Plenary Power Point for Presentation
at ICASSI July 19th

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Reflecting on LEADERSHIP TODAY TOWARDS DEMOCRACY & SOCIAL EQUALITY

So how are we doing?

Karen John, PhD
Developmental Psychologist,
Adlerian Psychotherapist
Overview of Talk

• My abiding aim

• Key messages from Adler & Dreikurs

• Democratic leadership - promotes / values / inspires…

• So HOW ARE WE DOING?

• Contributions from Alexis de Tocqueville (1835-1840) and Bertrand Russell (1948)

• Factors that promote and undermine democratic leadership / good authority

• Where do we have control?

• THINK globally, ACT locally
My abiding aim is...

... to help individuals, families, staff teams, leaders, organizations and communities recognize and overcome the internal and external obstacles that interfere with their healthy, socially-responsible functioning...

... and to stand up to thugs!
Key messages from Adler (1911-12)

In 1911 Adler left Freud’s Psychoanalytic circle & argued that:

- Striving for power or superiority is an effort to compensate for feelings of social inferiority and to protect self esteem – with the oedipal complex being just one example.

- The rise of democracy altered power relationships – with even young children being highly sensitive to those changes.

- Autocratic methods of parenting, teaching, leadership and management lead to defiance and disobedience.

- Democratic ways of relating, among leaders and led, adults and adults, adults & children, and between the sexes, are needed to optimize cooperation and human potential and promote social equality.
Striving to Overcome Feelings of Inferiority

Superiority - Competition

Success
How am I doing?
Power
Position
Possession

Inferiority

Failure
Complaining
Blaming
Fears
Excuses
Individual Psychology was meant to convey the principle of holism or the indivisibility of human feeling, thinking & behavior, as well as the indivisibility of physical and mental health and the social embeddedness and interdependence of individuals, social groups and humankind.
Finding the Courage to be Imperfect

Superiority

How am I doing?
Success
Power
Position
Possession

I'm little

Inferiority

Failure
Complaining
Blaming
Fears
Excuses

Superwoman

Working together to make things better for everyone

Cooperation [with competition to improve things]

Self-Occupation

SOCIAL INTEREST
Community Feeling
What am I doing?
Sharing
Enjoying
Creating

Finding the Courage to be Imperfect

Superiority

How am I doing?
Success
Power
Position
Possession

I’m little

Inferiority

Failure
Complaining
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Superwoman
Rudolf Dreikurs on Social Equality

Dreikurs’ *Social Equality: The Challenge of Today* was written in 1971 as a sequel to Adler’s *Social Interest: A Challenge to Mankind* written in 1933.

Dreikurs’ central question was:

“How can we make social equality a reality?”

Dreikurs was an optimistic realist who believed there was “…plenty for everyone", that we are at the beginning of the ‘Age of Democracy’ and offered a psychological explanation for “…the birth pains of a new society”.
Key Messages from Dreikurs (1971)

1. **Self-discovery** - the need to know and trust ourselves, towards inner freedom
2. **Moving beyond conformity** - lack of individuality and freedom are the *cause*, not the consequence, of conformity.
3. **Understanding our emotions, thoughts and actions** - our inability to live up to our own high standards of intelligence leads us to denigrate our emotions.
4. **Moving towards harmony and cooperation** - including resolving intergenerational, family & gender conflicts
5. **Finding a safe place within the group** - the social system threatens everyone's status and position, self-doubt interferes with feeling equal.
6. **Recognizing the interrelatedness of the individual & society**
7. **Fostering a humanist religion** - with principles, morals, symbols and rituals consistent with belonging to the human community, and the necessity of mutual good will and help.
Ecological Model of Democratic Leadership

- promotes social equality
- values ethics & action
- socially inclusive
- feels belonging & significance

Government
Society
Community
Individual
## What Strengthens Democracy & Good Authority?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ecological Level</th>
<th>Strengthening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government’s Social Policy</td>
<td><em>Government promotes social equality in policy &amp; practice</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider Social Values</td>
<td><em>Society promotes ethics and actions that lead to greater social equality</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Structures</td>
<td><em>Local communities act in the interest of social equality &amp; community feeling</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td><em>Individual feels social belonging, of value and able to express social interest</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP: –

at government level promotes...

social equality of worth / dignity
social justice / social equity
involvement in decision-making
safety & material security for all
EQUALITY vs. EQUITY
DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP: – at societal level values... community feeling / engagement civic morality mutual support / cooperation care for posterity / the planet connection with the cosmos
Societal Responsibility + Aspirations
DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP: –

in the community inspires
feelings of belonging & significance
moral purpose
freedom of choice
scope for creativity & initiative
pleasure in contribution & caring
inner freedom
BELONGINGNESS

You need every member to help run the community.
So how are we doing?

To what extent does your government lead...

1. social values of equality of worth & dignity
2. social justice, social equity
3. material security
4. interrelatedness, mutual responsibility
So how are we doing?

To what extent does your society expect…

1. community feeling & engagement
2. civic morality, social equity
3. mutual support and cooperation
4. connection with planet and cosmos
So how are we doing?

To what extent does your community invite...

1. freedom of choice and scope for initiative & creativity
2. expression of moral purpose
3. pleasure in contributing & caring
4. inner freedom to be & express yourself
So how are we doing?

To what extent do you as an individual feel …

1. social belonging, pleasure & pride in belonging
2. dignity and self-worth
3. higher purpose in social engagement
4. part of the human community
Alexis de Tocqueville’s (1835-1840) central question was:

‘Why did the French revolution lead to the terror and counter-revolution when the American revolution brought about liberal democracy?’

He believed equality to be a providential fact – and regarded democracy as an equation that balances liberty and equality and concern for both the individual and the community.
de Tocqueville identified five conditions that promoted democracy in America...

1. common origins & language
2. exile in pursuit of religious freedom
3. absence of an aristocracy
4. few wealthy individuals
5. endurance of hardship and rough economic conditions that required common toil, mutual support and cooperation
Bertrand Russell, Authority and the Individual

Bertrand Russell’s (1948) central question was: ‘How can the needs of society and the individual be reconciled?’

He was a champion of humanitarian ideals, freedom of thought and social and political activism

– and he believed that a world economy could provide for the material welfare of humankind...
Bertrand Russell,  **Authority and the Individual**

1. The distinct **purposes of social activity** have different requirements: **security & justice** require centralized governmental control, whereas **progress** requires a wide scope for personal initiative.

2. **Personal freedom** requires morality informed by ethical beliefs.

3. The sphere of **individual action** should not be regarded as inferior to social duty.

4. **A good society should be a means to a good life for all its citizens:** What gives life value lies outside of government, but those in control often forget what **actual human beings** are like.

5. **Decentralization from central to local government** provides opportunities for hopefulness & individual engagement in activities.

6. **Neither capitalism nor communism** offers people opportunities for initiative or security.

7. **Greed of possession lessens** when there is no fear of destitution.

8. **A liking of power** need not involve injury to others.
Social Equality depends on Good Authority and…

- Having a shared understanding of values, aims & objectives…
- Understanding our own and others’ needs…
- Being clear about our beliefs, values and boundaries, and the needs of others in a range of situations…
- Confidently taking responsibility for and sticking to decisions on behalf of others, sharing considerations and consulting with them when reasonable to do so…
- Ultimately, our sense of belonging and self-authority are emotionally felt, rather than known…
- Others feeling contained and safe with us…
Feeling Held and Contained?
## Factors that Strengthen Equality, Democracy, Authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Stance</th>
<th>Societal Expectations</th>
<th>Community Attitudes</th>
<th>Individual Feelings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government takes social lead</td>
<td>Society takes responsibility</td>
<td>Community holds social values</td>
<td>Individual feels social belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social values, equality of worth &amp; dignity</td>
<td>community feeling &amp; engagement</td>
<td>freedom of choice &amp; scope for initiative</td>
<td>social belonging, pleasure &amp; pride in belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social justice, social equity</td>
<td>civic morality</td>
<td>moral purpose</td>
<td>dignity &amp; worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safety, material security</td>
<td>mutual support and cooperation</td>
<td>pleasure in contributing &amp; caring</td>
<td>higher purpose in engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrelatedness, mutual responsibility</td>
<td>connection with planet &amp; cosmos</td>
<td>inner freedom to express oneself</td>
<td>being part of the human community</td>
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## Factors that Undermine Equality, Democracy, Authority

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<th>Community Attitudes</th>
<th>Individual Feelings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government lacks the will to further democracy</td>
<td>Society promotes disconnection</td>
<td>Community encourages shallow pursuits</td>
<td>Individual feels anxious and meaninglessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social equality not guaranteed</td>
<td>individualism</td>
<td>pursuit of wealth/greed possession</td>
<td>no higher purpose, conformity of opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abuse of power</td>
<td>social isolation</td>
<td>commercialism</td>
<td>loss of meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oppressive bureaucracy</td>
<td>tyranny of majority</td>
<td>perfectionism</td>
<td>lack of confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When Democratic Leadership is Compromised

Government & Social Policy

Wider Social Values

Community Structures

Individual
- loss of direction, belonging, confidence & meaning
- lack of vision / leadership, target driven, adversarial
- individualistic, perfectionism, power dynamics
- social inequality, bureaucratic, short-term commitment
Control Target

No Control

Influence

Control
THINK globally

ACT locally