***“WHAT’S THE STORY?”: LIFE STYLE NARRATIVES STUDY GROUP***

(an affiliate of the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology [NASAP])

**HAPPY NEAR YEAR!**

Summary of our December 11, 2022, meeting:

**BAH, HUMBUG: Life Style Interpretations**

**(1 Holocaust Survivor; 2 Sons of Nazis)!**

**But first:**

Thank you, all – from across the nation! – who zoomed-in to our December meeting. And thank you, all, who wanted but couldn’t (you can still join us for our **Sunday, February 12, 2023**, meeting, which coincides with Adler’s birthday [the 7th], Rudolph Dreikurs’ birthday [the 9th], Valentine’s Day [the 14th], and U.S. Presidents Day [the 20th]. Watch our emails or check out our website for more information).

And a special thank you to Natalia who emailed us after our meeting from Ukraine, apologizing that she couldn’t participate because of a blackout. (That should get us thinking “What can we do to spread ~~cheer~~ Social Interest beyond this holiday season?”)

**Check us out!**

[**https://www.whatsthestory.online/**](https://www.whatsthestory.online/)

***What’s the Story?*** is a book club with a twist in which we “string together” a person’s Early Recollections (ERs, or perceived important memories) into a kind of short story, then apply literary methods, such as those endorsed by The Great Books Foundation, to interpret it.

**Summary of December 11 meeting:** Well, we weren’t able to interpret the ERs of the sons of Nazis, as had been announced, because we spent the whole meeting discussing the Family Constellation and ERs of “Ira” (not his real name), a Holocaust survivor!

They were that fascinating!

The backstory: a couple of us *What’s the Story* regulars were in an adult education course with Ira. The course focused on the Polish Jewish attorneys who had originated, just before and during World War II, the now established international legal terms “crimes against humanity” and “genocide” (yes, at first they were not widely accepted). The course also contrasted their lives and careers with the big-wig Nazi attorneys whom Hitler had appointed to govern their homeland during the Nazi occupation and who were, thus, complicit in carrying out the Holocaust (i.e., the Jewish genocide).

Should we be surprised that three of the above four attorneys went to the same top law school! And knew each other – or at least had met?! (Shades of all the Trumper and anti-Trumper attorneys and congress-folk who went to Harvard and Yale!)

When the course’s text and a film that was shown revealed the ERs of the two sons who had been interviewed about their notorious Nazi fathers, the *What’s the Story-ites* commented on the significance of ERs. Ira laughingly said he didn’t believe anything psychology has to offer! So, with his approval, we conducted a short Life Style interview with him. (Ira, 85, is one of the youngest Holocaust survivors; roughly the same age as the sons of the Nazis, he was born in Poland in 1937 and survived in Soviet Kazakhstan where his family had fled. Note: on September 15, 2019, *What’s the Story* focused on three “sets” of ERs that a Holocaust survivor had given over a 20 year period.)

And how did we interpret Ira’s Life Style? Well, we surmised that he was simply enacting his Life Style in class! His themes, as reflected in his ERs and descriptions of himself and other family members (Family Constellation), showed him doubting or questioning authority – or those whom he perceived had authority – and calling attention to himself.

Well, he had described himself growing up as a “smart aleck”!

And the first ER that Ira related even had him admitting that, gee, “That could be one of the reasons I became a mathematician”! (He has a Ph.D. and was a university professor.) In his own words, since *What’s the Story* is adamant that ERs be written down or recorded precisely as the person relates it – not as an interviewer or clinician remembers it (often wrongly and according to his/her/its/their bias):

I attended regular (Polish) school. And there was an hour devoted to catechism, the Catholic training with a priest. (The priest) said I couldn’t take it because I was Jewish. A teacher knowing that I was not of that faith took me out or took me with her as she was teaching mathematics in that hour. … She struck me as very beautiful. … She impressed me very much.

We – and especially he – roared with laughter, understanding its “guiding” significance.

He wasn’t really a “Bah Humbug” after all!

**Our December meeting was an out of sequence meeting.** We had planned to meet four times a year: in February, May, August, and November – on the first or second Sunday of those months. However, because of our “double” meeting in August and September (“live” Life Style interview in August, group interpretation in September), which kind of “excised’ our November meeting, we decided to have one more meeting before 2022 ends. Confused? Don’t be! Click on “Past Meetings” for explanations (and more examples of what we do – that is, group interpretations of Life Styles!).

**Our next meeting will be February, 12, 2023**, which coincides with the birthdays of

Alfred Adler (the 7th), his disciple Rudolph Dreikurs (the 8th), U.S. Presidents Abraham Lincoln (12th; also, Super Bowl Football Sunday) and George Washington (22nd ; the actual U.S. holiday is the 20th), and Valentine’s Day (14th). Who knew that the shortest month of the year (February) has all these celebrations! It’s also African American Heritage Month!

**In past Februarys, we’ve interpreted the Life Styles of Adler, Freud, Jung, Dreikurs, even a couple (remember, it’s Valentine’s Day month. We interpreted Lincoln’s ERs one November for our 2022 election meeting – along with Trump’s, LBJ’s, Jefferson’s, J. Q. Adam’s, and Grant’s). What should we do this year? Send in your suggestions:**

**We have a big Mother’s Day event planned: yes, Life Styles of Mothers and Daughters!**

Contact Les White for more information: [leswhitechicago@gmail.com](mailto:leswhitechicago@gmail.com), <https://www.whatsthestory.online/>

**FEBRUARY 12 ZOOM MEETING:**

[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86399840320?pwd=RnpYRHZ2S2k1VlZyYlo4Zzh2MUtVUT09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86399840320?pwd=RnpYRHZ2S2k1VlZyYlo4Zzh2MUtVUT09)

(passcode, if necessary: 175908)

meeting should last up to 1 ½ hours

(1:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (Chicago/Toronto); 2:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time/New York; 12:00 p.m. Mountain Standard Time/Denver; 11:00 a.m. Pacific/Los Angles; 7 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time/London; 8 p.m. Central European Time/Paris, Warsaw).

