

Robinsons On Parallel Living Healthy is a Social Responsibility

At the Adlerian Psychology Summer Institute in Romania, Helmut Heuschen provided valuable information relating SOCIAL INTEREST to individual health. Social Interest is one of the cornerstones of Adlerian Psychology (Alfred Adler). It emphasizes the importance of each citizen of the world making a contribution to the welfare of others. Caring for others, lending a hand, making a contribution, reaching out to make the world a better place all are mentally healthy ways to give of ourselves. This is called Social Interest.

Helmut Heuschen maintains that each of us has a responsibility to live a healthy life so that we may serve others and not become a drain on the finances and time from the rest of us. Attending to health every day results in much less time spent later in illness (lost productivity and minimized happiness). Health is a life long question for all of us with many different questions and tasks.

In Helmut's native Germany, health is big business; five million citizens work in health service at a cost of 250 million Euros a year. Admirably, the government spends those Euros in prevention as well as cure!

Having made the case of healthy living, Mr. Heuschen asked: "What is the key to living health in the 21st century?" How am I at breakfast, lunch, dinner, in traffic? How do I take care of my body all through the day?

Here are the suggestions from Helmut and his panel of experts:

1. Coffee is OK if you drink no more than 2 cups a day.
2. Breathe fresh air deeply as often as you can.

3. Exercise vigorously at least 3 times a week for 30 minutes.
4. Mediate/stretch with Tai Chi/Yoga in the morning and evening.
5. Be grateful for your health care.
6. Be grateful for your health care givers.
7. Heck, be grateful. Demonstrate an “attitude of gratitude.”
8. Contribute to your family; everyone has his/her own task.

Interestingly enough, Helmut pointed out that human beings can get sick from human beings AND they can get well from human beings. He also shared this quote from Heraclitus of Ephesus: “Illness lets everybody experience the value of his own health.” Sometimes being sick is a very healthy wake up call, right?

Also, this from Giorgio Pasetti: “THE HEALTHIEST GYMNASTIC EXERCISE IS GETTING UP ON TIME FROM THE DINING TABLE.” Hear! Hear! My own dear mother always said, “The best exercise is pushing back from the table.” Maintaining a healthy weight or losing weight means consume fewer calories.

Questions for healthy persons included these:

1. People, animals and nature need unpolluted air. How do I avoid unnecessary driving?
2. I will use less water. How can I do it?
3. Plants are vitally necessary. How can I use less pesticide in my garden?
4. How can I protect the natural resources by saving energy?
5. How can I treat animals respectfully and save their surroundings?

6. How many products can I reuse, reduce, or recycle?
7. Noise creates all kinds of illness. What can I do to reduce the noise in my life?
8. I would like to move from consumer to a life protector. How can I save life and nature? What is my responsibility?
9. I accept diversity. I will deal with diversity in peaceful ways in my family, workplace, and community.
10. I have the responsibility for my own health. How many minutes per day do I spend in caring for my body? Do I get my exercise? Am I sensitive to how food and drink influence my health?

Helmut Heuschen pointed out that Alfred Adler himself described the bad influence of the poor sitting posture and unhealthy room air. A man way ahead of his time!! Rudolph Dreikurs, the great interpreter and educator of Adler's principles, said *the act of encouraging is medicine*. I love this!! I find this to be very true.

The above questions for each of us were found in an article of Environmental Initiative, an organization that was immediately founded after the nuclear accident in Chernobyl in 1986. They are relative to us today, many years afterward.

Helmut a "walked the talk," as we say. He offered exercise to any of the participants who would invest in their health to join him early each morning in the alpine village of Poina-Brasov, Romania during the ICASSI experience. The research and encouragement he offered in the lecture series was timely and welcomed.