

Spontaneity or Emotion as the Catalyst for Change

CORRECTIVE EXPERIENCES IN PSYCHODRAMA

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ABSTRACT

Corrective experiences are a common factor in effective therapies, often having profound transformative effects. While Greenberg proposes that the activation and processing of emotions produces corrective experiences, Moreno emphasises spontaneity as the therapeutic agent or catalyst of change. Drawing on research, Charmaine McVea argues for the greater efficacy of spontaneity. She proposes that spontaneity not only constitutes an outcome of corrective experiences but also contributes to the emergence of those experiences, specifically through the development of action insight and corrective interpersonal experience during psychodrama enactments.

KEY WORDS

action insight, corrective experience, emotion, emotion-focused therapy (EFT), Greenberg, Moreno, psychodrama, psychotherapy integration, research, social atom repair, spontaneity, transformation

The field of psychotherapy integration explores the common underlying factors that produce therapeutic change¹. Investigations in recent years have focused on the transformative effects of corrective experiences, identifying these events as common factors in most therapies while also acknowledging the range of different explanations for their efficacy. Some explanations emphasise emotional processes as having greater value, while others focus on relational or behavioural processes (Castonguay & Hill, 2012). Although spontaneity is often mentioned in these explanations, it is typically regarded to be an outcome of the corrective experience and its central contribution to the emergence of the corrective experience is not explored. The psychodrama paradigm has a unique contribution to make in this field, with its focus on spontaneity as both an outcome of therapy and a catalyst of change during therapy.

1 If you are interested, refer to the Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration website: <<https://www.sepiweb.org>>.

To make the case for the central place of spontaneity in corrective experiences, research into protagonists' change processes when addressing painful emotional experiences (McVea, 2009; McVea, Gow & Lowe, 2011) will be reviewed, with a focus on two questions:

- (i) What does a comprehensive analysis of protagonists' change processes reveal about the relationship between spontaneity and corrective experiences in psychodrama?
- (ii) Are corrective experiences in psychodrama equally well explained by an alternative model of therapeutic change?

The second question challenges us to consider if the spontaneity construct adds to our understanding of corrective experiences, or if they can in fact be explained by an alternative model. Greenberg's (1996) emotion-focused model is used as a point of comparison because it is based on an experiential-humanistic approach that might be expected to have some kinship with psychodrama, and because this model has established investigative tools (Greenberg & Foerster, 1996) that make a research-based comparison possible. A clear point of difference between the emotion-focused model and the spontaneity model emerges from the research, with the development of spontaneity over the course of a psychodrama enactment leading to a corrective interpersonal experience that is profoundly transformative.

Corrective Experience and Transformation

Alexander and French (1946) coined the term 'corrective emotional experience' to refer to a moment in the therapeutic relationship when a formative, emotionally charged experience is re-created in such a way that previously intolerable emotions become tolerable and a new response emerges. The generic term 'corrective experience' is now often adopted in the literature when relating to different therapeutic explanations for these events. For an in-depth discussion, I recommend *Transformation in Psychotherapy*, in which Castonguay and Hill (2012:5-6) define corrective experiences as ones where, "a person comes to understand or experience affectively an event or relationship in a different and unexpected way. ... (including) events that are emotional, relational, behavioural, or cognitive. ... not just typical helpful events in therapy but ... surprising or disconfirming of past experiences and often (having) a profound effect".

The Emotion-Focused Orientation

Greenberg and Elliott (2012) propose a humanistic-experiential perspective that emphasises the affective component of the corrective experience. Their explanation is exemplified in emotion-focused therapy (EFT), where the activation of primary adaptive emotions is understood to promote therapeutic change (Greenberg, 1996, 1999, 2002). Of particular relevance to this current review, Greenberg (1999) argues that allowing and accepting emotional pain is at the core of corrective experiences, and that the central

task in all therapies is to assist a person to move towards, rather than avoid, emotional pain. In his research, he found that the first step in moving from avoiding to allowing emotional pain is to express the secondary emotions such as shame, guilt and hopelessness that mask the pain. Then, therapeutic weeping, defined as 'an intense form of the expression of distress/sadness' (Greenberg, 1999:1471), is a marker that the person is allowing the experience of emotional pain. With this emotional release, the person identifies maladaptive beliefs that have been maintaining their problematic functioning and recognises unmet needs at a visceral level. Greenberg views therapeutic weeping as a transformative process that alters the person's internal pain-inducing structure, producing affective and motivational change, a change in perception of self and others, relief and self-affirmation. In EFT, this internal transformation of emotion, leading to the transformation of maladaptive responses, constitutes a corrective experience.

The Relationship between Emotion and Spontaneity

A significant difference between Greenberg and Elliott's explanation, and the psychodrama paradigm, lies in the emphasis on emotion compared to spontaneity as the therapeutic agent. To understand the difference between spontaneity and emotion, let us consider how the term 'readiness' is used to define each phenomenon. On the one hand, emotion promotes a person's readiness to respond in a particular way (Frijda, 2004). A person feels loving and has an impetus to move towards the loved one; a person feels afraid and the impetus is to run or freeze. Spontaneity, on the other hand, is a readiness to respond in the moment, as required by the situation and with the flexibility to create a new response as the situation changes. While Moreno (1987) is emphatic that spontaneity is neither an emotion nor a component of emotion, he considers that the production of feeling assists the development of spontaneity. Feeling provides salient information to the person about the significance of their experience in the moment, and this influences the direction of their spontaneous response.

Spontaneity as the Catalyst for Change

In identifying spontaneity as the catalyst for change in psychodrama, Moreno (1980/1946) relates it to free will and sees it as directional and purposeful. "Warming up to a spontaneous state leads up to and is aimed at more or less highly organized patterns of conduct" (Moreno, 1987:42). This means developing the ability to respond with flexibility and vitality in the moment, which requires the strengthening of interpersonal connections and a sustained warm up to the present relationship. The purpose of a psychodrama enactment is to warm up to 'the spontaneous state' so that creativity is enhanced, and progressive roles are produced and integrated. From this perspective, spontaneity is the transforming agent in corrective

experiences or, to use the psychodrama term, in social atom repair. In line with spontaneity theory, Clayton (1993) identifies the core principles of social atom repair as being the development of a larger perspective of the social system and greater flexibility in response. In his view, this is achieved through greater consciousness of the values of other people, so that this consciousness is integrated into the individual's warm-up (Clayton & Carter, 2004). This process brings "different aspects of (self) into harmony" so that old warm ups move into the background, a corrective emotional experience is developed, and progressive roles are strengthened and produce a catharsis of integration, "a sense of opening out and including other elements outside of oneself" (Clayton & Carter, 2004:324-337). The emphasis is on warming up to the system, so that spontaneity is produced in the context where role development is required.

Corrective Experiences in Psychodrama: Findings from Research

Let us now turn to a review of research, where the investigation of protagonists' change processes has supported the spontaneity explanation of corrective experiences over the emotion-focused explanation. The research involved a comprehensive analysis of the experiences of 14 protagonists who participated in psychodrama workshops focused on addressing the effects of painful emotional experiences (McVea, 2009). This analysis drew on recordings of psychodrama enactments as well as protagonists' and directors' recall, allowing for a deep understanding of the context, process and impact of protagonists' experiences. Each psychodrama enactment was then reviewed a second time, applying Greenberg's and Foerster's investigative tools, to test the EFT 'allowing and accepting emotional pain' explanation of corrective experiences.

Protagonists identified two types of corrective experiences during the research, one centred on action insight and the other a corrective interpersonal experience that builds on Clayton's description of social atom repair. Both types meet Castonguay's and Hill's definition of corrective experience, as quoted earlier. In the following sections, these two types of corrective experience are described and illustrated. As we will see when we look in more detail, even when the components of the EFT model are present, the spontaneity perspective provides a fuller explanation of the corrective experience.

The Corrective Experience Through Action Insight

Action insight events in psychodrama are those where a protagonist gains new and surprising insights during an enactment. Kellerman (1992:86) describes action insight as stimulating "the integration of emotional, cognitive, imaginary, behavioural and interpersonal learning experiences". During the psychodrama workshops in which the research took place, processes were identified that illuminated the protagonists' experiences

leading up to and during action insight events. Action insight only occurred when the protagonists experienced the enactments as if they were happening 'here and now'. As their warm ups deepened, there was a sense of accuracy, a sense that they were relating to the original painful scenes and experiencing their original responses. These responses typically included secondary emotions such as shame, guilt and inadequacy as well as maladaptive beliefs, both of which are described in EFT. Through role reversals and from the mirror position on the edge of the stage, the protagonists re-experienced the events from a variety of different perspectives, which prompted primary adaptive emotions such as sadness, distress, hurt and fear, again fitting the EFT model. From these different perspectives, the protagonists developed a more attuned awareness of the original events, warmer responses towards themselves in the scenes and positive regard for their abilities to cope in restrictive environments. There was an emotional release as each protagonist arrived at the moment of insight and experienced a bodily felt awareness of the impact of the painful events, then and now.

In the following example of an action insight event, the protagonist Ray is feeling 'stuck' in his career and unable to make decisions or follow them through.

Ray: *I want to go somewhere. I want to succeed. I want to get more out of life, so all this indecision has got to stop!*

Director: *Set out the choices you have.*

Ray: *I can't. I can't. It's an old childhood feeling, a feeling of my parents pushing me somewhere and I don't want to go there. It's a sort of paralyzing fear, the feeling of lack of choice.*

Director: *How old are you?*

Ray: *It feels about 7.*

Director: *Choose someone to be you when you are 7 and set out your parents pushing this 7-year-old.*

Ray sets the scene whereby the father places his hands on the 7-year-old Ray's shoulders and physically pushes him in one direction, while the mother stands alongside the father.

Ray as father: *Okay son, this is where you're going and this is what you're going to do.*

Ray, as the 7-year-old, faces his father, looks blank and moves backwards in the direction he is being pushed, silent and without resistance.

Ray as mother: (leaning towards 7-year-old) *Listen to your father. This is what's best for you.*

Ray as 7-year-old: (pleading) *I don't want to go there. Don't say that. I don't want to.*

Ray stands on the edge of the psychodrama stage with the director, as the auxiliaries re-enact the scene.

Ray: *You poor boy.*

Ray puts his head in his hands and cries. After a little, he approaches the 7-year-old again and sighs.

Ray: *You poor boy. It's not fair. It's been lonely, and it's been scary, really scary (crying more).*

Ray as 7-year-old: *Yeah, but I can't accept that. I can't accept the compassion. I hear the words but I just (bends over), phew! The pain. It's almost like I don't deserve it. I've got to earn the compassion.*

Through this psychodrama enactment, Ray realized that he had been functioning from a belief that he must earn the right to relate to his own feelings about life choices. Gaining this new perspective, he experienced the emotional release as an expression of adult compassion for the seven-year-old boy. This new emotional expression was a catharsis of integration. Interestingly, action insight events such as this typically incorporate the components of the EFT model identified by Greenberg and Foerster (1996). In this example, there was the expression of secondary emotions of helplessness and anxiety, and then of primary adaptive emotions of pain, loneliness and grief. As this emotional expression unfolded, the protagonist experienced a bodily felt awareness of the maladaptive belief that had been guiding his actions, and he began to transform this belief as he responded with compassion to his seven-year-old self.

However, there are two features that suggest that while the EFT model may go some way to explaining the corrective experience of action insight, as illustrated above, it is not sufficient to explain the full transformative experience. Firstly, the protagonists' reports of their experiences during action insight events pointed to the importance of processes that produced larger perspectives and greater flexibility of response. They identified as central their ability to move around and interact with the social system that they had concretised upon the psychodrama stage, to gain different perspectives through mirroring, doubling and role reversal, and to incorporate new responses from auxiliaries. Indeed, auxiliaries who enacted the positive regard of friends and mentors had a particularly positive effect on the protagonists, assisting them to warm up to progressive adult functioning in the here and now, and to develop self-acknowledgement and self-acceptance. All of these aspects are central to the spontaneity rather than the EFT explanation of therapeutic change. Secondly, while corrective

experiences centred on action insight produced greater self-awareness and some relief for protagonists, they did not produce a sense of resolution or transformation. In the example above, the protagonist developed greater acceptance of past choices and the way in which the parental dynamic impacts him in the present, but this did not produce a change in the underlying dynamic. However, in many of the psychodrama enactments during the research, an action insight event formed a significant aspect of the warm up to the more transformative corrective interpersonal experience.

Social Atom Repair: The Corrective Interpersonal Experience

The most transformative corrective experiences identified in the research were social atom repair scenes, where previously unmet interpersonal needs or act hungers were fulfilled, and which protagonists later identified as having profound and lasting effects in their lives. In essence, these were corrective interpersonal experiences, and the research findings suggest that they emerged from the gradual development of the protagonist's spontaneity during the course of a psychodrama enactment.

In the psychodrama enactments that resulted in these corrective interpersonal experiences, spontaneity development was evidenced by a gradual freeing up of the protagonists' responses leading up to the social atom repair scenes. This freeing up occurred as the protagonists experienced different perspectives of self, others and the environment. The development of spontaneity typically followed three phases. Firstly, as described in the previous section, deep re-experiencing of the original dynamic led to action insight that produced acknowledgement and self-acceptance. As a result, the protagonists became more motivated and hopeful of finding new responses to their presenting problems, even though they could not yet generate new responses. Then, a transitional event occurred, in which the protagonists warmed up to progressive roles that they had already developed in their lives, and effectively addressed challenging relationships on the periphery of their core painful emotional experiences. I term this transitional event 'activating resourcefulness', because it involved warming up to and strengthening already existing progressive roles. The process of activating resourcefulness warmed the protagonists up to their competence, and this seemed to free them to approach their core painful emotional experiences with greater self-confidence. Finally, the protagonists generated new responses that produced corrective interpersonal experiences, or in psychodrama terms, social atom repair.

Two examples of corrective interpersonal experience are described here, one addressing uncomplicated grief in adult life and the other addressing complex grief from childhood. Action insight and the activation of resourcefulness appear to be pre-requisites for the generation of corrective interpersonal experiences and are therefore included in the descriptions.

JULIE: THE DEATH OF A MUCH-LOVED BROTHER, HUSBAND AND FATHER

Julie's brother, Bill, is rushed to hospital where he is pronounced dead before family members are able to join him. Bill's family is shocked by his sudden death and struggle to relate meaningfully with one another. Now, Julie wants to re-establish her connection with family members and become a positive influence in Bill's children's lives. In the psychodrama's first scenes, she re-experiences a day of teenage adventure with Bill and her other siblings, and then sets out her family system now that Bill is dead. Both these scenes produce action insights in that Julie is struck by how much she looked up to Bill and relied on him to show her the way to embrace life. She experiences an enormous gap in the family now that he is gone. The next scene emerges from the concretisation of the family system. Julie and her sister, Michelle, have not been in contact with each other since Bill's funeral. This scene, in the surplus reality of an imagined future conversation as the two sisters walk side by side along a beach, encompasses a rupture in their relationship, a sense of strain.

Julie: *I don't want you to feel like you're second best, that the only way you got to be important is because Bill has died. I have always wanted to have a relationship with you and I love you as you are.*

Michelle: *I think some of that is the choices I make in my life. I miss Bill too.*

Julie: *(cries) I like you as you are. There is a heap I can learn from you and I enjoy every day I spend with you.*

This future-focused enactment involved the activation of resourcefulness as the protagonist warmed up to a role that was already well developed in her relationship with her sister. She experienced herself relating easily and effectively in a challenging encounter and realized that she had the capacity to have a meaningful, if confronting, conversation. Both participants expressed openness towards each other, their tele was positive and a simplicity and grace emerged in the enactment. As she spoke with her sister, the protagonist warmed up to the positive and loving relationships in her family life, and she felt more hopeful and resourced. She was then ready to confront the frightening scene of her brother's death.

At the beginning of this work, Julie had related the family's distress regarding the lack of opportunity to be with Bill and touch him after he died. The director remembers this and weaves the unmet need into the creation of a social atom repair scene. Bill has collapsed and died and is lying on the bedroom floor. Julie, Bill's wife Diane and his two young children, Sally and Ricky, are sitting around him on the floor.

Sally: *Wake up Daddy! Why doesn't Daddy wake up?*

Julie: (speaks gently) *We can't wake him up. He's peaceful now. He didn't have to suffer. He's at home with all of us.*

Diane: Cries quietly.

Director: *Does anyone touch him?*

Julie: *It's ok to touch him. He's not cold or anything.*

Sally and Ricky gently reach out and touch Bill and stay in this position. Julie leans against Diane and they both weep.

Sally: (cries) *My daddy! My daddy!*

Julie: Cries.

As she entered this scene, the protagonist was already warmed up to the strong positive relationships in her family and to her capacity to respond well with the people she loved. With her spontaneity high, she generated a fresh and vital response in the situation. She was able to fully experience her grief for her brother and at the same time, respond in a comforting way to her sister-in-law and the children. She was conscious of herself and her family experiencing now what they had missed during the original event, and she felt herself stepping into a more significant place in the children's lives. The protagonist's crying marked a catharsis of integration in the form of an expression of grief alongside the fulfilment of unmet needs, that 'sense of opening out and including other elements outside of oneself' (Clayton & Carter, 2004:337). The second example of a corrective interpersonal experience relates to complex grief and a history of family trauma. It illustrates the same processes, but in a starkly different enactment.

JANE: COMPLEX GRIEF WHEN A YOUNG CHILD'S MOTHER DIES

When Jane is 6 years old, her mother dies when a car hits her as she walks along the road at night. Jane's early life is dominated by her father's violence towards her mother, and her mother's death is never discussed within the family. In this environment, Jane's fantasies about the death flourish. She carries a sense that her mother chose to die to escape Jane, and she is haunted by images of body parts strewn across the road. She steps forward to be a protagonist in a psychodrama, with the purpose of having an adult-to-adult conversation and telling her mother how her death has affected her throughout her life. In the opening scene, Jane is unable to express herself and realizes that she cannot focus because she is concerned about her father's violence towards her mother. This is the action insight scene, where it becomes clear that early reparative work is required. The drama moves to a new scene, where Jane's resourcefulness emerges. On the stage, the auxiliary who is enacting the role of Jane as a young child hides while her father verbally attacks her mother. On the edge of the stage and accompanied by a double, Jane watches her parents fight and the child hide. The scene is

repeated with increased intensity. The double, attuned to the protagonist, makes an intervention that 'brings Jane to life'.

Auxiliary as father: (yelling at Jane's mother) *You are such a stupid, ugly woman.*

Auxiliary as mother: Screams.

Double: *No! That's not right! That can't happen!*

Jane sits up straight and looks more alert.

Auxiliary as father: *I don't care!*

Director: *If that's true Jane, put words to it for yourself.*

Jane: *Yeah! That can't happen. You guys stop that.*

Auxiliary as mother: *Careful, he'll hurt you!*

Jane: *I'm not frightened of him.*

Director: *Is that right?*

Jane: (voice stronger) *I'm not frightened of him. I've stood in front of him to stop him hurting my little sister. Yeah!* (crouching and moving towards her father).

Director: *You're an adult now. You don't have to be a little child anymore.*

Jane: *Yeah!* (standing up, hands on hips, facing her father, looking him in the eye) *Stop that!*

As the scene ends, Jane feels more resourced and warmed up to herself as an advocate for the child, a clear determined boundary-setter. She looks at the child who is still hiding and begins to feel concern for her. Now, the scene of the death is staged. Auxiliaries are chosen to be Jane's mother and the car. Jane sits on the floor at the edge of the stage holding an auxiliary who is enacting her 6-year-old self, while her mother walks along the road. The car appears and makes a loud noise as it hits Jane's mother, who screams and falls to the ground.

Jane: (looking at the scene) *I'm feeling a bit like crying. I feel sad* (looking down at the child and stroking her head). *I'm looking after you.*

Auxiliary as 6-year-old: *Is her body all over the road?*

Jane: *No, she got knocked and fell to the side of the road. She didn't even get run over.*

Auxiliary as 6-year-old: *Is that my mummy?*

Jane: *Yeah, but it's all right. It's frightening, but I'm going to look after you.*

Jane reverses roles with her 6-year-old self and the enactment of the accident is repeated.

Jane as 6-year-old: *It's scary and I, I suppose I'm only little too.*

Auxiliary as Jane: *You're only tiny.*

The 6-year-old Jane cries while she is held and comforted by the adult Jane.

Jane: (crying, with her arms around 6-year-old Jane). *It is sad. We can be sad together. We're not ever going to get what we wanted from her. ... I'll listen to you. I'm with you and I'll nurture you.*

The production of this scene was important, including setting up the auxiliaries to enact the accident in a way that was meaningful for the protagonist. The auxiliary enacting the 6-year-old child spontaneously offered material that was relevant to the scene, and this added to the crisp production and the warm up of the protagonist. The protagonist, now well warmed up to her spontaneity through the action insights and activation of resourcefulness that emerged from the previous scenes, initiated the corrective response to the child with minimal intervention from the director. Deeply affected by the enactment of the accident, she spontaneously turned her attention to the child and responded to the child's needs. As an adult, she began to double the child, and it was with this adult caring that the child was able to warm up to her loss. Reviewing the scene later, the protagonist's reflections were resplendent with moments of 'opening out and including other elements outside of oneself' (Clayton & Carter, 2004:337). In witnessing the 'psychodramatic accident', she had realized that her mother did not abandon her. She also actively learnt from the auxiliaries during the drama, noticed the group members' acknowledgment of her mother's death during the sharing and experienced the caring of this new community.

The examples of corrective interpersonal experience offered above constitute social atom repair, whereby a previously unmet interpersonal need or act hunger was fulfilled, and new progressive roles were developed. The action insights and resourcefulness that emerged in the earlier scenes led to greater spontaneity and flow in the later scenes. The protagonists and auxiliaries, now accessing their spontaneity, generated a greater proportion of the production and minimal intervention from the director was required at these later stages. Expressions of mutually positive relationships followed, in which the protagonists initiated the longed-for responses.

Interestingly, protagonists identified corrective interpersonal experiences as having the most transformative impact of any of the events in their enactments. Yet, when tested against Greenberg's and Foerster's measures for 'allowing and accepting emotional pain', they did not fit the EFT explanation of corrective experiences. One reason for this might be that the two models place spontaneity at different points in the therapeutic process. As noted earlier, Greenberg (1999) proposes that 'allowing and accepting emotional pain' produces affective and motivational change, a change in perception of self and others, relief and self-affirmation. In contrast, the spontaneity explanation advanced through this research understands that these same conditions are produced before the corrective interpersonal

experience can emerge. As Clayton proposes, when spontaneity is high, old warm ups move into the background and progressive roles are strengthened and produce a catharsis of integration (Clayton & Carter, 2004). The therapeutic weeping in the social atom repair scene is more fully understood as a catharsis of integration rather than as a marker of the internal experience of allowing and accepting emotional pain.

Spontaneity's Efficacy in Producing Profound Corrective Experiences

These are several features of the corrective experience in psychodrama that suggest that a focus on spontaneity rather than emotion is more likely to produce profound transformative effects:

1. The processing of emotions appears to be an element of action insight events, but while these events assist protagonists to develop a more hopeful and compassionate attitude to themselves and their situations, they do not on their own produce lasting change. These events are more usefully understood as part of the process of building spontaneity in the protagonist's system and contributing to the protagonist's motivation to create something new.
2. The depth of experiencing of the original event is essential to the emergence of insight. Conflictual responses fall away, and the protagonist becomes more unified, while the gradual development of spontaneity means that spontaneity emerging at one stage contributes to greater spontaneity in the next stage. For some protagonists, the increased spontaneity that comes with insight leads to a quick resolution, and the development of a new and adequate response. For most, the spontaneity that comes with insight is not adequate to produce social atom repair and unresolved act hunger remains. When resourcefulness is activated, the protagonist 'wakes up' to their capacity for effective action and increased confidence energizes the protagonist to move to social atom repair.
3. For a corrective interpersonal experience to emerge in a psychodrama enactment, the spontaneity of the protagonist and auxiliaries needs to be high enough that they take a greater part in producing the scene themselves. The protagonist's responses become increasingly free flowing and the director's interventions become increasingly minimal. The social atom repair that occurs in these scenes is most transformative when the protagonist initiates the reparative relationship.
4. Acceptance of self in the moment is linked to greater spontaneity in psychodrama enactments, as illustrated in the scenes above. An expression of a positive relationship to self immediately precedes the emergence of all new responses.
5. Emotional release in the corrective interpersonal experience scene

can be understood as a catharsis of integration. This catharsis contains powerful emotions, such as grief, fear and pain, that were present during the original event, along with the experience of the new relationship that emerges. The protagonist recognises a new experience of self and the relationship.

Spontaneity or Emotion: Why Does It Matter?

The way in which we conceptualize the therapeutic process affects what we focus on as practitioners. If we orient to emotion, we will prioritize emotional expression. If we focus on spontaneity, we will look to the protagonist's warm up and produce the social and cultural system to which they are relating, so that they deepen all aspects of their warm up. We will orient to elements of the system that generate greater spontaneity.

The development and integration of a transformative relationship is the corrective experience in psychodrama. It is not imposed or structured by the director but emerges from the protagonist in relationship with the director and auxiliaries, as spontaneity increases. The model of spontaneity development that is set out here is not all encompassing. It is based on the experiences of 14 protagonists and four psychodramatists, working with the specific theme of painful emotional experience. The model does, however, offer insights into the efficacy of spontaneity in generating corrective experience during psychodrama enactment, especially in the form of action insight and in the social atom repair of a corrective interpersonal experience. Spontaneity emerges as both a catalyst of change during therapy *and* an outcome of that therapy.

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