

The Dynamics of Creative Power Creative power drives every individual's unique personality development. Adler equates creative power with the "self," the "I," the "soul" of the individual. It provides the uniqueness and self-consistency of movement toward an imagined ideal completion, the creative compensation for felt deficiency, and an unfolding of all capabilities toward a totality. Individuals can use this creative power cognitively, emotionally, or behaviorally, and focus it in a socially positive or negative direction, resulting in useful achievements, or useless exploitation, conflict, and destruction. In early childhood, this creative capacity can be nurtured, or nearly eradicated by parents or teachers. The task of educating and training children is not a mere transfer of information and skills from teachers to learners. Children must not only accept the training, they must also use their creative power to integrate and apply what they have learned; without this combination, even the best teachers or trainers may fail. The spontaneous formation of the individual's style of life, before the age of five, illustrates the creative power of the child, who, after a period of extensive exploration and trial and error, narrows his anticipation of the future toward what he perceives will bring him security, significance, and success. (In the mentally limited child, the organizing influence of one overall goal is absent, because he lacks the creative power to formulate one.) Both positive and negative influences are used, ignored, or shaped in an imaginative way to fortify and justify a direction in life. This direction is based on the freely adopted, creative interpretation of experience, not on any deterministic cause and effect dynamics. At the root of this direction lies the meaning that the individual attributes to life. Each individual's life contains two potential, major creative landmarks. The first, in early childhood, is the construction of a style of life and fictional final goal. Depending on the degree of insecurity and goal rigidity, a fixed law of movement may develop, severely restricting the creative power for the rest of that individual's life, locking him into narrow, repetitive patterns. However, a second creative landmark is possible, with the assistance of CADP, releasing the grip of the original law of movement. Many years after the original creative choice of a direction in life and the subsequent restricted functioning, penetrating insight and encouragement can bring an adult to a reawakening of his dormant creative power. A second creative choice or psychological "rebirth" is then possible, generating an entirely new meaning of life and style of living. Accessing realistic information about ourselves requires the ongoing feedback of encouraging, significant others. Howard Gardner's concept of multiple intelligence (verbal-linguistic, mathematical, spatial, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal) comes close to describing the rich variety of this capacity. Living creatively demands that we constantly monitor the effects of our actions and with a healthy infusion of humility, correct our intentions and improve our behavior. Is this enough?