***“What’s the Story?”: Life Style Narratives Study Group***

Next meeting: Sunday, May 14, 2023 (Mother’s Day), over zoom

Life Styles of a Mother and her Daughter

Continue scrolling for more information!

*What’s the Story?* endorses the collection and group interpretation of Life Style material (Early Recollections/ERs and Family Constellations/FCs).

**We’re a book club with a twist**, “stringing together” a person’s ERs into a kind of short story. (The FC, or descriptions of self and family members, serves as a “cast of characters”). By applying literary interpretive methods, such as those endorsed by The Great Books Foundation, we sharpen our listening and assessment skills.

Check us out!

We’re a NASAP affiliate – and FREE

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

We meet four times a year over zoom (February, May, August, November).

**Continue scrolling down for a summary of our February 12, 2023, meeting in which we matched the Life Styles of pioneering Adlerians Rudolph and Tee Dreikurs.**

**Join us for our Mother’s Day meeting on Sunday, May 14, 2023, in which we will compare the Life Styles of a Mother and her daughter:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82163896315?pwd=eTFIbEdVVm1pMGYvWXArZEtWNlRHUT09>

if passcode is needed: 226460

meeting should last up to 1 ½ hours

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

**Summary of our February 12, 2023, meeting – Rudolph and Tee Dreikurs:**

Past Februarys have seen us celebrating the birthday of Alfred Adler (February 7) by interpreting his ERs and even comparing them to those of Freud and Jung. This year, we celebrated Valentine’s Day and the February birthdays of husband-wife Adlerians Rudolph (8th) and Tee Dreikurs (28th).

A student of Adler who immigrated to Chicago in the late 1930s, Rudolph (1897-1972), was “undoubtedly the single person most responsible for the (spread) of … Individual (Adlerian) Psychology” (Raymond Corsini, 1967). Tee (1900-95), a life-long Chicagoan, pioneered the discipline of art therapy. Rudolph’s Life Style material was culled from his article, aptly titled *Guiding, Teaching, and Demonstrating: An Adlerian Autobiography* (1967), Tee’s from her memoir, *Cows Can Be Purple* (1986). The host of our zoom lives in Tee’s apartment building; the meeting included reminiscences of Tee by the building’s security and doorperson (who had once been Tee’s cleaning person!). Participants zoomed in from across the U.S. and Canada.

It was easy to deduce from Rudolph’s and Tee’s ERs and FC descriptions that both had perceived themselves growing up as deeply inferior to others, with strong goals to belong, and “stands” that they and others should be treated fairly (how Adlerian!). Both also were able to connect with others through the arts (he through music – originally because of the influences of a beloved cousin; she through painting – because of the influences of a beloved life-long friend [whom we learned would be the first woman artist hired by Walt Disney, influencing the look of such early Disney films as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* and *Fantasia*!]). Both Rudolph and Tee also found their “callings” by working with groups: he, when an adolescent, with budding socialist youth groups, then later with open family counseling sessions, which involved inviting audience members to participate in assessment and therapeutic suggestions; she by bringing groups of battling, delinquent adolescents together through art projects that gave rise to cooperation, her not expected observation, for example, that if one wanted help with a goal to paint a figure, another would offer it. As one participant mentioned this was decades before the famous social psychology Robbers Cave experiment, which saw, again, battling competitive adolescents at a summer camp helping each other when confronted with an issue that needed to be solved (in the Robbers Cave experiment, for example, the breaking down of a bus which prompted the groups to join forces to help fix it).

What was most enlightening, however, was how participants’ “reading” of the same material led to a re-evaluation of impressions. For example, whereas one participant had deduced that Tee was a “follower” and not, as she described herself, “disobedient,” and another felt that she “went along,” others saw her as “accommodating” and “accepting” of others. This difference – was she a follower, or someone who easily went along with the wants of others, or someone who accommodated or accepted others’ differences or behaviors?; what does it mean to be disobedient? – supported what Adler would do when presented with a case in front of an audience: raise questions about that person’s behaviors and goals and look for evidence and themes in what was presented. This process not only helps hone interpretive skills, it broadened our understanding of and empathy with Rudolph’s and Tee’s relationship (our reading also included Tee’s recollection of how she had met Rudolph – which gave evidence to her acceptance of his behaving like a little boy! If only we had had his recollection of how he had met her, we could have truly demonstrated couples therapy!).

As the above summary makes a case for: *What’s the Story?* emphasizes questioning or supporting one’s opinions by providing “hard” evidence from the text (our “reading”). Doing so in a cooperative, group environment not only “unpacks” the material, it enhances Life Style interpretation.

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For more information, contact Les White at leswhitechicago@gmail.com