reflects the optimistic nature of humanistic psychology in its willingness to embrace the possibility that we can achieve the mastery of our lives, beyond the false restrictions that existence appears to present us with.

Wilber, K. (1979). No boundary. In Rowan, J. *Ordinary Ecstacy.* Boulder: Shambala

Joe Moore is a practising cognitive behavioral therapist.

Adlerian Psychotherapy

An Advanced Approach to Individual Psychology

Ursula E. Oberst & Alan E. Stewart (2003). London: Brunner-Routledge

There is both an individual and social way of reading Adler. On the first reading Adler is the therapist who took Nietzsche's will to power as both the goal and problem for the individual and turned this into something of an overriding human dialectic. If one thinks of Caspar David Friedrich's painting of 'From the Summit: traveler looking over the Sea of Fog' which adorns the penguin edition of Nietzsche's Ecce Homo' one has an effective vision of man in the ascendant. This is the vision of man born to overcome misfortune, neatly encapsulated in Adler's theory of organ inferiority. On the other hand there is Adler, the medical psychologist and founder of Individual Psychology, who suggests that all questions of life can be subordinated to three major problems: communal life, work and love, all irreducibly social in nature. It is our reaction to these 'unavoidable problems of humanity' that determines how we live our lives. The solutions we arrive at do not merely effect ourselves, but the destiny and welfare of mankind as a whole. Way (1956) notes the desire of Adler to 'bring his psychology before the general public as a therapeutic aid to good living which turned him into something of an apostle for that ideal of human fellowship.' (p.40). Thus it is misplaced to see in Adler a simple translation of Nietzsche's 'will to power' into psychological principles, let alone practice. For Adler the strength of the individual is a necessary part of social living and not an end in his or herself.

Oberst and Stewart both with counseling psychology backgrounds, highlight this social dimension as well as noting the similarities between Adler and more recent therapeutic approaches such as humanistic and cognitive therapies. For Adler our lack of social feeling is to be found in earliest childhood, in such problems as 'pampering, congenital organic inferiorities and neglect.' Individual psychology does not however abrogate individual responsibility to such external factors, but acknowledges the creative power of the child to produce divergent and mature results. If successful the child can then avoid the adaptive problems of the 'neuroses,

the sexual perversions, failure and the unreal world of the pampered.'

What then are the ways in which active adaptation can occur and where 'movement and character' can be enhanced and the deleterious effects of early experience ameliorated? Adler quotes the maxim 'Everything can be something other as well.' Whilst this does not a priori assume 'the other' to be positive, it does highlight the possibility of change. It is this that resonates with current cognitive interventions, Adler notes that he is 'convinced' that 'a person's behaviour springs from his ideas.' Our ideas collectively construed constitute our life pattern which determine 'our thinking, feeling, willing and acting.' Change occurs as a result of recognising that 'everything we call a mistake shows a want of social feeling.' The solution for Adler is through social education, which he optimistically believes will in a far off age triumph over all that opposes it, then 'it will be as natural to man as breathing, for the present the only alternative is to understand and to teach that it will inevitably happen.'

It is one of the strengths of the book that Oberst and Stewart dedicate a chapter to the relationship between Adlerian therapy and other approaches. While existential theory is not mentioned , the chapter is useful in highlighting the extent to which Adler foreshadowed many later day therapies and the extent to which he remains something of a unique influence. Sadly, Victor Frankl and Rollo May are identified as being influenced by Adler, but the nature of the relationship is not explored.

For the existential practitioner the book does I think provide some illuminating insights. The relationship between Adler and Vaihinger's 'Philosophy of As- If' is particularly thought provoking. Essentially this is a world of negotiated fictions that we agree to use in a specific way. This seems to me to provide a counter-balance to the brutality of Satrean 'Bad Faith' and the 'Either/Or' split between authenticity and inauthenticity. The modern world is in many respects a fictive world in which we operate on the basis of assumption. This is of course particularly the case with therapy. The issue of whether something is or is not the case is actually of less interest than whether a fiction can be utilized for a particular person at a particular time.

There were many similar points in the book which prompted me to think about the content of Adler's philosophy and therapeutic technique. These aroused a sense of '*deja-vu'* in that many ideas not formally associated with Adler appear to have been derived from his thinking. This was both an intellectual surprise and a pleasure, partly due to the attention that the authors have paid to locating Adler within the broad scheme of contemporary psychological developments.

Way, L. (1956). *Alfred Adler: An Introduction to his Psychology.* Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Dr. Robert Hill. Clinical Psychologist in Addictions – SLAM