

May 2026-Newsletter-Mantra of Hope Counseling Services

4310-Sherwood Towne Blvd, Mississauga, Ontario

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes."

Marcel Proust, French Novelist,

1871-1922, best known for his work *In Search of Lost Time*

In this newsletter, we will examine the case of R (M, 64) using Adlerian theory.

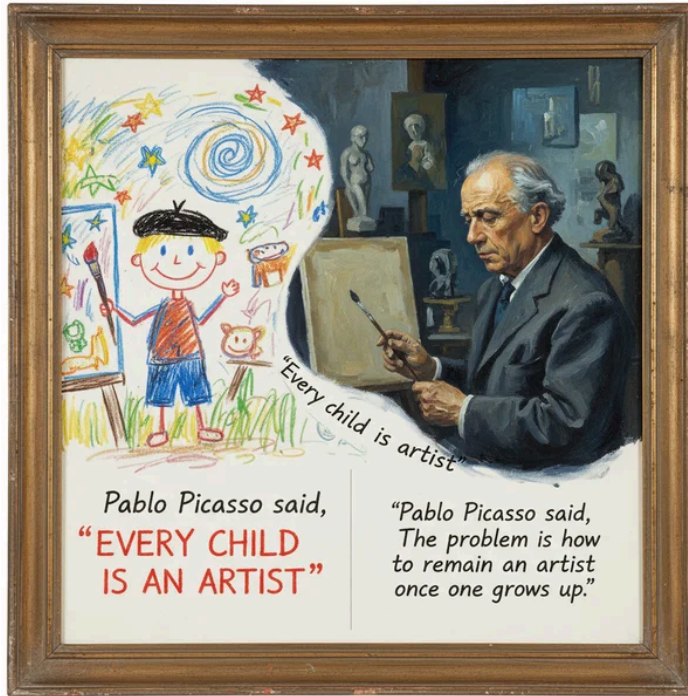
Adlerian interventions, such as questioning and family sculpting, examine personal alignments with society and life transitions. We explore how Proust's central theme - that time is lost not just because it passes, but because we fail to fully live in it — and that memory, while imperfect, is the only way we can ever reclaim it. We explore how fulfilment can be explored through psychotherapy and counselling.

Case Scenario: R (M 64), navigating cultural differences in a multigenerational household

Mr. R is an immigrant from South Asia who moved to Canada after retiring from a long career in education. He currently lives with his adult daughter, her husband, and their two young children. Since arriving in Canada two years ago, Mr. R has experienced challenges adjusting to life in a new country and navigating cultural differences within his multigenerational household.

He has expressed feelings of social isolation, loss of traditional status, and difficulty finding a renewed sense of purpose in retirement. Family interactions have been affected by shifting roles, communication barriers, and generational differences in expectations. These concerns and family dynamics make Mr. R's case especially relevant for understanding the complexities of aging, migration, and identity through the lens of Adlerian theory.

The Adlerian counseling approach helps in viewing the family, life, death, and associations. Adler believed that people are part of a social context, that their symptoms serve a purpose, and that people are actors who can co-create not only behavior modification but also fundamental personality change, thereby redefining how they see themselves, others, and the world.



Pablo Picasso said, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once one grows up". We also probe cultural aspects of life in this phase.

South Asian Americans: Fast-Growing Ethnic Minority



Between 2010 and 2017, South Asians were the fastest-growing major ethnic minority group in the US, growing by 40% over the previous decade (SAALT, 2019). This exponential growth, along with a rapidly aging US population, implies that a significant proportion of South Asian Americans will be 65 years or older in the coming years. Yet, research on the lived experiences/needs of older South Asian Americans is limited (Khan et al, 2022).

Thematic analysis of the interview data showed that level of acculturation, proficiency in English, cultural beliefs and practices, awareness about available health and social services, degree of religiosity, and the density of social networks were key determinants of healthy aging. Compared to those who were US-born or had immigrated earlier in life, participants who had immigrated later in life (post-retirement) appeared more financially and/or emotionally dependent on their adult children and expressed ambivalence about future caregiving arrangements and intergenerational co-residence. Nearly all participants shared that helping their adult children with childcare, cooking, or other household chores gave them a sense of purpose and made them feel valued.

Relevance in the case of Mr.R- post-retirement immigration to Canada

These findings are highly relevant to Mr. R's experience. Like the study participants, Mr. R immigrated to Canada post-retirement and has found himself relying more on his adult daughter and her family for emotional and practical support. He,, too, has described feelings of uncertainty about caregiving roles and about how to balance his traditional values with the expectations of his new Canadian environment. Engaging in household tasks and assisting with childcare has provided Mr. R with opportunities to retain a sense of meaning and contribution within the family, counteracting some of the isolation and loss of status he has faced since

migration. This close connection between research and Mr. R's lived reality helps illustrate the practical implications of Adlerian theory for understanding the migration and aging process.



*Helping out in Community Gatherings provided R with an avenue to
Feel valued and connected: There was initial resistance, given his former
Role as a college professor, but over a period of time, he adjusted to
The realities of his current situation and generated new possibilities*

Family Sculpting and Striving for Significance

R was asked to sculpt the family members in a pose that symbolizes how he sees them, then redo the sculpture with the group in an ideal pose. R was educated about the Crucial Cs of connection, capability, count, and courage, and became more aware of feelings of connection in society, which he has now adopted after turning 60.

Significance in The Present Context

Striving for significance begins in childhood, when one is dependent on parents. This need for significance can be seen in actions, reactions, conflicts, attention-seeking, challenges, and power struggles. In Mr. R's story, his move to Canada and transition into retirement surfaced new challenges to his sense of significance. He no longer holds his former professional status and must now find ways to feel valued within his family and community. For example, Mr. R's involvement in household chores and assisting with his grandchildren has become a way for him to experience a sense of purpose and belonging. At the same time, differences in cultural expectations and communication styles between generations have led to tension, prompting Mr.

R to seek new avenues to assert his importance within the family. His adaptation and efforts to contribute highlight how the striving for significance is a continuous process throughout the lifespan, shaped by changing roles and circumstances.

Applying Family Sculpting-Processing Grief and Life Transitions

Therapist-PB (T-PB): Do you remember how your family interacted? What were festivals or birthdays like?

Client-R (C-R): I remember my elder brother was very strict. I lost two sisters, who passed away before the age of 10. Celebrations of important festivals like Raksha Bandhan were colored by memories of my sisters. My brother passed away two years ago.



Happiness was a kind of sorrow, a measure of what could be lost. -Kiran Desai, Novelist

Commentary: Through such sculpting, early recalls can be examined before and after therapy, to see if they differ. In therapy, the unprocessed grief of the passing away of his elder brother came out. These issues were not discussed openly with his children and grandchildren, who have their own lives in Canada. The other contacts in Canada who have grown and lived here for a long time could not connect to the nuances of Indian South Asian Reality.

Comfort and Confidence in Expressing Emotions, Sharing Memories

As therapy progressed, Mr. R became more comfortable expressing his emotions and sharing memories with his family. He reported feeling a greater sense of acceptance and connection, both with his relatives and the wider community. By working through his grief and exploring his shifting family roles, Mr. R gained new insights into his place within the household. He was able to communicate his needs more openly with his daughter and grandchildren, leading to improved understanding and stronger relationships. Ultimately, Mr. R emerged from therapy with increased

confidence and a renewed sense of purpose, finding new ways to contribute and feel valued in his new environment.

What is home? We developed the concept further in therapy.

Family Sculpting

R (M 64) was asked to sculpt the family members in a pose that symbolizes how he sees them, then to redo the sculpture with the group in an ideal pose. This was creatively adapted in this current life to open new horizons.

No	Theme	Example	Follow-up
1	Connect		
2	Capable		
3	Courage		
4	Count		
5	Creative		
6	Collaborate		

No	Theme	Example	Follow-up
1	Connect	With memory of his childhood	Integrates life phases
2	Capable	Remembered his educational journey, and the strivings of his parents, the first post-Independence Generation	Understanding the factors and forces that shaped his youth
3	Courage	To see patterns, after a long time, he admitted how festivals like Rakshabandhan were	Each happiness is also tinged with the flavors of Unique Family Memories

		altered due to the memory of his two sisters who passed away very young	
4	Count	Through therapy, he started doing volunteering work-which made him have a sense of achievement and productivity in Canadian society	Role Models in Community Work
5	Creative	We created boundaries around negative people. Making a log of themes discussed, how these affected his self-esteem, helped	Boundaries of emotional well-being were created.
6	Collaborate	With the therapist and other family members, to create a map of Values and how much effort he puts in each	Looking back at festivals, family gatherings, helped him to be more proactive- For eg, he volunteered for arrangements of a birthday celebration in the community.

Historical Developmental Perspective

From 1902 to 1910, Alfred Adler was part of the “Wednesday Society,” which met regularly on Wednesday evenings at Freud’s home, and was the beginning of the psychoanalytic movement, which had around 17 members by 1906. Each week, a member would present a paper, and after a short break of coffee, cakes, and cigars, the group would discuss it. Alfred Adler broke away from the psychoanalytic movement, emphasizing family, society, and birth order rather than internal drives.

Feature	Sigmund Freud (Psychoanalysis)	Alfred Adler (Individual Psychology)
Primary Motivation	Sexual and aggressive drives (Libido).	Striving for superiority and social interest.
The Unconscious	A dark repository of repressed desires and trauma.	Less emphasis; focus on conscious goal-setting.
Human Nature	Pessimistic; we are driven by internal conflicts.	Optimistic; we have the power to create our destiny.

Orientation	Causal: Behavior is determined by the past.	Teleological: Behavior is guided by future goals.
Social Influence	Minimal; focus is on the internal psyche.	High; focus is on family, society, and birth order.

References

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For a customized plan of Therapy you can contact

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