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PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT OF A Q-SORT MEASURE OF THE
ADLERIAN CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY PRIORITIES:
THE ADLERIAN PERSONALITY PRIORITIES Q-SORT (APPQs)

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of
Antioch University Seattle
Seattle, WA

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement of the Degree
Doctor of Psychology

By

Dennis Roberts, M.A.

July 2011

PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT OF A Q-SORT MEASURE OF THE
ADLERIAN CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY PRIORITIES:
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12 July 2011

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ABSTRACT

PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT OF A Q-SORT MEASURE OF THE
ADLERIAN CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY PRIORITIES:
THE ADLERIAN PERSONALITY PRIORITIES Q-SORT (APPQs)

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This is a preliminary study of a proposed clinical Q-sort, the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs). This preliminary evaluation includes a review of the literature on Adlerian theory, the Adlerian concept of personality priorities, Q-sorts, and the use of the Q-sort in individual assessment. A typology of personality priorities based on a qualitative review of the literature is presented. A usability study with twenty-six participants examined the ease of administration and understandability of the items in the Q-set and generated suggestions for changes to the instrument instructions and Q-set items. Findings and implications for further development of the instrument are presented. The electronic version of this dissertation is at OhioLink ETD Center, www.ohiolink.edu/etd.

With many thanks to David.

*Without his constant help and encouragement this
dissertation would not have been possible.*

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Introduction

Statement of the Problem

A core concept of Adlerian Psychology is Alfred Adler's theory that individuals behave in accordance with a "lifestyle" (*Lebensstil*) that emerges at a very early age and can be assessed by the therapist (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964; Wheeler, Kern, & Curlette, 1991). Kefir (1971) proposed a reformulation of lifestyle as "personality priorities" and this has been widely adopted by many Adlerians (Ashby, Kottman & Rice, 1998). Unfortunately, there is no widely accepted objective tool for clinical assessment of personality priorities by Adlerian therapists (Wheeler, Kern, & Curlette, 1986), and only one proposed tool in early stages of development (Allen, 2005). This is a reflection of a larger problem of a lack of standardization and limited research in many elements of Adlerian theory (Kern and Curlette, 2003; Choca, 1998).

This research is an attempt to address this using a widely accepted method for assessment of personality, the Q-sort (Stephenson, 1953; Watts and Stenner, 2005) to

create an instrument that can be easily used in the clinical setting to explore personality priorities.

Purpose and Brief Overview

The primary objective of this research is to develop a Q-sort instrument for the assessment of Adlerian personality priorities. As there are few standardized tools for Adlerian clinicians to use in the assessment of personality priorities the creation of such an instrument could potentially have a significant impact on the work of Adlerian therapists. There is likely a high degree of clinical applicability for an easy to administer and score instrument in the Adlerian tradition that assesses personality priorities.

Two questions were created to guide the research and creation of the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs). These are, "*Which personality priorities typology should guide the creation of and use of a Q-sort for this assessment?*", and, "*What items should be included in the Q-set?*"

The foundation of this research is a review of the theory behind Adlerian or Individual Psychology and the

lifestyle or personality priority typology. Some Adlerian therapists have proposed lists of lifestyle or personality priority types. Although these appear to have significant differences in nomenclature and descriptions of the proposed types, it has been argued that many of these share significant core themes (Wheeler, Kern, & Curlette, 1991). The Adlerian concept of Personality Priorities (Kefir, 1971; Kefir and Corsini, 1974; Pew, 1976; Ashby, Kottman, and Rice, 1998) is examined within this tradition and explored for significant concepts for inclusion in this theoretically based instrument. Following standard Q-methodology for the creation of the item set (the Q set) (Brown, S.R., 1980; Brown, S.R., 1991; Watts & Stenner, 2005; Johnston, Angerilli, & Gajdamaschko, 2004) an item set has been created that is based in Adlerian theory and emerges from the literature on personality priorities.

Creation of the personality priorities typology and Q-set was followed by an administration of the APPQs to a convenience sample of twenty-six participants as a usability study. This allowed an evaluation of the ease of administration of the instrument and the collection of suggestions for changes to the instructions and Q-set items. After analysis of the results of usability study, this preliminary stage of the creation of the APPQs

concludes with an outline of future refinement and development with the instrument.

Contributions of this research

It is expected that the findings of this research will contribute to the refinement of the Adlerian concept of personality priorities through the creation of an instrument for assessment of this theoretical construct in the clinical setting. Once the instrument has undergone further refinement and validation, Adlerian therapists would be better able to assess the personality priorities of clients and to match theory based interventions to the lifestyle of clients. It is also likely that the creation of an instrument for the measurement of personality priorities could lead to increased research into the concept and exploration of the implications of personality priorities on the behavior and psychological functioning of individuals.

Outline of dissertation

This dissertation is divided into four chapters and an appendix.

The first chapter provides an introduction to the study and offers a statement of the problem and a brief overview of the study.

The second chapter is a literature review organized around Adlerian Psychology, lifestyle and personality priorities, assessment instruments in the Adlerian tradition, and Q-sorts and Q-methodology.

The third chapter is a presentation of the methods and procedures used. This includes an overview of the research, the creation of the personality priorities typology, the creation of the items in the Q-set, and the administration of the Q-sort in a usability study.

The fourth chapter presents and discusses the results of the study, examines the implications of the results for a Q-sort instrument for elicitation of the personality priorities of individuals in clinical settings, reviews the limitations of this research, and proposes further research with the instrument.

Literature Review

Adlerian Psychology

Adlerian Psychology, also known as Individual Psychology (Hoffman, 1994), is based on the theories and writings of Austrian psychiatrist Alfred Adler. Adler was an early collaborator with Freud who separated to form a rival school of psychology over theoretically incompatible beliefs about the nature of human personality (Ellenberger, 1970).

The importance of an interest in the larger community or society of which the individual is a part is a core concept of Individual Psychology (Dreikurs, 1972; Bass, Curlette, Kern, & McWilliams, 2002; Bitter, 2007). Referred to variously as "community feeling," or "social interest," the phrase that Adler used, *Gemeinschaftsgefühl* (from the German words for "community" and "feeling"), the construct of social interest entails not only a cognitive but also an emotive connection to the needs of the larger community (Ansbacher, 1992).

The concept of community mindedness was developed by Dr. Adler as a response to the suffering that he observed as an Austrian army doctor in the First World War (Bottome, 1939) and as an explanation of aggression in human behavior. In a lecture delivered to medical students in Vienna in 1928 (and only recently discovered in archives), Adler (2009) explained how, while still associated with Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis, he had postulated an "aggressive drive" that he later rejected in favor of emphasizing the role of social interest in mental health. He came to the conclusion that children and adults under the influence of feelings of inferiority and lacking in social interest will act out in an aggressive manner toward other people. Hoffman (1994) states that Dr. Adler was once asked about the fundamental difference between his theories and those of Sigmund Freud. He replied by stating that Freud's theory assumed that the problems of neuroses were caused by the conflict between inner desires and community demands, while in Adlerian theory the causes were the individual's lack of connection to the larger community.

In Adlerian psychology there is a significant orientation toward social interest as guiding concept in clinical therapy (Ansbacher, 1992). Later Adlerians have

continued this placement of social interest or community feeling as the central concept of mental health in the system of Individual Psychology (Lazarsfeld, 1961; Grey, 1998; Bitter, 2007; Sperry, 2007).

Contemporary Adlerians place an emphasis on the individual's identification with and empathy toward others as the basis of mental health and interpret the lack of social interest as the cause of much psychopathology (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1970). Therapeutic interventions and clinical practice in Adlerian psychology are based on this central concept of community feeling (Carlson, Watts and Maniacci, 2005). Dinkmeyer and Sperry (2000) summarize the objectives and nature of progress in Adlerian oriented psychotherapy as the social growth of the individual. "The measuring stick for progress is one's increased capacity to meet the tasks of life, to give and take, and to cooperate - what Adlerians call social interest" (pp. 178-179).

Adlerians assert the individual is characterized by lifestyle or personality priority themes that are expressed in the individual's self-concept and approach to the tasks of life (Ansbacher, 1967). The lifestyle (*Lebensstil*) of the individual is the basic orientation toward life. It encompasses the self-concept, the self-ideal (Adler's term that refers to the teleological nature of the individual),

the *Weltbild* (world-picture), and the ethical convictions or personal code of acceptable behavior of the individual (Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer, 1979). Lemire (2007) reviewed significant Adlerian theorists and found within the Adlerian tradition a consensus that there are four ways that social interest was expressed in human behavior. He labeled these involvement, encouragement, improvement and accomplishment.

The lifestyle of the individual is a reflection of and a guide to his or her current level of functioning and social interaction (Kern, Snow, and Ritter, 2002). Obtaining an understanding of the individual's lifestyle is an important basis for counseling and psychotherapy in Individual Psychology (Adler, 1998). The lifestyle of the individual is also a characteristic manner of relating to oneself and to other people and is closely related to the *fictionate goal* of the individual (Adler, 1954). Shulman and Mosak (1988) explain that the lifestyle is not a set of self-created rules for the behavior of the individual but is an elaborate system of organization or pattern of responses. Reflecting a foundational belief of the unity of the whole person in Adlerian Psychology, Adlerians hold that lifestyle is expressed in every action and

relationship of the individual (Oberst and Stewart, 2003; Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer, 1979; Ansbacher, 1967).

Every action by an individual has a goal or purpose that is in line with the lifestyle of the individual (Adler, 1937; Vaughan, 1927). Because of this, all behavior can point us back to the individual's basic orientation of life. Expanding on this idea, Alfred Adler (quoted in Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964) said that,

We can begin wherever we choose: every expression will lead us in the same direction - toward the one motive, the one melody, around which the personality is built. We are provided with a vast store of material. Every word, thought, feeling, or gesture contributes to our understanding. (p. 332)

The Adlerian concept of the lifestyle of the individual is based on two premises: the unity of the personality and the purposefulness of all behavior (Vaughan, 1927). Rejecting others' division of the personality into competing parts, Adler (1998) believed that the personality of the individual is a unified whole. He noted that the unity of the individual and personality is at the core of the concept of lifestyle. "This (self-consistent) unity we call the style of life of the individual. What is frequently labeled the ego is nothing more than the style of the individual" (Adler, as cited in

Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964, p. 175). Adlerians, following Dr. Adler's understanding of the unity of the personality, reject models of personality that base behavior on unconscious drives and urges (Brinich & Shelley, 2002). Adlerian psychology was termed Individual Psychology from the Latin *individuum* (an undivided thing), reflecting a belief in the holistic nature of the person and the unitary or indivisible nature of the personality. Adler was in correspondence with Jan Smuts, the philosopher who coined the term "holism," and Dr. Adler acknowledged the influence that Smuts' holistic philosophy had on Individual Psychology (Bottome, 1939).

Although it is often (wrongly) included among the psychodynamic theories, Adlerian theory rejects a "dynamic unconscious" and other formulations that would divide up the unified or whole personality (Oberst & Stewart, 2003; Brinich & Shelley, 2002; Tico, 1982). This focus on the undivided whole of the individual is a concept that is unique to Adlerian theory (Fall, Holden, & Marquis, 2002) and is one reason why clinical tools that are based in alternative theories are often incompatible with Adlerian based therapy (Shulman & Mosak, 1988).

The Adlerian theory of personality is not only holistic; it is also teleological. In Adlerian Psychology,

all behavior is directed toward a purpose. All people are seen as working toward purposes or goals that were adopted very early in life and continue to guide the actions and decisions taken by the individual (Dreikurs, 1953). This is often termed the *telos* of the individual (from the Greek word "τέλος" for "end", "purpose", or "goal"), or the final goal or the fictional goal (Dreikurs, 1953). Human behavior is interpreted to be driven by goals or purposes (Rattner, 1983). Adlerians have termed this the *fictional* (also *fictionate* or *final*) *goal* (from Adler's term, *personale Finalität*) because it is the goal or purpose of all behavior. This fictional goal is an assumed end point or purpose of the movement toward an ideal self that the individual has constructed for the sake of belonging and security (Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 2000). Because they understand all behavior as purposeful and goal directed (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1970), Adlerians see individuals as both creative (generating their own path toward their goals or purposes) and self-determining (Tico, 1982). Behavior, including cognitions and emotions, is purposeful and is directed toward an end or purpose. To understand the individual, one must understand this goal to which all behavior is directed (Fall, Holden, & Marquis, 2002). Dinkmeyer, Pew and Dinkmeyer (1979) describe this

understanding in explaining the concept of the *fictional goal*,

Each person develops in early childhood a fictional image of what he or she would have to be like in order to be safe, to be superior, to feel belonging, and so forth. The actualization of this fictional image becomes the central goal of the person's lifestyle. (p.28)

Adler (1998) asserted that this understanding of the goal of the individual was so important that psychology could be defined as the effort to understand the behaviors of the individual to find out about their goal and then compare this to the goals of others. He stated that one can evaluate the healthiness of the lifestyle and final goals toward which the lifestyle points by judging the degree of social interest and the movement of the individual toward social usefulness. Adlerian theory posits that every individual is faced with the demand of various tasks of life, such as providing for oneself and finding love and sexual companionship (Stone, 2007). Because of the nature of these demands of the tasks of life, requiring cooperation for survival, the individual with a lifestyle that is informed by social interest and community feeling will live well in their community (Fall, Holden, & Marquis, 2002).

Many Adlerians refer to the final goal as the fictional goal because it is merely assumed as a guiding purpose of the individual and not understood as existing in some unconscious state (Oberst & Stewart, 2003). (Oberst and Stewart use the term "fictionate" instead of "fictional," a usage that has the benefit of not implying that the goals are false.) This goal is "fictional" because the individual behaves "as if" he or she had selected a lifestyle goal. This idea of "as if" Adler adopted from the philosopher Hans Vaihinger's concept that humans behave "as if" ("als ob") our assumptions are true, which he titled the "Principle of Fictionalism" (Ellenberger, 1970; Vaihinger, 1925/2009). Thus the telos or final goal is not a belief, conscious or unconscious, but rather a final goal that can be discerned as an interpretable conceptualization of the end point and purpose of the lifestyle and behaviors of the individual (Adler, 1954). We behave "as if" we are moving toward a goal that we often do not fully comprehend.

The lifestyle of the individual is a pattern of behavior that is aligned with this fictional goal and adopted early in life as a private logic (Manaster, 2009). Adlerians assert that at a young age the individual recognizes his or her dependency and weakness as compared to adults and the world around them (Dinkmeyer, Pew, &

Dinkmeyer, 1979). From this a perception of inferiority develops. The young child looks for ways to move from this perceived inferiority to a position of relative superiority or safety. The individual develops an approach to life (the lifestyle) from which he or she will make choices and act.

Formative experiences within the family, especially among siblings, influence the development of the fictional final goal, but the individual creates his or her *telos* and lifestyle from their interpretation of the events around them. Instead of seeing people as determined by the past and early childhood experiences, Adlerians see the influence of the individual's interpretations of early events as influencing the chosen lifestyle (Adler, 1998).

It was Dr. Adler's contention that the most prevalent mental health difficulties are caused by a self-interpretation of powerlessness and discouragement. When this self interpretation leads to a withdrawal from the tasks of life (work, love and sex, and the needs of others), then we can say that the individual is demonstrating the lifestyle that Dr. Adler labeled the "avoiding type" (Mosak & Di Pietro, 2006).

Childhood experiences are seen as important in the development of the lifestyle, but are not interpreted as

causes of the lifestyle (Adler, 1937). Because people are seen as creative and self-determining at a very early age (within the limits of childhood and development), the lifestyle and fictive final goals are interpreted as a choice. Rather than believe that people are determined by the past and early childhood experiences, Adlerians focus on the role of the individual's interpretations of early events in influencing the chosen lifestyle (Mosak & Di Pietro, 2006) and assert that the individual is always free to change his or her lifestyle and goals. Adlerian therapists work with clients in understanding the goals and inner logic that are hindering change and in identifying new beliefs and attitudes that will lead to a greater sense of connection to others (Carlson, Watts, & Maniacchi, 2005).

Lifestyle and Personality Priorities

Alfred Adler outlined the importance of understanding the lifestyle of the individual, but he cautioned against a too heavy reliance on the use of a typology of personality types (because of the limitation that these impose on an understanding of the individual). Adler (as cited in Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964, p. 166) wrote in 1935, "We do

not consider human beings as types, because every person has an individual style of life. If we speak of types, therefore, it is only as a conceptual device to make more understandable the similarities of individuals." The use of a personality typology is, therefore, only a *heuristic* to allow a better understanding of individual similarities and differences. Adlerians understand the behavior and goals of an individual to point toward a certain *telos* or goal "as if" (Vaihinger, 1925/2009) the individual has a certain type of lifestyle (Brinich & Shelley, 2002). The lifestyle is a principle of internal consistency and unity of purpose for the behaviors and intentions of the individual (Ansbacher, 1967.) To Adlerians, typologies of behavior are classification tools to better understand and provide more congruent clinical interventions for the client, and not an ontological state or formal structure found within a reified personality of the individual.

Nonetheless, Adler did delineate four lifestyle types (*ruling, getting, avoiding, and socially useful*), based on the theory of four temperaments (*sanguine, choleric, melancholic and phlegmatic*) of the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964; Kefir & Corsini, 1974). Of Adler's four types of lifestyle, three are defined as being inappropriate for meeting the challenges

of life in society, while only the fourth is based in the need of social cooperation and belonging.

The first of Adler's types, the *ruling type*, is demonstrated by a tendency for an individual to show a dominating style in interpersonal relationships. The second, the *getting type*, indicates an individual who attempts to address their goals by having their needs met by others. The third, the *avoiding type*, indicates an individual who side-steps the challenges of life. Only the fourth type, the *socially useful type*, is oriented toward social interest and meeting the needs of the individual through cooperation. These four types are all elements that can be constructed into a fourfold chart based on the degree of social interest and activity of the individual.

Table 1. Alfred Adler's Four Lifestyle Types

	<i>high degree of social interest</i>	<i>low degree of social interest</i>
<i>high degree of activity</i>	Socially Useful Type	Ruling Type
<i>low degree of activity</i>	Getting Type	Avoiding Type

Other practitioners in Individual Psychology have outlined their own lists of individual lifestyles, including Mosak & Shulman (1971) and Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer (1979). Despite the differences between these lifestyle typologies, it has been accepted among Adlerians that significant similarities exist among them (Wheeler, Kern, and Curlette, 1986). This acceptance of various typologies is based in Adler's assertion that any typology of lifestyle is only an heuristic device and not a claim about essential ontological states of human personality (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964).

Ansbacher (1967) presented a review of the history and meaning of the concept of lifestyle for the previous 40 years that it had been in use among Adlerians. He traced the origin of the idea to Adler's first writing on the Guiding Image (*Leitbild*) in 1912, adopted from the German psychologist Ludwig Klages. By the 1920's, Adler was referring instead to the Life Plan (*Lebensplan*), emphasizing the cognitive aspect of the idea in the behavior of the individual. In 1929, Adler replaced the term *Lebensplan* with a term borrowed from sociologist Max Weber, "lifestyle" (*Lebensstil*). It was his intention to find a term that encompassed the "wholeness" of the individual.

Ansbacher (1967), in exploring Adler's development of the concept, outlined three significant properties of the lifestyle of the individual, which he labeled the *unifying*, the *unique* and the *operational* (including with the functional and constancy) aspects. The *unifying* aspect is the manner in which the various behaviors of the individual, and even the self-constancy of the individual's self-perception, are based in the lifestyle. The *unique* aspect of the lifestyle is its differentiating property in the establishment of the person as a free actor, able to select behaviors and beliefs that are most in accord with his or her goals. The lifestyle, for Adler, was the foundation of the aspects of personality that we identify as personal style or presentation, the ways that one person will differ from another. Finally the *operational*, *functional*, and *constancy* aspects of the lifestyle are the sources of typical responses by the individual to stimuli across a range of situations. Ansbacher then concluded the essay with two examples through which he explored these aspects of the lifestyle.

Mosak (Mosak, 1971; Mosak & Shulman, 1971; Mosak, 1979; Mosak & DiPietro, 2006) has proposed a set of fourteen lifestyle types, including "the getter," "the controller," "the driver," and "the person who must be

right," among others. Mosak does not claim that this is an extensive and exclusive list of lifestyle types. He makes the assertion that these are only the most common types found in clinical experience and that there is potentially a much longer list of lifestyle types.

Kopp (1986) noted that the majority of Adlerian typologies focus on negative behaviors. He saw this as a contradiction with Dr. Adler's focus on the positive aspects of behavior and goals. He proposed a typology of nine lifestyle types presented with and without social interest. His list (Table 2.) is a theoretical presentation of nine types of striving for significance based on social goals, with a scaling between poles of social interest.

The benefit to the therapist of Kopp's (1986) lifestyle formulation is that it has easy applicability for conceptualization of how an individual relates to others. Kopp's typology both indicates a goal of behaviors (i.e. the Driver is looking to belong through achievement, the Controller is looking to belong through the establishment of order) and provides direction for therapeutic work in moving toward greater social interest. The Controller who is working toward order as a means to belong can be

Table 2. Kopp's (1986) typology of lifestyles

<i>goals in striving for significance</i>	<i>without social interest</i>	<i>with social interest</i>
<i>morality</i>	Moralizer	Conscience
<i>fairness</i>	Victim - Martyr	Advocate
<i>independence</i>	Opposer	Individualist
<i>knowledge</i>	Know-It-All	Resource
<i>achievement</i>	Driver	Achiever
<i>order</i>	Controller	Organizer
<i>acquisition</i>	Getter	Harvester
<i>evaluation</i>	Critic-Judge	Sounding Board
<i>peace</i>	Pleaser	Diplomat

encouraged to follow the strategy and tactics of the socially interested Organizer. With each type Kopp also discusses typical strategies and tactics in moving toward the goals of the individual. This provides guidance for the therapist in planning interventions based on current lifestyle and goals based on the central concept of Adlerian Psychology, community mindedness or social interest.

Although it is a helpful means of conceptualizing the Adlerian theory of lifestyle and looks to have great usefulness in guiding interventions by the Adlerian

therapist, there does not appear to be any literature on research into Kopp's formulation.

Kefir (1971) proposed personality priorities as a revised method of understanding the concept of the personal lifestyle of the individual. Her proposed typology of personality priorities, presented at an international gathering of Adlerians in Tel Aviv, Israel, was based in theory and clinical experience. She identified four types in her model of personality priorities: *pleasers*, who seek to achieve their goals by obtaining the favor or acceptance of others; *superiors*, who seek to achieve a position of social superiority or high level of achievement than others; *comforters*, who seek comfort for self and an avoidance of stress and stressful situations; and *controllers*, who seek external control of their environment or internal control of self to achieve their goals. Her presentation appeared at a time when many were questioning the future direction of Adlerian theory (Dreikurs, 1972) and it found a receptive environment for research and application (Ward, 1979).

Kefir and Corsini's (1974) presentation of the concept of lifestyle personality priorities is placed within their review of lifestyle typologies in the Adlerian tradition. By examining a number of previously proposed typologies of

lifestyle in use among Adlerians, they came to the conclusion that the majority of these are remarkably similar with most differences being variations of name or emphasis. The authors acknowledge Adler's concerns about the creation and use of lifestyle typologies, along with his creation of one as a clinical heuristic. They also noted a need for a typology for differentiation and generalization, especially in clinical work, in spite of the somewhat arbitrary nature of any typology of human personality.

Kefir and Corsini (1974) begin with the recognition that any typology must be both "meaningful" and "clinically useful" (p. 164). Exploring this, they list four criteria for a good typology of lifestyle and human personality.

1. It should have wide applicability. It should be useful for categorizing a considerable number of people and/or behaviors.
2. It should be dynamic rather than static; represent action rather than type; behavior rather than appearance.
3. It should have extension; and not consist of "boxes" in which people are placed.
4. It should be sophisticated and complex, considering simultaneously two or more variables, thus permitting articulation. (p. 164)

Although this list has strong face validity, the authors did not list any significant reasoning, theoretical

basis, or research behind their criteria for a lifestyle or personality priorities typology.

The basis of Kefir and Corsini's (1974) exploration of lifestyle and personality priority typology was an examination of the lists of types that other authors had created in a search for common elements. Their hypothesis was that previous clinicians and theorists had created typologies that were generally very similar in content, even though the terminology varied. Their focus was on clinically based descriptions, and they omitted statistically based descriptors of personality.

A weakness of this study was the lack of rigor in methodology. The basis of their article was a side-by-side presentation of the terminology of eight theorists and writers and a simple semantic comparison of the names for various types. Table 3 shows the table of names of types from the comparison by Kefir and Corsini.

Table 3. from Kefir and Corsini (1974), p. 167, "Names of Typologies as Suggested by Various Authorities"

HIPPOCRATES	ADLER	HORNEY	DREIKURS	LEWIN	SHELDON	KEFIR	BORGATTA	Authors
Sanguine	Useful	towards	attention	democratic	affection	pleasing	responsible	accord
Choleric	Ruling	against	power	autocratic	assertive	superiority	assertive	conflict
Melancholic	Avoiding	away	assumed disability	laissez faire	privacy	comfort	emotion	evasion
Phlegmatic	Getting		revenge			control	intelligence	neutral
							sociability	

from Kefir and Corsini, 1974, p. 167

After comparing the typology of eight authors and theorists (Hippocrates; Alfred Adler; Karen Horney; Rudolph Dreikurs; Lewin, Lippitt and White; William H. Sheldon; Nira Kefir; Edgar Borgatta) the authors outlined a consensus typology. They label the first type, which they call "factor one," as "accord." The second is labeled "conflict" and the third labeled "evasion." The fourth they label "neutral" but they liken it to Hippocrates term "lethargic" or Kefir's (1971) term "control," which they assert refers to sense of self-control. With these types the authors generate an image of a triangle with a top point of "accord," a bottom left corner of "conflict," a

bottom right corner of "evasion," and a central point of "neutral."

Kefir and Corsini (1974) state that an individual's central dispositional tendency could be located in this triangle in three different ways: generally (a claim that one usually behaves in such a manner), specifically (placing a certain observed behavior or dispositional state on the triangle), and situationally (noting that certain dispositional patterns will emerge in certain situations). The result of this, they state, is that instead of considering an individual as having a fixed personality type, the individual will be seen as having a general dispositional set that revolves around a central tendency and a range of behaviors that may vary by situation.

This is a different concept from the standard Adlerian conception of lifestyle. Lifestyle, to Adler and to most Adlerians, is based in the unity of the person. Individuals will tend to manifest the same lifestyle on a consistent basis unless they are given strong encouragement to change (Oberst and Stewart, 2003; Dreikurs, 1953, 1972; Adler, 1927/1954). Kefir and Corsini's article (1974) has had a significant impact on Adlerians despite its lack of methodological rigor and a conclusion about personality

priorities and lifestyle that is at odds with a core concept of Adlerian psychology.

Pew (1976) proposed a revision of the concept of personality priorities to the concept of the individual's *number one priority*, which he defined as, "...a set of convictions that a person gives precedence to; it is a value established by order of importance or urgency, that takes precedence over other values" (p.1).

Pew uses Kefir's (1971) typology of four personality priorities but adds four states that the individual will seek to avoid. In his understanding of personality priorities, he points not only to the goal or purpose of behavior as a means of social belonging, but also indicates those states which are least desired by the individual. Thus, a person with a primary or "number one" personality priority of comfort will not only seek satisfaction and pleasure, he or she will also seek to avoid stress. An individual with a number one personality priority of pleasing will seek to avoid rejection. An individual with a personality priority of control will seek to avoid humiliation, and one with a personality priority of superiority will seek to avoid meaninglessness.

Pew (1976) provides further guidance in identifying the personality priorities of individuals by outlining the

personality priorities as not only a direction toward certain goals but also as driven by avoiding specific negative states. The clinician is offered advice toward understanding the goals of the client and his or her personality profile type and guidance in a direction for moving a personality priority that is low in social interest toward a higher degree of social interest.

One of the questions left unanswered by much of the literature on lifestyle and personality priorities in Adlerian Psychology is the relationship between these concepts and the Adlerian understanding of final or fictional goals. Pew (1976) addresses this directly, explaining the relationship in terms of the difference between short term and long term goals. He states,

An individual's number one priority indicates, in a given situation, his short range goal; while at the same time it clarifies his long range goal. The final, fictional goal of a particular person, however, is much more succinct and idiosyncratic. The number one priority is part of the road map used in moving toward that goal, including the pitfalls to avoid. (p. 3)

Pew (1976) explores the purposes or reasons for the concept of the personality priority in Adlerian Psychology and Adlerian based therapy. He notes that it is a means of quickly obtaining insight into the lifestyle. He adds that

understanding personality priorities is a means to understand core convictions. It is also a means to help the individual feel more understood by the therapist. Personality priority types are also a means for clarifying interpersonal interactions, in relationships and in therapy. Finally, he explains, we can understand personality priorities as a work in progress and as a path that the client can take toward increased social mindedness and social interest.

Langenfeld (1981) and Langenfeld and Main (1983) created the first research instrument for the assessment of personality priorities, the Langenfeld Inventory of Personality Priorities (LIPP). (This instrument is not currently available through any publisher.) The authors administered a set of 75 six-point Likert-type items to 801 university students and examined the data through factor analysis. This yielded a set of five factors for personality priorities. These factors were (in order of importance based on the eigenvalues from a principle axis factor analysis) Pleasing, Achieving, Outdoing, Detaching, and Avoiding. Three of these factors (Pleasing, Achieving, and Outdoing) are related to movement toward goals, while two factors (Detaching and Avoiding) are related to moving away from undesired outcomes.

Kutchins, Curlette and Kern (1997) examined the controversy over the conceptual relationship between formulations of lifestyle and personality priorities by various Adlerians. They identified three alternative answers to this among Adlerians. The first, from Kefir (1971), is that, "...personality priorities are a set of beliefs and convictions that help one understand one's lifestyle" (p. 374). The second is that personality priorities are but another term for lifestyle, and the third is that personality priorities were only a small portion of the individual lifestyle.

Seeking to resolve these competing understandings of the concepts of lifestyle and personality priorities, Kutchins, Curlette and Kern (1979) administered instruments designed to measure these personality constructs to 210 undergraduate students and then examined the statistical relationship. The two instruments that they selected were the Langenfeld Inventory of Personality Priorities (LIPP) (Langenfeld, 1981; Langenfeld and Main, 1983), and the Basic Adlerian Scales of Interpersonal Success - Adult form (BASIS-A Inventory) (Wheeler, Kern and Curlette, 1993). The authors compared the relationships between the ten BASIS-A Inventory scales with the five LIPP scales using Pearson correlations. They then compared the individuals

in each of the LIPP scales by F-tests and discriminant analysis.

Kutchins, Curlette and Kern's (1997) hypotheses were presented as a list of nine potential relationships between the scales in the LIPP and the BASIS-A: a negative correlation between the BASIS-A scale BSI (Belonging/Social Interest) and the LIPP scale Detaching; positive correlations between the BASIS-A scale GA (Going Along) and the LIPP scale Pleasing, the BASIS-A scale TC (Taking Charge) and the LIPP scale Outdoing, the BASIS-A scale WR (Wanting Recognition) and the LIPP scale Achieving, the BASIS-A supporting scale L (Liked By All) and the LIPP scale Pleasing, the BASIS-A supporting scale H (Harshness) and the LIPP scale Detaching, the BASIS-A supporting scale P (Striving for Perfection) and the LIPP scale Outdoing, and the BASIS-A supporting scale P (Striving for Perfection) and the LIPP scale Achieving.

The results of this showed only a low to moderate relationship between the constructs measured by the scales of the Langenfeld Inventory of Personality Priorities (LIPP) (Langenfeld, 1981; Langenfeld and Main, 1983), and the Basic Adlerian Scales of Interpersonal Success - Adult form (BASIS-A Inventory) (Wheeler, Kern and Curlette, 1993). Their conclusion was that the lifestyle themes

measured by the BASIS-A Inventory and the personality priorities measured by the LIPP are not highly related.

From this study we might conclude that there is little relationship between the two concepts; yet each of the two instruments used in this study has significant reliability and validity problems, as discussed in the section (below) on assessment instruments in the Adlerian tradition. Because of the limitations of these tools, it is likely that Kutchins, Curlette and Kern (1997) have given us little information on the relationship between the Adlerian construct of personal lifestyle and the newer Adlerian construct of personality priorities.

Ashby, Kottman and Rice (1998) explored the relationship between the five personality priorities, identified by Langenfeld (1981) and Langenfeld and Main (1983), and the psychological variables that were proposed to relate to these priorities in the theoretical literature. The Langenfeld Inventory of Personality Priorities (LIPP) was administered to two 262 undergraduate students. Using the resulting personality priority type as the between-subjects factor, the data was analyzed using a one-way multivariate analysis of variance. Supporting the theoretical construct of personality priorities, the results showed significant differences among the scales.

Correlations between personality priorities (such as individuals with the personality priority of Achieving having generally higher self-esteem) were consistent with theoretical descriptions of the scales. The authors acknowledge two limitations of the study: the homogenous nature of the participants (almost all were Caucasian college students) and the small representation of the personality priority Detaching in the results.

Allen (2005), creator of a recently developed personality priority assessment inventory (the Allen Assessment for Adlerian Personality Priorities, AAAPP), presented a list of five personality priorities that she bases upon previous work by Brown (1976), Holden (2000) and Poduska (1976). In her system of personality priorities there are five scales: Superiority (S), Comfort (C), Pleasing (P), Control of Others (CO), and Control of Self (CS).

Shojaian (2007) examined the impact of the match between personality priorities of therapists and their clients and the therapeutic working alliance. The Allen Assessment for Adlerian Personality Priorities (AAAPP) (Allen, 2005) was used to assess the personality profiles of therapists and their clients, and the Working Alliance Inventory-short, revised (WAI-SR) (Hatcher and Gillaspay,

2006) was used to assess the working alliance in this study. Participants included fourteen therapists and 31 clients in a university-based counseling center in the southwestern United States. The results indicated a moderate relationship between the match of therapist/client personality priorities and the therapist perception of the strength of the therapeutic working alliance.

Assessment Instruments in Adlerian Psychology

In contemporary Adlerian therapy, assessment of the lifestyle is a significant early task (Kern, Yeakle, & Sperry, 1989), often completed in an early stage of the work with clients. Adlerians often work within a four stage model of individual therapy (Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 2000; Oberst & Stewart, 2003). The first stage in this model is devoted to establishing the therapeutic relationship. The second stage is an assessment of individual lifestyle. Without the accurate assessment of the lifestyle of the individual the third and fourth stages (insight and reorientation) lack a foundation in an understanding of the client. It is on the understanding of the guiding line of the lifestyle and the final goals toward which it points that Adlerian therapy is built.

Adlerian therapists typically explore the lifestyle in the first few sessions with clients (Oberst & Stewart, 2003). Adlerian therapists have reported that they find it difficult to use interviews alone to establish the lifestyle/ personality priority of individuals (Allen, 2005). Often they will use a variety of tools and interview protocols, many times using a non-standardized tool created by the therapist (Shulman & Mosak, 1988).

Formal assessment tools in Adlerian psychology descend from the set of questions that Dr. Adler proposed to guide the early interviews (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). Adler's list of suggested questions (on birth order, family interactions, and medical difficulties, among others) was developed by later Adlerians into formalized sets of questions for use by the clinician (Dinkmeyer, Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 1987; Shulman & Mosak, 1988). These question sets fulfilled the role that later assessment tools would take in the evaluation of client lifestyle.

One of the most significant Adlerian structured interview tools is the Personality Priorities Interview (PPI) (J.F. Brown, 1976). The Personality Priorities Interview is not a formal assessment instrument, but a guided interview with a proposed set of questions for use. In the absence of well-established formal instruments for

the assessment of personality priorities by Adlerians, the PPI has been a widely used means of assessing the personality priorities of individuals. The PPI inquires into personal history, presentation (including patterns of speech), and self-beliefs. It is intended to be administered over multiple sessions and involves significant instruction of the client by the clinician in the theory of personality priorities. Clients are also assigned "homework" for completion and return to the clinician, which is used for interpretation in session. Unfortunately, the interpretation of the client's personality priorities is not systematized but is dependent upon the non-standardized impressions of the clinician.

Langenfeld (1981) and Langenfeld and Main (1983), attempted to address the lack of research on the Adlerian construct of lifestyle/ personality priorities with the creation of the Langenfeld Inventory of Personality Priorities (LIPP). The LIPP consists of 75 items for individual responses using a six-point Likert-type scale. This was a research instrument and does not appear to have been cited in recent research literature. It is not available through any publisher. After reviewing the items and content of the LIPP and comparing it to the more recent BASIS-A instrument, Kutchins, Curlette and Kern (1997)

concluded that the Langenfeld Inventory of Personality priorities needed significant alterations and further research with its scales before it could be further used in lifestyle research.

Watkins (1982) created the Self-administered Life-Style Analysis (SALSA) to assist Adlerian clinicians in evaluating the lifestyle of clients through a directed interview and written assignments. The SALSA is a questionnaire in which the individual is asked to write one-paragraph responses to 10 questions divided among four domains (Personal Views, Approach to Life Tasks, Description of and Relationship with Siblings, and Personal Early Recollections). The instructions for the SALSA advise that it will likely require clients at least 45 minutes to complete. Unfortunately, there is no information provided on interpretation of responses and it appears that traditional Adlerian techniques for interpretation of lifestyle through structured and unstructured interviews apply to this instrument. It is difficult to describe the SALSA as an assessment tool when it is more accurately described as a questionnaire for the collection of information for interpretation by the therapist. Some of the questions could be difficult to answer for many individuals from lower educational

achievement backgrounds. These include questions such as, "Indicate briefly how you currently see yourself as an individual," and, "Share the impressions or thoughts you have when you think of people in general." The SALSA is likely not a practical means for the assessment of lifestyle or personality priorities in the clinical setting.

The Kern Lifestyle Scale (Kern, 1997; Kern and Cummins, 1996) is a 35 item self-scoring paper and pencil test. It was the first lifestyle scale created by Kern in the process that led to the development of the BASIS-A (Wheeler, Kern and Curlette, 1993). It has continued to be used by some Adlerian therapists because of its ease of administration and scoring. According to the interpretation manual (Kern and Cummins, 1996) it still lacks refinement by item analysis, reliability and validity studies. No information is provided on the development of the items or the scales, other than a comment in the manual that it "...has been normed on some eight hundred subjects, and possesses adequate test/re-test characteristics" (p. 25). The authors of the interpretation manual propose that the Kern Lifestyle Scale "...be employed as a consumer instrument to help individuals nurture a rapid grasp of the dynamics of their lifestyles in action" (p. 25).

Clinicians are advised in the Kern Lifestyle Scale interpretation manual to obtain the BASIS-A. The instrument assesses five lifestyle scales: control, perfection, pleasing, self-esteem and expectations. The interpretive manual (Kern and Cummins, 1996) offers narrative descriptions of each scale and possible interpretations of low and high scores on each scale.

The BASIS-A Inventory (Wheeler, Kern and Curlette, 1993) has become a significant tool used by Adlerians researching lifestyle (Watkins and Guarnaccia, 1999). Through an examination of memories of childhood behaviors, attitudes, and feelings, the BASIS-A Inventory provides an assessment of the themes, beliefs, and attitudes that underlie the lifestyle of the individual. It was developed from the earlier Life Style Personality Inventory (Wheeler, Kern and Curlette, 1986), which was a revision of the earlier Kern Lifestyle Scale (Kern, 1997). The authors identified the Life Style Personality Inventory (LPSI) as a "research version" of the BASIS-A (Curlette, Wheeler, and Kern, 1997, p. 2). The five primary scales of the BASIS-A (Belonging/Social Interest, Taking Charge, Going Along, Wanting Recognition, and Being Cautious) were originally scales in the Life Style Personality Inventory.

As with its predecessors, the BASIS-A Inventory asks that examinees recall memories of childhood experiences in answering items. Each item completes the phrase, "When I was a child, I..." The instructions for administration note that the respondent is asked to compare his or her self to their siblings before the age of 10, with the additional instruction that if the respondent had no brothers or sisters they are to compare themselves to friends at the time before they were ten years old (Kern, Wheeler, & Curlette, 1997).

The BASIS-A Inventory (Wheeler, Kern and Curlette, 1993) has been used in a range of research by Adlerians, including an assessment of the personality profile of inmates (Slanton, Kern, and Curlette, 2000); the relationship between psychological birth order and lifestyle (Gfroerer, Gfroerer, Curlette, White, and Kern, 2003); lifestyle profiles and interventions for aggressive adolescents (Smith, Kern, Curlette, and Mullis, 2001); conflict resolution strategies among students (Morris-Conley and Kern, 2003); the comparison of lifestyle themes with the demographic variables associated with college student drinking (Lewis and White, 2004); and the predictability of diabetic adherence to treatment (Kern, Penick, and Hamby; 1996), among others. One limitation for

wider acceptance of the BASIS-A Inventory by researchers and psychologists, as noted by Gallagher (1998), is that most research with the instrument has only been published in *The Journal of Individual Psychology*, an Adlerian publication. Two of the authors of the BASIS-A Inventory are the current editors of this journal.

Unfortunately for advocates of the BASIS-A Inventory, there has been recent evidence that questions the validity of the instrument.

Roberts (2005) examined the validity of the BASIS-A through a comparison of the means of the BASIS-A Inventory Scales for Latino and Caucasian samples taken from a community college in the southwestern United States. The reliability estimates for the sample were compared to the reported coefficient alphas listed in the manual. This comparison found that in four of the BASIS-A scales (BSI (Belonging-Social Interest), GA (Going Along), TC (Taking Charge), and WR (Wanting Recognition)) the means for the samples were not equivalent. Roberts concluded that the BASIS-A may lack cross-cultural applicability using its current norms. This suggests that the norm samples for the BASIS-A, created from a primarily Caucasian sample from the Southeastern United States, might not be valid or reliable

when used with individuals from other ethnic, cultural, or racial groups.

Miller (2007) calculated correlations between BASIS-A subscales BSI (Belonging-Social Interest), TC (Taking Charge) and BC (Being Cautious) and the Social Interest Scale (SIS) and the 16 Personality Factors 5th edition questionnaire (16PF). Examining both the construct validity and divergent validity of each of these three BASIS-A scales, Miller compared them to expected relationship with global scales in the 16PF and the Social Interest Scale. In all three scales, correlational analysis failed to find a statistical relationship with the more well-established instruments. Results of each of the three scales indicate that the BASIS-A may have significant problems with validity in measuring the personality / lifestyle constructs that it claims to measure.

Although the BASIS-A continues to be an instrument that is widely used by Adlerians, it may lack validity and may be measuring other behaviors and personality constructs than what it claims.

A recently created instrument for the clinical assessment of Adlerian personality priorities is the Allen Assessment for Adlerian Personality Priorities (AAAPP) (Allen, 2005). This was developed for a doctoral

dissertation at the University of North Texas and has been used in one research study by another student at that same institution. The author of the instrument acknowledged that it needs further refinement for clinical administration and research (Allen, 2005). She also noted that the item list needs rewriting to make it more widely understandable by individuals from a wider range of educational backgrounds. Finally, the instrument lacks research into cross cultural validity or reliability.

While assessing the lifestyle of the individual is a significant early task in Adlerian-based therapy, there is a significant lack of standardized, reliable and easily administered assessment tools for this task. Clinicians working from an Adlerian perspective are left to choose between non-standardized questionnaires that are dependent upon clinician interpretation and formal tools that may not accurately and reliably measure the lifestyle of the individual.

Q-sorts and Q-methodology

Q-methodology is a theoretically grounded qualitative method of research (Watts and Stenner, 2005; Shinebourne, 2009) using quantitative techniques and a specific method of data collection (the Q-set) and analysis (Q analysis) to identify clusters of subjective evaluations by subjects (Block, 1961). Individuals are asked to sort a collection of statements by pre-specified criteria in a forced distribution (Van Exel & de Graf, 2005). The items in the Q-set are sorted into a predetermined pattern (typically a normal distribution, as is the case with the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort). To allow for a subjective comparison among all of the items in the Q-set, all statements remain "accessible and sortable" (Thomas & Watson, 2002) until the task of sorting by the participant is finished.

Q-sorts and Q-methodology were created by psychologist and physicist William Stephenson in the early 1930s (Block, 1961) and presented by him in a 1935 letter to the journal *Nature* (Stephenson, 1935a). He expanded upon the idea with an article the same year, "Correlating persons instead of tests," that proposed the application of this method to psychometrics (1935b). Stephenson argued that Q

methodology was a better tool for statistical research into human attitudes and beliefs than traditional correlational research (labeled R methodology from the symbol for correlational coefficients, *R*) of his colleagues Cattell, Spearman and Thurston (Shemmings, 2006). Building on his early descriptions of Q methods, Stephenson spent the next fifty years further developing this tool for the assessment of subjective perceptions by individuals.

Watts and Stenner (2005) give a brief description of Q methods as a qualitative research method that, "...employs a by-person factor analysis in order to identify *groups of participants* who make sense of (and who hence Q 'sort') a pool of items in particular ways" (p. 68). Wheeler and Montgomery (2009) elaborate on this difference with R methodology, explaining that, "Unlike more common statistical analyses where participants are the sample, in Q methodology, the Q statements or Q set form the sample" (p. 294).

Q methodology was designed to elicit the range of attitudes and understand patterns in these attitudes in a population. Unlike surveys and R methodology studies, it does not attempt to make claims on the prevalence of these attitudes in the population. One cannot extrapolate from Q data to claim that a certain percentage of individuals hold

a certain belief or set of attitudes (Wheeler and Montgomery, 2009). Rather, one can claim that, within a certain population, the factors identified by Q analysis of Q data are among the clusters of attitudes that exist in the group (Ozer, 1993). Cross (2005) explained, "another factor underlining the Q approach to participants is that, in a perversion of the survey paradigm, Q methodology has no interest in estimating population statistics; rather, the aim is to sample the range and diversity of views expressed, not to make claims about the percentage of people expressing them" (p. 210). Q methodology identifies patterns of attitudes within a population, while other techniques can discover the prevalence of these attitudes or subjective beliefs (Shinebourne, 2009).

Wheeler and Montgomery (2009) further explored this significant aspect of Q-methodology, noting, "Participant characteristics are typically reported as frequencies rather than percentages in Q methodology, as the participants are not necessarily representative of a target population. Instead, participants are selected because they possess characteristics of interest to the researcher" (p. 294).

Thomas and Watson (2002) comment that one of the benefits that the use of Q-sorts can offer researchers is

the ability to use them for "in depth study of small sample populations" (p. 141). They state that in Q-methodology studies a sample size of 30 to 60 participants is typical. They also note that participants need not be randomly selected in Q-studies. Although this small number and lack of conventional sampling of participants would be considered non-standard for R-methodology studies, it is an accepted and designed aspect of the study of operant subjectivity where the range of opinions is the focus of research and not the population from which the respondents are drawn (Watts and Stenner, 2005).

Steven Brown (1991) noted that the nature of Q methodology and the focus on the exploration of the elements of subjectivity (the segments) as the basis of the research make large numbers of research subjects not as critical for Q methods as for other (normative) methods. He stated,

...since the interest of Q methodology is in the nature of segments and the extent to which they are similar or dissimilar, the issue of large numbers, so fundamental to most research, is rendered relatively unimportant. In principle as well as practice, single cases can be the focus of significant research. (1991, section 1)

Akhtar-Danesh, Bauman, and Cordingley (2008) explain the reason for this smaller number in this research tradition: "The objective in Q-methodology is to be able to describe typical representations of different viewpoints rather than to find the proportion of individuals with specific viewpoints" (p. 763).

Block (1961) advises that in personality assessment there are three ways to score Q-sort data: at the item level, at the cluster level, and in comparison to a criterion sort scoring. Studies using Q-methodology will often resort to analysis at the cluster level, while the use of Q-sorts in personality assessment typically will use criterion sort scoring.

Comparison to a criterion Q sort requires calculation of the correlation coefficient using the squared discrepancies between items. Through the calculation of r (the correlation coefficient) the clinician or researcher can state quantitatively the degree of agreement between any two sorts or between a sort and a criterion sort. Factor and cluster analysis are also recommended as methods of observing patterns in Q-Sort descriptors of one or many individuals. The Shedler-Westen Assessment Procedure (Westen and Shedler, 1999a; 1999b), one of the more well-

known personality assessment Q-sorts, uses a combination of cluster analysis results and criterion sorts.

Five central themes emerge from the literature about Q-sorts and Q-methodology that are applicable to this research. These are as follows: the focus on subjectivity and subjective perception of the individual in Q-methodology; the significant difference between Q-methodology and other measures such as Likert Scales, R-methodology factor analysis, and cluster analysis; the reliance on small sample populations and the lack of random sampling in Q-methodology; the use of online administrations of Q-sorts and the availability of computer programs for Q-analysis; and the inapplicability of concepts of validity from R-methodology to Q-methodology.

Steven R. Brown is an often cited author on the creation and use of Q-sorts and Q-methodology. Currently a professor of political science at Kent State University, he was the founder of the International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity and for fifteen years served as the editor of the journal *Operant Subjectivity* (which has published a large number of articles on Q-methods.) As a doctoral student Steven Brown studied under Stephenson, and he has become the leading advocate for Q-

methods in research into subjectivity and subjective beliefs.

Steven Brown authored a widely cited text (1980) on the use of Q-methods in political science research that explored many of the techniques and assumptions underlying Q-methodology. He sets the procedure firmly within a theoretical background of "operant subjectivity," an assumption that attitudes and subjective opinions can be elucidated and measured with the use of appropriate techniques.

Expanding upon his earlier work on Q-methodology and providing an introduction to those unfamiliar with this research technique, Steven Brown (1991) posted an eight part tutorial on the Qualitative Methods List of the University of Georgia. This tutorial text has become one of the more cited guides on the process of Q-sorts and Q-analysis. This tutorial provides an introduction to the methodology, the basis for Q-methods in Concourse Theory, sampling and the creation of the Q-set, the sorting process, correlation of sets, factor analysis and interpretation. Steven Brown also provided a comprehensive bibliography of Q-studies preceding the tutorial. The methods and analysis behind this current research project

are guided in many ways by this tutorial guide by Steven Brown (1991).

Thomas and Watson (2002) offer a further description of the methods and rationale behind Q-sorts. Their exploration of Q-methodology provides a detailed review of the methods for the creation of the Q-set and sorting of the Q-set. The authors illustrate this with an exploration of a Q-study of faculty in a Management Information Systems program and their beliefs about the best methods to prepare Ph.D. students in their field.

In that study (Thomas and Watson, 2002) a set of 14 Q-statements were presented to nine participants and administered online using WebQ, a freeware web-based program for Q-research. Three factors were identified and then interpreted through an analysis of items and factor loadings. The Q-factor analysis that resulted was then compared to the results of an R-method hierarchical cluster analysis. The results supported the assertion by the authors that Q-analysis is more effective at eliciting sets of subjective beliefs from the data generated by the individual Q-sorts of a set of participants.

Dutch researchers Van Exel and de Graaf (2005) describe the history of Q-methodology and explain the steps in the creation and administration of a Q-set. They

illustrate this information with an exploration of three Q studies. The first reported is a study into bankers' conceptualizations of their customers. Thirty bank directors at the three major Dutch banks were given a 52-item Q-set. The results indicated five primary factors in the data and, upon interpretation, show five significantly different sets of attitudes among these bankers toward their customers.

The second illustrative study that Van Exel and de Graaf (2005) reported was a research project on the attitudes of veterinarians toward their clients, both the animals that they treat and their human owners. In this small sample (the numbers are not reported) the researchers found four primary sets of subjective beliefs by the veterinarians.

The third study reported by Van Exel and de Graaf (2005) examined the subjective beliefs of non-public transit users and their decision making process in selecting a means of transportation for a "middle distance" trip. Thirty-nine participants used a 42-statement Q-set (administered by mail) to rank statements on their reasons for deciding which method of transportation to use. This study led to a conclusion that four factors or subjective attitudinal sets were involved in the attitudes of non-

transit users toward public transit. These were analyzed and resulted in a recommendation to the Dutch government that improvements in quality of public transportation are a more cost effective way to increase ridership than reductions in the costs to users.

While each of these example Q-studies are quite different from the subject of this current research, Van Exel and de Graaf's article (2005) is useful for illustrating the decision making process that will guide the researcher using Q-sorts and Q-methodology.

Watts and Stenner (2005) address common misunderstandings about Q-methodology and Q-sorts. These authors begin by noting the unusual position of a qualitative research method employing quantitative methods. They see common themes in a comparison of Q-methods and the more traditional qualitative method of narrative analysis. Both, the authors explain, are attempts to get at patterns of subjective beliefs not immediately obvious to the observer. Nonetheless, they state, there are three significant differences between Q-methodology and narrative analysis. The first is that Q-methodology uses a predetermined set of statements for rating by participants rather than analyzing the participants' own statements. The second is the lack of temporal development of

subjective experiences in Q-methodology (with Q-methodology providing a 'snap shot' of present subjective viewpoints). The third is the individual nature of narrative analysis as compared to the group focus of Q-methodology. Because of these differences, the authors explain, Q-methodology adds additional techniques and perspective to traditional qualitative methods.

Watts and Stenner (2005) then proceed to an examination of methods of research in Q methodology, including the consideration of the question of factor rotation of the data in Q-analysis. They note that the centroid method of factor rotation is most common among Q researchers (and that in one commonly used software application for Q-analysis it is the only method of rotation available). Watts and Stenner state that other methods of factor rotation may be indicated by the data and claim that exploratory factor rotation is firmly established within Q-methodology. They note that this follows Stephenson's (1953) preference for theoretical and exploratory ("by hand") factor analytic rotation. The authors illustrate these methods through a presentation of a Q-study on public opinions on the punishment of juvenile offenders. They conclude with a demonstration of the process for the identification of factors and the

interpretation of the clusters of subjective viewpoints represented by each factor.

As a follow-up to Watts and Stenner (2005), Shemmings (2006) examined Q-methodology as a predominantly qualitative research method. He presents Q methodology as a technique that can be a useful supplement to other methods of qualitative research. He notes that Q-methodology can, for example, be helpful in identifying themes in transcripts, notes, and observations and would serve as a useful supplement to more traditional qualitative methods. This is a continuation of the argument by Watts and Stenner (2005) that Q-methodology be included among the qualitative methods of research.

Because Q-methods are a means of observing patterns that emerge in subjective experience, Shemmings (2006) presents it as a complementary qualitative method for research. Using a study of filial relationships between adult children and their older parents (as an example of this use of Q-methods in research), Shemmings highlights the qualitative as opposed to quantitative foundation of Q-methodology. He presents a Q-study on the relationships among adults raised in the same family to demonstrate this method of research. He uses this small study as a means of illustrating and exploring the strengths of Q-methodology

in qualitative research. He also presents a discussion of the process for the identification of factors and interpretation of these factors in Q research.

Nonetheless, in spite of demonstrating the quantitative methods used with Q-methods, Shemmings asserts that it remains a qualitative method that can uncover, "a rich and detailed analysis of participant subjectivities" (p. 162).

Cross (2005) examined Q methodology through an exploration of attitudes within health education research. In this paper she makes the claim that in researching attitudes and subjective opinions within the field of health and health education, Q methodology is a more robust technique than other methods such as binary scales and Likert scales. In an effort to increase behaviors that promote health, health educators often miss seeing the interrelationship between attitudes and beliefs. Cross includes a useful discussion of the strengths and limitations of Q-methods in the exploration of subjective attitudes and recommends the greater use of Q-methods by health researchers.

Shinebourne (2009) also presents Q-methodology as a primarily qualitative method of research. The author provides a discussion of Q-methods and then explores Q-methodology as a means of identifying both common and

divergent themes in subjective beliefs. Shinebourne also presents Q-methodology as a useful tool for thematic analysis.

Within the literature on Q-sorts and Q-methodology there are also researchers and authors who focus on the use of Q-sorts as a quantitative method of research. Nitcavic and Dowling (1990) used Q methodology to examine American perceptions about terrorism. After creating a 49 item Q set based on theoretical literature and interviews with 16 individuals, the authors administered their Q sort to 41 students enrolled in a public speaking class at a Midwestern college. From these, 37 of the sorts were found to be usable (completed according to the fixed distribution) and were analyzed with QUANL, an early computer program for Q factor analysis. Principal component factor analysis and varimax rotation generated a four-factor solution that accounted for 54% of the total variance among the sorts, with the first factor accounting for 20.6% of the variance among the sorts. The four factors were then interpreted into four Q-Types labeled by the authors as the *frightened philosopher*, the *humanistic/cold-war patriot*, the *aggressive patriot*, and the *pacifist isolationist*. While the content of that study is not directly related to this current research, the methods used

and the analysis of the data provide an example of the process for this research into Adlerian personality priorities. Their administration and analysis of a Q-set is a well crafted set of Q methods for research into patterns in the subjective attitudes of a specified group. Nitcavic and Dowling's article demonstrates the strength of Q-methods as a quantitative research method within its qualitative research methods framework.

Papworth and Walker (2008) examined patient perspectives on the treatment of mental health problems in primary care settings in the United Kingdom. Two groups of 10 patients each from the north of England (Newcastle Upon Tyne) were given a semi-structured interview to identify common themes for the concourse. (The concourse is the term used by Q-researchers to identify the set of statements gathering some of the subjective impressions within the group from which the Q-set is taken.) All interviews were transcribed, coded by the researchers, and subjected to interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Smith, Jarman, and Osborn, 1999). From the resulting concourse a 64-item Q-set was created for rating into an eleven-point (-5 to +5) Q-distribution chart. This was administered to a new sample of 28 participants, and participants were instructed in the sorting procedure. The

data on the sort patterns of each individual Q-sort was then analyzed using the PQMethod (2.11) computer program. Correlation and factor analysis generated a five factor pattern in the responses. The authors then compared item responses within each factor group to create an interpretive description for each factor, which they labeled 'older and engaged,' 'stigmatised [sic] and reluctant to engage,' 'stigmatised and psychologically isolated,' 'informed and choice focused,' and 'socially oriented.' Based on an interpretive reading of the response sets within each factor, a narrative description of each grouping of subjective belief pattern was provided. A further discussion by the authors of these findings offers an examination of potential implications for mental health care in primary care settings in the U.K.

Wheeler and Montgomery (2009) used Q methodology to examine the subjective beliefs of community college students toward learning mathematics. The authors present little discussion of Q-methodology and techniques but provide a solid example of the processes involved in a Q-methodology study. Wheeler and Montgomery created a 36-item Q-set of items based in a review of the literature (which in their case concerned personal epistemology, beliefs about mathematics, and self-theories of

intelligence.) Seventy-four students at a community college in the southwestern United States were recruited to participate and of these students, 65 generated Q-sorts that followed the instructions and were analyzable by the researchers. The authors explain in some detail the statistical analysis used in Q-analysis of the Q-sorts by participants. Three primary factors were identified and the authors demonstrated their interpretation of the factors using the items from the Q-sets (as opposed to traditional use of factor loadings in R-methodology factor analysis).

Wheeler and Montgomery (2009) provide no explanation for the high rate of failed Q-sorts in their study, but it should be observed that the participants were instructed to sort items into a nine-point distribution continuum, a much wider spread than is used in other studies with Q-sets of a similar size.

It is worth noting that in the study by Wheeler and Montgomery (2009), the authors include, with the Q-sort, the administration of two open-ended questions for written answers to questions related to the study. These answers were used to interpret the factors identified through Q-analysis of the data. This is consistent with standard Q-methodology (Brown, S.R., 1980) and indicates the

importance of external qualitative information in the interpretation of the factors identified in Q-methodology.

Q-methodology has also been used in published research involving single individuals as subjects. Goldstein & Goldstein (2005) used Q-methods to explore the self image of a single individual undergoing short term therapy (18 sessions). After creating a Q-set of self-statements made by the client in therapy sessions, the authors administered the instrument to the client 13 times over the course of therapy. The 13 sorts were then analyzed by PCQ software to identify primary factors in the matrix of correlation coefficients. Five factors were identified as attitudinal sets of beliefs about the self by the client over the course of therapy. According to the authors, the first three of these factors was related to significant themes in the therapy. The authors then explored how the identification of the factors played a significant role in the case conceptualization.

While the work of Goldstein and Goldstein (2005) is with a very small sample population ($n=1$), the study highlights one way that Q-sorting could be used in individual therapy. It offers some guidance in the creation of a Q-sort for the identification of Adlerian personality priorities in therapy. Based on this use of Q

methodology in a study with a single subject, it does appear possible that multiple administrations of a Q set with a single client could generate significant data for use in clinical settings.

One important difference between the work of Goldstein and Goldstein (2005) and this current research is that Goldstein and Goldstein's Q-set was created by the therapist from statements made by the client, while this study is testing a theory based Q-set for use in the clinical setting. Goldstein and Goldstein also provide a useful discussion of the relative advantages of using a standardized item set versus the use of self-statements to generate the item set.

Beyond their use in research, Q-sorts have also been created for use in clinical settings and for personality assessment. Among these Q-sorts, the two most widely cited and used are the California Adult Q-set (Block, 1961, 2008), and the Shedler-Westen Assessment Procedure (Westen and Shedler, 1999a, 1999b; Shedler and Westen, 1998, 2004, 2006).

The California Q-Sort (CAQ) (Revised Adult Set) (Block, 1961, 2008) is a 100 item Q set described by its creator as "theoretically neutral" (1961, p. 43). Items are sorted into a quasi-normal distribution in nine piles

ranging from "most descriptive" "most undescriptive." The CAQ was developed by personality researcher Jack Block, well known for his work on the Berkeley Longitudinal Study (Funder and Ozer, 2010), and is based on the work of the research at Institute of Personality Research of the University of California at Berkeley (Domino, 2001). Block (1961) notes that the earliest version and precursor to the current test was a Q-sort for a personality study of Air Force officers.

After administration of the Q-set to an observer (who can be an informed clinical expert or a "socially intelligent lay observer" (Block, 2008, p. 102)) the sort is recorded and the results compared to pre-established prototypes (a criterion Q sort).

Block (2008) provides a set of five prototypes of personality styles (criterion sorts) and includes with each prototype a set of 13 items positively related to the prototype and 13 items negatively related to the prototype. The five prototypes or criterion sorts that he offers are the "CAQ Optimal Adjustment Prototype," the "CAQ Male Paranoia Prototype," the "CAQ Female Hysteric Prototype," the "CAQ Ego Resiliency Prototype," and the "CAQ Undercontrol Prototype." In the same work Block offers guidance on the development of additional prototypes based

on the sorts of either clinicians or "socially intelligent lay observers" (p. 102).

Domino (2001), in reviewing the CAQ, notes that there is no inclusion of psychometric properties such as reliability and validity in the commercially available version of the CAQ. Although some of this information is provided in Block's works (1961; 2008) the omission of this from the published version of this instrument is a notable problem for users.

The Shedler-Westen Assessment Procedure-200 (SWAP-200) (Westen and Shedler, 1999a; 1999b) is a recent and much reviewed Q-sort designed to meet the need for a standardized method for assessing and describing personality functioning. It is a 200-item Q-set that is scored (with an Excel spreadsheet template available from the creators of the instrument) that compares the sort to previously established criterion sorts. The instrument instructions specify that the items are sorted by a clinician who has seen a client a minimum number of times or has administered to the client the Clinical Diagnostic Interview (C.D.I.) (Westen and Muderrisoglu, 2003, 2006). Use of the SWAP-200 Q-sort involves first sorting the 200 items into two piles of 100 items each; a "descriptive" pile and a "not descriptive" pile. The "not descriptive"

pile is removed, and the remaining 100 items are then rank ordered into a one-tail distribution (the right half of a normal distribution). The instrument creators note that it should take most clinicians about forty-five minutes to complete the SWAP-200.

Items in the SWAP-200 Q-sort were created from a wide review of literature on personality disorders and personality functioning and then revised by consultation and preliminary administration to a large number of mental health professionals. The authors have reported that they are in the process of creating the SWAP-II, a revised version with a smaller Q-set and based on further feedback from a large pool of psychologists and psychiatrists (Shedler and Westen, 2006).

A number of studies using the SWAP-200 have been published. Among these researchers have investigated the clinical effectiveness of psychotherapy (Cogan and Porcerelli, 2005), compared the use of the SWAP-200 Q-sort by clients (self-sort) and clinicians (informed observer sort) (Bradley, Hilsenroth, Guarnaccia, and Westen, 2007), and examined the instrument's reliability and discriminant ability in differentiating among personality disorders (Marin-Avellan, McGaules, Campbell, and Fonagy, 2005).

Cogan and Porcerelli (2005) administered the SWAP-200 to the therapists of fifty-four clients in psychoanalytic therapy (26 at the beginning of treatment and 26 at the end of treatment, with time in analysis of 6 months to 171 months with a mean of 71.0 months and a standard deviation of 30.2 months.) Although there were methodological limitations to the study (including the possibility of selective response bias among the analysts) the stated goal was to test the viability of using the SWAP-200 in studies of the clinical effectiveness of treatment methods. The authors concluded that the SWAP-200 Q-sort is an effective method for the investigation into the clinical effectiveness of a system of therapy. They propose longitudinal studies to further assess the SWAP-200 Q-sort in clinical effectiveness research.

Bradley, Hilsenroth, Guarnaccia, and Westen (2007) compared the use of the SWAP-200 Q-sort by clients, as self-reports, with Q-sort assessments of the same clients by their clinicians as informed observers. The study involved 31 women and 23 men diagnosed with borderline, antisocial and obsessive-compulsive personality disorders. The comparison found only a small-to-moderate correlation, but the authors state that this was anticipated due to the nature of these personality disorders.

Marin-Avellan, McGaules, Campbell, and Fonagy (2005) explored the use of the SWAP-200 Q-sort in discriminating between personality diagnoses that can be difficult to delineate with other assessment tools. In this study, 30 individuals in a high-security corrections hospital were assessed with the SWAP-200 Q-sort, the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Personality Disorders (SCID-II), the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), and the Chart of Interpersonal Relations in Closed Living Environments (CIRCLE). In this study, the SWAP-200 Q-sort demonstrated high reliability and discriminant ability (with fewer indications of comorbidity in the sample populations.)

The SWAP-200 Q-sort has demonstrated that Q-sorts can be an effective means of personality assessment. It has also shown that Q-sorts are a practical method of personality assessment in a clinical setting. Critics of the instrument (including Block, 2008) have noted that the SWAP-200 Q-sort uses a non-standard sort for the Q-set. (After the elimination of the one hundred "not descriptive" cards, the remaining "descriptive" cards are sorted into a right-tailed distribution.) They question this change to traditional Q-methodology. Garb (2005) argued that the method of prototype creation in the SWAP-200 Q-sort (the compilation and comparison of multiple sorts by experienced

psychologists and psychiatrists) was in the "romantic" tradition of psychology and lacked the empirical grounding that he believes formed the basis of the DSM criteria. The SWAP-200 is important for this current research because of its prominent role in current Q-sort research.

Q-sorts (along with Q-methodology) have been put to significant use as a clinical tool in the assessment of client personality, psychopathology, and progress in treatment. They differ from traditional *R* methods by the sorting of criteria (test items) on an individual basis, rather than the sorting of individuals based on criteria. Because of this difference, Stephenson (1935b) proposed that Q-sorts offered a more accurate and nuanced picture of individuals than traditional techniques for assessment. Recent applications of Q-methods in clinical assessment, such as the California Q-sort and the SWAP-200 Q-sort, have been shown to demonstrate acceptable reliability and validity and to effectively discriminate between individual personality types and disorders. The increasing application of Q-sorts in clinical settings has the potential to generate new insights into client personality styles and behaviors and to offer individualized treatment guidance to clinicians.

Development of the Q-sort

Q-methodology research typically involves five steps or stages: (1) defining the "concourse" (which is the range of discourse about the topic from which the Q-set will be drawn), (2) creation of the Q-set (the sample of items to be rank-order sorted by participants), (3) selection of participants, termed the P-set, (4) sorting of the Q-set by participants, and (5) analysis and interpretation (van Exel and de Graaf, 2005). Thomas and Watson (2002) summarize this as a three stage process of proper design, proper administration, and proper analysis.

Identification of the concourse involves a qualitative search for a range of possible statements that could be made about a certain subject (Brown, S.R., 1991). It is not assumed that it is possible to obtain the full range of every possible description of subjective experience (Cross, 2005). A common practice is the selection of a range of statements from sources deemed to be significant, including interviews with informed sources and the review of relevant literature, including previous research or theoretically oriented literature (Brown, S.R., 1980; Van Exel and de Graaf, 2005; Shemmings, 2006).

Creation of the Q-set is drawn from the concourse, usually guided by *a priori* considerations (Thomas and Watson, 2002), and is designed to be representative of the breadth of subjective opinions identified in the concourse (Johnston, Angerilli and Gajdamaschko, 2004). Cross (2005) emphasizes the importance of thoughtful sampling by the researcher in creating the Q-set, stating,

...the selection of the Q set remains the responsibility of the researcher. Therefore, an effective Q study depends upon meticulous and thoughtful sampling of the propositions. People can 'tell a story' only if they have the appropriate statements with which to tell it. (pp. 211-212)

Items for the Q-set can be chosen in a naturalistic selection (taken from the process of exploring the concourse) or ready-made (taken from previous questionnaires or scales). They can either be selected systematically (according to a predetermined pattern) or in an unstructured manner, as might be used in an exploratory Q-sort (Shemmings, 2006). Goldstein and Goldstein (2005) give a wide range for the size of the Q set, noting only that 25 to 75 items is the "usual" size of a Q sample (p. 41).

Waters (n.d.) stated that the process of building the Q-set involves the creation of item lists guided by

theoretically described scales (rational item selection).

Often, Waters notes,

...the focus is on scales created by rationally combining sets of theoretically related items (usually 5-10 in number). Several such content based scales might be constructed from the items of a given q-set; many of the items in the q-set not being assigned to any scale at all. The reliability and coherence of scales based on such rational item selection can be improved and summarized using standard correlational methods to examine internal consistency and discriminant validity... (n.d.)

This list is then reviewed for clarity and similar statements brought together into a more comprehensive item list. The statements are then classified by theoretical categories and the researcher verifies that the items in the Q-set represent the desired categories (Brown, S.R., 1980; Van Exel and de Graaf, 2005).

The selection of participants is the next stage in the process. Watts and Stenner (2005) advise that, in creating a sample of participants for research, an "opportunistic" sampling be used until enough data emerges to show that certain subjective viewpoints are more apparent in various demographic groups.

The instructions for administration of the Q-sort are meant to be easily understandable for the participants.

Because the participants are unlikely to have taken a Q-sort previously, some basic explanation of the sorting procedure and the rank ordering process is required. The participants are usually provided with a set of cards, each containing one item (statement) from the Q-set. The participant is then asked to order the statements based on preset categories (which may be described in numerical terms ("one to ten," for example) or into Likert like categories ("strongly disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree," etc.) The Q-set can also be administered by computer (Reber, Kaufman and Cropp, 2000; Thomas and Watson, 2002).

The Q-sort differs from a traditional Likert approach in that the participants are constrained to sort the items into a predefined number of "piles" in a predefined distribution. For example, one Q-sort may limit the participant to place only three items under "strongly agree," five under "agree," seven under "neither agree nor disagree," etc. Because of this the participant is forced to rank order the items in a set pattern that often vaguely resembles a Bell Curve (Block, 2009), although the final form of the sort is determined by the Q-sort creator.

After administration of the Q-sets to participants, a correlational matrix is created from a per-person

comparison of the Q-sorts. An exploratory factor analysis is then used to identify common factors in the data (Brown, S.R. 1991). The factors are analyzed for elements in the Q-set, along with other qualitative data provided by the participants in the sort for interpretation. Unlike traditional factor analysis, interpretation of factors is not based on factor loadings but on a qualitative analysis of the statements contained within the identified factor (Brown, S.R., 1980; Wheeler and Montgomery, 2009).

Adlerian Psychology and Q-methodology

With its foundation in "correlating persons instead of tests" (Stephenson, 1935b) and its focus on seeing the subjective perspective of the individual, Q-methodology is potentially a good match with the core assumptions of Adlerian Individual Psychology. Both Q-methodology and Adlerian theory assume that the subjective beliefs of the individual are significant elements for evaluation, are compatible with a model of humans as holistic and undivided persons, and have ties to constructivist theories of psychology.

Watts and Stenner (2005) explain this conceptual basis of Q-methodology, stating,

Q methodology was designed for the very purpose of challenging the dated, Newtonian logic of 'testing' that continues to predominate in psychology. It also offered an early critique of the cognitive assertion that people can properly be divided into a series of psychological 'parts'. (p.69)

Alfred Adler (as cited in Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1964) touched on a similar understanding of human psychological structure and differences when he proposed the concept of *individuum* or the undivided nature of the person (a model he later tied to the concept of holism) and advised clinicians to stop divining the meaning behind the words of the client instead of working with the actual (subjective) statements of the client.

Recent Adlerian writings have considered the constructivist model of the self that underlies Adlerian psychology. Watts (2003) explored the concept of *relational* constructivist models of psychotherapy as a bridge between *cognitive* constructivist models and *social* constructivist models and posed that Adlerian therapy was a well established model that could fulfill such a role. Oberst and Stewart (2003) note the connections between constructivist theories of the self and the Adlerian

concept of the person as the author of their own lifestyle and purpose.

Shulman and Mosak (1988) noted that the core concepts of Adlerian psychology are incompatible with the assumptions that underlie clinical assessment instruments based in other traditions. It is possible that Q-sorts are a more appropriate method to assess the central concepts of Adlerian psychology (including the Lifestyle/ Personality Priorities) because of these similarities. The possible compatibility of this constructivist model of the person with the assumptions that underlie Q-methodology is a central concept behind this dissertation.

Chapter Summary

Adlerian Individual Psychology is based on a holistic model of the individual that sees all people as goal directed (teleology). Healthy mental functioning, in Individual Psychology, is based on community mindedness or social interest, and psychopathology is an expression of insufficient interest in the needs of other people and the community. Individuals who seek help from therapists working in this model are often guided through a process of

assessment of their lifestyle type or life goals and then coached (or encouraged) toward a greater sense of social interest.

The concept of the Lifestyle or Personality Priorities is a central idea in Adlerian Individual Psychology. Adler claimed that people behave "as if" (als ob) they are guided by an organizing set of beliefs that direct them toward a purpose. This idea, which he found in the writings of Vaihinger, became the foundation of the insight stage of interventions by later Adlerian therapists.

Adlerians and non-Adlerians have noted that there is a significant problem with the lack of available assessment instruments in the Adlerian tradition. Some have proposed that a non-directive interview, known often as the Lifestyle Interview, is an appropriate technique for assessing lifestyle; others have pointed to the non-standardized nature of such interviews and the dependence on the skills and interpretive abilities of the therapist. It has also been argued that the low profile for Adlerian psychology is at least partly founded on the lack of instruments for assessing core concepts in clinical settings. Instruments have been proposed and continue to be developed, although each of these has shown weaknesses

or flaws that call into question their validity and usefulness.

Q-sorts and Q-methodology are a method of personality assessment first developed by William Stephenson in the 1930s as a means to elicit the range of subjective opinions within a group. As a research tool the Q-sort is a qualitative method with a strong quantitative component. Within clinical settings, the Q-sort has been used for psychological research and for personality assessment.

Methods

Research Questions

Two questions were created to guide the research and creation of the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs). These are as follows: "*Which personality priorities typology should guide the creation of and use of a Q-sort for this assessment?*" and "*What items should be included in the Q-set?*"

Procedure

The primary method of this research was qualitative and exploratory. The first stage involved the creation of a personality priorities typology for this instrument through an exploration of primary sources on lifestyle and personality priorities in Adlerian Psychology. This was driven by the first question of this research, "*Which personality priorities typology should guide the creation of and use of a Q-sort for this assessment?*"

Following this, the second question ("*What items should be included in the Q-set?*") was addressed through the creation of the items Q-set, detailed below.

The second question was also addressed through the administration of the Adlerian Personality Priority Q-sort (APPQs) to a convenience sample of 26 volunteers, along with a brief structured interview of each volunteer. This process generated feedback on the contents of the cards and on the instructions for administration.

The Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs) was administered to this small sample following standard Q procedures (Brown, S.R., 1993). Along with this administration of the APPQs, the subjects also were given a brief structured interview (Appendix B) on the understandability of the items and instructions. The answers were recorded and coded for qualitative themes. The results of this structured interview were analyzed and are reported below.

All procedures complied with APA ethical guidelines (American Psychological Association, 2002). The anonymity of participants has been protected by the use of identifying numbers. All data has been stored in a locked file under the control of the author of this dissertation and will be appropriately destroyed seven years after the conclusion of the research.

Creation of the personality priorities typology

The personality priorities typology for this instrument was created through an exploratory reading and central theme coding of Adlerian sources on the concept of Lifestyle / Personality Priorities.

In creating a typology of Adlerian personality priorities the goal was not to generate an exclusive list of types that could be applied to each and every person as an objective ontological category. Such a claim would be in direct conflict with Alfred Adler's concept of lifestyle and type (Adler, 1954; Adler, 1998). The goal for the creation of this instrument's typology was to examine the more widely proposed lists of Adlerian personal priority types and related Adlerian literature and sources and to generate a typology that could be generally accepted among Adlerian therapists. The desired goal was a typology in general agreement with the broader concept of personality priorities within the Adlerian tradition.

Eighteen primary sources were explored for themes related to personality priorities and analyzed and coded for significant themes. These sources (Table 5.) included 13 journal articles, a dissertation, a short book, a book chapter, the transcript of a lecture by Alfred Adler, and

the transcript of an address to the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology by a leading Adlerian. Sources were selected for relevance and content related to a typology of Adlerian Personality Priorities, based upon the earlier literature review in this study.

The sources were analyzed and coded in accord with interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Smith, 1996; Smith, Jarman, & Osborne, 1998). This approach was selected for coding the sources because of its compatibility with both the understanding of the individual as self-defined in Adlerian Individual Psychology and its ready congruence with the phenomenological foundation of Q-methodology. Interpretative phenomenological analysis involves a double interpretive activity where the researcher attempts to understand the subjective perspective before seeking to elucidate, record, and code the multiple perspectives encountered in the sources being studied. The investigator seeks to understand the experience or the point of view of the participants or sources.

The 18 sources were each read at least three times to allow key phrases and identified themes to be recorded. These key phrases and identified themes included types of lifestyle or personality priority. Patterns of lifestyle

and personality priority types were noted and outlined. The prevalence of each theme component was also recorded. A process of questioning of the themes and key phrases identified in the sources was conducted. Questions such as, "Does this appear in other places in the literature on Lifestyle and Personality Priorities?" and "Is there a conceptual overlap between this theme or key phrase and those found elsewhere in the sources?" The preliminary notes were then reorganized by cluster themes through concept mapping (Jackson & Trochim, 2002). Multiple versions of each concept map were attempted before a cluster model of six nodes emerged that was both concise (using the least possible terms) and expressive (capturing the most content from the key phrases and identified themes).

Table 4. Sources for coding of theme components

<u>Source</u>	<u>Type of source</u>
Adler (2009)	transcript of lecture
E.G.S. Allen (2005)	doctoral dissertation
T. Allen (2003)	journal article
Ansbacher (1967)	journal article
Ashby, Kottman, and Rice (1998)	journal article
Curlette, Kern, and Wheeler (1996)	journal article
Dreikurs (1991)	journal article
Horley, Carroll, and Little (1988)	journal article
Kefir and Corsini (1974)	journal article
Kopp (1986)	journal article
Langenfeld and Main (1983)	journal article
Manaster (2009)	journal article
Mosak (1979)	journal article
Mosak and DiPietro (2006), ch. 4	book chapter
Pew (1976)	Monograph
Pishkin and Thorne (1975)	journal article
Stein (2008)	transcript of address
Thorne and Pishkin (1975)	journal article

Creation of the Q-set

Writings by prominent Adlerians have been explored using qualitative methods to outline a lifestyle typology that is compatible with lifestyle typologies in general use among Adlerian practitioners. From this list of Lifestyle types a set of 48 statements for rank-ordering in the Q-sort (the Q-set) has been created. The first step was to use the guidelines proposed by Block (1961) and discussed by Ozer (1993) to create a broad pool of 324 statements. This was reduced through clustering and selection to a list of 171 items. From these, a rational items selection process (Waters, n.d.) was employed to refine this to a list of 48 items. To do this, eight statements were selected that most closely matched each of the scale descriptions for each of the Personality Priorities types. The resulting list (see Appendix A) was then rewritten through multiple revisions to improve readability and word length as measured through the Flesch-Kincaid scale (DuBay, 2004).

Materials

The Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-set (APPQs) is presented to the participants printed on three inch by five inch cards. The items are numbered on the card to allow for ease of recording the sorts. To address a potential confounding of results by item order, the cards are randomly shuffled before presentation to each participant. The sorting task specifies a first sort into two piles (Generally Agree and Generally Disagree) before then sorting all cards into seven rows on the mat.

A one page set of instructions (see Appendix C) is included, along with a sorting mat to allow for easier sorting by the participant.

Usability Study

For the usability study, a convenience sample of 26 volunteers was recruited at a coffee shop near a university campus in the city of Chicago, Illinois. Volunteers were approached and asked to participate in a brief study that involved completion of a card sorting task and answering of four questions about the cards. No incentives or payment for participation were offered or given, all participants

were provided an explanation of the nature of confidentiality in research, and all asked to sign an informed consent form. A copy of the informed consent form was offered to all participants.

Results

Creation of the Personality Priorities Typology

The personality priorities typology for the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs) was created through an exploratory reading and central theme coding of Adlerian sources on the concept of lifestyle and personality priorities.

This stage began with a repeated reading of the sources and the recording of themes identified in the sources. These themes included summaries of lifestyle or personality priority types presented and interpretations of the types. Also included were preliminary interpretations and systems for types. The notes were then reorganized by cluster themes that included proposed connections between the identified themes. Patterns of lifestyle and personality priority types were noted and the links between these patterns (identification of nodes in the themes) outlined. The prevalence of each theme component was recorded. Following this the themes in each source were organized by relationship into clusters using concept mapping (Jackson & Trochim, 2002). These clusters of

themes or nodes provided an outline of significant concepts in the literature on Adlerian personality priorities.

The six primary nodes obtained in the sources (Table 5.) have been incorporated in the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs) as the scales of personality priorities (Table 6). These include Superiority (S), Comfort (Ct), Pleasing (P), Control (Ct), Avoiding (A), and Getting (G).

It cannot be claimed that this is a complete list of all types of Adlerian lifestyles or personality priorities. Making such a claim would be incompatible with both Adlerian theory and with the methodology used to generate the list. The purpose of the creation of the list was to generate a personality priority scale that could be generally accepted by Adlerian clinicians for work with clients. Further evaluation of the acceptability of this list by those clinicians will depend on research anticipated to be undertaken after the completion of this project. (See the discussion section below.)

Table 5. Nodes in sources, personality priorities typology

Research Themes (Nodes)	Theme Components
Superiority	Focus on competence Need to be the best Sense of Responsibility
Comfort	Immediate Gratification Avoidance of anxiety Lack of planning Easygoing
Pleasing	Cooperative Eager to please Ignores own needs Avoidance of conflict
Control	Uses others Controls choices of others Restricted Self Limited Experiences Fear of being out of control
Avoiding	Limited interactions Few significant others Fear of painful encounters
Getting	Obtaining resources Avoiding scarcity Possessions as means toward self-worth

Table 6. Personality Priority Scales in the Adlerian
Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs)

<u>Scale</u>		Description
Superiority	S	Will demonstrate a tendency to achieve security or purpose by becoming the "best" or most significant person in a situation. This individual will often focus on competence and show a significant sense of responsibility.
Comfort	Cf	Will seek avoidance of anxiety through immediate gratification. This individual may appear "easygoing" and might exhibit a lack of planning that causes difficulties in life.
Pleasing	P	Will appear cooperative and eager to please. May appear to ignore own needs and could have problems caused by over avoidance of conflict.
Control	Ct	Will demonstrate a restricted self and a limited set of personal experiences. May fear the feeling of being out of control and may seek to control the choices of others.
Avoiding	A	Will have limited interactions and few significant others. May be fearful of painful interpersonal encounters and interactions.
Getting	G	Will demonstrate a focus on obtaining resources and avoiding scarcity. May demonstrate an extreme interest in or focus on possessions as an evaluation of self-worth.

Creation of the Q-set

Following an examination of Adlerian and non-Adlerian lifestyle assessment tools and a review of literature on the Adlerian construct of lifestyle / personality priorities, a preliminary list of 324 items was created and grouped by APPQs scale. These were reviewed for clarity and duplication of ideas. Through a process of clustering and selection, this list of 324 items was reduced to 171 items, and from these the eight items most representative of the six types in the APPQs scales were chosen. This resulted in a list of 48 items in the APPQs (see Appendix A).

All items in the APPQs Q-set were written for ease of understanding. The items in the 48-item Q-set were calculated to have 7.7 words per item. The items in the Q-set were created with a predominance of short words to aid in understandability. Average word length for the entire Q-set is 4.1 characters per word. Items were written in active voice. The Flesch readability ease and the Flesch Kincaid grade level (DuBay, 2004) were calculated for the entire Q-set. The items of the APPQs show a reading ease of 78.4 and are at the Flesch-Kincaid grade level of 4.2.

Usability Study

For the usability study, the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs) was administered to a convenience sample of 26 participants. The purpose of the usability study was to allow an evaluation of the ease of administration of the instrument and to identify changes that need to be made to the Q-set items, and to the instructions for administration.

A convenience sample of 26 volunteers was recruited at a coffee shop near a university campus in the city of Chicago, Illinois. Volunteers were approached and asked to participate in a brief study that involved the completion of a card sorting task followed by answering four questions about the cards.

An explanation of the study and of the nature of research confidentiality was provided to the participants, and all participants signed informed consent forms. Instructions for the sorting task (Appendix C) were read to the participants. All administrations of the Q-set were performed individually and in a location where card sorts could not be directly observed by other individuals.

The time for completing the card sort task was recorded for each participant. For this sample, the

average time to complete the card sort task was nine minutes and forty-five seconds (the median time was eight minutes and thirty-seven seconds), with a range of between six minutes and eighteen minutes and thirty seconds to complete.

During the administration of the Q-set, all questions by the participants were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Seventeen participants asked questions about the instrument, the cards, and the instructions for sorting. A process of repeated reading and sorting of these questions by content led to the identification of seven clusters of questions by participants.

The most commonly asked cluster of questions (asked by eight participants, three males and five females) was whether the sorter was limited to placing only one statement card per sorting mat box. These participants seemed unsure about the nature of the forced distribution including the identified number of Q-set items per row, or they were requesting a change to the instructions.

The second most common cluster of questions was concerned with the importance of the order of items within each row. This was asked by seven participants, all male. One of these participants asked, "What is the value in the rows? Does it matter where in the row I place the card?"

Another asked, "Does it mean anything how high or low the card is?" A third asked, "Is there a difference in degree?" Four of these seven participants then said that they believed this was unclear in the instructions and that the instructions for the instrument should clarify this.

The third most common cluster of questions was about the instructions for the sorting task. The sorting task specifies a first sort into two piles (Generally Agree and Generally Disagree) before the cards are sorted again into the seven rows on the mat. Five participants asked questions about the instructions for this step. One participant asked if only one of the two piles from the first sort was to be sorted onto the mat. Another asked if they were to sort one pile onto the mat before the other. A third participant asked if the second sort was to be completed using the same cards that were used in the first sort. Two participants suggested that another sorting mat be created for the first sorting task.

The fourth most common question set also involved the first sorting task. Four participants (all male) asked the purpose of the first sort. (They were told that it was to aid in sorting the cards onto the mat in the second sort.) None of these four participants had asked about the instructions for the first sorting task.

The fifth most common question set involved the second sorting of cards onto the sorting mat. Three participants (two males and one female, all three with an educational level of a graduate degree) asked if they could move cards around once placed on the mat. They were told, "Yes, the instructions state that you can move cards around until you believe that you have correctly placed all cards."

The sixth was a single question by one male participant. He asked if he could create more than two piles in the first sort task. He was told he could not and asked to follow the instrument instructions.

The seventh was also a single question. This was from one female participant, who asked, "Can I look at the instructions again while I am doing this?" She was told that yes, she could see the instructions during the sorting task.

The self-reported demographics of participants (including gender, age, and level of educational achievement) were compared for those who asked questions and those who did not ask questions.

Nine females did not ask any questions about the instructions, the cards or the sorting task. (All 10 male participants asked questions, and seven of the 16 female participants asked questions.) The average age of the nine

females who did not ask questions was 32.4 years (which is younger than the average age of 39.23 for all participants) with a range of 21 to 44 years. Of the nine who asked no questions, four have an educational achievement level of high school diploma, four have a bachelor's degree, and one has a graduate degree. Those participants who did not ask any questions about the instructions, the cards, or the sorting task were younger and had a lower level of education than the average of all participants.

Among the 17 participants who did ask questions (seven female and ten male) the number of questions asked was compared by gender and by level of education.

In the comparison by gender, the 10 males asked an average of 2.7 questions each (ranging from one question to five questions); the seven females with questions asked an average of 1.43 questions (with a range of one to two questions). (This was an average of only 0.63 questions among all sixteen females.) All males in the participant sample asked questions about the instructions, the cards, or the sorting task. There was a large variance in the number of questions asked by male and female participants, with males being more likely to ask questions, and males asking an average of more than twice as many questions as the number of questions asked by female.

Sorting by educational level of achievement showed no clear pattern of difference in asking of questions. Participants who had achieved only a high school diploma had an average of 1.45 questions. Participants who had achieved a bachelor's degree asked an average of 0.9 questions. Participants with at least a graduate degree asked an average of 2.14 questions. No clear pattern of questions asked was observed among participants by educational level achieved. (Because the sample size was so small and because this was a non-random sample, no advanced statistical analytic methods were used to search for patterns in the data by level of educational achievement.)

After completing the Q-sort, the participants answered a four-question structured interview (see Appendix B), and participant answers to these questions were transcribed for coding and analysis.

The first question asked of each participant (after the completion of the card sort task) was, "*How difficult was it to understand the instructions for the use of these cards?*" All but one of the participants stated that the instructions were easy to understand. Responses to this question included answers such as: "It was ok," "It wasn't difficult," "Very easy to understand," "Pretty

straightforward," and "Not hard at all." One participant described the instructions as "clear and concise." On the other hand, one participant (a male, in his forties, with a graduate degree) described the instructions as, "Confusing and hard to understand."

The second question asked of each participant was, "*How easy to understand were the statements on the cards?*" All 26 participants answered that the statements were easy to understand. Common responses varied from a brief, "very easy," to longer descriptions of their belief that the Q-set items were not difficult to understand. Two participants described the statements as "interesting," and one stated, "these aren't things that I think about very often." One participant noted that the items were short sentences, and said, "It was all pretty clear, short and to the point. People don't like to read long sentences. This was what I liked about it."

Nonetheless, three of the 26 participants noted that some of the items were double negatives, and they stated that this made the task a little harder for them. One said, "I had to think twice about (a specific card). I had to reread it because I wasn't sure what it was saying the first time." Another participant commented, "Some of the

negative ones I had to think twice about to make sure I understood."

Four participants stated that some of the Q-set items were repetitive. One said, "I think it is interesting that I found myself reading them multiple times because I had read other cards just like that." Another participant said, "There were some phrases that repeated a lot."

A significant issue that emerged in this question was concern about the statements on the cards being too "general," "abstract," or "ambiguous." This was reflected in comments from nine of the 26 participants (34.6%). A few of these were expressed in comments that they had to "think about" the cards, or "give it some reflection." On non-directive probing this was determined to be related to not believing that the statements were specific enough.

One comment by a participant was, "Some were a little more abstract than others; a couple stood out as being more random." After a follow-up question the use of the word "random" was explained as meaning "unfocused." Another participant commented, "I thought that they were easy to understand in a general, personal way. They could be interpreted in a lot of ways." After a follow up question requesting that this observation be explained, the participant commented that they would rewrite the items to

be more specific, but added, as a caution, "You could end up making them very specific," which they said would not be desirable.

One participant answered question two by saying, "Generally they are o.k.; there are some that are ambiguous. I've heard people say things like this. The times that they are ambiguous are when you might respond differently in different situations." On further questioning this participant added that this ambiguity might lie in the instructions needing to provide more clarity or focus on the application of the cards and not in the statements in the Q-set.

In addition to the nine participants who thought that the statements in the Q-set were too general, another four participants (15.3%) offered observations that the statements were very specific. One replied to question two by saying, "Black and white; I got it." Another stated, "It was all very clear and concise," and added, "clear, short, and to the point." A third participant replied to the question with a statement that, "I think that they were very yes, no, true and false." The fourth stated that, "it was great that they were so specific."

The four who stated that the Q-set statements were specific were three males and a female, with a median age

of 51.0 years for all four participants. The two males each have an undergraduate degree as their highest level of educational achievement, and the two females each have at least a graduate degree.

Among the nine who stated that the cards were too general were four males and five females. By age group, two are in their twenties, two are in their thirties, five are in their forties, and none are older than forty-nine years old. The median age for the nine participants who noted that the items are too general was 33.5 years. Three females and one male (a total of four) in this group have only a high school degree, one female and one male in this group (a total of two) have an undergraduate degree, and one female and two males (a total of three) in this group have at least a graduate degree.

The third question asked of each participant was, "*Do you feel that you were able to accurately describe yourself using these cards?*" This question is a little broader than the question of usability, but it is applicable to the question of usability. It was included to determine whether the participants thought that the Q-set produces an adequate description of the individual.

Of the 26 participants, 21 said that they were able to accurately describe themselves using the Q-set statements

on the cards. Of these 21, only eight participants offered unqualified statements of agreement to question three. These included a participant who said, "I think it did," another who said, "yes, absolutely," and a third who said, "I think I was able to describe me using the cards." One participant stated that she thought that the Q-set provided a description of herself in multiple domains, saying, "It really covers a lot of different aspects of someone; work, personal, friendships, family."

The other 13 participants who answered yes to question three offered various qualifications to their answer. Of these, six commented that they felt restrained by the forced distribution of Q-sorting. One participant who answered question three in the affirmative said that, "the only issue would be if you had too many agree over disagree you had to figure out the middle." One participant was very specific about changes that they would have made to the forced distribution, saying, "I think more spaces on the *mostly* [column] would help; one more *mostly* would have been perfect."

One participant who answered question three in the negative (and thus not part of the sixteen who believed that they could accurately describe themselves using the Q-set cards) also noted that this answer was influenced by

the forced distribution of the cards. This participant said, "I had way more that I agreed with that I had to shift to disagree even though I don't disagree."

Two participants who stated that the Q-set did accurately describe them provided a percentage answer to this question. One participant said, "if I had to run through it again, I would make some changes. I would give it a 70% accurate description." The other said that, "I would say like 90 to 95%, that's it."

Seven participants who said that the items did accurately describe them stated that they had concerns whether an instrument such as the Q-set of statements could accomplish this. One said that the questions did accurately describe them, "only to the extent that forty-eight cards can get to the heart of who you are." One participant said that, "you always want to add 'but..', and add your own thoughts to it." Another participant echoed the use of the word, "but," saying, "...there is always a 'but..' statement. I can think of exceptions. A qualifier." One of these participants noted that he felt that the cards had accurately described him, "in a simplistic way. I mean it was pretty basic. Basic but not really thorough." One participant said that it offered only "a general picture."

One participant, who said that the Q-set was "mostly" able to describe her accurately, said that it seemed none of the cards refer to basic emotions. "I notice that none of these actually says an emotion on them. It never says 'I am happy, sad' or anything like that." After saying this she reread through all of the cards and noted that card 33 does use the word "happy." She then said, "well it doesn't describe you very well if it doesn't talk about emotions."

Five participants said that they did not think that they were accurately described by the Q-set cards. Two of these participants said that this is because they thought that the limitation implicit in the forced sort of the cards prevented them from creating an accurate picture of themselves. To both of these participants, the requirement that the cards be sorted into a modified standard sort was the identified reason why they felt that the use of the Q-set did not allow for the creation of an accurate self-description. Three of the participants in this group expressed disagreement with the idea that a limited set of statements could capture the full range of human personality or experience.

Of those who stated that the Q-set did not accurately describe them, two were females and three were males. The average age of these five participants was 41.2 years. By

educational achievement, one male and two females have undergraduate degrees, and one male and one female have at least a graduate degree.

The fourth question asked of each participant was, *"What suggestions would you make to the statements on any of the cards?"*

Fifteen of the 26 participants said that they had no suggestions for changes to the items in the Q-set. The participants in this group included nine females (56% of the females in the usability study) and six males (60% of the males in the usability study).

One participant said that he wouldn't make any changes because, "I thought that they were pretty clear. I could apply them pretty easily." Another said that there were no changes needed because, "they were all worded very well, easy to understand, not too many big words." One participant said that there was no need to change the items because, "they are pretty definitive statements," while another said that there was no need to change any because, "they are general enough to apply to anyone." One participant said that although, "every once and a while I had to reread one," the items were, nonetheless, "all pretty clear."

Eleven participants answered question four with general and specific suggestions for changes to the items on the cards. The general suggestions were as follows:

- Remove the numbers from the cards because this is distracting during the sorting task.
- Do not use the words "very" and "always" as often in the Q-set statements.
- Use shorter sentences for the items.
- Change the negative statements into positive statements. (One participant said that, "I thought it was interesting that some of the cards were in the negative of what you would normally say. Instead of saying 'I am not comfortable' say 'I am comfortable' with the opposite. These should all be positive or negative statements.")
- Make the Q-set items "more specific," "less general," and, "easier for me to understand the context."
- Remove items that are repetitive and, "seem to say the same thing as another card."

Changes to specific cards were also offered by participants. Suggestions were proposed for 20 of the 48 cards. Only five of the cards, numbers 8, 26, 35, 38, and

44, had changes suggested by more than one than one participant. The specific suggestions for changes to the Q-set items are listed in Table 7, "Usability Study Participant Suggested Changes to the Q-set."

The suggested changes fell into seven groups. These included suggestions to increase the specificity or add context to a statement, disagreements with the psychological content of an item, clarification of wording to make ideas clearer or to assist in readability, removal of repeated content in items, rewording of a negative statement as a positive statement, and removal of a self-descriptor that a participant believed to be universally true.

A number of participants raised the issue of statements being too general and not providing more context for interpretation. These suggestions included statements of unease or discomfort at not understanding how to interpret a statement or at having to decide whether they would agree with an ambiguous self statement. Some participants stated that a few items were "not specific," "too situational," and "a blanket statement." One participant suggested that the addition of context to a statement would have helped her decide how to interpret the item.

The largest group of suggested changes involved the psychological content of items. Content related changes were offered for seven of the forty-eight cards. These included a comment that two of the cards (number 6 and number 44) could be "too difficult" for "over-emotional" people, concern that card 29 ("Sometimes I just want to be left alone") might "sound combative," and a discussion of philosophical issues around the degree of knowledge of other people as a reaction to card 35. One participant stated that her suggested changes to Q-set items were related to her own discomfort with the content of some of the cards.

Participants offered suggested changes to two items (card 8 and card 31) to clarify content. This included adding "I usually" to card eight and changing the words "I want to..." to "I try to..." in that item. In card 31 a participant suggested adding the words "more often than not."

There were also suggestions to clarify wording to assist with readability. This included a suggestion to simplify the sentence structure of card 14, and a suggestion to change the contraction "can't" to the word "cannot" in card 23.

In question two, four participants said that there was some repetition of content in various cards, but in question four only two cards were identified as repetitions. These were card 15 ("I don't like debates and arguments") and card 37 ("I like to debate politics and ideas"), which one participant said were too close in content.

Rewording a negative as a positive was suggested by one participant for card 26 (that the statement 'I have a low tolerance for pain' be replaced with, 'I have a high tolerance for pain'). The participant commented that people would be more likely to be honest about phrasing this in a positive rather than a negative manner.

One participant also stated that card 48 ('I like to receive gifts') was too universal and should be removed.

Table 7. Usability study participant suggested changes to the Q-set

Card 1	Other people can depend on me.
One participant said that this card should be more "specific." They suggested that this could be accomplished by providing context, or explanation of the word 'depend.'	
Card 6	I sometimes feel very empty inside.
There was a suggestion to remove this item (along with item 44) by one participant because "someone could be over-emotional." The participant said that items 6 and 44 could be "too difficult" for such a person.	
Card 8	I want to avoid stress and anxiety.
Two participants suggested changes to this item. The first proposed that the phrase, "I usually" be added to this item. This participant also suggested clarifying between "stress caused by me or stress caused by someone else. Internal versus external." The other participant suggested that the words "I want to..." be changed to "I try to..." because, "everybody wants to."	
Card 12	I am worried that one day I might have nothing.
There was a request to clarify this by one participant, who said "I don't know if 'nothing' means physical things or people."	

Card 14	I don't like to wait for the things that I want.
One participant said that this might be difficult for other people to understand. It was suggested that the sentence structure be simplified.	
Card 15	I don't like debates and arguments.
This is too similar to item 37, one participant said.	
Card 18	Sometimes I really want what other people have.
This item "could be taken multiple ways," one participant said, because "it is not specific and needs to be more specific. Does it mean things or relationships?"	
Card 21	I am uncomfortable around people who are arguing.
One participant commented that "Perhaps this is too situational. Someone may not be able to decide if it applies."	
Card 23	You can't always trust a lot of people.
This was difficult to understand on first reading, a participant said, because of the use of a contraction. "I had to reread it to see if it said I can or I cannot."	

Card 26	I have a low tolerance for pain.
<p>Two participants said that this card should be altered. One participant suggested that this be changed to "I have a high tolerance for pain." The reason for this was that "someone would be more likely to be more honest about a positive statement than a negative statement." Another participant wanted this clarified, saying, "Is it psychological or physical pain? I don't know."</p>	
Card 29	Sometimes I just want to be left alone.
<p>A participant said that this item "sounds almost combative." It was suggested that this be changed to "Sometimes I enjoy spending time with myself." This participant added "That would be more descriptive. That's how I wound up interpreting it."</p>	
Card 30	It is worth the extra money to buy the best brands.
<p>"This is a blanket statement," one participant said. She said that "most women would say yes to this statement sometimes, but not all of the time."</p>	
Card 31	I follow through on my plans.
<p>One participant said that for this item, "maybe you need to add, 'more often than not.'"</p>	

Card 35	It is hard to really know someone else.
<p>This item raised philosophical issues around the knowledge of others in relationships for one participant, who suggested that it be removed from the item set. "I think that you can know someone really well and then be surprised. What is this card about? This is a blanket statement. You can, but you may not. You may think you do."</p>	
Card 36	<p>Buying something for myself always makes me feel better.</p>
<p>This item was difficult to sort, one participant said, because "it depends on how you interpret it."</p>	
Card 37	I like to debate politics and ideas.
<p>One participant said that items fifteen and thirty-seven were too similar, that they should be changed because they are repetitive.</p>	
Card 38	I try not to work too hard.
<p>A participant suggested that this be changed to "I try to be relaxed at work." This was because "people might make this very negative; it might be perceived as negative." Another participant thought that this item was too "subjective" and "situational."</p>	

Card 43	I can talk my way out of trouble.
<p>A participant said that this should be changed or removed because "This almost sounds like 'I can be manipulative if I want to.' Maybe use 'I have a way of working out things to my advantage.' The first one just sounds like, 'Hey, I'm manipulative.'"</p>	
Card 44	Too much responsibility is stressful.
<p>One participant suggested removing this item, and item 6, because "someone could be over-emotional." The participant said that items six and forty-four could be "too difficult" for such a person.</p>	
Card 48	I certainly enjoy receiving gifts.
<p>"Everyone enjoys receiving gifts," one participant said, and therefore this should be removed from the item set.</p>	

Analysis

Two questions were posed to guide the preliminary development of the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs): what typology of personality priorities should guide the creation and interpretation of the instrument and what items should be included in the Q-set. To answer these, four stages were taken in this research. The first stage was an extensive review of the literature on Adlerian Psychology, Lifestyle and Personality Priorities, Q-sorts and Q-methodology. Following this, a typology of personality priorities was developed to be compatible with previous lifestyle and personality priority typologies in Adlerian Psychology. A Q-set was then created, based in the resulting typology and guided by a process of rational item selection. Finally, this Q-set was administered to a convenience sample of 26 participants, along with a brief structured interview, to assess ease of administration and understandability and to solicit feedback on item content.

The first question posed in this process was "*Which personality priorities typology should guide the creation of and use of a Q-sort for this assessment?*" This was addressed through an exploratory reading and central theme coding of 18 primary sources, followed by analysis and

coding through a process of interpretative phenomenological analysis.

The six primary nodes obtained in the sources have been incorporated in the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs) as the scales of personality priorities. These include Superiority (S), Comfort (Ct), Pleasing (P), Control (Ct), Avoiding (A), and Getting (G).

Because the process of this research was to organize the types found in previous typologies, it cannot be proposed as a universal typology for Adlerians. Before his death, Dr. Adler reminded his followers,

...we do not consider human beings as types, because every person has an individual style of life. If we speak of types, therefore, it is only as a conceptual device to make more understandable the similarities of individuals.
(Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964)

In Adlerian psychology, any personality or lifestyle typology is only a tool to be used, changed, or discarded as best suits the individual client. Still, because this current typology has been created through an analysis and synthesis of previous Adlerian typologies, it may be possible, with additional theoretical exploration, to

propose this collection of types for broader use within Adlerian Psychology.

In the next stage of this project, the second question (*"What items should be included in the Q-set?"*) was addressed. Following the methods of Block (1961), Ozer (1993) and Waters (n.d.), a pool of 324 statements was created to broadly represent the scales of the scales in the typology. These were reduced through clustering and selection to a list of 171 items. From this list, 48 items were selected using a process of rational item selection (Waters, n.d.). The resulting list (see Appendix A) was then rewritten through multiple revisions to improve readability and word length as measured through the Flesch-Kincaid scale.

The proposed Q-set is designed to be understood by most adults able to read at the 4th grade level. The resulting set of items for this instrument has an average statement length of 7.7 words per item, an average word length of 4.1 characters per word, and a Flesch readability ease scale score of 78.4. The 48-item Q-set in the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-set (APPQs) is at the Flesch-Kincaid grade level of 4.2.

The result of this stage of instrument creation is that the APPQs Q-set has been structured by the scale items

of the personality priorities typology created for this instrument, the individual items have been written and selected by widely accepted methods for the creation of items sets in Q-sorts for personality assessment, and the question of ease of readability addressed through a process of multiple revisions.

The second question was also addressed through the administration of the Adlerian Personality Priority Q-sort (APPQs) to a convenience sample of twenty-six volunteers, along with a brief structured interview. This process generated feedback on the contents of the cards and the instructions for administration.

All but one of these participants said that the Q-set instructions were easy to understand. All participants said that the cards (the items in the Q-set) were easy to understand. Making the claim that the instructions and cards items are understandable seems warranted.

One result raises a concern that there might be problems in the understandability and ease of administration of the Q-set among all participants. The recording and analysis of questions and comments during the sorting task showed a notable difference between participants based on gender and age. Female participants and younger participants were much less likely to ask

questions and, as a group, asked fewer questions. There are many possible reasons for this, including that the Q-set was administered by a male in his 40s, that the instrument is more immediately understandable by younger females, or that the process of soliciting and recording questions was not gender or age appropriate. Without further studies using this instrument, using a much larger sample and administered by males and females of various age groups, this cannot be answered. This may not be a significant difficulty for the use of this Q-sort for the assessment of personality priorities, or it may be very significant; without further research it cannot be answered at this time.

The usability study generated a number of changes that need to be made to improve the APPQs. From the administration of the APPQs to the participants in the usability study (including the observation of the participants during the administration, the recording of comments and questions by participants, and the solicitation of responses to the brief structured interview administered with the APPQs) a number of changes were identified as either necessary or deserving of further consideration before future stages in the development of the instrument.

These identified changes include the rewriting of double negatives in the statements of the Q-set, the deletion of repetitious cards, the inclusion of more context or specificity to aid in sorter judgments, and the inclusion of emotional content or statements that discuss emotions.

The process followed for the development of this Q-sort has created the main elements of the instrument, a set of items and the instructions for sorting these items. The next stage in development of the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort will need to be the rewriting of the Q-set items based on the usability study results. This will then be administered to a convenience sample, using both male and female administrators of various ages to assess both the changes to the Q-set and to evaluate the finding at this stage that females and younger participants were less willing to ask questions.

The items in the Q-set will need criterion sets based on the personality typology created in this project. Based on the methods used in the two most widely used Q-methods for personality assessment, this can be done in one of two ways. The Q-sort prototypes can be created theoretically from the items of the Q-set and then compared to sorts of individuals that have been previously identified as

illustrative examples of personality priority types, or the prototypes can be created through a criterion sort of informed observers (such as experienced Adlerian clinicians) and then factor analyzed for consensus sets for inclusion in prototypical sets. For the California Adult Q-sort (CAQ) (Block, 2008) the criterion sorts were created from theoretical based definitions and then compared to the sorts of individuals identified as examples of the personality constructs. For the SWAP-200 (Westen and Shedler, 1999a; 1999b) the criterion sorts were developed through the compilation of a vast set of many hundreds of sorts by informed clinicians (psychologists and psychiatrists) describing prototypical clients within categories. These sorts were then factor analyzed to establish consensus criterions.

Although the criterion sort method used to create the SWAP-200 provides a more statistically established basis for the prototypes, it is dependent on sorts by outside observers. This would require comparing observer sort prototypes of typical examples to the self-report sorts in the final administration. Because the SWAP-200 uses informed observer sorts, this is not a significant concern for that instrument, although Westen and Shedler (1999b) acknowledge that a reliance on observer sorts for criterion

prototypes is also a limitation in the original creation of that instrument. For a Q-sort instrument using self-report sorts such as the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-set (APPQs) it may not be the case that outsider created prototypical sorts can be directly compared to self-sorted Q-sets. The method for the establishment of the prototypes in the California Adult Q-sort (theoretical creation of the prototypes followed by a comparison to the self-sorts of individuals) may be the more appropriate method for the establishment of the criterion sorts for the APPQs.

After the creation of the criterion sorts, the next step would be to create a web-based system for administration and scoring. This has been created for the California Adult Q-sort (CAQ) and the Shedler-Westen Assessment Procedure-200 (SWAP-200); a number of computer programs exist to allow for easy web-based administration and scoring of Q-sorts. This would allow for the final stage of the creation of the APPQs and the collection of a large sample for analysis to be completed to address the questions of reliability and validity.

Discussion

The need for an assessment tool to examine the Adlerian construct of lifestyle / personality priorities has been noted. This dissertation has examined the application of Q-methods of assessment, a qualitative method using a per-person statistical analysis, for the assessment of the construct of personality priorities within the lifestyle. The theoretical compatibility of Adlerian concepts of the person, including the holistic nature of the person and the heuristic nature of types, and Stephenson's Q-methods for the assessment of subjective beliefs, suggest that this could be an appropriate and effective method for lifestyle assessment.

The development of any new Q-sort instrument to assess personality in individuals is a multi-year and multi-stage process. The Shedler-Westen Assessment Procedure-200 (SWAP-200) Q-sort was developed for 15 years before original release (Westen and Shedler, 1999a, 1999b), and there has been an additional twelve years of research before the soon-to-be-released next version, the SWAP-II. The development of the California Adult Q-sort (CAQ) required ten years of development before first release and another ten years of research before the current version

was released (Block, 2008). Other Adlerian instruments, such as the Basic Adlerian Scales of Interpersonal Success - Adult form (BASIS-A) also involved multiple stages and more than a decade of development (Wheeler, Kern and Curlette, 1993). There is no reason to assume that the development of the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-set (APPQs) will be a shorter process than these tools.

This current stage of the development of the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs) is titled a "preliminary development" because it is meant to create a workable foundation for further development. It is limited in scope and scale because it is envisioned that the complete development of a new clinical tool is beyond the range of a single dissertation.

It is anticipated that there will be a need for further studies to follow this research to establish a valid and reliable Q-sort tool for Adlerian therapists and their clients.

This preliminary developmental stage has created a personality priorities typology for use in this instrument, along with an instruction set and Q-set items for sorting by individuals. These have been refined through the process of this project and further changes identified in the usability study. Additional stages for further

development of this instrument have been outlined in this project. This further development would be required before release of the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs) could be considered. The focus of this stage of the development of the instrument has been on establishing the theoretically based scales, the items in the Q-set, and evaluating the usability of the instrument.

One of the central themes of Adlerian Psychology is the importance of the Lifestyle (including the personality priorities) of the individual in shaping cognitions and behavior. Alfred Adler advised that the foundation for the work of the therapist and the client is an understanding of the role of the Lifestyle in the life of the individual. Unfortunately, Adlerians have had no widely accepted standard tools for the assessment of the Lifestyle and Personality Priorities, and this lack of clinical tools has limited research into Adlerian theory and application in clinical settings. Q-sorts have been presented here as a methodology that would be compatible with the constructivist nature of Adlerian theory and aid the Adlerian clinician in the assessment of the lifestyle. This project has addressed this need with a review of the Adlerian concept of the Lifestyle and Personality Priorities, and through the creation of a typology and a

preliminary Q-set for this task. Further stages of development, as outlined here, will continue the development of the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs) and, it can be hoped, create a tool that can be accurately and reliably used by Adlerians in research and clinical applications.

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APPENDIX A

The Q-set for the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort

The Q-set for the Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort
(APPQs)

1. Other people can depend on me.
2. I don't make a lot of plans.
3. I need to help other people.
4. Sometimes I have trouble understanding other people's feelings.
5. I am often misunderstood.
6. I sometimes feel very empty inside.
7. It is very important that I accomplish my goals.
8. I want to avoid stress and anxiety.
9. I will ignore my own needs to help someone else.
10. It is important to know and follow the rules.
11. I am easily embarrassed in a crowd.
12. I am worried that one day I might have nothing.
13. I make things happen.
14. I don't like to wait for the things that I want.
15. I don't like debates and arguments.
16. I want to know what is going to happen before I get involved.
17. I don't have a very large number of friends.
18. Sometimes I really want what other people have.
19. I have very high standards.

20. It is very important to be relaxed and to feel comfortable.
21. I am uncomfortable around people who are arguing.
22. I am very neat and orderly.
23. You can't always trust a lot of people.
24. Other people notice when you own expensive things.
25. I am a very confident person.
26. I have a low tolerance for pain.
27. It is hard to say "no" when someone asks me for a favor.
28. I am a very cautious person.
29. Sometimes I just want to be left alone.
30. It is worth the extra money to buy the best brands.
31. I follow through on my plans.
32. It is o.k. to leave some things unfinished.
33. You should always try to smile, even when you don't feel happy.
34. Children should respect authority.
35. It is hard to really know someone else.
36. Buying something for myself always makes me feel better.
37. I like to debate politics and ideas.
38. I try not to work too hard.
39. I like to please other people.

40. I am good at managing and leading other people.
41. I am very sensitive.
42. If I were rich, I wouldn't have to worry about so many things.
43. I can talk my way out of trouble.
44. Too much responsibility is stressful.
45. Sometimes people don't notice how much I do for them.
46. It is better when things are well organized.
47. I am shy and reserved around other people.
48. I certainly enjoy receiving gifts.

APPENDIX B

Brief Structured Interview for the Usability Study

Brief Structured Interview for the Usability Study

1. How difficult was it to understand the instructions for the use of these cards?
2. How easy to understand were the statements on the cards?
3. Do you feel that you were able to accurately describe yourself using these cards?
4. What suggested changes would you make to the statements on any of the cards?

Length of time to completion of the Q-set: _____

Demographic data of participant #

Age:

Gender:

Ethnicity and/or race:

Nationality of birth:

Primary Language used at home:

Highest level of education:

APPENDIX C

Instructions for sorting the Q-set in the Adlerian
Personality Profiles Q-sort.

The Adlerian Personality Priorities Q-sort (APPQs) consists of 48 cards. On each card is a brief statement. You will sort the stack of cards twice. The first time you will divide the cards into two stacks: "Agree" and "Disagree."

After this is completed, you will sort the cards onto the paper mat. One card will go on each box. The rows go from left to right, and are labeled "Definitely Disagree" to "Definitely Agree."

From the cards that you first sorted into the "Agree" and "Disagree" piles, complete the rows, placing one card per box.

You can move the cards around to different rows until you are satisfied with the placement of each card.

Please let me know when you have completed sorting all of the cards.

After you have sorted the cards, I will ask you four questions about your opinion of this assessment instrument, the individual cards, and these instructions. I will record your opinion and use it to improve the card sort.

Do you have any questions before we begin?