

The psychological position is important - not the ordinal position.
These are probabilities only. Adler: "Remember it always could be different."

Only Child: "a dwarf in a world of giants"

Adults are more proficient, so child may feel incompetent.
Parent's anxieties may make child feel insecure, unsure of self. *lawyers-justice - middle helping professions - oldest*
Center of Interest, often pampered.
Less opportunity to learn how to share, stand up for self, settle fights.
May feel lonesome and resent not having siblings.
If requests are not granted, may feel unfairly treated and refuse to cooperate.
May gain approval or solicit sympathy by being shy, helpless, *usually oldest will do best in school but if the family atmosphere emphasizes academia, both will excel.*
Frequently is interested in self: "What's in it for me?"
Often becomes "a getter" rather than "a doer."
May have special opportunities in a world of adults (trips, visits, etc.)
May become highly responsible - encouragement is a vital factor.

First Child: "born first and wants to stay first"

Is only child at first and the center of interest and attention. *family atmosphere accounts for similarities*
Then "dethroned" by sibling. May feel "They don't love me anymore."
After dethronement, may seek undue attention, usually on the constructive side at first; but if child becomes discouraged may become destructive. May then become a "problem child." *tends to have one close friend rather than have lots of friends*
Tends to be steady, responsible, dependable, often conforming.
Often overly concerned with own prestige, "has to be first."
May exploit own worthiness.
Frequent "typologies": one who has to be right, perfect, superior. *if they can't succeed, then they possibly give up altogether*

Second Child: "born behind and runs hard to catch up" *altogether*

Opposite of first child, if first is "good" second is "bad" and vice versa.
Chooses another field of endeavor where there is less competition from older siblings. *lots of friends*
Acts as if he or she were in a race.
Is frequently a "rebel" - doesn't like the position into which he or she was born.
May overcompensate and become hyperactive and "pushy."
May become "squeezed" if a third child is born - but may also "squeeze" in both directions.

Youngest Child: "born the baby, never dethroned - if it is a privilege, never wants to leave paradise"

Similar to the only child.
Often "spoiled" by parents and older siblings.
May act the "baby" and succeed in having things done for him or her.
May not be taken seriously, since he or she is the smallest.
Is frequently allied with the oldest.
May become "boss" of the whole family.
Is frequently highly creative (don't know why) - may excel or evade.
May become a "speeder" - become successful, or develop feelings of inferiority through discouragement.
May lack self-reliance and remain a "baby" into adulthood.

*they tend to do well in life if they can get over their helplessness
Youngest is the most relaxed of any in the family*

*actors-comedians
odd/even rule
generally speaking, the 1,3,5,7 and 9 placement tend to be alike in character, as is the 2,4,6,8*

competition not so bad where First is Male
competition in how different from each other

Middle Child of Three: "tends to elbow self through life"

S3P9-2

Has neither the privileges of the oldest or the youngest.

May feel uncertain of place and unloved, neglected.

May feel people are unfair.

If oldest is capable and youngest is attractive, may become a "problem" if he becomes discouraged.

May feel "squeezed" but may also "squeeze."

lawyers

Heredity: The child's "inner" environment:"

May account for similarities of children in a family.

Frequently used as a rationale for behavior (pessimistic approach often).

Given the potential, but one must "potentiate" to use it.

Whole potential is seldom used.

"Organ inferiority" (hereditary weakness), provides choices of adaptation:

The child may give up functioning in that area.

May overcompensate for deficiency in that area.

May go around and compensate in another area.

Family Atmosphere: The climate of the home:

May account for similarities of children in a family, but they may respond in differing ways.

Relationship between the parents becomes the basis for the atmosphere.

Competition vs. Cooperation

Attitudes toward their sex roles

Domination/submission

Order vs. Chaos

Mutual respect vs. "smother love"

Ambitions of the parents for the children.

Conformity or creativeness stressed?

Are members of the family encouraged to "be oneself" or to "put up a front" and cover up one's true feelings?

Is humiliation used, or are family members treated as one's friends?

Are high standards stressed?

Family Values: What is important?

A family value is defined as something that is important to both parents whether they agree or not. Family values cannot be ignored: each child in the family must take a stand.

Child may conform or rebel.

Child may side with one parent against the other if they disagree.

Child cannot remain neutral.

Conforming children usually accept the family values and make them their own.

Rebellious children "kick" the family values, since they realize these are the sensitive areas where parents are vulnerable.

Overambitious children mimic these values and become superior to the parents in following them.

Common family values: education, money, sports, health, honesty, success, conformity, religion, communication, taking care of others, etc.

Family traditions and history, family mottoes may also be significant.

Guiding Lines: The models of the parents or other significant adults:

The models that the parents present act as "drawing power" to the child.

From his or her parents the child forms a concept of what it means to be a man, a woman.

Child observes how they behave in certain ways, their attitudes, what kinds of behavior seems to be effective, etc.

Some children choose to "model" one parent; some may select what seems to be the best of the attributes of both parents; some may model the opposite of a parent.

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Family Constellation: The interaction between members of the family:

- The child's family is the first social world the child knows.
- The interaction between members of the family is the most significant contribution to the formation of personality.
- More important than what the interaction is, is how each child feels about it.

EXERCISE

Hand write you answers on your printout – we will go over this in our conference call. You do not need to submit this to your mentor. This is for your file.

Directions: For each of the following parent behaviors below, decide which injunction (stopper) is being communicated and then write the appropriate letter in the blank.

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. Don't exist! | g. Don't be you! |
| b. Don't belong! | h. Don't be a child! |
| c. Don't think! | i. Don't grow up! |
| d. Don't feel! | j. Don't be well! Or sane! |
| e. Don't! | k. Don't succeed! |
| f. Don't be important! | l. Don't be close! |

- ___ 1. Pay attention to the child primarily when she's being "adorable".
- ___ 2. Pay attention to the child only when he escalates feelings and behaviors.
- ___ 3. Parents never have a fight or argue in front of the children.
- ___ 4. Child is patted on head when he is being quiet and is otherwise ignored.
- ___ 5. Mother says repeatedly, "You're too much for me!"
- ___ 6. Rejecting father says sarcastically to son, "How is mother's little helper today?"
- ___ 7. Mother is pregnant and doesn't tell the child.
- ___ 8. Mother presents self as helpless and needy.
- ___ 9. Older children view their aging mother's "newborn" as an embarrassment to the family.
- ___ 10. As training for manhood, father shakes hands with infant son and never hugs or kisses him.
- ___ 11. Mother laughs at child's recurring clumsiness and ineptness.
- ___ 12. Daughter gets special treatment only when she's not feeling well.
- ___ 13. Son is told repeatedly, "Children should be seen and not heard."
- ___ 14. Mother becomes anxious when the child displays any autonomous behavior.

Directions: Identify the counter-injunctions (drivers) inherent in each example below. Place the appropriate letter in the blank.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. Please me! | d. Hurry up! |
| b. Try hard! | e. Be strong! |
| c. Be perfect! | |

- ___ 15. Louise begins the counseling session by saying, "I've got so much to tell you and there's so little time" and begins reporting on her week-long experiences in staccato-like fashion.
- ___ 16. Joe has shed no tears since his father's recent death. His words belie the hint of sadness in his eyes as he talks about how good it feels not to have "the old bastard" around.
- ___ 17. Aurelia, who characteristically talks in loud and rapid voice, is speaking in soft, measured tones while watching her therapist carefully.
- ___ 18. "Yeah, I did a lot of good things for myself this week. I set the alarm and got myself up in time for work every morning, I kept all my appointments, I got my assignments in on time. I even took time out for myself - - playing tennis and taking my girl out to the movies. The one thing I didn't do was spend more time with the kids which I promised myself I would do."
- ___ 19. Client is sitting in a tense position on the edge of her chair, struggling to explain what she wants from the session.