

Eva Dreikurs Ferguson

The 42nd Adler/Dreikurs Summer Institute, known as ICASSI, had participants from 21 Countries: Israel, India, Japan, Malta, Turkey (where Jane's roommates were from), Germany, Switzerland, Ireland, Netherlands, Finland, UK, Canada, Uruguay, USA, Italy, Puerto Rico, Spain, the Bahamas, Romania, and Hungary. Having folks representing this many countries with participants coming from many work settings that included university professors and counseling professionals, was a dream come true for Eva Dreikurs Ferguson, whose father, Rudolph Dreikurs had established ICASSI in 1962. The lectures were presented in English and translated into German by the able, Doris Voss, each morning.

Fittingly enough, the first morning lecture was provided by Eva Dreikurs Ferguson herself on the human being as a WHOLE BEING, not divided into "good self/bad self" as we see in the cartoons. Our attitudes, emotions, and motivations are all goal directed. Counselors mentally ask "What was the purpose of this action or emotion?" Clients/individuals often don't know or are unaware of the goal of their behavior. We can learn what our goals and purposes are and therefore what other's goals are. Isn't this a positive, useful concept? Human beings can figure out what they are up to and decide if it is useful to them or not. Then, the joy of it all is that they

can change their behavior if it is not working for them. Solutions to their challenges would be helpful rather than harmful to themselves and others.

One of the cornerstones of Adlerian/Dreikursian psychology is Social Interest, succinctly defined as an individuals' need to belong and contribute. Eva Dreikurs Ferguson pointed out that Social Interest very much influences our BIOLOGICAL processes. She cited research indicating that although our genes represent our heredity, whether or not the genes "find expression" depends on many factors, including our psychological processes. Just because we have genetic predisposition (leanings) does not mean our genes automatically exert their influence. She also described research results that showed what many have long known: That exercise is not only good for our bodies but it is also good for our minds!! How about that!! And here's another provocative thought one's attitudes and beliefs can influence one's body, and the body can influence one's mind. Now we are back to the introduction which stated that human beings are whole persons, not divided. This is referred to in Adlerian/Dreikursian psychology as the concept of "holism." Obviously, Jane was fascinated with the concepts presented in the lecture and found that they resonated in her brain (and body).