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**Plenary Power Point for Presentation
at ICASSI July 24th**

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Meaningfulness

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What's it all about, Alfie?

Burt Bacharach/Hal David sung by Dionne Warwick

- ▶ What's it all about, Alfie?
Is it just for the moment we live?
What's it all about when you sort it out, Alfie?
Are we meant to take more than we give
Or are we meant to be kind?
And if only fools are kind, Alfie
Then I guess it is wise to be cruel
And if life belongs only to the strong, Alfie
What will you lend on an old golden rule?
As sure as I believe there's a heaven above, Alfie
I know there's something much more,
Something even non-believers can believe in
- ▶ I believe in love, Alfie
Without true love we just exist, Alfie
Until you find the love you've missed you're nothing, Alfie
When you walk let your heart lead the way
And you'll find love any day, Alfie, Alfie



What is it all about, Alfred?

- ▶ How do we develop a sense of meaning?
- ▶ Is it in suffering? Is it work?
- ▶ Is it through overcoming? Overcoming what? Mental illness? A mountain or river? Death? A disability?
- ▶ Is it in getting? Taking? Possessing? Manipulating? Controlling? Conquering? Through sexual exploits?
- ▶ Through joining a religion or making a social contribution?



No Need for Directions if We Don't
Know Where We Are Going



OK, we're not all sailors

- ▶ Who or what serves as our guiding light?
- ▶ Parents
- ▶ Siblings
- ▶ Television, media, and video games, etc.
- ▶ Grandparents and relatives
- ▶ Churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and their programs
- ▶ Teachers and other children at school

Most of this leads to “normal” behavior

- ▶ Normal behavior means acceptance of certain, more or less specific, ethical values which influence, direct and motivate behavior. An adult person confronted by a situation which requires choice and decision has to be guided by an evaluation of the consequences of his or her decision. Insofar as these consequences involve other persons, ethical values become indispensable if harm to others or to oneself is to be avoided.

(Papanek, H., 1957, p. 160)

Conflicting Social Values

Societal - “And if only fools are kind, Alfie”	Adler’s
Competition	Cooperation
Rugged Individualism	Altruism and ideals of unselfish love
Strength as Self-Assertion or prestige, outsmarting others (to not be a sucker or sissy)	Equality, honesty and mutual helpfulness; the desire to be useful
Movement on the vertical plane	Movement on the horizontal plane - equality
Masculine ideal	Humaneness - better human beings
Hostility	Compassion
Distrust, Suspicion	Confidence in others
Fear	Courage

Gemeinschaftsgefühl is the goal

- ▶ Social interest - a person's awareness of belonging in the human community and the cosmos of which it is a part
- ▶ ... means *feeling with the whole, sub specie aeternitatis*, under the aspect of eternity.
- ▶ It is never a present-day community or society nor a political or religious organization, but a goal, an ideal always beckoning and pointing the way..
- ▶ Mankind ... can bring its task closer to a solution only if the bodily and psychological welfare of all is taken as an unalterable factor in the accounting of life." S&SI, p. 279-280



“We are not driven by the past, we are lured by the future” (Linden)

- ▶ Adlerian psychology is an optimistic psychology, a psychology of encouragement.
- ▶ It is also a teleological psychology - all behavior is goal directed.
- ▶ Where we come from is not as important as where we are going. Whence is interesting and useful but whither is decisive. (G. W. Linden)

What's it all about Alfie?

- ▶ Work, communal living, and sex (intimacy)
 - ▶ Goal is continuation of life itself
- ▶ Gemeinschaftsgefühl and Social Interest enable one to perform the tasks of life consistent with the development of that “ideal community”

Gemeinschaftsgefühl – Community Feeling

- ▶ A person's awareness of belonging in the human community and the cosmos of which it is a part
- ▶ An understanding of his/her responsibility for the way the life of the community is shaped by his/her actions
- ▶ The more developed the Community Feeling, the more diminished the inferiority feeling with its associated sense of alienation and isolation

So, Enough Theory – Let's Practice

- ▶ 1. Stand up and take your chair to the side of the room - don't be afraid to ask someone near you if you can help them
- ▶ 2. Form two circles – an inner circle and an outer circle



Mill about and find partner – Each sentence begins with:

- ▶ One of my guiding stars was . . . *(say good-bye and mill again and find a new partner – do this after each exchange)*
- ▶ What I want from Week 2 of ICASSI is . . .
- ▶ What I need from Week 2 of ICASSI is . . .
- ▶ What I do for creating meaning in my life is . . . Or I create meaning by . . .
- ▶ I am a guiding star for . . .