

The Loneliness of the Long Distance Writer

Isolation in T.E.P.-In-Training Process

by Dale Herron

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When I sat down to write up a curriculum I had been using for the Auckland Training Centre for Psychodrama's most advanced trainees, I felt like I used to feel standing atop the 6 metre diving platform as a teenager – there was a lot of empty space in front of me.

I don't know what to say about a curriculum apart from the bare facts. I don't know what needs to be known about the facts themselves.

This empty space, this being at the edge of what I know, perhaps what is known, is certainly a creative moment. All of our psychodrama training and experience prepares us for such creative moments because we work always with the unknown, yet as we become more familiar and trusting of the method, our trainers and supervisors, there are some **knowns** as well.

And as we begin the Trainer, Educator and Practitioner process, especially supervising and writing about what we know and do as trainers and supervisors, there is an aloneness and sometimes a creative vacuum.

When I took my written curriculum to my supervisor, we worked hard together to discover

what else might need to be included to shape the content for the written communication. We were both, I think, working right out at the creative edge – trying out ideas,

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discarding them and co-creating a working structure to communicate what I knew to the reader in a lively way.

When we worked together in this way, we were both enlivened and excited. I am sure you have

experienced this at times yourself. Both of us needed to move far beyond what we knew or what we could call on from other models.

Yet most often, T.E.P.s and T.E.P.s-in-training do work alone and supervision can be infrequent or at a distance. This is neither bad nor good but simply reflects what *is* at this stage of the journey. And what is experienced, I think, is a form of aloneness (not sentimental loneliness) which is both appropriate and at times daunting.

I have no doubt that meeting with other T.E.P.s – formally and informally – ignites creative sparks that fan into warm fires that enable the work to proceed. Trainer development workshops, conferences, T.E.P.-in-training groups, all can serve these functions.

Now that we have so many potential T.E.P.s among us, should these events and areas be given more attention and emphasis in local training centres and at conferences? We T.E.P.s-in-training in Auckland have been meeting more or less regularly for several years and we come away from trainer development opportunities with renewed vigour and bursting with ideas. Do T.E.P.s have these opportunities, or are T.E.P.s so involved with the running

of the centres, the training, the writing and supervision that they also live with the aloneness as a fact of life? For T.E.P.s, where does regular supervision come except one's peers? That alone might not be adequate, so I have sought regular on-going supervision within my profession which is excellent but quite different from working with a T.E.P. Especially when I am thinking, writing and developing courses and philosophy directly related to psychodrama, there is a large empty space at the front where the ideas will appear and become tangible – soon. Meantime I am learning to stand at the edge of the board.