



CHECK AND APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Define and explain *flexibility*.
2. Explain proactive approaching.
3. Ferrari (2010), in *Still Procrastinating? The No Regrets Guide to Getting It Done*, would like to see a general cultural shift from punishing procrastination to rewarding the “early bird.” The author proposed, among other things, that the federal government and other agencies give financial incentives to those who do things (such as paying taxes) early, long before the deadlines. Discuss whether this strategy could reduce procrastination or would just reward the people who are too anxious and do everything very early.
4. In one of the most famous plays by Shakespeare, the main character Hamlet posed probably the most frequently quoted question: “To be or not to be?” In the monologue that followed, he complained about life’s pains and unfairness yet was also afraid that the alternative, which is suicide, might be worse. What kind of coping was Hamlet choosing from?
5. Define *adjustment disorder*.
6. Explain burnout.
7. Have you ever experienced burnout? How did you cope with it?

SELF-REFLECTION

The Drama of the Gifted Child by Alice Miller (1994) put forward a controversial hypothesis: Many professional psychotherapists are likely to be narcissistic. They do not become narcissistic after they become professionals—quite the contrary, she writes. Many individuals seek degrees in psychology because of childhood experiences that make them narcissistic.

Imagine, she argues, a mother who is emotionally insecure, weak, or desperate, yet who always tries to appear confident, independent, and strong. This mother has a child who is sensitive and smart and who is capable of understanding her or his mother’s struggles. The child wants to help and thus develops sensitivity to the needs of the mother and other people. The child earns a good reputation for helping others. Unlike business, such amateur “psychological practices” generate no money; however, they bring approval from others. The child, a teenager now, becomes a home-grown “therapist” and feels important. He or she now seeks people’s praise. That is why many of these children later choose psychology as a profession. To them, Alice Miller argues, psychological practice is about much more than money. Helping other people with their emotional issues feeds the psychologists’ childhood narcissism—the desire to maintain a good image of self and feel special.

Questions

As a high school student, were you ever asked to help other people with their emotional problems? Did you enjoy helping or guiding others? What is the difference between (1) enjoying every opportunity to help another person and (2) having narcissistic features?