

RUDOLF DREIKURS: A CONSENSUAL APPRECIATION
ON HIS 70TH BIRTHDAY

RAYMOND J. CORSINI

*Honolulu, Hawaii*¹

For most readers of this *Journal*, Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs, the original editor, and present member of the editorial board, needs no introduction. However, for those who are unfamiliar with him, and who may wonder about this tribute to him, a few words of explanation may be appropriate. Dr. Dreikurs, a former student and colleague of Alfred Adler, is undoubtedly the single person most responsible for the state of the practice of Individual Psychology today. He has been the indefatigable proponent of Individual Psychology via his large number of publications, and his world-wide travels and innumerable lectures and classes. He has probably had a greater personal impact on more members of the Adlerian community than any other single person.

The history of this tribute is: When the editor of this *Journal* consulted me as a former student and colleague of Dr. Dreikurs about a tribute, I suggested a collection of articles expressing the influence of Dr. Dreikurs on others. From this evolved the plan to write to the many people known to us to have been influenced by him, asking them to respond to the question: "What Dr. D. has meant to me." (Dr. D. is what most of his associates call him.) I offered to excerpt and comment on these letters for the delight of the many friends of Dr. Dreikurs and the edification of the reader who has not had the benefit of contact with this most unusual person.

Responses were received from literally around the world, and ranged from a postcard to letters of many pages. One difficulty of editing the replies was the repetitious aspect of their complimenting. Partly because we could eliminate repetition in this way, and partly for other reasons, it was decided to keep the authors of the comments anonymous. Other formats were possible, the best of which might have been simply the printing of all material received; but this would have exceeded the limits of a whole issue of this *Journal*.

¹This material has been edited and written during a visit to Burlington, Vermont, in the company of Heinz and Rowena Ansbacher, while the author was teaching an NDEA course at Rhode Island College in Providence during July and August, 1967.

It is hoped that through the schema we have used, the reader will gain a multi-faceted impression of this complex and good man, and a sense of the feeling of others for him. The reader may even be inspired by the example of what Dr. Dreikurs' main intention in life seems to be: to help others to make the fullest contribution where they uniquely belong.

IMPACT ON OTHERS: ENCOURAGEMENT

Dr. Dreikurs has had a tremendous personal impact on a great many people. He has the rare ability of making people feel important, of building them up, encouraging them, and energizing them to accomplish far more than they believed possible. I have seen him often in the process of so operating—and something special seems to emanate from him at such times. Some comments from our respondents will illustrate this phenomenon.

He has helped me to a new way of life—an understanding of myself and my fellow men. He has restored in me an acceptance of psychology as something practical and useful. I have been able to do the same for many others and they, in turn, in an ever-widening circle, effectively extend the Dreikurs influence within the community. This is perhaps the ultimate in human satisfaction. Dr. Dreikurs has significantly affected me. I can place strong faith in his ideas because I feel that for me as a person the concepts which he has set forth are true.

Nine years ago, we were a family of seven. At that time we could not possibly have foreseen the profound influence one man and his charming wife could have on each and every one of us and on our family as a group. Because of Dr. D. we have all grown to respect ourselves and others in a manner that has spilled over into all of our human contact . . . Our marriage is more meaningful today, after twenty years, than ever before; we are both making major occupational changes which we hope will enable us to be more contributing; our relationship with our fellowmen is on a much broader scope with deeper, fuller friendships and a greater sense of kinship with all humanity, and finally, we get along better, each of us, with ourselves.

In the above comment, mention is made of Dr. D.'s wife, Sadie Garland Dreikurs, and perhaps another comment may help bring this remarkable woman into focus.

When I think of Dr. Dreikurs, I usually think of him together with Mrs. Dreikurs, as if respectively, figure and ground . . . When I think of Dr. D. the attitude of goodwill which I sense between him and her is part and parcel of him . . . Dr. and Mrs. D. have been a reality for me in terms of how husbands and wives and people in general could get along with each other—cooperatively and yet with each maintaining his integrity.

The following three quotes are representative of comments received about his impact on others from professional people.

Probably Dr. D. has been to me what Alfred Adler had been to him.—Dr. D. has provided me with inspiration, supervision, and above all courage to approach certain tasks in life. His contributions to my field are immense and too frequent to list. Each time in meeting him my life was not only enriched, but more than that: There was a permanent change in my attitudes. I have never come across anyone else about whom I could make that statement.—Dr. D. occupies a very special place in my life. Since I have met him, he has been a continuous source of inspiration and encouragement. His influence and friendship have decisively affected my life, for which I am deeply grateful. I owe my profession and personal success to his guidance and teaching . . . Dr. Dreikurs is a great man.

A few more comments about the impression he has made on others may help to convey the essence of the man.

He is probably not aware of the large number of people who had to be perfect, top man or nothing at all, who through associating with him, gained the courage to be imperfect, not to be afraid to make mistakes.—I regard the five-year period of my close association with him as the most thrilling and productive of my life.—I am a much happier person because Dr. D. was my teacher and friend.—Others have been affected by me through him, beginning with my own four children. They know his name as well as they know their own and they have lived with his precepts.

We want to conclude this section with a few further comments on Dr. D.'s striking ability to encourage, to be enthusiastic about other people, and to motivate them.

He constantly challenges each of us to heights of thinking about our powers as a part of the universal power of all creation, yet he remains so close to the problems of everyday living that he can suggest a solution that works when the three-year old refuses his breakfast cereal.—Dr. D. is a practicing master of the principle he so espouses: encouragement.—Dr. D.'s encouragement and teaching spread a large path of hope: he threw the life-line to the desperate—His tremendous ability to fire the imagination and stir up enthusiasm is an incredible combination.—He helped us to strengthen our trust in ourselves and the things we stand for.

PERSONALITY

In the prior section we received an impression of the effect that Dr. D. has had on others. But what kind of a person is he? To save this effort from the saccharine effect of encomiums, let it be said that some of those who have written have been critical and caustic of him as well as effusive and complimentary. Dr. D., as is true of all great men, has friends and enemies. Even those who love him can find things to criticize.

Aggressiveness and Compassion

An important aspect of Dr. D.'s personality is his aggressiveness, his apparent need for challenge and conflict.

I enrolled in a course that Dr. D. was teaching. Our first confrontation led to a fight. Dr. D. maintained that he, as professor, had authority . . . It was not my first conflict with college professors. However, this was vastly different. Whereas previously, my conflict with authority figures had led to alienation, with Dr. D. it did not seem to make any difference. I was accorded the same respect and privileges as other students. For the first time in an interaction in a group situation I learned that friction and a clash of interests could take place without disrupting or destroying the relationship.

The man himself? A fighter . . . a real scrapper in the ring. He never gave an inch under all the pressures of opposing viewpoints . . . He once told me, "There are two kinds of people in the world . . . those who get and those who give ulcers. I give ulcers."

We sometimes could not agree with him—there are differences in life style, in conceptualization—but we always felt united within the framework of humanistic philosophy and within the Adlerian movement.

A most interesting feature of Dr. D.'s personality, aggressive though it may seem, is his response to attack. Those who know him well know that he stands up strongly and indefatigably for his ideas, but his resistance to provocation is remarkable. An incident recounted is typical: "Dr. D. was one evening teaching . . . A young faculty member was asked his opinion, and because he was ill-prepared to answer, attacked Dr. D. furiously. Throughout the interchange, Dr. D. remained friendly and uninvolved, and encouraged this angry young lion to develop his points."

"Rudeness" and Essential Humility

Dr. D. is a very human person, with what others consider shortcomings. His impatience with niceties, with the meaningless vacuity of human relations, ploys, and empty gestures is the despair of those who are devoted to teaching others good manners. He is often direct, abrupt and "rude." If someone is sitting on a comfortable seat, Dr. D. may ask him to move and let him have it, not for the comfort but perhaps for the location of the chair in order to conduct a meeting. Those who do not understand his motive, see this as rudeness. When food comes to the table he often is the first to pick and choose. If you have chicken, he must have "the back of the chicken." His artless naturalness is perhaps an expression of his

genius, his impatience with the artificiality of human relations, a reversion to the naturalness of life. Some comments from those who love and respect him may illustrate this aspect of the man.

My appreciation of Dr. D. over-rides my impatience with his shortcomings.—Though Dr. D. was often dogmatic, arbitrary and sometimes maddeningly autocratic, he was also, as Ray Lowe was fond of putting it, “in his area, limitless.”—As is true of all people, he is full of contradictions; and being a warm and creative and genuine person, his contradictions are perhaps more visible than those of lesser men.

Another characteristic to be discussed here is a fairly sensitive one, and one about which I was in disagreement not only with others who knew him superficially, but also with him. The issue is: Does Dr. D. have one big fat ego, think of himself as a God, have the typical grandiosity that affects psychotherapists, or is he essentially a modest man? My own judgment is that he is a humble person, and that while he is aware of his gifts and his abilities, he employs them in the service of humanity rather than for his own behalf. He is a dedicated man, not to the proposition that he must advance regardless of others, but rather to his ideas. This aspect of his humility, his humanity and humanism, is frequently expressed in the comments received.

With his humility and focus on his work he is unaware of the extent of what he has accomplished.—It was particularly gratifying that Dr. Dreikurs had no feelings of rejection to anyone on this basis [race]. This tremendously simplified the work with groups of children and adults since it was solely on the basis of their human problems without any overlay of a false “sociology” which is often an impediment in professional people.—I see Dr. D. as being modest without being humble and as simple without being small. He has the stature of a full-size man, yet is on a level with a child.

Democrat and Autocrat

Closely related to this aspect of humanity is his acceptance of other people. As those who have repeatedly heard him lecturing well know, his constant concern is with democracy. One summer at Oregon State University, some of the students developed a song about Dr. D., with a refrain, which as I recalled was, “And then . . . Dr. D. invented dem—oc—ra—see.” Now, it should be kept in mind that part of Dr. D.’s contradiction is his “authoritarian” personality. It is a fascinating experience to watch this man, so perceptive, so impatient of delays, so ready to see the proper answer, knowing

what should be done in a situation, yet holding himself back while other, lesser people have to fight and debate and argue, sometimes endlessly, before they finally come to the conclusion that his judgment was correct in the first place. It is also quite comforting to see how well he fights, and how gracefully he submits when the vote is against him. Democracy, to Dr. Dreikurs, is a real thing, not just a concept to manipulate for his convenience.

Some illuminating comments fall in this area. "Ray Lowe tells of the time that Dr. D. was calling Ray the most authoritarian, dictatorial Alderian on the planet Earth when Mrs. D. said, 'why Rudy, if I hadn't known that Ray was with you I would have thought you were looking in a mirror.'" This same person cites a limerick on this point:

Says the good Dr. D., "I'll not brook
Any further debate; if you'll look
You can see it's quite clear
That democracy's here;
Just do as I say in the book."

In a serious vein we find the following comments.

Dr. D. insists on the dignity of each human being and the equal value of each, and on the necessity of man's developing his sense of belonging to his group; and on each individual's being able to fulfill himself in contributing to the group and to social evolution.—Dr. D. meant the realization of the humanistic ideal in our time. Whoever is acquainted with his work is deeply impressed by his unique human feelings, his almost religious faith in human dignity which permeates all of his books, all of his teaching and every single one of his counseling sessions.—Dr. D., a man of the people, will live on, not so much because of his great intellectual achievements, but because he helped make a deceptively "simple" way of life teachable and applicable to ordinary human beings in need, and especially for his championship of the inalienable right of each human to be treated with respectful dignity.—He sees all persons as being equal to himself without in any way detracting from his own greatness.

Energy

Great men, those people who literally change the world, I am convinced, have excesses of three qualities that must occur simultaneously: a high order of intelligence, enormous amounts of courage and optimism, and incredible reserves of energy. We need not discuss the evidence of Dr. D.'s intelligence—this will be given later in evaluating him as a diagnostician—but some comments about his energy and courage may help to see him in a broader light. First, his energy:

It was my first introduction to seeing Dr. D. in action and I do *mean* action. In my mind's eye I can still see him: he was all over the place, never sitting but pacing up and down and gesticulating and haranguing, bringing home his points. I was truly impressed with and amazed at his activity and his dynamism. This kept up for about two hours and I was getting tired. I wondered: how long can he keep this up? Well, finally he said, "We'll take a ten minute break." I made my way to the rest room and found him there . . . I looked at him and said: "You are a veritable Simon Legree." Guess what? We went back for more of the same. I marvelled at his energy, just full of it, seemingly never tired.

Rudolf has worked more than anyone else to put over Individual Psychology to many audiences in many countries.—Dr. D. has a tremendous amount of persistence. He wears me out when I try to follow him around. He is up in the morning racing, and we put him on the assembly line: take him here and there, and when I get tired, I turn him over to another; then that one is exhausted. This is a man of tremendous drive. Now I see the truth in the expression that genius is about 10 per cent inspiration and 90 per cent perspiration.—I once invited a faculty member to meet him; but when I mentioned Dr. D.'s name he informed me he had met him. "But," he said, "he is not a person. He is an experience."

Courage and Optimism

We now proceed to the question of Dr. D.'s courage and optimism. While none of the writers of the letters discuss this aspect, a bit of history may be of some value. When Adlerians came to this country from Vienna and other places, some "renounced" their professional identity and became eclectics, "psychoanalysts," and the like, because of the common conviction that in this country to be an Adlerian would be unpopular, professionally unwise and perhaps even dangerous to one's reputation. Dr. Dreikurs always stood up to be counted as an Adlerian, and calmly and stubbornly refused to "listen to reason." He was told that as a refugee, one should be quiet, mind his own business and try to get along. But instead, he had the colossal nerve to attack entrenched and established people. The present writer once visited the mecca of psychoanalysis in this country and was told in great bitterness by the headman there, "that man Dreikurs is hurting us." We have a number of expressions in the letters describing Dr. Dreikurs' capacity to live according to the ideals he professes.

Even when Dr. Dreikurs was challenged, he had the courage to hold to his convictions.—He exemplifies his idea of having the courage and stamina to do what is right.—Dr. D.'s courage and convictions know no bounds. The tenacity with which he championed sound but unpopular theories of psychology and approaches to counseling has been worth the effort. The approaches he advocated, which at first met with powerful opposition, are now being applied.

One respondent tells of an involved issue having to do with "entrenched interests" ending with defeat for Dr. D. and the sabotage of a program suggested by him. The writer then goes on to say, "About six months later at a farewell dinner given him by grateful students, I expressed my regrets. He turned to me and said: 'It was a blessing—for I adjusted to this by writing on *Psychology in the Classroom.*'" And this brings us to Dr. D.'s indomitable optimism by which his courage is borne.

The quality in him that perhaps influenced me most is his optimism, whose twin was his faith in people's potential for growth. His is the spirit of giving, of not finching from a task even in adversity. He is also the spirit of relativism; though he could be dogmatic at times to a degree that seemed excessive. Yet he seemed to hold few absolutes. I see this as a reflection of his intrinsic openness, his eagerness to grow and learn rather than to hold rigid dogmas. His very real humanism seems to me to be a guiding line through much of what he does.—If I were to select one word describing an attitude which sets Dr. D. apart from most professionals with whom I frequently come in contact, it would be 'optimistic' . . . The word 'hopeless' does not seem to exist in Dr. D.'s vocabulary.

It is, of course, on the basis of such courage and optimism that it is possible for Dr. D. to have such an impact of encouragement on others as we have seen.

PSYCHIATRIST

Traditionally, a psychiatrist does two things: he diagnoses and he treats. Regardless of his personal qualities, if he is a poor diagnostician or an unskillful therapist, he is not a success in his field. In my thirty years of experience as a clinical psychologist, I have had an opportunity to work very closely with a great many clinical psychologists and psychiatrists and in my judgment no one has come even close to Dr. Dreikurs in his genius for seeing a situation as it really is and for putting the problem or the solution simply and fully. While working as his co-counselor at the child guidance center in Evanston, I constantly marveled how awkwardly he phrased his comments and questions—and yet what results he obtained in responses or changes. To this day I can not understand his uncanny capacity to see into people, and despite his frequent assertion that if one really understands the theory of Individual Psychology and the basic premises of teleology, one can do as well as he, I believe that his diagnostic and treatment skills are really a function of his individual talent and not something that can be learned. In the letters there were frequent mentions of these aspects.

His diagnostic techniques with children and parents having problems are unequalled: he has no peer.—You might not always agree with Dreikurs but you can not fail to recognize his high moral courage, his intuitive genius, and his ability to change a person's mistaken outlook on life within the shortest possible time.—I feel I have been most impressed by his keen perceptive diagnostic skill which is combined with a genuine concern for the individual.—. . . his awesome skill as a diagnostician. There were many examples of this witnessed and heard. He could solve a case in hours which others had labored with unsuccessfully for years.—Those of us who have worked for him and worked with him over the years have become convinced that he functions at a level that most psychologists and psychiatrists are hardly even aware of. Few of us have reached this level, and if so for only a very short time. . . . Dr. D. has found this way and through his genius, many of us are beginning to grope through in this direction ourselves.

And now we move on from diagnosis to treatment. In my own experience and in terms of my conviction, Dr. Dreikurs practices what I have called *immediate therapy*. That is, for him to diagnose is to treat. Describing the person to himself uncovers the heart of his problems, exposes the basic errors of the private logic, and this *is* for Dr. D. the heart of therapy. Everything else is nothing but cleaning up the debris. For this reason, I see Dr. D. as a superb therapist, and regard his reluctance to deal with patients on a long-term basis, and his independent invention of *multiple therapy*, as further expressions of his genius and his impatience with those who are so much slower than he is.

Many examples were given expressing this gift that Dr. Dreikurs has of coming up with the right answer the first time. And yet, those who work with him, have heard him say to the patient, endlessly and persuasively, "Perhaps you can take this formulation as a tentative working hypothesis . . ."

There is still another aspect of Dr. Dreikurs as a healer that should be mentioned; this is the fact that he *cares* for his patients. It is part of the self-protective aspect of this kind of professional work to harden oneself, to remain aloof when confronted with sickness and death of the body or the spirit, just to prevent going insane oneself. But Dr. D. has never gotten callous, his patients are never "cases." He has the legendary devotion of the old-time family physician, and I put myself here on record that should I ever need care in the direction of his specialty, and if I am unable to decide for myself at the time, he is the physician of my choice! But now to the opinions of some others of Dr. Dreikurs as therapist.

The young couple had been brought to Dr. D. by one of the resident psychologists in the area. He had been working with them for a year with what seemed to be very poor results, and they were at the point of breaking up. Dr. D.'s condition for taking the case was that the initial interview be a demonstration in front of the group who were studying at the seminar. At first the husband was unwilling to proceed under these conditions. Dr. Dreikurs put it to him in what might be considered his characteristic manner under such circumstances. "Do you want to save your marriage or do you want to break it up?" To those of us trained in the more traditional and less directive methods of therapy, this was heresy, but it worked. The young man ended his resistance at that point and was cooperative for the rest of the demonstration. In the space of an hour, without any prior knowledge of the background of either of the two clients, Dr. D. had revealed to them their styles of life, how these corresponded and how they could learn to make the diverse styles more fitting to each other. One had only to look at the expressions on the faces of the two to be aware of the insights they had attained. At first they expressed bewilderment and not a little resentment at what they heard. This changed to absorption, then to what seemed almost a sheepish acknowledgement of what had taken place, then almost dramatically to feelings of relief, as if they were saying to themselves, "Now, why hadn't I thought of that before?"

He was also a lover of truth with kindness and a very understanding heart. Children returned his respect for them: In him they knew they had a loyal friend, and through his guidance he showed them the opportunity to succeed as a human being. Reluctant parents grew to enthusiastic boosters. Fathers who had dragged their feet entering the center later sat at his feet to hear every word he spoke.—(From a patient:) I have written to "Dear Dr. D." often. I have written in despair, in crisis, in doubt, in joy, in triumph. He has done me the honor of answering me each time in the spirit in which I wrote. His answers have come to me from all over the world . . . One answer is always with me, and is worn thin. It is my talisman, the only one I have ever had in all my life.

TEACHER

Perhaps Dr. Dreikurs would be more happy to be seen as a teacher than as a psychiatrist. *Un homme social*, he seems happiest in a group, and at the very pinnacle of happiness when he has the full and undivided attention of all. For him, goal 1 is the prime goal, closely followed by goal 2. Of goal 3 there is not a trace, and as for goal 4—forget it! It does not exist.²

It is this aspect, as a teacher, that most letter writers discussed: the theoretician, the lecturer, the man of ideas, the man of vision, whose field is the vast scope of the mind and the even vaster scope

²For the uninitiated I should like to explain that Dr. Dreikurs recognizes four goals of misbehavior among children: trying to gain recognition through (a) getting attention, (b) proving one's power, (c) obtaining revenge, or (d) displaying inadequacy.

of all human affairs. Whether or not he has succeeded is difficult to say: the evidence is that his success is great; what is impressive is the scope of his activities in this respect. Some excerpts on Dreikurs the intellectual, the lecturer, the teacher may give the reader a feelings of this man in this role.

I found Adler's *The Neurotic Constitution* and [*The Practice and Theory of*] *Individual Psychology* most difficult reading; in fact, I doubt if I understood much. Reading Dreikurs' *Fundamentals [of Individual Psychology]*, however, suddenly made things more clear, like a flash of lightening illuminating the darkness, a sudden insight into what IP was all about. His explanations were concise and clear, down to earth, easily understandable from the point of the uninitiated.

(A professional couple, writing a joint letter, state:) We have at each new encounter with his spoken or written work admired his ability to express himself clearly and forcefully. We feel close to him because of the common ideology we share and because of the challenge that differences of opinion present. We hardly know anyone who had contributed more than Rudolf to the development and clarification of our Adlerian ideas.

I came on the estimable doctor at a crucial time in my life. Having taken a Ph.D. in philosophy in a leading school, I had a sizable store of theory but little understanding of how it should apply in concrete situations. Dreikurs directed me to the applications. Without having to alter any of the theory, really, he showed me how to make it work . . . It was as though I had been waiting for him to come along. When he did, I could do no other than accept as my own the teachings of Individual Psychology to which he subscribed. His first influence was to make me aware of the purposes of human behavior. Prior to my contact with him I had thought of counseling in rather mechanical terms—tests, reflections of feeling, etc. It would be accurate to state that he added a dimension to my counseling theory and procedures that had never existed before. . . During the past academic year, as is characteristic of his generosity, he has opened his home to monthly seminars which have restimulated my thinking.

I first heard Dr. Dreikurs in 1938 in Chicago. He was addressing a large audience . . . and he held them spellbound with his insightful and revealing explanations . . . just as he is still inspiring and opening up new vistas for people all over the world.

An aspect of his greatness is his vision. I think this is why it is so comforting to hear him. He explains what to most of us is unknown. He sees what most of us see only vaguely. We see it enough to know it is true when he speaks.

FRIEND

It must be evident to the reader that this man has the power to make strong friends. As stated earlier, he has equal power to make enemies. No one is neutral to him. To make a friend one has to be a friend, and this is one universal character quality that occurs in

the letters. People in all sorts of desperate straits have called on him and he never refused. A few samples may indicate something of this aspect of this man.

"First and foremost he is my friend, yet I knew him in person for only a few days," writes one of his former students, and the writer sees no problem or nothing unusual in such a statement. "In 1955 during the first conversation I had with him, he asked me to come and see the kind of work he did and immediately invited me to attend a public guidance session he was to conduct in Evanston." The editor of these notes includes this apparently minor item because it expresses the spirit of Dr. Dreikurs: he meets you, likes you, wants to educate you, invites you—and sure enough you go with him or to him. "What would we have ever done without him? What would have happened without his teachings?" one colleague exclaims and adds what we have already heard, "Truly, Dr. D. was an experience!"

He has expended tremendous energy publishing, speaking and teaching but never for self-elevation, always because it needs to be done. He traveled great distances at the invitations of former students, to lend his knowledge to establish local societies, to further the practice of Individual Psychology and to make known its concepts, often without remuneration.

(One of his colleagues writes:) When Hitler took over Austria, I, like so many had to leave Vienna. I wrote to Dr. Dreikurs, who had been in Chicago only one year. I will never forget the great relief I felt when his answer came: "I will get you an affidavit from one of our Adlerian friends here. The beginning will be hard for you, but we will try to start child guidance work in Chicago!" He was the only friend I had in Chicago when I came. I admire Dr. Dreikurs for keeping alive in his work the idealism and optimism which are so vital in Adlerian Psychology. He has made Adlerian techniques more useful in education, and has done more than anyone in the United States to further Alfred Adler's work.

Certainly I will always remember not only his personal guidance but his keen sense of human and personal friendship.

TWO LETTERS

This concluding section consists of two letters, from Greece and from Israel, quoted in full except for some passages omitted for reasons of space or because they have already been quoted. The letters tell their own story and, besides, give the reader a feeling of the raw material from which the other excerpts were drawn.

From Greece

When I first met Dr. Dreikurs and observed one of his counseling sessions I immediately felt: "This is what I am looking for." And since that time, every

new meeting with him is an inexhaustible source for the training of my clinical sensitivity. I think that I learned from him all that I know that is really valuable and so different from the sterile scientific terms and classifications or the clichés of the so-called dynamic psychology.

He was my great discovery and I made every possible effort to bring other people of my country to know him; and his work in Greece was quite remarkable.

When he first visited Athens the mere fact that he was an Adlerian made professional people quite reluctant to listen to him. But one demonstration of child guidance was enough to change the atmosphere. The impression was so great that even people from very different psychological orientations became interested and a great number of them felt that they could find in Dr. Dreikurs' method a realistic and practical approach to meet the problems of today's youth. In his short visits in this country he accomplished what would take years for others to achieve.

It is on the basis of his human feeling that one can understand the appeal Adler had on him. All through a life's time, Dr. D. has preached Adler—"to Freudians a scandal and to scientists a silliness." And this courageous attitude so free from opportunistic speculations, along with his incontestable effectiveness, induced respect for him even in his opponents.

He was able to incorporate all the newest clinical progress in his Adlerian frame of reference and thus gave new life to old truths. But above all these accomplishments, the most worthy of notice is probably the fact that countless people in so many countries have become so much better teachers, better parents and better human beings by the mere fact that they have met him and were exposed to his ideas.

Dr. Dreikurs belongs to that high class of teachers who teach not only by their word, but also by their action and mainly by the whole of their personality.

*From Israel*³

The Adlerian group in Israel was very pleased by the idea of a tribute to Dr. D. on his 70th year in the *Journal of Individual Psychology*. Our plan was to get together, and write a joint article on Dr. D. the revolutionist, the reviver of conscience in the Israel of the 1960's.

Less than one month has passed, yet this was a month worth many years, and we feel, that prewar thoughts and approaches are obsolete and so far away, that they have to be re-analyzed and re-evaluated before they are full heartedly adapted again. What happened during this month proved beyond doubt that a strong sense of belonging makes every individual much stronger and much more capable of functioning fully, and realize potentials beyond ones own expectations. We are still under the shock of the events and this is the reason for our delay.

Dr. D.'s message, it seems, meant to us more than to others. While to others he helped to widen horizons, re-evaluate ideas or acquire a personal or professional frame of reference, to us he contributed another additional dimension, a collective one. Strange as it may seem, he helped us to strengthen our trust in ourselves

³This letter is dated June 30, 1967, within the month of the war between the Arab States and Israel.

and the things we stand for as Jews and as Israelis. He taught us to direct our bubbling, restless energies into positive, constructive and cooperative routes, instead of using them in criticisms, as we are so often prone to do.

With courage, force and persistence, most undemocratically, he taught us democracy. His aggressiveness did not deceive us. We sensed beyond it the man dedicated, as our prophets of old were, to deliver the message of a way of life, meaningful and worth-while. We were infected by his great optimism and trust in man, and as we set out to work, we discovered ourselves.

We owe more to Dr. D. than words can express. Only through intensive and devoted work for the cause of Adlerian principles by teaching others what we have learned, can we help and contribute, and so have our deeds speak for us.

ENVOI

What makes the person is the sum total of all that he is and all that he does. If we add up all that we have brought together here, we have the reflection of a full and complete life of a strong and unusual man. Here is a man starting his eighth decade of life, who has accomplished what ten normal people have not, and yet, despite an operation for cancer, despite a recent heart attack, despite at least thirty per cent more adipose tissue than he needs, is restlessly challenging and trying to change the world. We are all the richer for having known him and want to express our great affection for Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs.