

ICASSI Summer Institute 2012

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2012's ICASSI Summer Institute was in the peaceful town of Druskininkai in Lithuania. Being there for the full two weeks I was able to experience the learning, personal development and camaraderie that go hand in hand at this most international of gatherings. I would like to offer my personal experience of this year's institute and hope to convey what ICASSI offers for attendees.

The ICASSI Summer Institute was established in 1962 by Rudolf Dreikurs, a younger contemporary of Alfred Adler. It provides training and experiential learning for professionals, individuals, couples, and families over a two-week period each summer. Both the faculty and attendees are diversely international, and it is fitting that the location of the Summer Institute finds itself in a different country each year.



*Opening Plenary
Photo: Magnus Irvine*

The principles of Adlerian-Dreikursian Psychology are lived in these two weeks and I always come away from the Summer Institute with a head-full of ideas, a renewed passion for my work and studies, and

encouragement a-plenty. The latter may be from my participation in Yvonne Schürer's workshop "Enhancing Social Interest" which focused on improving empathy between counsellor and client and encouraging each person's interest in the interest of others. There are several techniques I have been able to take from this workshop and use in my client work.

The weekdays at ICASSI begin with a morning plenary and then the option of an all day workshop or two half-day workshops. Each workshop and each facilitator has so much to offer that I came away feeling next year I will still be spoilt for choice. Eva Dreikurs-Ferguson's 'Individual Psychology in the Workplace' is an eye opener and every year I attend I see more and more applications of Individual Psychology in democratic problem solving and the necessity to identify the actual problem from both points of view. Frank Walton's 'Family Counselling' plenary showed, through live case studies, how direct and effective the Adlerian approach is in understanding and working with family dynamics. There are many more workshops and plenaries I could write about, each one offering a unique view of the application and understanding of Adlerian-Dreikursian Psychology.

The evenings were also packed, with Special Interest sessions, where ideas and experiences were offered by participants and facilitators alike, cultural events, with some excellent participative folk dancing, auctions to raise money for the scholarship fund, and entertainment nights where all and sundry



*Lithuanian Folk Dancing
Photo: Magnus Irvine*

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strutted their stuff (myself included).

At the weekend there were a variety of excursions on offer or a nice town to look around. I chose to stay in Druskininkai where there were a lot of activities to partake in – zip-lining across a very wide river, bungee jumping, bike rides through the forest, swimming, even skiing!

I came back to the UK looking forward to next summer and the chance to make more new friends and have more new experiences.

Next year's summer institute is in Wageningen in the Netherlands (July 21st – August 3rd, 2013) and is therefore a lot more accessible from the UK. In 2014 it will be in Kent, so even easier. Hopefully see some of you next year.

More information about what ICASSI offers can be found on:
www.icassi.net



*Gathering for a Group Photo
Photo: Magnus Irvine*