asks compelling questions that help to focus attention on something new. These questions stimulate the right hemisphere to activate and provide a chance to make a new connection. Where we put our attention, we create connections (Rock, 2006). When the neurons fires, Daniel Siegal believed, “the opportunity to strengthen their connections or make new connections is made possible” (Carlson, 2008, p. 76). This process can provide possibilities and potentials to clients, and lead to a change of actions and to physical changes in the brain.
During sessions, a coach acknowledges the goals and values that clients can have an opportunity to reflect. One of the goals of Adlerian life coaching is to develop the client’s social interest. Siegel created the term “mindsight,” which means sensing your own mind and that of others and relating to that level. Being able to do this will change your brain in a positive way (Carlson, 2008).

Siegel also explained the way brain functioning is shaped by the way you share energy and information, which he calls communication (Carlson, 2008). Because Adlerian Life coaching emphasizes the importance of social interaction, sharing the way one personally experiences “mindsight” can increase the quality of communication. Positive reflection and encouragement result in helping to shape the nervous system.

Jung-Beeman and associates in Northwestern University reported that people’s brains release alpha-band waves just before we come up with an insight (Rock, 2006). Alpha waves increase the release level of serotonin that provides relaxation and eases pain. They also show that the brain gives off strong gamma-band waves when we come up with an insight (Rock, 2006). Gamma-band waves can be found in all parts of the brain when the brain processes information to different parts of it. Therefore, we can access a new region of the brain and create a new life map.

These neurological processes help to provide a motivation to take action. We can become brave enough to try a new behavior when one’s social interest grows and we gain the courage to be imperfect. Adlerian Life coaching can help the brain work at a higher level and to catalyze life
Planning to Expand Individual Psychology

**Act as an Adlerian.** Acting as an Adlerian is an essential concept in both clinical and daily settings. This is a basic and fundamental way to engage in friendly communication with others. With common sense and interest in others, Adlerians can counsel and encourage people who need courage and encouragement, especially young Japanese people. They are struggling with finding purpose and meaning in their lives and dealing with their life tasks because of a lack of courage to take action. Through mutual respect and trust and cooperative activities, we can train them to develop a sense of belonging and significance, and a feeling of equality and value.

**Lecture and workshop.** Adlerians work in schools, clinics, businesses and communities. They offer lectures and workshops, meetings, presentations, and conduct case study groups. They serve other Adlerians, as well as persons in human service fields, education and business. Adlerian counseling demonstrations motivate people to study, learn and share information with each other.

**Social media and networking.** Since most Adlerians encountered Individual Psychology through happenstance, the full utilization of social media and networking is indispensable. In this age of advanced information technology, we can easily use these systems in marketing and this is the fastest way to inform Japanese people about Individual Psychology.

**Translation and publication.** Publication of books, articles and academic papers is another means of expanding Individual Psychology. A number of Adlerian books are published in
English in the United States and elsewhere, and some of these are also translated in Japanese. Many Adlerian books are still not available in Japanese; hence, greater efforts should be made to translate more of this material. However, publishing companies are reluctant to publish books without any guarantee of making a profit. Instead, perhaps electronic versions can be considered. In addition to translation, writing papers, books and training manuals that are compatible with Japanese culture is necessary.

**NASAP and ICASSI.** Attending the NASAP conference and ICASSI summer institute allows learning and a deepening of understanding of the theory and practice of Individual Psychology. Networking with others Adlerians and an exchange of ideas based on different cultural perspectives is totally important. NASAP expects to increase its affiliate groups around the globe. This could also make it possible to more easily interact with overseas Adlerians.

**Collaborative workshops with overseas Adlerians.** Inviting overseas Adlerians to Japan, and offering seminars and workshops is a complicated project. This collaborative activity would provide a fresh perspective for Japanese people and enhance their motives in continuing learning in a new environment.

**Conclusion**

Although Individual Psychology has influenced most contemporary psychotherapies, Adlerians have struggled with expanding the theories and practices of Individual Psychology. The assessment and application of Individual Psychology and Adlerian Psychotherapy with Japanese populations shows that Adler’s ideas and his integrative approach are effective and
applicable to Japanese people and culture. Adlerian Psychology’s uniqueness and diversity allow us to innovate and advance Individual Psychology, and our encouragement and confidence can overcome a variety of challenges. Therefore, it can be possible to develop and expand Individual Psychology throughout Japan.
References


Retrieved from
Japan’s Cabinet Office (2011). Hikikomori gun no teigi, suikei-sū (The definition and estimate of Hikikomori).
Retrieved from


http://www.tradingeconomics.com/japan/unemployment-rate


Newbauer, J. (2011). *What is an Adlerian?*


Retrieved from: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/03/health/suicide-rate-rises-sharply-in-us.html?_r=0


Plumer, B. (2012, Oct 5th). *September jobs report: Why the drop to 7.8% unemployment is good news.* Retrieved from


(Date related youth employment).


