



## The Words of the Father (2011 Edition)

By J.L. Moreno  
The North-West Psychodrama  
Association, UK

2011

Original German *Das Testament Des  
Faters* published anonymously 1923 by  
Gustav Kiepenheuer, Verlag, Vienna

Original English translation by J.L. Moreno published 1941 by Alliance Book Corporation, New York, followed by a second publication 1971 by Beacon House, New York

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The Words of the Father: A Response by Sara Crane

*ALL CREATURES ARE ALONE  
UNTIL THEIR LOVE OF CREATING  
FORMS A WORLD AROUND THEM*

With these words on page 152 of *The Words of the Father* (2011), Jacob Moreno calls forth the Creator of the Universe. He challenges his readers to come alive to the forces at work in the world and accept our responsibility to become change agents.

I first started psychodrama training in 1984 at an Aotearoa New Zealand workshop conducted by Wayne Scott. He enabled me to understand and put into a social context the deeply disturbing events of civil war with which I had grown up in Northern Ireland. I was able to come to grips with the powerful forces that had influenced and shaped my political psyche. A few years later, while training at the Wasley Centre in Perth, I began reading Moreno's core texts. The strong call to action emanating from *The Words of the Father* entered my being and haunted me as I began a new life stage. I was inspired to become a renaissance creature, capable of anything, while at the same time becoming less fearful and more accepting of my vulnerabilities and shortcomings. A renewed energy filled me. I set out to change the world and discover the ways in which I might use my own particular abilities to make a difference in my local community. I do not think that I understood at that time even a tiny aspect of Moreno's writing. However, the energy I gained sustained me and gave me the courage to believe in my own creative genius, at least enough of the time to commit to

psychodrama training and a professional re-birth. In later years, I opened AANZPA regional meetings by reading aloud poems from *The Words of the Father*. My hope was that some of Moreno's deep desire for well-being in the world would be transmitted to the audience and thus given new life.

In that original reading of *The Words of the Father*, my introduction to Morenian philosophy came through particular sections in First Principles such as the concept of the moment, the cultural conserve and the theory of spontaneity and creativity. Alongside my current 2012 read, I have been reading the 2011 republications of *The Autobiography of J.L. Moreno* and *The First Psychodramatic Family* and the aspects that now resound for me are the historical and biographical contexts in which *The Words of the Father* was produced. Moreno wrote it in 1919 as a 30 year old Sephardic Jew. He had been working in an internment camp near Vienna in the aftermath of World War One and had already founded a religious movement, a revolutionary theatre and published the magazine *Daimon*. It was during this era that "...the idea of a sociometrically planned community came to me..." (*The Autobiography of J.L. Moreno*, 2011 Edition, p.72). The anonymously published *The Words of the Father* was an expression of this vision, containing a very full description of the values Moreno was inspired to transmit.

The Introduction and Foreword to this 2011 edition of *The Words of the Father*, both by Jonathan D. Moreno, serve as eloquent and informative adjuncts to the text. I am arriving at a deeper understanding of Moreno's call to us to take responsibility for our own 'god-ness' and act upon it. Instead of elaborating further the content of this book, I want to encourage you to read it. Approach it as though it were *Finnegan's Wake* by James Joyce or *Under Milkwood* by Dylan Thomas. Do not expect a literary masterpiece. Just let the mysteries swamp you. Reading the poems aloud will enable you to resonate with Moreno's voice. Allow the prose passages to serve as a primary introduction to the philosophy which informs his theory and practice.

My re-acquaintance with this seminal text has impacted on my work as a psychodramatist in two particular areas. One has been running psychodrama groups and the other has been working with children and families after the earthquakes in Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand. In both areas, I have become more alert to my use of language in 'the god field' and more committed to assisting the people with whom I work to find the language and actions that enable them to access what Moreno named 'the Father'. Re-reading *The Words of the Father* has also made me more conscious of working at an archetypal level. Let me expand on these themes using illustrations from my work.

In one psychodrama group, a protagonist set out a scene in which the Presbyterian Church represented the role of a dour, prescriptive rule keeper. This was followed by a scene in which the protagonist enjoyed rebellious revelling. The protagonist was elated and the auxiliaries were having fun. However, when I enquired about the relationships with community and soul, both of which had