“Common Ground: Doing What Works”
Theme of FAS International Conference in 2013

The Florida Adlerian Society is pleased to announce that “Common Ground: Doing What Works” is the theme for the organization’s 2013 conference. The 18th annual International Conference will take place Feb. 28 to March 2, 2013, at the Safety Harbor Resort and Spa.

The conference will include workshops and seminars on topics of interest to professional therapists, educators, parents, and anyone interested in improving their relationship skills. Safety Harbor is located a short drive from both the Tampa and St. Petersburg airports.

FAS is soliciting program proposals for the 2013 conference through Oct. 30. Submit proposals to Tim Evans via e-mail at Tim@evanstherapy.com. More details about the conference and registration information will be posted on the conference website at www.adlerflorida.org.

Finding an Unexpected Friend in Eastern Europe

By Geri Carter-Evans

Tim Evans and I were recently invited to Latvia to a series of workshops with Inguna Griskevica. Inguna is a leading Adlerian psychologist who organized the workshops and translated from English to Latvian.

I had no idea what to expect from our trip, which took place Aug. 23 to Sept. 3, 2012.

For half of our visit we stayed in a quaint surfing and fishing village called Pavilosta, with Inguna and her husband Ronalds. We were greeted by their two beautiful girls, Alice and Petra, ages 7 and 5, and a friendly and very large dog, “Harry.” The family practices social interest, democracy and cooperation. Inguna is quite the hostess and cooked all our meals while we stayed with her.

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A Letter From the FAS President

By Tom Butts, FAS President

FAS Members and Supporters: I would like to share my experiences as a volunteer at the Florida Adlerian Society. My background is not in psychology or psychiatry. I am a business and technology person.

Q: Why am I working with the Florida Adlerian Society?

I joined FAS because of the encouraging message and ideas that FAS promotes.

I wanted to learn how to better apply Adlerian principles to my marriage, my relationship with my two daughters, and my business relationships.

FAS helps people learn to have meaningful and fulfilling relationships. Learning these “new behaviors” is similar to learning another language. You can read a book or listen to tapes, but being immersed in a new language of encouragement and cooperation is the best and easiest way to learn. Joining the FAS is like moving to Spain to learn Spanish – everyone is speaking the language, so you learn at a faster pace! Not only has my involvement with FAS been quite a fabulous experience, but I’ve met some great and encouraging people along the way.

Q: Who are those encouraging people?

At our 2012 conference, I met Dr. Peter Breggin and became familiar with his work. Dr. Breggin opened my eyes to the reality of today’s medical practices in the United States—truly saddening. I later listened to Dr. Breggin’s radio show and he provided a unique perspective on God and organized religion. I have not been to church in 40 years, but he said some things that opened my eyes—quite an amazing man. Go and learn about Dr. Breggin at his website—breggin.com.

At another FAS conference I met Dr. Frank Walton. Dr. Walton asked if my family would be his “subjects” for a demonstration on family therapy. We hurriedly

book review:

“Psychiatric Drug Withdrawal”

by Dr. Peter Breggin

By Timothy D. Evans, Ph.D.

Psychiatric Drug Withdrawal is a book for the seasoned professional and the beginning graduate student, as well as for the patient and the family. This is in keeping with Dr. Breggin’s emphasis on a collaborative team approach to treatment and especially to drug withdrawal. This is not a book you will read once, but one you will have by your side, as a reference, for helping a loved one or your client.

The first ten chapters inform us of the effects psychiatric drugs have on our brains and educate us regarding specific drugs. In chapter 11, Dr. Breggin, using his years of clinical experiences, puts all the ingredients together and demonstrates how to help individuals regain their lives from the disabling effects of drugs.

Dr. Breggin does this by putting counseling and psychotherapy back in the forefront as the intervention and not the drugs. He gives respect and dignity back to the counseling process, including the active participation of the client and at times the family.

It is refreshing to read a book renewing the use of the core conditions (empathy, genuineness, and positive self-regard) as necessary and sufficient in helping clients’ function effectively. This is a long stretch from the medical model, which mistrusts human nature, relies on brain drugs, and denies self-responsibility. Dr. Breggin invites us to use what works, empathy and a therapeutic relationship.

This is a book that is both academic and clinical, and at the same time easily read by clients and families: a rare combination for the practicing therapist.

His years of experience researching the effects of psychiatric medications, combined with being an excellent practitioner, are explained in a systematic and effective manner. You will learn the effects of drugs and how to approach your client in a collaborative and humane manner.

This is what we need. The idea that drugs are the answer has failed, and with a high cost of human suffering.

Timothy D. Evans, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Florida Adlerian Society, Private Practice, Carter and Evans Marriage and Family Therapy, Approved Supervisor AAMFT
The Courage to Forgive

By Timothy Evans, Ph.D.

Life is made of one-third what I choose to do with my thoughts, behaviors, and attitude. Another one-third is the choices people around me make, in which I have no control. Hopefully, my wife will continue to choose to be with me. I cannot control her choice. I can decide how I will behave in hopes that she will find me pleasant and interesting, but in the end, the choice is hers.

The final third, which again I cannot control, is what the universe, biology, nature, or what some believe God determines. I have no control over a hurricane hitting Tampa, my cat having heart disease, or a friend getting cancer. This is biology. I do have a choice in how I interpret and relate to those specific events (again my one-third).

If we live long enough, we will encounter events that force us to face our vulnerability as human beings. This can be interpreted as an injustice because “I have been doing everything right (if there is such a way) therefore nothing bad should ever happen to me.” This “injustice” may be because of someone else’s choice or biology. When it occurs, I will experience vulnerability and know that I am not totally independent. Some may guard against these feelings of vulnerability and say his wife’s cancer is the work of the devil. These life events will test our emotional self-reliance (self-responsibility) and push us to need others.

When we confront and experience our vulnerability we receive a
dese of humility, which connects us to others. From these incidents, we will learn there is only one genuine need we all have and that is other people.

Since the beginning of time, human beings have misbehaved and made poor choices. Take for example the story of Joseph in the Book of Genesis. His brothers sold Joseph, the youngest and special son, into slavery. This was the beginning of Joseph’s trouble. He was falsely accused of having sex with his owner’s wife and thrown into prison. Yet he survived. Before he reached age 30 he was appointed as a top official by the ruler of Egypt. He predicted a famine and was put in charge of a food storage that saved the region. His brothers were forced to journey into the city seeking food, starving, and begging. Who did they appear before? Joseph! His chance to get even.

So it would seem that justice will prevail and what goes around comes around. His brothers did not recognize him and Joseph’s natural inclination was revenge. However, Joseph recognized that revenge was an easy way out. The courageous choice -- and the only way to be happy -- was forgiveness. One difference between happy and unhappy individuals is the ability to forgive.

Tragedy, error, inhumanity, and struggle will not go away. However, the realization that you have a choice in how you respond is powerful and influences your happiness and well-being, in spite of the other two-thirds. Forgiveness is done through the use of good psychology. It requires courage, emotional self-reliance, and a desire to be free.

Anyone who has done you harm will continue to have a stranglehold on your life, until you are willing to forgive them and free yourself from the resentment, anger, hurt, injustice, and sometime hatred.

Joseph took an active approach to the injustice and pain inflicted upon him. He used the situation to become socially interested instead of self-interested.

Forgiveness is an active process that requires these steps:

- I will not bring up the incident again and use it against you.
- I will not talk to others about this incident.
- I will not let this incident stand between our personal relationships.
- To do this I will not dwell or ruminate over the problem or punish you by withdrawing and keeping emotional distance.
- I will free the relationship to develop, unhindered of the past wrongs.

Forgiveness requires courage, emotional self-reliance, and a desire to be free.