

ICASSI 1990, Clinton, USA

The 23rd Rudolf Dreikurs Summer Institute was held in the United States of America. Between July 22 and August 3, 1990, over 300 individuals gathered to live and practise the Adlerian way of life at Hamilton College, a small liberal arts institution at Clinton in upper New York State.

Participants lived in the residence halls, ate in the cafeteria, and took part in scheduled and impromptu programs in college facilities, outside on the lawns, or in wooded areas adjacent to the campus.

A favourite of many participants was walking through Root Glen, a seven and a half acre wooded garden adjacent to the college, containing some fifty five species of trees and many kinds of shrubs, and scores of varieties of flowers. A special evening treat was the appearance of fireflies doing their mating dance.



A variety of one and two-week courses, presented in English and German, was offered to meet the diverse interests of adult participants. Choices included courses and workshops on Introductory and Advanced Adlerian theory, Practice, and Philosophy; Early Recollections; Dreams; Life Style; Encouragement; Self-awareness through Painting and the Use of Art in Counselling; Women's Issues; Psychodrama; Couples Therapy; Family Counselling; Loss, Grief, and Separation; Class Meetings; and the Democratic Classroom. There was a personal development course for youth, and a children's program.

Afternoon sessions, presented in English and German, included presentations and demonstrations on the variety of ways in which social interest may be developed and practised in schools, in counselling, and in international relations. Evening sessions provided opportunities to participate and enjoy social interest through cooperative games; social and folk dancing; classical music; and a farewell dinner and celebration.

Participants had numerous options for activities within driving distance during the middle weekend. Many travelled to the Thousand Lakes area or to Niagara Falls, while others visited craft fairs, experienced a renaissance festival, toured the Baseball Hall of



Fame, or created their own unique adventures.

The value of the two-week experience provided all participants with the opportunity to contribute their unique life style, perspective, and understanding of social interest with others in an accepting environment. Each participant was provided with unlimited opportunity to reach out and connect with other like-minded individuals, to recognize similar interests and strengths, and to experience Adlerian principles and philosophy in action.

It was a time and place in which everyone could feel free to share themselves and to enjoy being and doing, alone or together, in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.

Personal memories include morning walks around the track, down unexplored paths in the woods, or through Root Glen; impromptu waltzes in the hall before breakfast; choosing to share meals with different participants and to eat all the yoghurt and ice cream one wanted; singing a duet during classical night; and an impromptu group “sing-along” that unfolded one evening with Richard Kopp.

Other memories include the close connection developed in Kirsten Sonstegard’s psychodrama class, and the sensitivity and compassion that evolved in Claire Hawes’ couples counselling class.

An event that most exemplified the ICASSI experience was living one of Dreikurs’ insights. A participant wrote: “Thus it was that I chose to show up at the farewell dinner celebration, trusting that I would connect with others who had also chosen not to make previous plans, and then experience the encouraging and exhilarating process of connection that just seemed to naturally unfold”.

As Dreikurs once said *“Life exists only at this moment; fulfilling life means meeting any given situation adequately.*