



June 14, 2020

The Board of International Association of Individual Psychology (IAIP) position statement about violence, racism, inequality, and injustice and call for actions.

The Board of the International Association of Individual Psychology (IAIP) is deeply troubled by systemic racism, continuous violence, and other injustices that may be portrayed as an American news or an American export but, in reality, have no borders or national origins. The Board of IAIP stands in support of everyone whose life is affected by oppression and discrimination and against systemic racism and institutional injustice in every part of the world. This position is a direct expression of the mission of IAIP to promote the development of Adler's Individual Psychology theory, research, and application throughout the world. What is happening in the US, Canada, South America, Australia, Europe, and parts of Asia is not an American problem. It is a problem of humankind, and it is a problem of human nature. As Adlerians we often say that Adler was ahead of his time. If that is true, then the time for Adler is *now*. As a Board of an international organization, we carry responsibly to speak up.

The Board believes that injustice in one part of the world is injustice everywhere, and that it is everyone's responsibility to understand and confront injustice no matter where on a map the most recent episode could be located. The Board further believes that fulfillment of that responsibility for Individual Psychologists and everyone who practices Adler's theory, in any occupation and any work setting, is only possible if we challenge ourselves to study Adler's theory in-depth, if we critically examine our own biases, and if we act with courage and cooperation across the borders.

Adler, and later Dreikurs, called on us to see and to confront inequality and to realize that practice of democracy requires "fundamental change in human relations" (Rudolf Dreikurs, 1964, *The impact of equality*). We must see that no atrocious system is conceived in a vacuum, but in human nature - using those craving for power, and others choosing to remain silent. Having lived through the World War I, the Spanish flu, the Great Depression, and the rise of the Nazism, Alfred Adler did not see intoxication with power and resulting crimes as exclusively housed in one nation or on one continent. Adler placed direct responsibility on psychologists to "work against nationalism when it is so poorly understood that it harms [hu]mankind as a whole; against wars of conquest, revenge, and prestige; against unemployment which plunges people into hopelessness; and against all other obstacles which interfere with the spreading of social interest in the family, the school, and society at large" (Alfred Adler, 1933, *Problems of social psychology*).

The Board is calling on the IAIP member organizations, their individual members, and everyone else to examine their own work, their personal and professional commitments in furthering Adler's philosophy, in revisiting Adlerian traditions of outreach and community education, in cooperation with groups and communities representing marginalized populations. The Board sees "The Challenges in the Global World: Healing and Growth" not only as a topic of the next IAIP Congress and a call for presentations in 2021, but as a call for actions now.

The Board of the IAIP