



of SOCIAL INTEREST

Newsletter of the Adlerian Network of Ireland Ltd.

Resource Centre, Kickham Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.

AUTUMN 2011

Editorial

Welcome to the autumn edition of the Adlerian Newsletter. This edition contains information on the upcoming events of the Adlerian Network.

Firstly is the Autumn workshop entitled 'The Skill of Encouragement.' This workshop will be facilitated by Catherine Ann O'Connell and will focus on the use of encouragement for personal growth and to improve relationships and will take place on 19th November.

There are also articles on some of the fantastic workshops that took place at this year's Adlerian Summer School. The articles review these workshops that ranged from grief/loss to spirituality to self care.

We are very grateful to all the people who took the time to contribute articles for this edition. Their articles highlight what a positive experience the Summer School is for one and all.

Further news, at this years AGM Karen Molan was elected Chairperson, Eileen Graham was elected as Secretary and Margret Gubbins as Treasurer. Cora Gentles stepped down as Chairperson but remains on as a Director as does Dave Cantwell.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and should you seek any further information or wish to comment on any aspect of the newsletter, please contact us at:

The Adlerian Network of Ireland Ltd.,
Resource Centre, Kickham Street,
Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

Phone: 086-3989513
info@adler.ie
or check out our website
www.adler.ie

Spirituality During Difficult Times

I am the 'newbie', a newcomer to Adlerian thought and to theories of counselling and psychotherapy in general. By chance, I heard about the Adlerian Summer School in Clonmel and applied for a place on the Art Therapy Course, which I hoped might be a gentle way to begin experiential work. Consequently, when the Art Therapy course was cancelled due to the lecturer's illness, Peggy Pelonis's course "Spirituality During Difficult Times" was a random second choice.

Peggy based her course on the tree of life, specifically the tree of our own lives that she asked each member of the class to draw. Then she asked us to write a short story about our lives, give it a title and a beginning, consider themes, what important points to highlight and what we would prefer people not to know. Then we were given a partner (the person next to us, who could have been anyone) and at different stages in four day course we ran our stories and themes past one another and gave feedback. The title of our story became the title of our tree of life. Our earliest memories and relationships were noted at the roots and as we filled in details higher up the tree we moved closer to the present time.

It will be no surprise to students of Adler that during this process, evidence of powerful patterns of behaviour emerged, but for me it was disconcerting. Suddenly, I could clearly see how my life has been ruled by behaviour I developed as a result of childhood experiences. I was shocked. Each member of the class was an exceptional empathic individual but I was fortunate that my partner for feedback was able to ask gentle questions and reflect back to me insights that otherwise I might not have grasped.

I found the experiential part of the workshop extremely gruelling. Nevertheless, it helped me realise how universal a great deal of suffering is. That realisation, combined with the prayers and insights I learned during the course of the workshop, has helped me become a more compassionate and able listener. I understand much better how empathy can help people gain insight into their problems so that they can release their resistance and experience more love and trust. Peggy also encouraged us to define our goals, a surprising experience that gave me a great target to aim for.

I did not choose Peggy Pelonis's course. I was not in search of a full-blooded experiential workshop. I did not choose the members of the class. Yet the course gave me just what I needed, when I needed it. I have come away as a more self-accepting and compassionate person, with a growing interest in Adlerian thought. His shrewd observation that the impressions of "earliest infancy will colour [the subject's] attitude towards life and determine in a rudimentary way their view of the world, their cosmic philosophy" (1) is not just a brilliant insight, it makes absolute sense.

Alison Broder

(1) "Understanding Human Nature – Alfred Adler on the psychology of human personality", pages 74-75, One World Oxford, printed in the UK by Lightening Source UK Ltd after 2003.

Clonmel 2011

We very frequently find, for example that Doctors were confronted with the realities of death quite early in their childhood. Death was the aspect of human insecurity that made the greatest impression on them. Perhaps a sibling or parent died and their later training developed towards finding a way for themselves and others, of feeling more secure against death.
Alfred Adler

It's a bird, it's a plane, no it's Wes, a tall and affable gentleman from Nebraska whom I first got to meet three years ago in Clonmel and ever since I have since found his work refreshing, purely Adlerian and extremely effective. If I were to ask Pat to describe the course he may say "This is the third time I have attended a WW course and quite honestly there is nothing else that I would rather do, it's just so honest, informative inspiring and so easy to apply in work and life". If I were to ask Wes to describe this years course he would unselfishly hope I mention the group who kindly attended with dignity and courage supporting each other and welcoming the wisdom in the hope that it will one day help us as individuals, the community we live and those we love. Wes has created an enormous amount of effort into presenting his work in a simple and digestible way, a sprinkling of art, a touch of story telling, some added theory with a pinch of principle - a master chef amongst the diners of Adlerian and counselling cuisine.

Story telling plays an important role in helping children understand.

Chicken soup was served - a wonderful spirit lifting childrens book written by Patricia Polacco and read by Wes in that unmistakable passionate voice. The author says she's a believer in the "unbiased common good we have for each other as human beings. No doubt the author will agree with Adler on his principles:

We are all social beings

We are creative and self determining decision makers, responsible for our thoughts, feelings and behavior.

Based on our perception of self, others and the world we are subjective beings.

We are holistic, a combination of body and mind, cognition, behavior and emotion in our movement through life.

Work, friendship and intimacy encompass the tasks of life.

In life we look for what is useful, failing this we sometimes trip into the useless side of life.

Encouragement is essential in life, focus on strengths, assets and contribution.

Develop community feeling.

Another day begins, another story - Nancy Woods "Old Coyote" – simple beauty which tells the story of an old creature's last day. "Old Coyote's muzzle is turning white, and his steps are slow. He spends most of his time basking in the sun and remembering. Chasing rabbits, raising pups with Mrs. Coyote, gathering with his friends on the mountain and howling at the moon — it's been a long, full life, and he's grateful for it. But could it be time for him to take one last journey?"

And now some time to develop our own life story. We were given an opportunity to skip on a tram and journey tracks from the past that intersection life's losses including death, illness, a home, a love, a parent leaving, a dream or a job that did not work out. The process developed day by day with some extremely moving and thought inspiring lifestyle questioning:

What happened in life, in childhood or teens that you were not adequately prepared for?

Was there something you needed from others that you may or may not have received?

As you moved through the process – who was helpful and in what way?

What qualities do you admire in an influential figure that has passed away?

We spoke of courage;

Being courageous can mean the following:

Facing up to life's swings between joy and sorrow

Standing up to even the greatest difficulty, looking at it critically and trying to overcome it

Overcoming obstacles is one of the most important tasks in life. Taking responsibility for ones actions and accepting their consequences is personal courage or having the courage of ones own convictions and nothing to do with masculinity or femininity.

Tolerating criticism (not easy because of our tendency to become defensive).

Admitting our mistakes without feeling humiliated. Many admit mistakes but feel humiliated.

Only when we can overcome this humiliation and accept that nobody is perfect can we claim to be reasonably courageous.

Be flexible, adaptable and sensitive to the situations and conditions on hand, this is a most important aspect of human development.

Prepare to risk becoming unpopular rather than just conform to being a group that is not moving in the right direction.

Be able to cope with oneself rather than always having to burden others.

Erik Blumenthal 98

A big thanks to Nigel and his two sons whose spirit in the face of tragedy inspired us all.

Another tale, Leo Buscaglias wonderfully wise and strikingly simple story of a leaf named Freddie. How Freddie and his companion leaves change with the passing seasons, finally falling to the ground with a winters snow, an inspiring tale illustrating the delicate balance between life and death.

The artistry in the book was seconded only by our group members sketching and coloring, doodling our early memories. Some contributed further with poetry and art work...ga raibh maith agat Sinead

And finally..To summarize the week workshop we sought resolution in the perceptions that sprouted from the suggestions within our lifestyle questions. To find an answer we look within the decisions that were provoked by the challenges, we analyzed the results and decided which shoots were healthy and which were not so healthy. Time to reflect now, take time out to make space in your thoughts for these responses and how they may benefit a useful and co-operative society.

Ladybug teaches life is short and it teaches to let go of ones' worries and fears, to trust in spirit and enjoy life. It brings the gifts of renewal and regeneration. The message of the Ladybug could be asking you to "Let go and let God".

Prepared by Eugene Murphy August 2011

Poems

I looked upon my garden,
and I couldn't help but frown
To see the sad Autumnal leaves
so swiftly whirling down.
I thought of all the sweeping up,
and grumbled loud and long,
And then I paused a moment,
For I realised I was wrong.
For should the trees not shed their leaves
that surely would deny
The sight of graceful Winter boughs
beneath a frosty sky.
And oh, I'd miss the Springtime buds
in every woodland glade,
And in the heat of Summer,
how I'd miss their dappled shade.
So let the leaves keep drifting down,
My grumbles you won't hear,
For leaves are things of beauty, yes-
Whatever time of year.
Margaret Ingall

My optimism disappeared
For just a little while,
The World had lost its wonder
The sun forgot to smile.
I felt a disappointment
With people, places, things,
And I forgot the cheerfulness
A bright new morning brings.

I looked at those around me,
Who bore a heavy load,
And knew that I was fortunate
To walk a smoother road.
And I have the faith and hope and love
All these I never doubt,
My optimism has returned
And now the sun's come out!
Iris Hesselden

The Beautiful World

By Margaret Ingall

This world's so full of beauty
Don't pass it by each day
Ignoring all the wonders
Beside you on your way

The dancing days of Springtime
The Summer's comely face
The burnished gold of Autumn
The Winter's silver grace

These are the gifts of glory
Bestowed with loving care
So STOP and see the beauty
That's here for all to share

Membership of the Adlerian Network of Ireland Ltd.

Please fill in the form below if you would like to become a member of the Adlerian Network of Ireland Limited. This network is based on the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler.

Benefits of Membership

- You receive notification of all Adlerian workshops and meetings.
- You get a discount on all workshops that you attend.
- You receive two newsletters a year (Autumn & Spring) with interesting articles and information in relation to Adlerian events.
- You support the Adlerian Network of Ireland.

Adlerian Network of Ireland Limited (Launched in 1994)

Aims

To advance public awareness and professional interest in the work of Alfred Adler.

To teach individuals, groups and families effective ways of living cooperatively together.

To develop training programs that encourage high standards of practice.

To promote a forum for the holding of lectures, seminars, meetings and training courses which will enhance the aims and objectives of the A.N.I.

To facilitate communication and the exchange of ideas between the many individuals and groups in Ireland who are interested in Adlerian Theory and Practice.

Application Form for Membership of the Adlerian Network of Ireland Ltd.

**(Membership is €30 and is valid until the 30th of
June each year)**
BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

*Enclose subscription of €30 and send to: The Secretary, Adlerian
Network of Ireland Limited, Resource Centre, Kickham Street,
Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.
Phone: 086-3989513*

Membership Type New: Renewal:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

An Adlerian Approach to Self Care

I have been a nurse for 30 years part of a caring profession for along period of time. It is amazing then that during those years and during my year's teachings Nursing Students and Support Staff that the value of caring in a compassionate way for oneself receives little emphasis. I have been surprised by this for sometime and consistently try and approach the topic when ever I can get an opportunity with students and colleagues. For many years to care for one's self was not considered with respect and positive enlightenment. Others come first always and caring for your self did not sit so nobly in society and in particular amongst the caring professionals. However as with many of us there are life's changes personal illness or circumstances with loved one's which will bring us back to the heart of compassion. In the transition and adaptation one explores how to heal the broken spirit and find hope and resilience to continue. I had for sometime heard of this magnificent Adlerian summer school and when I noted one of the modules called – "An Adlerian approach to self care" I decided to enrol. Attracted too by the tutor of that module, Mary Mulcahy and her established links with Tipperary Institute of Technology, so off I went.

Alfred Adlers individual psychology is a dynamic holistic and insightful model as it regards people as "human becomings" understanding people on their particular paths through life and of course above all believes that each human being is a unity of mind, body and spirit and therefore unique. I was indeed taken by the belief of Adlerians that the attitude of the individual to life events is more important than the event itself. Now I was really interested how could I use these principles to consciously care for myself in away that would re-evaluate my life style and facilitate the changes in awareness to ensure life choices that nurture and support.

During the weekend I did indeed come to understand the context of not only the five but two additional tasks of Adlerian principles which encourage 'peace within' for myself, 'peace between' in my relationships, 'peace among' in my community and finally 'peace beyond' in a spiritual way. We all seek what is familiar and comfortable and seemingly safe but it is important to go through the chaos of life changes be it illness, separation, crisis because through it we grow. How we cope with this brings resilience as the changes we choose or the changes that take us by surprise i.e. grief, loss, separation, illness will all test our personal coping skills. Each of us has a personal style of coping and at many stages in our lives we are moving from coping well to not coping and many variations in between as life changes occur planned or unplanned. Alfred Adler said that each one of us is comforted by three major life tasks. How we approach these tasks is what is important for us to know. The main life tasks are – Work and Career, - Friendships and Social Connections – Love and Intimacy. However there where a further two added after Adlers writings where – Spirituality and – Self Care, all of these are affected by changes or events in our lives and kinships.

In order then to survive and flourish we need to know the four C's, be **Connected** to have a place to belong, we need to be **Capable** to believe that I can do it. To **Count** and be able to make a difference. Finally to have **Courage** that I can handle what comes. In a nutshell we need to take responsibility own it, name it, problem solve around the issues and always care for yourself in the crisis and eventually let it go with peace in our hearts. I always loved story telling and Mary Mulcahy used therapeutic stories with examples of how to create a productive analysis and respond to feelings and dilemmas. Taking time to rest, sit with the presenting issues, to meditate if it helps, to release the free

flowing energy within while using visualisations sensations and awareness to let go. The introduction of some Jungian psychology and how we as participants could use elements of the Jung's model to apply insight into everyday life was very useful. Mary had a beautiful facilitative style that explored soul and a creativity to identify present life journeys pathways forward. The module was enriching and insightful one for all. One of Mary's recommended reading books "You can heal yourself" by Louise Hay is a wordy purchase. But just to capture the spirit of the group I will quote from it as it applies to each one of us. "In the entire world there is no one else exactly like me. There are persons who have some parts like me but no one adds up exactly to me therefore everything that comes out of me is authentically mine because I alone chose. I own everything about me, my body, my mind including all my thoughts and ideas, my mistakes, failures and successes. I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive and make sense and order out of my world. I own me and therefore I engineer me. I am me and I am ok."

Thank you to my group, our facilitator Ms Mary Mulcahy and most of all to the members and organisers of the Adlerian Summer School it was truly a privilege and honour to be part of it. Do take care of yourselves there is no greater power than love which brings many blessings, so love yourself a little.

Mary Prendergast

The Adlerian Network of Ireland Autumn Workshop 2011



The Skill of Encouragement HOW TO GET THE BEST FROM YOURSELF AND OTHERS

**Saturday November 19th 2011
10:00 am - 4.00 p.m. (Registration 9.30am)
Resource Centre, Kickham St., Clonmel.**

At this workshop you will learn about Alfred Adler's concept of encouragement. According to Adlerian psychology, encouragement is the process of developing a person's inner resources and providing courage to make positive choices.

During the workshop we will use visualisation, group work, discussion and activities to explore the concept of encouragement. You will leave feeling stronger, more able to make changes, cope with life and of course feeling hugely encouraged!

The course is facilitated by Catherine-Ann O'Connell, a lecturer in Limerick Institute of Technology-Tipperary for eleven years. She is passionate about the common sense psychology of Alfred Adler and his practical ideas for improving our lives. Catherine-Ann loves working with groups and delivering empowering, fun and life-changing training.

Cost: €50 A.N.I. member / €55 non-member

**Further enquiries to 086 3989513
www.adler.ie**

"People need encouragement like plants need water"