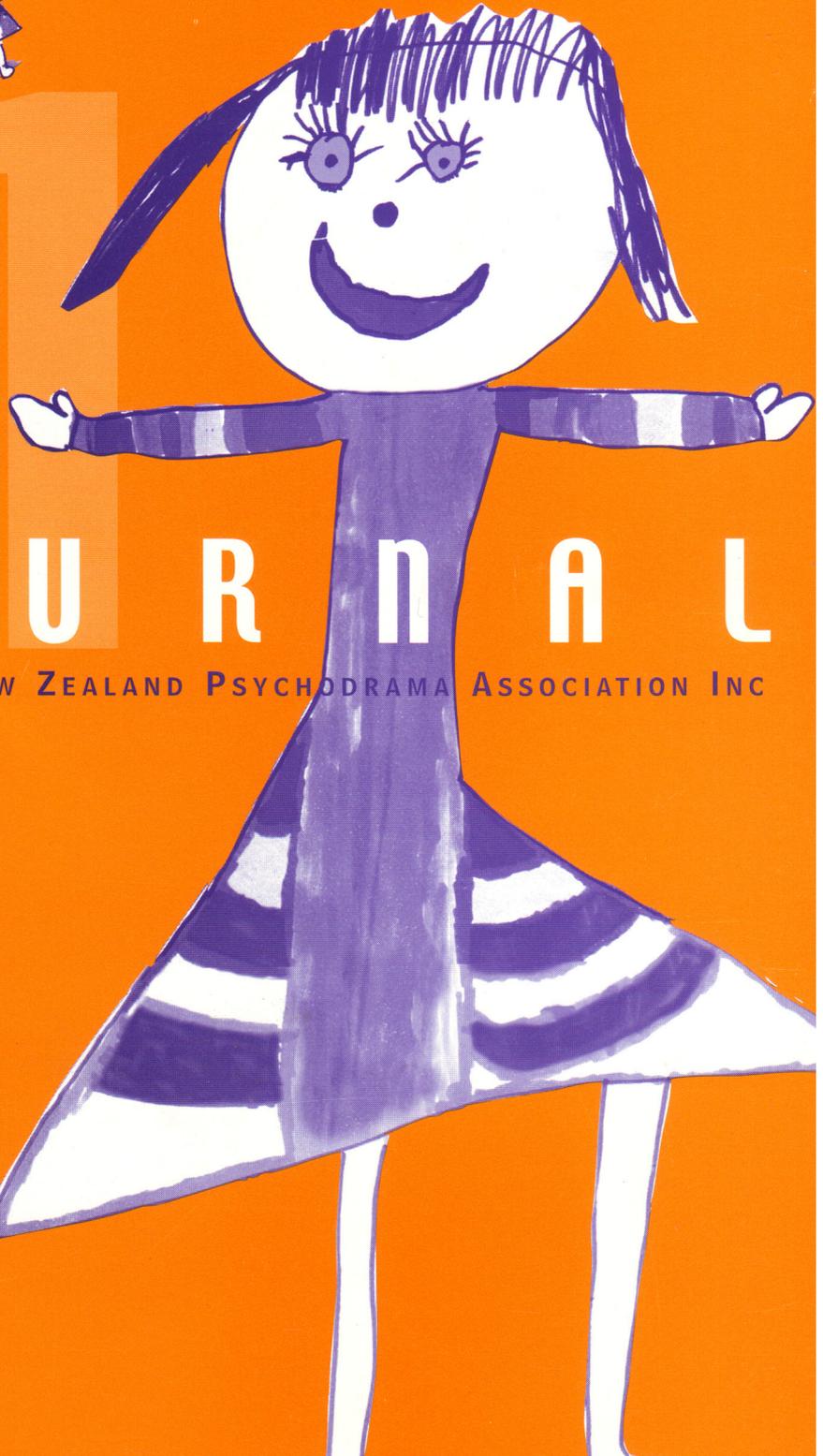


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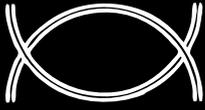
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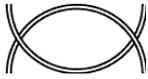
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The purposes of the Association particularly include professional association with one another, the setting and maintaining of standards and promoting the establishment and reputation of this method.

Members associate particularly within its geographical regions, at the annual conference, through regular bulletins and this journal.

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“Who Will I Choose and Who Will Choose Me?”

Using Warm Up and Sociometry to Facilitate a Progressive Classroom Culture

by Bona Anna

Bona Anna is a Psychodramatist and is Assistant Principal at a state primary school in Christchurch, Aotearoa/New Zealand. She has been developing ways to apply Moreno's theories and techniques in her work as a classroom teacher, with the aim of improving learning and educational outcomes. Here she focuses on the use of warm up, sociometry and sociometric thinking to facilitate a progressive classroom culture. This article draws from her psychodrama thesis.

INTRODUCTION

Most of us have thought of reading books, signs, music and the formulae of mathematics and science. But reading people, things, situations or relationships may be a relatively new idea. Reading the cues of behaviour in specific life situations, however, gives us the primary data for a science of human relations. As we learn to read the role-playing of ourselves and others, our aims, our attitudes, our aspirations, and our warm up to interacting to achieve what is important to us will become more concrete. (Robert Haas (1949:240) introducing one of the first books on Moreno's work to be published for the education sector in America in 1949.)

Teachers in New Zealand have become experts at facilitating accomplishment in curriculum areas such as oral language, reading, writing, mathematics, science and the arts. Although social development

has come to be regarded as an essential part of a child's education, its occurrence has been presumed rather than planned. For the most part, it is expected that social education will “happen” within the general classroom program. Largely, for many children, it does. Those children who come to the notice of the classroom teacher for deficiencies in social development are usually referred to special needs programs for individual help, or special programs are set up within the classroom to assist a “problem student”. There is a focus on the individual child, whose limited social ability and low social acceptability is often expressed through, and then noted as, “bad behaviour”. Thus, role clusters such as *behaviour problem* and *naughty child* tend to develop in the class and are embodied by particular children.

Systemic analysis to assist in understanding this phenomenon has been under-

utilized, although American educators were beginning to grapple with this issue as early as the 1940s. During that period, McClelland and Ratcliff, two sociometric researchers from Houston, Texas, commented that ...“teachers’ plans and efforts have been thwarted because pupils who started school so eagerly and with such well-meaning intentions have been frustrated in their efforts to learn by a feeling of not belonging. Many of these pupils have dropped out of school and a far larger number who remained in school have not done well. Good teachers have always tried to help their pupils fit the social milieu of which they are a part, but their methods have been trial and error because no one has shown them a method that they might use” (McClelland and Ratcliff 1947:147). In more recent times, this concern has been addressed on an ad hoc basis through the implementation of social skills or life skills programs in schools. Again, however, there is a focus on individual skills-based learning. The sociometric implications are poorly understood, and recognition of Morenian theory is absent.

In Moreno’s view, a positive and supportive set of relationships in the social atom is a necessary component for an individual to achieve a high degree of spontaneity and creativity in life. “Moreno believed that our social world, what he came to call the social atom, was highly significant to our sense of well-being. In a constantly shifting pattern, we reach out towards or reject individuals in our social atom, and they do the same towards us” (Fox, 1987:xv). A low sociometric position tends to lead to social isolation and therefore a loss of creative potential. Much of Moreno’s work was directed toward improving the position of the isolate in society.

Applying this thesis to educational enterprises Robert Haas (1949), an innovative American educator, coined the phrase “social literacy” and identified two reasons for its addition to the core curriculum. Firstly, in his view, a progressive social environment was an essential prerequisite in reducing under-achievement in educational attainment and promoting adequate achievement. Secondly, Haas maintained that, for the promotion of democratic human relations, a citizenry must develop adequate problem solving, flexibility, kindness and courtesy. Conflict could then be negotiated using a higher level of skills than presently existed. The ability to role reverse – experience the situation from the other’s position - was essential for any lasting resolution in human conflict and this ability had its origins in social learning. These purposes remain relevant in the present educational environment, and are in accordance with the aims for essential skill development set down in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (1993:17-20).

In his book *Effective Group Leadership* Max Clayton (1994:13) maintains that a group meets in order to achieve certain goals. The group leader’s function therefore, is to facilitate the development of a group culture within which the group members are able to do the necessary work to achieve those goals. This principle is applicable to the leadership of any group, including a group that has formed for educational purposes. My work required the facilitation of a classroom culture in which the effective development of skills, attitudes and knowledge, as set out in official curriculum documents, could take place. Sociometric analysis, combined with the utilization of the concepts of warm up and sociometry, enabled me to facilitate increasingly progressive learning roles, positive classmate relationships and adequate social development. The result

has been the emergence of a progressive classroom culture or learning environment, and thus the enhancement of educational achievement.

A Sociometric Analysis

Moreno states that sociometry aims to determine objectively the basic structure of human societies (Fox, 1987:20). It involves the study and measurement of social relations - the "groupal" and structural dynamics in any community, group or class (Clayton, 1989:59). Sociograms may be used to record the patterns of social relations. These are the positive, negative or neutral feelings flowing between people in a group or students in a class. The sociometric term for this is tele - the projection of feeling, in the here and now, into space (Clayton, 1989:61). Transference is often involved in the phenomena of projection, interfering with the chances of positive two-way tele developing. A person's feeling towards another may not originate solely in the present situation, and may not really be "deserved" by the person onto whom it is being transferred. This feeling may originate in a previous relationship. If that relationship involves conflict, the transferred feeling is likely to be negative. It is this negative, transferred feeling which underlies dysfunctional group processes and, in the case of school children, fragmenting classroom relationships.

Some children in the class will be highly chosen by others - the positive stars or stars of acceptance. Other children will be significantly under chosen. These are the negative stars, or stars of rejection. A few children will be completely neglected - the isolates. Clayton (1989:63) maintains that the true isolate does not choose and is not chosen at all. A few children may form isolated

dyads choosing only one other and remain separate from the rest of the class members. A subgroup of children, who choose only each other and exclude all others, is called a clique. As well, certain children may have a position in the group whereby they act as links. These pivotal members become obvious when they are chosen by children from two different subgroups or are chosen by all the positive and negative stars. These children often place value on both sides and act as neutral ground for relating. They are central to the development of positive and functional sociometry in a class.

As a teacher relating to the educational trend towards collaborative learning approaches, I have frequently directed my students to choose partners or organize themselves into small work groups. As many teachers have done, I noticed the group dynamics emerging in the class. Through directions such as "choose a partner for folk dancing, pair up for walking, choose a reading buddy, form a buzz group, make groups of four for project work", the classroom sociometry was revealed publicly, and often painfully, on a regular basis. Some children were highly chosen while others were under-chosen. The isolates stood alone. The dyads chose each other. The pivotal children attempted to straddle the emerging gulfs. A tone of anxiety and fragmentation developed. Coping systems were engaged. Chaos threatened. It seems self evident to comment here that class cohesion was reduced. I, like many teachers, made attempts to intervene in these regressing group dynamics by suggesting certain pairings to children, or by asking the pivotal children to pair up with isolates and negative stars. However, having little theoretical background in sociometry and group process at this time, my attempts to effectively assist students in the management of their relationships were

largely unsuccessful.

This poor class cohesion compounded over time and was reflected in a range of fragmenting behaviours by particular children. Certain roles - *the reluctant chooser, the self-important clique leader, the frightened clique seeker, the rejected victim, the anxious participant, the withdrawing isolate, and the village idiot* - cemented themselves into the classroom culture and seemed difficult to shift. The learning environment was thus characterized by exclusivity, harshness, low risk-taking and high anxiety. In my view, under-achievement of group goals was a consequence. I hypothesized that the educational attainment of children, especially those whose experience of the sociometry was negative, was reduced. Furthermore, the growth of social literacy in each student was not attended to in a planned or systematic way. The curriculum goal of social development remained, therefore, poorly met.

A thorough search through the literature led me to realise that educators from the late 1930s onwards have used sociometric measurements and techniques to intervene in the social dynamics of a classroom. Their purpose was to positively influence childrens' self-concepts, social literacy and enjoyment of school, and thus facilitate a higher level of educational achievement. I was particularly struck by the remarks of Nahum Shoobs (1947,154-164). Commenting on the positive behavioural and scholastic results of applied sociometry in a Brooklyn, New York public school classroom, she pondered how children might develop flexible and functional roles if exposed to sociometry from kindergarten levels.

I began to envisage that the development of fragmenting roles might be impeded, the development of progressive roles

promoted and a progressive learning culture emerge. Thus, specific planned sociometric interventions would eventually be unnecessary in the absence of an entrenched, regressive sociometric system. Behaviour problems need not arise to any large extent, and the class work could be fully focused on the teaching and learning programs. I was further encouraged by Clayton's contention (1994:18) that the sociometric structure of any group has a bearing on the amount and quality of the learning. I firmed up my resolve to put soundly-based sociometric practices into place in the classroom. This could be called, perhaps, sociometric classroom management.

As a pre-requisite, I utilized the concept of warm up to good effect in developing adequate learning roles. The aim was to facilitate the growth of progressive roles, a fluid, positive sociometry and a high level of social literacy in the students. Overall, I was interested in how a well-functioning sociometric structure and an adequate warm up in students could contribute towards a positive classroom culture over time, so that educational goals were highly achieved. New entrant pupils arriving from kindergarten would thus enter an established expansive learning environment. In my view this approach had the potential to build children up and ensure that their experience of school was positive. The school might thus make a significant contribution towards progressive development and the enhancement of spontaneity in each child, as well as achieving its more precisely prescribed educational objectives. These ideas linked well with Moreno's vision of an educational ethos built on the unifying power of spontaneity.

WARMING UP TO PROGRESSIVE ROLES

If you stand at the gate of any school and watch children arrive in the morning to begin their school day you will immediately notice the wide range of warm ups with which they come. I noticed that many of the children I taught arrived at school already warming up to a day of activity and learning. These children walked in with an air of expectancy and purpose. Then there was the other group, the potential rejectees, the isolates, the victims and the children with behavioural problems. They arrived at school warmed up to a range of fragmenting roles. There may have been trouble at home - early morning television watching instead of preparation for school, uneaten breakfasts or no breakfasts, impatient parents, sibling arguments, mislaid homework, lost school bags, lunch preparation problems, transport difficulties. Some parents were unable to model an adequate warm up for their children's school day or to provide a home environment where this could be facilitated. Thus, we have arriving at school, together with those who are well warmed up, the anxious learner, the willful rebel, the disorganized school attendee and the time bomb. The challenge for a teacher lies in her or his ability to gather up such a diversity of warm ups in a short space of time and create a functional education work group by nine o'clock.

I developed a range of methods to assist in the creation of an adequate warm up to the school day. First and most importantly was the development of an appropriate warm up for myself, the teacher. Just as a therapist or group leader focuses conscious attention on developing a positive warm up to the work ahead, so too must a teacher actively develop in themselves a good warm up to the educational work, the classroom

environment and the students. I then turned my attention towards the students, and developed procedures to assist them to warm up appropriately to the school day too, so that they arrived purposeful, positive and well organised.

A Focus On Framing

I had noticed that the traditional practice of allowing children unsupervised playtime before the official class beginning time of nine o'clock had a fragmenting effect on an appropriate warm up to learning. In response to this, a loosely supervised independent reading and informal story discussion session, beginning for each child as they entered the class and including willing parents, replaced playtime before school.

A Focus On Parents, Time And Structure

I began to pay more attention to the expectations that I had of parents. All relevant organisational matters were announced to parents beforehand. As well, the school's expectations of the home were communicated to parents and caregivers on enrolment. Thus I applied the principle of parallel process, whereby my well-organised focus was communicated to parents, who in turn proceeded to model adequate expectations for their children.

A Focus On Purpose

The assumption is often made that students know the purpose for which they come to school. Informal research into this matter has led me to believe that children's personal understanding of the reasons for school attendance vary widely, and are often at odds with those of the teaching staff and parents. With the aim of developing a workable warm

up in each child and a sound purpose for the class programme, I directed a session at the beginning of the school year. This took the form of small group talk, feeding into whole class discussion, and concluded when a number of commonly held purposes for attending class were established and recorded. To stimulate children's thinking about this often-neglected topic, I enacted the role of a student with inadequate, confused or unknown reasons for attending school and invited the students to interview me.

Children joined this reception class through the course of a year as they arrived from the local kindergarten. Similar work to develop a purpose was undertaken with the new entrants, especially those whose warm up to school was fragmentary. This took the form described above, but was sometimes carried out on an individual basis. In effect, I was modeling a useful warm up to the new "career" called school.

A Focus On The Teacher's Opening Statement

Max Clayton (1994:14-19) outlined the leadership displayed by a group leader in setting a positive purpose and effective, inclusive working structures for a group. He noted that what the leader said in the opening statements began a warm up in the group members, which could be built on as the group proceeded. The likelihood of good outcomes was thus virtually guaranteed. I paid closer attention to my opening statements, with increasingly improved results. A purposeful warm up to learning emerged in the class and was built on appropriately. An example of an opening statement is presented later in the article.

A Focus On The Development Of Progressive Learning Roles

I directed class sessions with the purpose of focusing attention on the development of progressive learning and social roles. One of these, "Getting Ready For School", was initiated to help students prepare for school in the mornings. This was particularly pertinent for those pupils whose home circumstances did not facilitate an adequate warm up to school. A home scene was produced. Moreno's concepts of role exercise and guided spontaneity (1949:X,No.5), and the psychodramatic techniques of concretization, maximization, mirroring, modeling, doubling and role reversal were utilized. Another session, "Arriving At School" was conducted to assist in the development of progressive functioning on arrival at school. "Welcoming New Children" and "Being New At School" facilitated the growth of adequate roles for the integration of beginning students. An example of one such session, where detailed description and analysis is provided, is included in my thesis (1998:46-52).

The application of the principle of warm up in the ways described facilitated the development in students of a range of progressive roles. I modeled an adequate warm up to the role of the teacher and guide. The structure of the program was such that the children entered into a quiet, friendly and purposeful learning environment. New entrant children were inducted adequately. Confusion, anxiety and chaos rarely intruded to warm students up to fragmenting roles. Progressive role growth in the students stimulated a greater expression of spontaneity, and laid the groundwork for the utilization of sociometry in the development of classmate relationships.

DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A PROGRESSIVE SOCIOMETRIC STRUCTURE

The building up of positive relationships in the class was accomplished by maintaining an awareness of the sociometry as it emerged, and adopting management strategies, described below, which pre-empted negative structures and reinforced positive links, thus promoting maximum flexibility, creativity and spontaneity. The development of progressive learning and social roles described was already a contributory factor, and the increasingly open sociometry in turn assisted students to develop and maintain a warm up to functional learning roles.

School activities such as reading, talking, walking, dancing, physical education, mathematics, problem solving, science experiments, social studies assignments and art provided many opportunities for work to be done in pairs. The directions for pairs formation were designed to facilitate progressively more flexible relationships: "Look around the class and choose someone with whom you enjoy working; you would like to work today; you think you could work well with on this occasion; you have not worked with for a long time." If there was an odd number I suggested that students take the initiative to form a group of three. The range of curriculum areas lent themselves to a variety of sociometric instructions. For example, in physical education the focus might be: "Choose someone with whom you think you could work safely."

On some occasions I issued sociometric instructions to encourage an appreciation of the diversity of roles and talents within the class which could be used to approach the multiplicity of different learning activities:

"Earlier, in physical education, you chose someone with whom you thought you could work safely. Now you are going to use musical instruments. Music is a different kind of activity from physical education. Look around the class and choose someone with whom you think you could create good music."

Co-operative group work was often utilized for learning activities as well. The management of group formation had a profound effect on the quality of the classroom sociometry. I varied the directions for different tasks over a year to encourage a broad range of choosing. For example: "You are going to do this science task in groups of four. How about you look around the class, and choose three other people whom you think you could work well with on *this* particular task; you think might be good to work with in science; you think you could be helpful towards in science."

In the beginning a high level of anxiety in the class was managed successfully with the direction: "Choose someone with whom you think you will feel happy and secure." However, as students developed familiarity with sociometric management of this kind and as I became more encouraging that they take the choosing seriously, I noticed that an atmosphere of openness and daring began to develop. I was then able to introduce increasingly more challenging directions over time. My aim was to lead students to consider linking with an ever-increasing range of classmates, and to gradually approach those with whom sociometric links were weak, neutral or negative. The graduation of directions was thus: "Choose someone whom you do not know very well but would like to get to know better; it might be a challenge to get to know better; it might be a challenge to work with; you have never paired with before."

On the occasions when I “inherited” a class of students in which the sociometry had been unmanaged, I faced a greater challenge. This was particularly so if the students were older and the relationship patterns more entrenched. I observed that there was a general tone of defensiveness, rigidity and aggressiveness amongst the students, and the sociometric structures had an inflexible, closed quality. Students chose only their “best friends”. The roles of isolate, victim, negative star and positive star were clearly discernible and were expressed by the same few children. A low level of spontaneity and a high level of anxiety characterized the class.

In a therapy group a group leader might work directly with such sociometry, asking members to reveal their negative, positive and neutral choices, and she or he might begin to explore the origins of these choices with the aim of producing a greater flexibility over time. However, in the educational context in which I worked the sociometric management described above was utilized to “loosen” the entrenched sociometry, so that educational aims might be better realized. Acting on ideas suggested by Clayton (1994) and referred to earlier, I formulated an opening statement that I thought was appropriate for the older students in this particular class, and presented it at the beginning of the school year.

“Welcome to your class for 1998. I am looking forward to a good year of work with you. I notice that some of you are unused to working with a wide variety of other students and like to work with the same group of students all the time. I am someone who believes it is good and productive to work with a lot of different people at different times for different purposes. So this is one thing you will learn to do under my guidance. I hope we will be able to create

an open, friendly learning environment in which everyone’s contribution is valued, where it is understood that making mistakes is a normal part of learning, and where every one of you will develop your abilities in all the different subjects we will be studying.”

This opening statement warmed the children up to a range of responses – surprise, shock, relief, excitement, fear, disbelief, cynicism, resistance and anxiety. Thus, I issued simple and non-threatening sociometric directions to begin with and built up the challenge over the year.

In utilizing the kind of sociometric management that I have described, there was no intention of replacing spontaneous friendship links with forced, unwanted or artificial links. The sociometric directions were carefully framed with specifics, stating clearly that students were to work with a chosen peer or peers for a specific purpose, to the best of their ability, for a specified period. Thus, I was not seeking to deny the reality of the positive, negative and neutral tele that existed between the students. This would have reduced my work to a form of social engineering. I noticed, however, that the students would invariably choose partners based on the existing tele until I offered sociometric instructions, which warmed them up to other aspects of themselves, particularly aspects to do with learning, working together and valuing others. As a result of my interventions the sociometry became increasingly flexible as the year progressed, and gradually an element of daring emerged. This produced a warm up in some students to the role of the *bold social interactor*. Greater risks were taken in terms of choosing work buddies and this slowly filtered through into social interaction. Thus, a range of progressive roles, absent or embryonic at the beginning

of the first term, developed over time within the social fabric of this class. In individual terms, each student was being role trained, and thereby developing functional aspects of themselves that had been previously under developed.

CONCLUSIONS

The advantage of this approach for the management of classmate relationships lay in the reduction of tension that resulted. Students, released from the anxiety which poorly managed sociometry tended to produce in the class - who will I chose and who will chose me - warmed up instead to progressive roles and a sense of daring, fun, and spontaneity. The isolate, the victim, the negative star and the dyad appeared in a much-diluted form. Role flexibility was enhanced and a fluid, open classroom sociometry developed. Behaviour problems reduced, thus allowing for maximum focus on teaching and learning activities and overall positive advances in educational achievement and social literacy.

In answer to Shoobs' pondering about what would happen if children were exposed to these kinds of sociometric interventions from kindergarten, I would predict progressive role growth in all students, and the development of increasingly more open, fluid classroom cultures. The roles of isolate and victim need not develop to any large degree in any child during their schooling. The ongoing experience of social belonging, identified long ago by Moreno as being essential to human well being, is thus accessible to assist all students to fulfill their creative potential.

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Facing Jerusalem – Reflections on Doubling

by Sandra Turner

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Being a Double for another requires courage, generosity and the ability to love. Taking up the role of the Double therapeutically also requires the roles of language giver, wise educator and skilful clinician.

This paper arises out of my desire to come to grips with the task of doubling to teach trainees. Although I double extensively in my work and have become skilled in this area as a therapist, it is another step to teach this. In order to teach and train others I have had to grapple with the material anew, learning and integrating the concepts at an even deeper level. Out of this tussle and reflection, a number of insights have presented themselves to me.

THE MATRIX OF ALL IDENTITY AND THE DOUBLE

Moreno describes the state of the infant, in which the mother, the infant, and all objects are a single whole, as "The

Matrix of All Identity". The mother, when functioning as a Double, moves towards her infant reflecting back the child's experience whilst attending to the needs of the child. She responds to her baby, laughing, cooing and playing. While the baby does not have the language of the mother it nevertheless responds and is pulled into relationship. The mother talks for both the baby and for herself and both are enlivened. It is not only that the mother enters the mind of the child, but also that the child enters into the mind of the mother. There is a weaving together of their thoughts, feelings and actions as if they were one person.

This relationship is one of the most intimate, exclusive and sensitive of all, and it is out of this that the child gains a sense of being understood. Dynamics of co-being, co-action and co-experience are manifested in the relationship between the mother and infant which is the first learning experience for the infant. From

this first stage of undifferentiation the infant begins to discover its boundaries and have some beginning sense of a differentiated self.

There is high dependency and vulnerability. If the mother fails to respond in a good enough way, the infant is left with no other way of knowing their experience. If this continues on, as it does for many children, there is a lack of development of the self and this developing child has an associated pervading emptiness.

This relationship of a mother attuned to the needs and experiences of her child is not based on empathy alone. It is a two-way telic relationship, a giving from one to the other and back again. Moreno calls this two-way relationship, "tele at work". (Moreno:1977)

WHAT DOES DOUBLING DO?

Birth is a creative act where spontaneity is maximized and indeed required if the infant is to survive their transition to the new world. There must be a high level of warm up for the catharsis of birth to take place. In psychodrama the Double is seeking to arouse in the protagonist a similar experience. This time it is a birth of the self. The task of the Double is to increase the warm up of the protagonist to themselves, using both physical and mental starters, thus making possible a knowing of themselves that would otherwise be too difficult and frightening to acquire on their own. Good doubling results in a fuller warm up to the self, and thus greater consciousness emerges and is arrived at. From this place there comes an increased ability to live with freedom.

Doubling is therefore not a technique to be taught, though many of us endeavour to do so. If Doubling remains at the level of technique the end result is often a

parody of the protagonist. Relationship with the protagonist is often not sustained and actions and phrases, which might be 10 minutes or even half an hour old, are repeated rote-like. The Double has lost their spontaneity, has ceased to be sensitive to the subtle changes in the protagonist and is acting as an automaton. In the worst moments there is a provoking and goading of the protagonist with the intent towards catharsis and action, as if this is the goal of psychodrama. This style of auxiliary work puts at risk the integrity of the protagonist and psychodrama.

REFLECTIONS ON DOUBLING

Having reflected on doubling and on how to teach it in psychodrama training, I have arrived at a number of insights;

It Isn't New Action that is Required, it is a New Consciousness of Being

Doubling is concerned with a state of being rather than a state of doing. Therefore the Double must give up all agendas, give up their ego, give up their fears and enter into the world of the protagonist. There must be full role reversal and the Double must be able to live authentically from the "I" position of the protagonist. This presupposes that she can, and does, live from her own "I" position. The Double goes to where the protagonist is, into their world. She does not lead or take the protagonist to her world.

Doubling is an Act of Love

This love is not sentimental or romantic, nor does it look for gratification. The Double cannot get away with any pretense of caring for another. Taking up the role of Lady Diana, looking to the protagonist for approval and a photo opportunity, acting

as if they care about the other, will not do it. Instead she must be Mother Theresa and crawl on her knees amongst the garbage if need be. She must go to the other, enter their world and feel the cuts and bruises along the way, not knowing whether she will be accepted or not.

Doubling Requires a Warm up and Acceptance of Relationship by Both Parties

Even when the Double goes to be with the protagonist in their world there is no guarantee of relationship. There is a time of warm-up where both are learning to be together and to tolerate each other. There will be a moment of acceptance when the protagonist is willing to have another travel with them. For some protagonists this is their first experience of the beginnings of attachment.

The Double is a Travelling Companion

The painful process of acquiring self-knowledge which up to now has been defended against, can only be managed if we are not alone. The Double must be able to tolerate intense feelings and have the capacity for intimacy. She must also know unequivocally that it is possible to face the darkness, the void that is the unknown, and that by going to this place the protagonist will return with new life. Old restricted ways of being will drop away and there will be a resurrection of the spirit. The protagonist does not yet know this and therefore cannot go alone.

The Double must be prepared to go into the territory of the protagonist's world and must be at least familiar with the lie of the land. Some familiarity ensures false paths are not taken and there is not a retreat from entering

the smelly swamps when they appear. Short cuts are to be resisted. The Double must be aware that in any moment there is more than one thing occurring in a protagonist. They need to be wise in determining what to focus on and what to maximize. A protagonist who laughs whenever they come close to their pain needs a Double who will challenge this and who will assist in the pain being expressed: this is the time to enter the smelly swamp. Joining the protagonist in flighty laughter, which is essentially a coping role, will be of limited assistance and will be a false path.

The role of the Double is limited by the experience of the auxiliary. The auxiliary must open up to all that they know, reverberate with their own experience and bring into consciousness their knowing of each moment. From this world of subjectivity the double must then bring into play their objectivity, including the roles of clinician and systems thinker to inform the experience.

The Double enables the protagonist to stay steadfast in facing that which is to be faced. She is the companion who lets the protagonist know they are not alone. Whenever new territory is entered there is an inevitable vulnerability which is often, and most reasonably, defended against, resulting in a pulling away from the new. The Double helps to ensure a forward stance is maintained.

Often when mirroring is undertaken, the vulnerability experienced by the protagonist is underestimated by the director. It is critical that the director takes up the role of Double alongside the protagonist as they endeavour to see those aspects of themselves that are not recognized.

The Double is the First Witness

New beginnings are sustained more easily if they are witnessed. Witnessing concretizes what has happened. Very often the first movement towards something new is not noticed by the protagonist. At this point they are unconscious and will still be living from an old script. A primary function of the Double is to bring into awareness the unknown. Being subtly attuned to the affect and body cues of the protagonist enables the Double to utilize maximization so consciousness begins to develop and thought begins to inform feeling in the protagonist.

The Double Builds Relatedness

All that is essential to learning is to be found in the relationship between the Double and the protagonist. When the protagonist learns to tolerate being seen having big feelings and not being overwhelmed, whilst sustaining relationship, trust and confidence in the self develops. This new learning can then be taken into other relationships.

Implications for Training

It is clear that for a trainee to learn to be an effective Double there is more than technique to be grasped.

Doubles must have had the experience of being doubled many times; of being held in relationship whilst they face their own anguish. It is preferable that they have experienced this within a psychodramatic context, to build their confidence that the method is robust enough to assist people to face what ever they need to face.

The Double must have been a protagonist many times, and know well the terrain of

their own self. They must have developed an ability to face those moments of terror that we all have without dissociating.

The Double must have been an auxiliary even more frequently to expand their role repertoire beyond their own life experience, and in doing so develop a greater appreciation for the richness and complexity of life.

Doubles must be able to sustain encounter and not pull away from their own or the others vulnerability when there is intimacy.

Group members have the opportunity to further their own development through being a Double. If they are able to remain open, vulnerable and take pride in the new life that has been brought forth in the protagonist they will be nourished and strengthened themselves. Any temptation to retreat into grandiosity or shame will be reduced.

Often there is a need for the work of the Double to be recognized especially when the work has been emotionally demanding. In this situation Mirroring by the director or other group members is needed and will assist the Double in finding their own ground to stand back on. This is captured in the following statement, "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us." [M Williamson 1992]

Doubling and Faith are Related

I have only recently begun to appreciate the relationship of Doubling to faith and formal religion.

One night when I arrive home from church my husband Ran asks me if going to church helps. He wants to walk with me and is keen to know how I make sense of both living with cancer and facing my own mortality. I am in no mood for a meaningful conversation about life; church on this occasion was less than what I sought. Having been well trained to say "Yes" to the first image that comes to mind I nevertheless flippantly toss it off as if it has little meaning. This image is of Jesus who at the time of Passover is steadfastly facing towards Jerusalem, all the time knowing it is his own death that he walks towards. I say to Ran 'this is the story that comes to mind and that if another can do it then it shows me a way to do this myself.' The story begins to take hold inside of me in a new way. In moments of solitude there is another Double available.

Moreno writes that the idea of the Double is as old as civilization and that it is found in the great religions. "If you could only talk to that person who is closest to you, with whom you are best acquainted. If we could produce for you the Double of yourself,

then you would have somebody with whom you could act together, because you belong together". (Moreno:1946)

To face Jerusalem is to face towards all of who we are, both the darkness and anguish and the brightness of our light. To do this we need many Doubles along the way, people who can help us to stay courageous and open hearted when we are struggling with our light and when we are frightened. This is what we seek to achieve in this process called psychodrama.

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An Invisible Grief – Group Work with Bereaved Siblings

by Barbara Dickson

Barbara Dickson is a Counselling Psychologist in private practice. She is an advanced trainee at the Australian College of Psychodrama in Melbourne. This article focuses on the grief of bereaved siblings and the group work approach Barbara has used with them as she has conducted groups for an agency called The Compassionate Friends over the past sixteen years.

I hope this article helps you to perceive and relate anew to the painful and distressing experience of bereaved siblings whilst they and their families struggle to navigate the terrain of grief in the first few years after the death of a brother or sister. I have discovered the grief of brothers and sisters is often overlooked or trivialised, becoming an invisible grief.

INTRODUCTION

My Own Grief

My involvement with The Compassionate Friends was foreshadowed one winter day in 1980, when my brother John died suddenly in a motor bike accident in Darwin. This experience was traumatic, “ten on the Richter scale”. While I had experienced some grief when my grandparents had died, a three or four on the scale, it was nothing of this magnitude. And their deaths had been expected. The first shock came as members of my family

visited my workplace in Melbourne to tell me John had died. While my first thought was that I was glad to get out of work for the rest of the day, I felt quite strange.

After the shock, I experienced tears, intense pain, lack of understanding from friends, work mates and employers, isolation and felt overwhelmed with intense emotions. I didn't know what was going on with me and the feelings continued as time passed. My parents, overwhelmed with their own grief, were unable to guide me. I had no map and no guide in this unfriendly and unfamiliar territory.

At this time I was a 27 year old nurse and an undergraduate student of psychology. I turned to grief theories to help me understand my experience of John's death. Three years later my grief was still occasionally acute, obviously longer than the one year which mainstream theorists such as Parkes (1972) allowed. Humanistic theorists such as Kavanaugh

(1972) consoled me more as he accepted that acute grief was experienced intermittently for several years. But his views were less accepted in psychological circles at the time.

When I went to the 'experts' for help I was told my grief was excessive, which made me feel inadequate. Friends were not much help as none of them had experienced much grief. Sometimes I grieved with my siblings and sometimes I was isolated from them. Playing music and dancing assisted me to express my grief, especially the music that John loved. That music helped me to cry.

It took me a long time to accept that my grief was legitimate. To get to this point, I had to work through restricted cultural ideas of grief, my mismatch with the mainstream theories of grief, and the 'expert' opinion that my grief was excessive.

The Compassionate Friends

I was still a psychology student in 1986 when I contacted The Compassionate Friends, a voluntary self-help and support organisation for bereaved families. I wanted to research the effects of their support groups on bereaved parents. Nine bereaved parents offered to be interviewed and I was touched when they shared their experiences generously. I wanted to give something back to them, so I asked them what I could do. Each one thought a group was needed for their children. They felt unable to care for them as well as they normally could because of their own grief. My experience as a bereaved sister led me to believe such a group was a good idea.

I responded to their request, and since July 1987, I have voluntarily facilitated more than 200 group meetings in which bereaved brothers and sisters shared their experiences.

Most of these meetings were monthly, lasting between one and a half and two hours. More than five hundred siblings have attended, most of them teenagers or young adults. While ages ranged from 13 to 55, most of them were young women, who had experienced the death of a brother between 15 and 25. They had all approached The Compassionate Friends for assistance, as the organisation has a policy not to approach bereaved people without an invitation to do so. In addition to conducting these groups I spoke with individual bereaved siblings and other family members on the telephone between meetings. From this work, I developed substantial knowledge of the experiences and problems faced by these bereaved young people.

COMMON EXPERIENCES OF BEREAVED SIBLINGS

When I compare the experiences of non-bereaved people in these age groups with the experiences of bereaved brothers and sisters, I can see their lives have been radically changed by the death of their sibling.

Changes in Wider Relationships

People often don't understand just how painful it is to lose a loved family member unless they have had the experience. Most bereaved siblings experienced a lack of understanding about their grief from others at work, at school, amongst friends and sometimes from counsellors and psychiatrists.

Soon after the death, visitors commented: "You have to be strong for your parents, they've got enough on their plate at the moment without having to worry about you too." Well-meaning acquaintances made cliched comments such as "You'll be okay" or

"He's better off where he is". Family visitors would ask how their parents, particularly their mother, was coping with their grief, but would not inquire how they were themselves. After a few months these questions stopped and people seemed to expect things would be back to normal in the family.

Later, new acquaintances would ask the bereaved siblings how many brothers or sisters they had. This was no longer a straightforward question for them. Often siblings wondered: "Do I say how many siblings I have now, or how many I had before he/she died?" While they didn't want to make people uncomfortable by replying that they had a dead brother or sister, it felt like a betrayal if they just gave the number of siblings without mentioning the death at all.

One young woman reported that, six months into the grief for her dead brother, a psychiatrist had told her she was a "gloom merchant", "hard to be around", and that he hoped she would cheer up soon. She got the impression that her grief was not acceptable, and her self-esteem plummeted. Unfortunately many bereaved siblings reported these kinds of comments. The siblings that found psychiatric help useful for their grief were in the minority. More said they gained help from counselling, especially when the counsellor said they had significant grief experiences themselves.

Withdrawing and Critical Friends

Most friends of the bereaved siblings were young, had limited experience of death, and did not understand grief. Soon after the death, some friends deliberately avoided mentioning the dead sibling. Others actively avoided the bereaved sibling, by not returning phone calls, or walking the other way when they met unexpectedly, producing

painful experiences of rejection.

Some friends wanted bereaved siblings to be as happy as they used to be, and criticised them for still grieving after several months. Some said, "It was only your brother/sister who died, how come you are so upset?" Comments like this put them 'out of sync' with their peers, even though their peers were well-intentioned towards them.

Experiences like these increased a sense of isolation, which could lead to depression, alcohol consumption, drug taking and a tendency to self-blame with thoughts such as "maybe I should be over it by now". Social life became a trial rather than something to be enjoyed. Friendships were severely tested and many did not survive.

A minority of bereaved siblings said some friendships improved, with sensitive friends learning to support their bereaved companions. Other friendships were forged when peers who had experienced a similar grief approached the bereaved sibling to offer support. Some friendships began in the Compassionate Friends support group, which delighted me.

In many workplaces and schools, little leeway was given to most bereaved siblings. They were expected to perform as normal, despite the known effects of grief such as lack of concentration, low energy and intense changeable emotions, which lead to lower school marks and to work performance dropping below previous standards. They were often in trouble with teachers for acting out. At work bereaved siblings struggled to achieve previous outcomes. Some were warned by employers that their performance was below standard.

Occasionally, an individual employer or teacher would display some compassion and understanding. These people usually assisted the bereaved siblings to continue going forward in their grief and did not add to it.

Changes in Family Relationships

I think the death of a family member is like a bomb exploding on the fabric of the family, leaving members shell shocked, isolated and devastated with grief; unable to be together the way they were before the death. The family changes, people get upset easily and they withdraw emotionally or fight each other. It takes many years for most families to develop a happy family life after the death of a child.

I found that surviving children did not want to add to their parent's burden of grief. They were fearful of overwhelming them further by adding their own grief onto what the parents were already experiencing. They could see just how devastated their parents really were with grief for their dead child.

Siblings would frequently pretend that they were OK, hiding their grief from their parents. The roles were often reversed, with bereaved brothers and sisters taking care of devastated grieving parents. So siblings struggled with the loss of the parents they previously knew, as well as their sibling. This left them to their own resources at a time they were also struggling.

Sometimes brothers and sisters reported feeling less important to parents than the sibling who had died. Occasionally they felt they had to compete for their parents' attention with the idealised memory of the dead brother or sister. This usually felt like a losing battle, which lowered their self-esteem. Frequently parents displayed many

photos and mementos of their dead child, but not many of the living children, which added to this negative comparison. Some brothers and sisters commented "They wouldn't grieve that much if I died."

Many siblings said their parents had become over-protective towards them after the death of their other child. They experienced their parents' anxieties as a restriction, which made it more difficult for them to take normal risks in their lives.

The relationship with other surviving brothers and sisters was often close in the early days of grief. In most families, this closeness did not continue. Usually, a few months on, the grief deepened and people began expressing their grief in dissimilar ways, reflecting their own personalities and their particular relationship with the sibling who had died. Family members had their own unique ways of dealing with grief and could irritate each other, causing conflict. For example, one sibling might be full of emotion and urgently want to talk about their dead sibling, while the other was struggling to put their grief on hold, so they could get on with their career.

Some siblings did manage to find a way to support each other anew, but this usually took time, effort and awareness to achieve.

Emotional Changes in the Bereaved Sibling

Grief is hard work emotionally, yet the grief of bereaved siblings seemed invisible to most people. This made their grief especially private, leaving them with intense, overwhelming and confusing emotions that lasted for long periods. They made comments like, "Why doesn't the world stop? Don't they know how big this grief is for me?"

Isolation is an inevitable part of grief, initially coming from missing the person who has died and later compounded by a lack of recognition by others of their grief. Feeling isolated didn't assist positive expression of grief.

I found bereaved siblings were often frightened by the intensity of the emotions they felt, increasing their desire to escape them. Sometimes they became withdrawn and felt suicidal. Unexpressed grief coloured their world, leading to depression, hostility and acting out. Life could be extremely difficult for long periods. They often dealt with this by drinking alcohol, taking drugs, or by being excessively busy.

While tears are not seen as OK in public, bereaved siblings would feel intense emotions at school or work. They would feel anger, depression, and sadness and have a need to cry intermittently for some years. Sometimes, especially at school, other people would 'knock' them for their tears. At work, people expected tears to be expressed 'privately' away from the workplace.

Nearly all the bereaved siblings I saw struggled with intense anger about the death of their brother or sister. For some it came with a certain freedom: they were able to reject people who treated them poorly while they grieved. Others were in conflict about expressing anger and some became actively suicidal. Many more expressed suicidal feelings as a wish to be with their dead sibling or to escape from life after the bereavement, especially from the emotional maelstrom they were experiencing.

Some bereaved siblings were freely able to express their emotions. Usually they had a supportive family, friends, counsellor or group around them.

Their brothers and sisters had died in many different ways, including transport accidents; suicide; drug overdose; misadventure; murder; genetic illness; AIDS; cancer or other illnesses; train and plane collisions; or had disappeared without trace. Each manner of death added extra emotions to the grief. For instance, the shock of sudden death; the intense anger associated with murder; the shame associated with suicide, AIDS, or drug overdose; the pain of watching a loved one slowly deteriorating with an illness; the fear of dying in a transport accident as their brother or sister had. Some expressed anxiety about getting a driver's licence, or fears about dying of a similar illness.

Impact on Teenagers of Facing Grief and Mortality

For teenagers, life was usually full before their sibling's death. Typically they had begun the struggle to become independent from their family; were experiencing pressures from strong peer relationships; were developing an interest in sexual relationships; and were studying for a career. At this stage teenagers are usually exploring life and moving out into the world.

The death of a sibling added the experience of grief for teenagers, usually bringing overwhelming emotions and reduced energy to engage in life. Many became isolated from their peers, especially when they were unable to express their emotions. In facing their own mortality, study seemed pointless to some. "Why bother making an effort to study or stop smoking when a car accident could happen, or I could die of some unexpected illness?"

As some teenagers dealt with their grief destructively, hiding the pain with drugs and alcohol, cynical behaviour, or acting out;

it took longer to deal with the pain of grief. Meanwhile their movement out into the world was inhibited.

Some teenagers were able to put their grief on hold so they could continue with their studies and do well at school or university. This could be followed by a resurgence of acute grief later on, which left them feeling 'off track' because of the time that had passed since the death.

Motivating Effects of Facing Mortality

After the first year or so, when their acute grief had subsided, some older bereaved siblings in their late twenties told me the death of their sibling motivated them to do things they really wanted to do. They had struggled to face the fact that they would die one day and that their life could be unexpectedly short. Some were motivated to get on with their studies; to make a desired career change; to value relationships and relate to people differently; to express love to people still alive; and to travel or take more holidays.

Physical Effects of Grief

In the early days of grief, bereaved siblings often lost weight and felt powerful emotions as physical pain in the gut. Sleeplessness and nightmares were frequently experienced when their sibling had died suddenly.

Concentration was reduced and memory poor. A lot of their energy was taken up with grieving, so they were often tired.

Relationship with the Dead Sibling

Frequently, bereaved siblings wanted their dead brother or sister's clothing and found

wearing it comforting. Photographs of their dead sibling became extremely important to them, although they did not always want to display them.

Some struggled with guilt for the unresolved fights and arguments with the dead brother or sister.

Some expressed a fear of forgetting their sibling, and others had a phase early in their grief when they could not remember much about their sibling, which was very distressing to them.

If the surviving sibling was younger, reaching the age of the person who died could be quite traumatic for them. They expressed fear they would die at that age; or feel they were betraying their sibling by living longer; or feel guilty about leaving their sibling behind. When they passed that age, they made comments like, "is he still my older brother?"

Usually, dreams about the sibling who died were a mixed blessing. To dream of them was often pleasant, but waking up and remembering all over again that they were dead could be extremely painful.

When the acute grief was gone, bereaved siblings needed to deal with guilt about surviving the grief, having fun and enjoying life. They needed to laugh again and go on living. Many struggled with this, wondering if it meant they no longer loved their dead sibling.

The Question of Life after Death

Nearly all siblings began questioning life after death. Spiritual issues were mentioned in many groups. Many told of psychic

experiences they had themselves or those related by others about their dead sibling. Often these came in the form of reassuring dreams or messages.

Life Transitions

During times of transition, such as moving from school to university; changing career; moving out of home; or getting married; grief for a dead brother or sister often came back acutely. At such times of acute grief, bereaved siblings reported that time felt 'elastic'. The death could feel recent, then a few days later it could seem a very long time ago.

People who were teenagers or younger when a death occurred, experienced grief during a transition as diffuse, like a background noise. Often it took time to identify the grief as the source of unexplained depression or regression.

For older siblings, grief could come back in surprisingly overwhelming ways. I saw a bereaved brother overwhelmed with grief for several weeks because his dead sister would not be at his wedding, 10 years after her death. Experiences such as this were common.

Changes in Values

Many times, bereaved people expressed intolerance for others' trivial preoccupations. Small talk about decorating houses and curtain colours could irritate them. They had a different perspective about what mattered in life. They couldn't see the point of others becoming very heated and hostile over minor differences of opinions.

Things previously important to bereaved siblings were not valued as much. They

become less materialistic. Usually relationships became valued more highly. They realised just how important relationships were when they felt the intensity of their grief for the loss of a loved one. Many spoke of the strong impulse to express love and affection to friends and family who were alive.

GROUP WORK WITH BEREAVED SIBLINGS

My Preparation for the Group

As I developed the idea for this group, I thought about the people who would come to it. For this group to be effective, I believed it was necessary that people were able to verbalise and express their feelings. I concluded that children under 14 years old would not generally have developed the necessary skills to do this, so offered the group to bereaved siblings 14 years and older.

Later I saw a young teenager get frightened by the traumatic stories and grief expression of some older siblings. I felt children younger than 14 were at greater risk of being overwhelmed in this way. When I realised this could replicate their experience with their parents, I was glad of the age restriction.

Usually I felt compassionate to the group members from the start or this emerged in the session as I allowed myself to be touched by them. My own experience of grief helped me reverse roles with them, a rare experience for most of them. However, I did not use the group to resolve my grief.

I held the belief that with adequate support from friends, teachers and maybe counsellors, participants could grow through this difficult

life changing experience and their lives could still flourish. I saw them develop wisdom and become more compassionate towards others, especially other grieving people, so I did not want to take this experience away from them. I saw grief as an expression of their love for their sibling.

Sometimes I worked with another bereaved sibling as a co-facilitator. I worked with five people for eight of the sixteen years I conducted these groups.

Description of the Group

Participants were welcome to arrive before the group and have a cup of tea or coffee in the kitchen. As the group began, we moved into the library, sat in a circle and as there were usually new people attending, I introduced myself. The group size varied, the largest was twenty-five. Usually there were three to five people. Infrequently there was one other person and myself. Some people came to the group early in their grief, others many years down the track. Some people came with friends to support them.

I did not set a particular agenda prior to the meeting. After I introduced myself, I said that in this group people talked with each other about the way the death of their sibling was affecting their life and that they usually experienced some benefit from this. Then I asked each person what had motivated them to come to the group that day, and what they wanted to gain from being there. Motivations varied from an upcoming anniversary of the sibling's death; a birthday; feeling particularly angry recently; not having expressed their grief for a while; or wanting to know what other bereaved brothers and sisters experienced.

I encouraged each person to speak about the effects of their sibling's death on their lives. I made sure each person had a chance to talk if they wished. I asked silent members what their experiences were of the various themes that arose, to give them a chance to be included. While some did not say much, others poured out their grief.

I would inquire how their brother or sister had died, leaving them free to answer broadly or in detail. As some who died had been in the news or died in unusual circumstances, intrusive questioning of the family by the press had added to their grief. I did not allow people to interrogate for details about the facts surrounding the death to satisfy their curiosity, or when their questions cut across the person who was expressing themselves.

I listened to what each person said, being in the moment with them as much as I could. The emotional intensity in the room was often palpable, as people began to express heartfelt and strong emotions. I breathed deeply and made sure I went at a slow pace in these intense moments, so people could feel I was able to be with them.

As I observed the group, I noticed people respond with a head nod, or by moving forward in the seat. I encouraged them to express their responses to each other. Usually they responded readily and bonded with each other fairly quickly. While some bereaved siblings bonded because of their ability to reverse roles with each other, others bonded through emotional fusion.

I allowed silence in the group and occasionally people sat for several minutes before they spoke. I did not usually break the silence myself, but listened to people when they spoke and responded to them.

I broke the silence if many people in the group were in the first months of grief, when words are hard to find for this confusing and difficult experience. (People are usually more articulate several months after the death). We discussed common themes and experiences as they were introduced. I brought it to their attention when they were interrupting or ignoring each other as they expressed themselves.

Differences in Expression of Grief

Each person's expression of grief is unique. This was especially noticeable when surviving siblings from the same family came to the group together. Each person's personality and their different relationships with the dead sibling were reflected in the way they grieved. These differences sometimes made it difficult for them to grieve together without conflict.

I knew some people's grief had particular aspects that made it very painful. I remember the sibling who told me of her identical twin dying. I could see there was a unique bond in that relationship, one most people never experience, that made the grief poignant.

I did not allow people to make comparative comments about whose grief was worse, or judgements about how people had died. I intervened in conversations immediately when this type of comparison began. Usually, I would let people know those comments could be destructive, that we had enough time for everyone to speak about their experiences, and they did not need to be competitive for group time.

Positive Effects of Emotional Expression

I encouraged people to be emotionally expressive. Often they would pause, tense up

and hold their breath as they began to cry, which tended to stop them from expressing emotions and crying. I encouraged them to breathe deeply and keep expressing themselves. People were allowed to cry freely, express anger and talk openly about the brother or sister who had died. I found when people were able to express their grief by crying, talking openly and expressing anger, they were able to get on with their lives with less disruption than those who were unable to express this. In subsequent groups people reported that, while emotional expression was painful at the time, it helped them move through their grief, and assisted them to work and look after their children more productively. They usually became less angry as well.

I encouraged some people who seemed isolated to think of others in their lives that they could talk to about their grief, as isolation usually inhibits emotional expression. This could be a sensitive friend, someone in the extended family, a counsellor, a group of bereaved siblings, or a group on the Internet. During the early stages of grief it was usually not their parents.

Almost all of the brothers and sisters who came to the group had used alcohol and/or drugs to alleviate the pain of grief. I knew there was no point in being critical of this behaviour, or asking them to stop. Sometimes they felt the need for a brief panacea for their grief. Some expressed their emotions only while under the influence of alcohol.

I assisted bereaved siblings to put their friends' hurtful behaviour into perspective, so they did not blame themselves. I would let them know that commonly in Australia, we do not talk openly about death and do not have established ways to approach bereaved people. Usually participants had not thought about this prior to their bereavement.

I invited support people to express their own grief if they had also known the sibling who had died. I interrupted some support people if they were giving advice or if it was clear to me they did not understand the experience of the bereaved siblings. At the end of one group, a support person thanked me for asking him to stop giving advice and inviting him to listen for the rest of the group. He said he had really listened and absorbed the experience of bereaved siblings for the first time.

Occasionally, grieving people came who were not bereaved siblings. They shared some aspects of the experience of grief, but usually did not bond with the group as much as bereaved siblings did with each other.

Regular Group Members

When people came regularly to the group, there was usually an additional factor which motivated them to attend. They may have been the only remaining child; had more than one sibling die; were isolated by being a long way from home; or had not been able to relate well to their family prior to the bereavement.

Anniversaries of the sibling's death, and times of cultural celebration such as Christmas and Easter, brought people back to the group as well. These times were usually very difficult for siblings. Their grief was in stark contrast to the celebrations in the wider society. Regular members said the group offered them a safe place, where they could express themselves without being censored, cut off or criticised.

The stories we shared were not all sad. Bereaved siblings wanted to remember and talk about the good times with their brothers and sisters, without being considered morbid. Many times in the group we

laughed. It took me a while to get used to this. When it first happened I wondered if I was doing the job right if people were laughing rather than crying. They wanted a place to talk about their shared history, including 'naughty' behaviour they still did not want to share with parents.

Usual Needs Met by the Group

Most bereaved siblings needed to know that their grief was legitimate, that the intense emotions they were experiencing were felt by others, and that other people could listen to them, understand them and accept how they were feeling. They were often surprised and comforted at how similar their experiences were, which helped them feel less isolated. Most did not become aware of the differences in their grief expression, unless they attended regularly.

This seemed enough for many people, who came once or twice to the group and in later feedback, said that the group had affected them greatly. One woman said "I only went the once, but that one meeting certainly put perspective on what I was feeling. It seriously saved my life."

When people mentioned creative expression of grief in listening to music, journal writing, prayer, poetry, sports and art, I encouraged them. At times of transition, such as marriage or baptism, I encouraged them to develop a ritual which was meaningful to them to mark the event. For example, lighting a candle, or including a picture of the dead siblings, so that the unexpressed grief did not haunt the occasion.

When siblings faced the dilemma of whether to let go of the grief and enjoy life again, some of them asked questions like "Does it mean I don't love my brother or sister if

I stop grieving?" I encouraged people to give themselves permission to let go of their grief and continue expressing the love for their sibling in a creative way in their life. I let them know that grief is not the only expression of love for someone who has died. I was there as living proof that it was possible to stop grieving and yet remain loving towards my brother.

When I was drawing the group to a close, I asked each member to reflect on what they had gained from being in the group. Typically, people commented that they were amazed by the affect on them of other people having had similar experiences. One 15 year-old girl had tears running down her face as she said, "I thought I was being selfish feeling this way about my brother. Now I know I'm not". She had not spoken much during the earlier part of the group.

As the group ended, I thanked people for their input, acknowledged whatever depth and honesty there had been in their sharing and sometimes commented on the impact of the group on me. I invited people to return to the group, but told them they were not under any obligation to do so. I knew grieving people did not need pressure to attend regularly. Initially I probably put people off returning to the group by being too careful to not put pressure on them. If siblings told me that parents insisted they come to the group, I was willing to contact parents and ask them not to insist. I believed it was a better

experience for bereaved siblings when they freely chose to be in the group.

After the formal session was finished group members could stay to talk with each other or borrow books. I suggested that people build on the 'normalising' effect of the group by reading about grief from library books. The Compassionate Friends had carefully chosen all the library books which were about people's direct expression of grief, or accurately reflected people's experience of grief, so I could confidently recommend them. Sometimes participants exchanged addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. I was glad to see this occur as it meant they would be less isolated in their grief. Sometimes strong friendships started this way.

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Encountering What is Possible – The Impact of Role Development in Facing Existential Crisis

by Sandra Turner

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Existential crises challenge the essence of who we are, often provoking a retreat into coping role systems or at worst full fragmentation. It is a challenge to get beyond coping to a place where anxiety can be met, and vitality can be sustained, for individuals and for the members of their social network.

A coping role system reflects a person's best attempt at managing an anxiety-provoking situation; it is often their best attempt at managing intense feelings of isolation and helplessness in a seemingly hostile world. The primary task of a coping role system is to alleviate anxiety and maintain equilibrium in the presence of the overwhelming threat.

Taking the ferry across Cook Strait between the North and South Islands of New Zealand is often a calm and uneventful experience with nothing to distract except a wonderful vista. Yet no one would

anchor in this strait, for even the largest craft would be tested in maintaining its equilibrium. The meeting of the Tasman and Pacific oceans brings an inevitable turbulence. This same turbulence occurs when a person simultaneously holds knowledge of both life and death in each hand. It takes a skilled and strong hearted *engager of life* to surf ski this passage, riding the waves and the wind, attuned to the elements and being at their mercy. We may admire this person, even envy them, we may even consider them to be reckless or foolhardy, but in the end we would not choose to swap places with them.

Many events in life will plunge us and our loved ones into crisis, none more so than the prospect of an early and untimely death. Death challenges in a way that no other existential crisis can. How that challenge is met depends very much on what role systems we live out of.

This paper arises out of my work as a group facilitator for people with cancer coming to terms with a diagnosis and treatment. My own experience of living with cancer has honed my perceptions and understandings, as indeed it must.

This discussion draws from role theory and personality structure: in particular the three gestalts (progressive, coping, fragmenting) first developed by Lynette Clayton and refined by Max Clayton. Lynette Clayton observes that "clusters of roles can be recorded in three gestalts, each of which has a central identity which acts as an integrating force for the role cluster." (L. Clayton, 1982)

PROGRESSIVE ROLES

Progressive role development occurs when the conditions in life have been favourable enough, when there has been good enough doubling and mirroring to ensure the integration of thinking, feeling and acting in each of the roles taken up.

If identity is located in the progressive role system we have resolved significant developmental issues and are free to focus on the tasks of actualization, of living independently and interdependently. The progressive or individuated gestalt "when organized at it's highest level allows for the natural flow of spontaneity and creativity. Creativity is released at various levels through the body and physical senses, through realistic planning, through emotional expressiveness and through experiences of a transcendent level of being." (G. M. Clayton, 1993)

Doubling (otherwise known as mirroring in the self psychology/object relations field) is the recognition of the self by the other. The mirror in psychodrama offers a view of the

self not previously recognized. As with all mirrors there is always some distortion. We need accurate doubling and mirroring during infancy and throughout our lifetime as we seek to develop new roles, articulate our experience and embrace our ability 'to be' with all aspects of ourselves.

If an existential crisis occurs before there has been adequate consolidation of identity in the progressive role system, it is unlikely that progressive functioning can be maintained when responding to any situation that threatens our sense of who we are. There will be subsequent regression to a predominately coping or fragmenting state. If terror and the fear of fragmentation have been successfully faced in the past there can be confidence that progressive role functioning will be sustained. The terror that existential threat brings will inevitably retrigger and be blurred by past experiences if they have not been previously worked through.

I include here a personal story to illustrate: I am phobic about rats, mice and anything that has a rodent appearance. A consequence of this is our children have even been denied the pleasure of having guinea pigs. Throughout my life I often joked there was no need to resolve this issue as I was sufficiently practiced at dissociating if needed, and well able to organize others to attend to any rodent event in my life. However, inevitably the affective restrictions required around this one thing pervaded other aspects of my life and this mode of operating didn't hold up. I am now thankful I did not persist with living this way and that I encountered and allowed myself the terror of what this phobia represented for me. I am still highly uncomfortable with rats and all their associated families but I do know that I can survive terror and that the ensuing big feelings and distress will not destroy me. This gives me confidence as I grapple with life now.

COPING ROLES

The coping role system is a person's best attempt at managing anxiety-provoking situations and reflects the best means of coping the person learned in their family system. Coping roles are modeled on the behaviours of parents and significant others who provided solutions to developmental crises and the family pathology. (L Clayton, 1982) Re-establishing equilibrium and creating some degree of personal organization and self-management is primary. While the main task of overcoming anxiety has been achieved the result is often a restricted and brittle response in which the modes of fight, flight or supplication prevail. There is inevitably a retreat to behaviour that is familiar even if limited. With this goes an unavoidable shrinkage of both intellectual and emotional functioning. The coping role clusters can be paralleled with the restrictive solution identified in the focal conflict model of Whitaker and Liebermann (1964). We can be sure that whenever a person is acting from a coping role a restrictive climate, encompassing others, will dominate. There is a focus on managing, on doing and on control of self or others, with little tolerance for the ability 'to be' with self and others.

FRAGMENTING ROLES

The fragmenting role cluster is present when a person no longer experiences himself or herself as coping. In this position the overwhelming experience is of disintegration, isolation, helplessness and estrangement from self and others. "The constellation of roles in this gestalt represent the unresolved pathological aspects of the parents' personalities together with the role responses of the child." (L Clayton, 1982) The critical processes of doubling and mirroring that are required for the development of a

robust self have generally been absent. If identity is located in this gestalt, or cluster of roles, then life will be experienced as empty and often chaotic. Identity is organized out of what are essentially the roles of the distressed child and the pathological counter roles of the adult.

EXISTENTIAL THREAT

There are many things which assist us in knowing who we are. These include; our place in our network of relationships, what and whom we commit to, and the activities that make up our daily lives. When anything fundamentally threatens our way of being in life, the manner in which we each know ourselves, this becomes an existential threat. This threat potentially brings a loss of a way of life often coupled with a loss of the community to which we have made a commitment. We can no longer act as we normally would and this brings a loss of confidence, making it more difficult to confidently take action.

Aging, an inevitable existential threat, confronts us all; changes in body shape, strength and durability, mental stamina and agility bring a reminder of our mortality that we strive in our culture to keep at bay. When these changes take hold it is often a shocking and unsettling time before a new equilibrium is found.

Implicit in knowing who we are is a consciousness of our felt experience; being aware of and able to have our feelings. This is at odds with our culture that classifies feelings into positive and negative and makes only the positive acceptable. Thus any expression of distress runs the risk of being seen at best as "not coping", or at worst as pathological. As a society, and even as health professionals, there is a general

inability to discern when the expression of distress is healthy and indeed even required. Frequently there is a premature leap towards settling the distressed person, and at worst a diagnosis of depression, anxiety or maladjustment disorder is made.

To be able to tolerate the distress in another we must first of all be able to tolerate our own. This is a pre-requisite for health professionals, family members and friends if they are to maintain their relationship with a person who is struggling under existential threat following the diagnosis of cancer. Such a threat is a life-changing event requiring the presence of willing and generous doubles and mirrors if the transition to a new place of equilibrium is to be achieved. An inability to respond from a progressive role state and take the position of either the double or the mirror will result in disruption to the relationship with consequent withdrawal and isolation by both parties. Coping roles will prevail along with a defensive and restrictive climate.

GROUP FOR PEOPLE ADJUSTING TO THE IMPACT OF CANCER

Over the past two years I have been co-leading, with Keitha Ross, a group called Living the Journey, for people adjusting to the impact of a diagnosis of cancer and its treatments. The age range has been from 38 years to 94 years with the greater number of people in the 50 – 80 age group. Membership ranges from 7 – 10 participants. Many have often had no previous counseling or group experience and arrive with little awareness of the inner journey that the cancer has forced on them.

People who come to this group are for the most part holding a great deal of distress. Some experience the intensity and anguish

of a recent diagnosis, some have had lengthy and radical treatment, some have carried the burden of their distress for many years since diagnosis and some face the knowledge of now having secondary spread of their primary cancer. Previous coping styles do not often hold up in the face of this existential crisis. Of some initial surprise to me was the reduced expression of affect in the group given the reason for meeting. Coping roles were prevalent as each attempted to defend against the fear of fragmentation that came with expressing feelings.

As relationships built it became possible to challenge and invite authentic encounter. Themes that have consistently been important to participants in each group have been:

- Grief about lost opportunities in the past and the future.
- Holding onto their personal authority whilst interacting with doctors.
- Family members not wanting to talk or know about the cancer, or family members being intrusive and controlling.
- Adapting to a changed body, reduced energy, physical changes, increased dependency and sometimes loss of intellectual functioning.
- Pressure of waiting for critical test results and appointments.
- Fear of upcoming treatments, surgery / chemotherapy.
- Acknowledgement of pain.
- Learning to ask for the right kind of help.

- Learning to set boundaries with friends and family.
- Looking well but not being well.
- Learning to prepare for the worst while hoping for the best. Neither living in false hope nor despair.

These themes impact on both the protagonist and all members of their social atom. When a person is functioning from a coping role they will exert strong pressure on everyone else to take up the expected counter role. Any acknowledgment of the issues will be fervently resisted. This occurs in the group as well as in members' lives.

For example, Julie was fond of telling her story and would listen, ever ready with advice to give. She became uncomfortable whenever there was an expression of distress, quickly deflecting by telling another story, making a joke, or giving a homily. In the beginning group members accommodated her, giving her space to live this way whilst maintaining their own more authentic contact. In turn, Julie's advise-giving escalated as she sought to make everything alright for everyone and insisted on having the last say. She worked hard to have people join with her in this way of living. When this was eventually resisted by the group, who persevered in working for genuine encounter, she left the session abruptly and didn't return. The many unresolved issues of her life were now knocking at the door as she endeavored to come to terms with having a terminal illness. Her old coping roles of dominating all conversation and joke telling produced alienation when others refused to go along with this way of relating. Her identity, located in the coping role system, left her with few resources to manage this next terrifying phase of her life.

LEARNING TO LIVE WELL

We often underestimate how long it takes to adjust to a change in circumstances; change that calls for significant internal work to occur before we are able to identify ourselves in a new way. Having always been an active and energetic person, it has been a big learning curve for me to "live well" within the limitations of reduced physical energy and an often-sore body. If I am to be at a seminar for a full day, the day will work best for me if I am sitting in a comfortable armchair. It is one thing to know this privately and quite another to make this happen in a public setting. What made this transition possible was the care and concern of two colleagues at a course who saw that this was essential and were able to make this happen without fuss. Their doubling gave me the confidence when challenged by other people, for having the "Queen's chair," to say lightly and with ease that I had a disability and that with it went some special needs. I was able to inquire if anyone else had special needs that needed attending to. This seemingly easy interaction belied the enormity of the shift in identity that had just taken place. I had been able to accept myself in a new way without losing anything of myself.

This event stayed with me strongly and when proudly relating to someone close to me that I had achieved the position of owning having a disability, I was taken aback by their strong command to "get rid of that label, that is just negative". My fuller display of myself did not match with their need to have me well. At this point there was a disjunction in our relationship. They were functioning from a coping role, trying to control the situation and have me adhere to their belief that positive thoughts will conquer all.

SUFFERING IS A CRITICAL INGREDIENT OF LIVING

I find we do not manage suffering well in our culture. We endeavour to overcome it, to fight and to battle to the end. Hero status is given to those who battle and overcome the enemy. Such a pathway makes it difficult for others to find any alternate route. For example, George had coped all his life by locking away his feelings. From an early age, he needed to be staunch and strong. He was a man of courage and insight. At one of the group sessions when we worked with paper and crayons he drew himself, a small figure against the snowcapped-mountains. Wondering if he had put his immune system into his picture George realized it was represented by the snowcaps he had drawn on his mountains and that the large grey mountains were the cancer. Despite his obvious ill health he thought he was still going to get better and stated strongly and very seriously that these snow-caps, his immune system, ought to be much bigger, that he should re-draw them, and quickly. The fight was still on, to beat the cancer and survive. With some gentle encouragement George was invited to sit with the idea that what he had drawn was how it actually was; he was overshadowed by a large cancer and had a shrinking immune system. Between sessions he sat with his picture; the image was doing its work.

A week or two later George came to terms with the reality of his illness; he accepted that he was dying and used his remaining energy not to fight his cancer but to experience more closeness with his children. He was able to adjust his goal from getting well again to looking forward to sitting on his deck in the spring. George became more able to sit with the reality of his situation, to be where he was and to look around him,

appreciating the simple pleasures of being alive, knowing also his vulnerability and dependence. George made it to the Spring, felt the Spring sun on his back one more time and contributed much to the group in the meantime.

We are frequently unable to relieve another of their suffering; we cannot change places but must bear witness and tolerate our helplessness if we are to stay in relationship. Victor Frankl (1964) in *Man's Search for Meaning* speaks of the tragic triad of pain, guilt and death which can only be countered by the optimistic triad of faith, hope and love. George had been keeping his children and partner at arms' length as he fought the battle of his cancer. He was fearful that any expression of feeling would lead to a loss of control and fragmentation, a kind of death of its own. The nearness of death often provides a strong impetus for change and George took the opportunity. George's story is one where there is movement from the tragic to the optimistic in the paradoxical acceptance of both his life and his death. In the group he was able to have his tears, to know the ache in his heart as he saw his relationships concretised before him and to let in the care of others that for most of his life he had kept at a distance. George did not give up hope but he did come to know realistic hope that then allowed for quality moments in the time he had left.

There is a biblical story that will be familiar to many of you. (Luke 8, 43-48)

It is of a woman who has suffered many years of bleeding and ostracism for being unclean. She has lived in isolation keeping her plight hidden. Desperate for healing she surreptitiously reaches through the crowd to touch the cloak of Jesus. Her anonymity is immediately broken when he recognizes

her touch, turns and calls her forth into the public arena. For her to come into the open, to be healed, the thronging crowd must also make way, they must give space to see and hear her. Only then is she restored to health, health that encompasses being seen and having a place in society. No longer is she coping on the margins of society but is a full member. Not very much is said of the crowd in this story but it is fair to say that the effort that is required of the woman, to come into the public arena, is the same effort that is required of all others present to not turn away from her anguish. Only then do we have a culture that is life giving.

Existential crisis threatens not only the individual but also all members of their network, including their health team. Any such threat is likely to prompt a retreat into a coping role system in an endeavour to manage the inevitable anxiety. To counter this withdrawal we all need to be doubles and mirrors for each other.

Working in the group *Living the Journey* we are seeking to develop a culture that in the face of an existential crisis is life giving; where there is not a focus on fighting but on being, and where it is possible to be seen, to see and to live with the truth of our lives. I enjoy how similar aspirations are expressed by Rebecca Wells in the novel *The Divine Secrets of the Ya Ya Sisterhood*, in which a group of lifelong friends conclude that the purpose of life is to learn to be tender and to have good manners. A philosophy that might stand us all in good stead.

NOTE

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of my colleague, Keitha Ross.

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Principles of Supervision

by Paul Baakman

Paul Baakman is a psychotherapist in private practice and also works with groups and organisations. He is a Psychodramatist; Trainer, Educator, Practitioner (TEP); and is the Director of the Christchurch Institute for Training in Psychodrama. This article draws on Paul's written work for accreditation as a TEP.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout my professional life, I have engaged in supervision. During my initial training as a residential social worker and later, in my training as a psychiatric nurse, I met a range of supervisors, some of whom I remember more vividly than others. Those supervisors who recognized my experience and encouraged me to think and use my imagination, made a lasting impact.

Within the context of ANZPA and its accredited training institutes supervision is regarded as an integral part of the training process. This is affirmed in the ANZPA Training and Standards Manual. Within the Christchurch Institute for Training in Psychodrama supervision may take place in a regular training group, in training workshops, or in individual, or group supervision sessions.

Trainees (mostly first or second year trainees) who are ready to begin applying aspects of the psychodrama method in their work, are expected to use supervision for preparation as well as evaluation and role-development. This is a time of daring and discovery, as new competencies begin to be developed. Third year trainees (and onward) continue making use of supervision. At this stage, supervision may be about the application of the method in a variety of settings, or about deepening the work, or the integration of an existing professional background with the identity of a psychodramatist. Supervision on writing tasks, such as the social and cultural atom paper or thesis, takes place with greater frequency.

In supervision, like in all human affiliations, the quality and depth of the relationship is central. I have come to appreciate the real value in committed

long-term relationships, personally and professionally. Commitment is demonstrated by valuing the intent and effort that has been invested over time, by both supervisee and supervisor, in the development of the supervisee's abilities. At the Christchurch Institute for Training in Psychodrama we noticed that quite a number of trainees were dipping in and out of training, and a number were becoming 'chronically advanced'. Trainers would 'get a handle' on someone's developmental edge, and then perhaps not see them for a year or more. Trainers would lose sight of where a trainee was at, and lose a warm-up to certain trainees. A stronger relating was called for. A move was made to no longer divide the training program into 'terms'. Whilst exceptional circumstances are taken into account, the overall expectation is now that trainees enroll for a whole year's program, and be 'hot' about training.

A commitment to the whole year's program has enabled greater continuity and group cohesion from one training event to another (trainees may of course enroll for additional training workshops at any time). Having trainees' enroll for the full year has contributed to stronger and more focused relationships, better planning, and a greater use being made of supervision. In writing this article I relate to the notion of 'development over time', by highlighting the relevance of gearing the supervision to a developmental perspective, and the importance of the notion of 'developmental levels'.

Supervision involves super-vision or over-seeing of professional functioning.

It is about:

- Integration between thinking, feeling, willing, and doing (first level integration). This integration promotes congruency and

comes about through the resolution of inner conflict, and the development of new roles.

- Learning to attune personal functioning to the demands of a role, or occupation in a changing society (second level integration). This attunement promotes the development of any or all of the five aspects of spontaneity: flexibility, adequacy, vitality, creativity, and originality.

In some parts of the world supervision is seen as necessary only for those still in training, or for those who have transgressed their code of ethics or have violated an organisational code. The belief that underpins this idea is that 'once you are qualified you surely know enough'.

"Many cultures emphasise self-reliance and put a value on solving one's own problems. For a person to seek help and make herself temporarily dependent on another person is a de facto confession of weakness or failure, particularly in Western, competitive, individualistic societies." Edgar Schein (1999:31)

In New Zealand, there is a growing understanding and acceptance of the need for ongoing (lifetime) supervision. Within the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists, a yearly practicing certificate is issued to those who supply evidence of ongoing supervision. An advantage of this is that it enables any 'consumer' or organisation to easily verify if a member is in regular supervision and this can help in establishing credibility and trust.

I believe lifetime supervision is of great value. Supervision is about much more than knowing facts and theories and following

procedures. Lifetime supervision is based on the premise that 'the more you know, the more you know what you don't know', and that it is possible, even desirable, to keep on developing, personally and professionally. Once basic training is finished the true value of supervision as a lifetime source of stimulation, challenge, and support, begins to emerge. These notions, in addition to my personal experience of the real benefits of supervision make me determined, if or when the time comes, to book a supervision session for when I cease to practice!

In this article, I highlight those principles of supervision I currently value highly in my work.

SUPERVISION ASSISTS THE SUPERVISEE IN THE COMPLETION OF TRAINING

Completion of training is achieved through the integration of a professional identity, and by developing, expanding and refining a professional role repertoire, which enables effective work with a client or group. The ANZPA Training and Standards Manual is an inspirational document which may be used by trainees to help evaluate progress. In Christchurch all new trainees receive a manual upon embarking in training.

Supervision requires trust. Therefore, it is essential that the supervisee enter into supervision voluntarily. When the supervisor is in a line management position with the supervisee, the supervisee is likely to be preoccupied with issues of performance and judgement and any adjustment is likely to be a pseudo-adjustment. When supervision is linked with a performance review, admission to membership of a professional body or teaching organization, or when there are concerns over maintenance of standards,

ethical or organisational issues, then the lines of communication and what may be communicated need to be clarified at the start.

Supervision is not friendship, counselling, or psychotherapy. Supervision centers on the development of professional roles. This specific purpose is well served by the supervisor and supervisee both taking responsibility for setting and maintaining clear boundaries between these different forms of operating.

Supervision may well involve friendliness, and may certainly have therapeutic benefits to the supervisee. After all, supervision involves the whole person of the supervisee, and includes a network of relationships (the social atom being the smallest unit of society that can be made sense of). However, keeping the distinctions between different forms of relating in mind assists the supervision to stay on track.

In the supervision of a psychodrama trainee, the psychodrama method is used. This can make for lively sessions in which the content as well as the process provides learning material. Events in a session can shake up a supervisee's worldview or sense of self. When this leads to the realisation that significant work needs to be done on aspects of the supervisee's personal life circumstances, then the supervisee may be encouraged to do this away from supervision. However, the supervisor need not be too rigid about this. Much of the work of supervision involves self-reflection and a focus on the supervisee's personal processes. Both supervision and psychotherapy are interpersonal processes that involve the examination of personal feelings. The main distinction is created by the difference in purpose. Anything that assists in the development of professional

roles is a legitimate activity in supervision, and this may at times involve working with the personal process of the supervisee. When this is done, it is important for the supervisor to be receptive to the supervisee's life experiences, and work with the influence these experiences have on professional role relationships. Gains made in personal work have a profound impact on professional functioning, and vice versa. The supervision stays on track if ultimately the focus is returned to current professional functioning.

Supervision may focus on any of the following relationships:

- Supervisee – Client (or Group)
- Supervisee – Employer or Agency
- Supervisee – Wider Community /Systems
- Supervisee – Supervisor

All of these elements have their roles, history, beliefs, values, and ways of doing things, (also known as 'cultural conserve'). All elements are inter-related and influence each other. In order to complete training any or all of these elements, and their relationships, may be addressed.

THE WARM-UP PROCESS IS ESSENTIAL FOR EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION

Warm-Up of the Supervisor

- **The supervisor warms-up to enjoying meeting and getting to know the supervisee**

An attitude of taking pleasure in meeting the supervisee assists the supervisor in

making generous assumptions about his or her functioning. Generous assumptions enhance the functioning of the supervisee. The supervisee feels accepted and a mutually positive tele may develop.

For example: Mary has arranged a supervision session. This will be her third session. From the time she walked in the front door, until she sits in her chair she has thanked me five times. She has thanked me for welcoming her, offering her a hot drink, opening a door, inviting her to the room, and in response to me saying ' please take a seat'. I ask her where she has learned to be so slavishly thankful. She responds by casting her eyes down and goes red in the face. The rest of the session Mary focuses on her weaknesses and self-doubt. The session feels like hard work. In the supervision on my own supervision, I reflect on the fact that I hardly know Mary and realize that I made a stingy and pathologising assumption. I become aware of the negative effect this had on the rest of the session.

A month later Mary books herself in for another session. I notice that she again expresses 'thank you' several times before the session begins, (evidence that my previous intervention had little effect). This time I say to her: "Mary, I notice that you express your gratitude for all the small things that come your way. Is this right; are you a person who is filled with thankfulness for all the numerous little blessings that come your way?" Mary responds with a big grin and nods: "That's me, that's right," she says, looking me in the eye. During the session, she shares some of her strengths and successes, and reflects critically, but not judgmentally, on her own functioning. This session feels like a breeze. I made a generous assumption, which helped Mary to warm up positively to the session.

- **The supervisor engages in supervision on supervision**

Professional supervision helps the supervisor to remain in touch with the experience of being supervised, stay sensitized to the supervisee, and what is required for effective supervision. The chance of the supervisor becoming isolated or grandiose in their functioning is reduced. This is a good example of being willing to 'swallow your own medicine', and 'practice what you preach'.

The word 'supervision' is used purposefully early on in the session to create a warm-up and focus. This reminds both that they are there for the purpose of professional development and not a counselling session or chitchat. In the case of an organisation paying for the supervision, both have an extra obligation to make the best possible use of time.

- **The supervisor expresses curiosity**

Active listening may involve asking open questions, following the supervisee's process, clarifying, and mirroring back what has been expressed. The supervisor's curiosity communicates interest and active involvement.

- **The supervisor has a positive relationship to time**

The supervisor allows the supervisee to work in his or her own time. Hurry communicates anxiety and is counter-productive. Certain things won't emerge in the supervisee's consciousness until the relationship is sufficiently developed. As in the process of psychotherapy, timing is of the essence. A premature intervention can have the effect of alienating the supervisee. Alternatively, when an intervention is delayed a golden moment may be missed. By not being in a hurry, the

supervisor is more likely to make a timely and appropriate intervention. I have found that when I take my time, and appreciate what is already expressed, this often results in me noticing more.

Warm-Up of the Supervisee

- **The supervisee prepares for the session**

The preparation may involve reading, writing, or thinking about a client or session.

- **The supervisee arrives at the session expressing a wish or desired outcome**

Arriving unprepared may be a sign of burnout, being overworked or of underdeveloped professional roles involving clear thinking, being organised and focused.

THE MODE OF SUPERVISION IS BASED ON A DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

The Supervisee

Supervision outcomes are enhanced if the type of supervision matches the developmental level and readiness of the supervisee. Factors that may influence the choice of type of supervision are:

- The nature of the work (individual-couple-group-therapy-counseling-consulting-teaching-training)
- The personality of the supervisee
- The quality of the supervisory relationship (for example, degree of openness and trust)

- The amount of personal exploration that has been done already. For example, to what extent has the supervisee been involved in personal growth processes?

As a general guideline supervisees who are new to their work need to start with focusing on the actual content of the work with the client or group. The focus is on the details of what actually happened. New supervisees are often anxious about their performance and need to be supported and encouraged in attending to what actually took place. While the uniqueness of the supervisee's relationship with their client or group must be respected, the supervisee can be helped to see how material from a session links to other aspects of the client's life; relates to progress over time; and can be linked to general principles of the 'change process'. This helps the supervisee to create an overview or larger picture.

The supervisee is respected as a 'creative genius'. Therefore supervisors generally avoid telling the supervisee what they

would have done instead; how another intervention would have been much better. Copious advice often leads to the supervisee ending up in a one-down position, and communicates lack of respect or trust in the ability of the supervisee.

With an experienced and competent supervisee, the supervisor focuses more on the unconscious aspects of the session. The supervisee is likely to have critically evaluated the conscious aspects of their functioning. Now the focus can be more on parallel processes and the emergence of frozen roles (also known as 'transference' and 'counter-transference'), both within the reported session as well as in the supervision session itself.

Blanchard and Johnson (1986) describe leadership styles that are appropriate for various developmental levels. They relate developmental levels to leadership styles as follows:

Developmental level	Appropriate leadership style
D1 Low Competence High Commitment	S1 DIRECTING Structure, control and supervise
D2 Some Competence Low Commitment	S2 COACHING Direct and support
D3 High Competence Variable Commitment	S3 SUPPORTING Praise, listen, and facilitate
D4 High Competence High Commitment	S4 DELEGATING Turn over responsibility for day-to-day decision-making

This model can be useful in managing staff or conducting 'administrative' or 'line management' supervision'.

Jonathan Fay (1993) offers a more detailed map which I find very useful. He describes four types of supervision:

- Line Management Supervision
- Performance Review
- Peer Supervision
- Professional (or Clinical) Supervision

The purpose of the first two types of supervision is the maintenance of professional standards and/or career development. The third type aims to support day-to-day practice. The fourth type is aimed at learning, professional role-development and the development of excellence. With the third and fourth type, confidentiality is the norm. The exception to this is when unethical matters become known that may affect the work.

This article focuses primarily on the fourth type: professional supervision. Fay goes on to describe four modes of professional supervision outlining the strengths and weaknesses of each :

- **Administrative Mode**

Interventions are prescriptive. The supervisor takes responsibility and initiative. They claim authority, define, direct, monitor practice, and evaluate the supervisee's competence.

- **Therapeutic Mode**

Interventions are supportive and

confrontative. The supervisor shares responsibility, initiative, and authority. They explore, contain, interpret practice, and help develop emotional competence.

- **Educational Mode**

Interventions are conceptual. The supervisor shares responsibility, initiative, and authority. They guide and assist practice and help develop knowledge and skills.

- **Consultative Mode**

Interventions are catalytic. The supervisor gives the supervisee responsibility, initiative, and authority. They witness, support, extend practice, and assume supervisee competence.

Whilst Fay clearly delineates the differences, these four modes are highly interrelated and the supervisor needs to stay flexible in switching between the different modes, as the situation requires.

The Supervisor

So far, there has been a focus on the developmental level of the supervisee. What about the development of the supervisor? The current life stage of the supervisor has an impact on what is noticed and attended to in the session. Anne Alonso states: "the supervisors' developmental tasks and supervisory work are complementary to each other." She makes a comprehensive description of different life stages in relation to the work of supervision (Alonso, 1985: 51-79). I found this invaluable reading, as it alerted me to my own life stage and made me conscious of the impact of this on my work.

THE SUPERVISORY PROCESS IS FOCUSED ON THE EXPERIENCE OF THE SUPERVISEE RATHER THAN ON SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS

For example, John is an experienced practitioner having his tenth supervision session with me. He wants to work on improving collegial relationships. He describes a number of difficult relationships with colleagues. He speaks in a tone that conveys complaint and blame. Rather than siding with him, challenging him, or going off in a daydream (moving toward, moving against or moving away, respectively), I direct him to set out a scene that involves him and his colleagues. Next, I invite him to take a close look and ask him: "what do you make of this?" At first, he seems frustrated and puzzled, and says, "Well, that's what I'm paying you to tell me". I burst out laughing and he laughs too. I say, "Let's look together". He looks again, and with surprising honesty, he shares about his contribution to the breakdown of relationships at work, and his anger with himself. It appears this anger was immobilising him. The rest of the session is productive. John leaves with a renewed appreciation of his colleagues. He has opened up to himself, and now is more receptive to the experiences others may have had in his company. At the end of this session I feel very awake.

Supervision aims to assist the supervisee to move past the point of impasse so that the client-system may be re-entered afresh. This is done through the creation of an environment that permits and stimulates the emergence of spontaneity and creativity.

Providing a supervisee with solutions will have the effect of creating or maintaining a dependence relationship. In this kind of

relationship, the supervisor is positioned as the omniscient expert with the supervisee as ignorant seeker. This role-relationship may be attractive to some. The supervisee never needs to grow up, learn to think independently, or assume personal responsibility for actions taken. The supervisor may bask in the ego-stroking glory of being seen to know it all. This can be seductive for inexperienced supervisors who may still be somewhat insecure in their role. But as Sheldon B. Kopp (1976) says: "The most important thing that a man must learn no one else can teach him. Once he accepts this disappointment, he will be able to stop depending on the therapist, the guru who turns out to be just another struggling human being".

The exception to this principle may take precedence in certain circumstances such as working with a novice, or in a situation involving significant danger or a breach of ethics. (For example, insisting that the supervisee belong to an association as opposed to working in isolation, or drawing a supervisee's attention to the existence of a code of ethics).

THERE IS RECIPROCITY IN THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE SUPERVISOR AND THE SUPERVISEE, IN WHICH EACH HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the Supervisor

Supervisors are responsible for assisting the supervisee to reflect critically on their work. As Max Clayton (1993:99) states, "Supervision involves detailed scrutiny of leadership functioning. This scrutiny is assisted by role analysis". He goes on to describe the careful preparation of the supervisor and the required attention to detail.

The supervisor ensures that the outcomes of the supervision are in harmony with the code of ethics of the supervisee's professional association. It can be useful to refer to a code of ethics from time to time, especially with a beginning supervisee. Frank and open discussion of ethical principles may assist the supervisee in absorbing, processing, and integrating the spirit of the code. This integration can help to protect the client as well as the supervisee. The code of ethics is not to be treated as a book of rigid rules, but rather as a document that guides practice.

The supervisor displays respect toward the supervisee by maintaining confidentiality. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that they do not make use of the supervision of trainees for the purpose of satisfying personal needs. Supervisors have a responsibility for being vigilant in monitoring their own processes in sessions and safeguarding against dependency, harassment, or abuse.

The supervisor safeguards against severe error by engaging in 'supervision of supervision' and participating in a regular peer-group. Supervisors need to be practicing practitioners themselves.

Responsibilities of the Supervisee

Supervisees are responsible for their work with a client or group, and for presenting that work as openly, fully and honestly as possible with the supervisor.

Supervisees are responsible for taking to supervision matters concerning their fitness to practice.

Shared Responsibilities

Both are responsible for making explicit their expectations and requirements at the outset.

Both are responsible for regularly reviewing the usefulness of existing arrangements.

THE SUPERVISOR'S PROFESSIONAL FUNCTIONING PROVIDES A ROLE MODEL FOR THE SUPERVISEE

Consciously or unconsciously, the supervisor will often be seen as a role model. Qualities I find important to model are: punctuality, respect (confidentiality), being purposeful, capacity to enjoy life, staying focused as well as flexible, and maintaining the framework established through the contract.

It is essential that the supervisor apply psychodrama theory and practice to the supervision. By doing this, the supervisor establishes credibility as a practitioner, and can model competence and enjoyment in the use of action methods. Supervisees learn, through experience, a great deal more about the application of the method and in turn are more likely to apply this in their own work.

Supervision of psychodramatists or psychodrama trainees needs to be based on psychodrama theories and values. Moreno saw human beings as actors. To have a purely verbal supervision of psychodrama practice would not fit, and would model incongruity to the trainee.

A major psychodrama technique that has immense value in supervision is concretization. This is emphasised by Antony Williams (1995:173): "the key to visual supervision is having an object represent some other thing - whether a person, a role, or a relationship - leading to the possibility of seeing many elements interconnected in a system".

HAVING CONCRETE TASKS TO CARRY OUT, FOCUSED ON THEIR ACTUAL WORK, ORGANISES AND READIES THE SUPERVISEE FOR THEIR PURPOSE AND PRACTICE IN THE WORLD

All roles consist of the three aspects: thinking, feeling and doing. For the outcome of the supervision to be integrated, the supervisee needs to practice. By practicing newly developing roles, these are tested and further developed. This provides the information needed for additional refinement.

'Practicing' can take many forms. This may include an intention to engage differently with a client, or homework such as writing or further reading.

CONCLUSION

I have described seven principles of supervision, and illustrated these with some personal experiences and practices. Prominence is given to the need for relating to a supervisee's developmental level, and a relationship of respect and reciprocity. The need for an adequate warm-up is highlighted. Emphasis is placed on the benefit to the trainee in being stimulated into developing their own knowing rather than being provided with solutions.

These principles represent an overview of the main ideas and values that currently underpin my philosophy and practice of supervision.

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The Play of Life – A Biological View of its Impact on Behavioural Change

by Carlos A. Raimundo

Carlos A. Raimundo is director of a learning and development organisation in Sydney which offers services and training in psychodrama, Strategic Relationship Management (applied sociometry) and the Play of Life (derived from psychodrama). Originally trained as a medical doctor and psychiatrist (Argentina) he is a Psychodrama Director and Trainer Educator Practitioner (TEP) (Argentina) and Psychodramatist and Educator (ANZPA). Carlos is an international speaker and presenter.

This article presents, through the medium of a case study, the effect of the Play of Life and other expressive, ludic (playful) methods and interventions on complex brain connectivity. This approach provides a platform for sustainable behavioural change. It gives a brief view of the biology of behaviour and relating, and the potential therapeutic effect of the method.

A CASE STUDY

Troy is a mechanical engineer; he is a husband and a father; senior manager and active member of welfare organisations. He is very active in his religious community, respected for his social position, donations, teachings and insights. He has a great memory, something that helps him to quote the most relevant, uncommon quotes from remarkable people and has great ability to compile research and create clear and powerful presentations. Many people have been benefiting from his teaching, but his personal life is in turmoil and his

work associates find it difficult to relate to him. His wife and three children oscillate between loving and hating him, something he does not understand. He also suffers from eczema and diabetes.

Troy is very confused by the reactions he receives from people around him. He felt laughed at last Christmas by his wife after he gave her his Christmas gift. He gave her a thermic-ionic vacuum cleaner, the most expensive in the market. He had been researching internationally to be able to find what the best vacuum cleaner in the market was. What he omitted, once again, was that his wife hates presents for the house for her birthday or Christmas. Then his son got very upset when he gave his father a copy of a poetry book his grandmother used to read to him, a book his father always wanted to have, but which has been out of print for 20 years. After searching heaven and earth for it, he found it and gave it to his father in a beautiful huon pine box¹. When Troy

opened the box he said a formal thank you, gave his son a mechanical hug and said: "This is a wonderful present. You probably got it at Paddington markets and paid \$4.50 for it. The box is great." He then gave a lecture about huon pine, placed the box aside and changed the topic. Troy is also confused about how people respond to him at work and why people don't choose him to be part of project teams.

Does he think correctly? Yes he does, but with the wrong brain.

LOOKING AT THE BRAIN

In 1848 Phineas Gage changed the way we see the brain. His story was the historical beginning of the study of the biological basis of behaviour. Gage was a construction foreman for the Rutland and Burlington Railroad. They were laying new tracks in Vermont, and a lot of blasting was necessary to level the terrain. Gage was in charge of the detonations, and on that fateful day, he was so distracted that he set off the blast before everything was ready. The tamping rod which he was using to set off the blasts was sent through his face, into his brain, and out the top of his skull, and came to rest many yards away. Gage was stunned, but quickly regained consciousness, and was talking and walking soon after the accident. In fact, he never showed any impairment of movement or speech. His memory was intact, and he was still capable of learning new things. He remained an intelligent individual. However, he was not unaffected. Before the accident, he was well-liked, well-adjusted, and responsible; he was a model employee. After that rod went rocketing through his brain, he became capricious, profane, and disrespectful. He was fired from his job because he could no longer be trusted to complete even the most mundane of tasks.

"Gage was no longer Gage". He wandered for over a decade, and eventually was put into his family's custody. He died in 1861, and was buried with that tamping iron which ruined his life. (J.M.Harlow)

Gage became a classical case in the textbooks of neurology. The part of the brain which was damaged forever was associated with the mental and emotional functions which he lost. He continued to communicate verbally with people around him, but his emotional connecting and ability to "relate", and respond appropriately with others was seriously damaged. There are some similarities to Troy.

The brain is formed by three specific, well-differentiated and connected neurological configurations: the hypothalamus or reptilian brain, the limbic system and the neo-cortex.

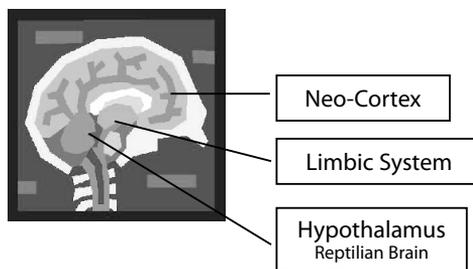
According to Lewis et al. (2001) the main function of the reptilian brain is homeostasis, or maintaining the body's status quo. Factors such as blood pressure, body temperature, fluid and electrolyte balance, and body weight are held to a precise value called the set-point. Basic survival instincts such as display of aggression, courtship, mating, territorial defence and automatic responses (such as reflex arch - impulsive reactions) derive from the hypothalamus and spine. This is the most archaic brain structure. The reptilian brain does not have any participation in the functional structure of the emotional brain. "It is very difficult to imagine a lonelier and more emotionally empty being than a crocodile" (Julio Rocha do Amaral, 1998).

Emotions are a domain of the limbic system², a neurological structure between the hypothalamus and the neo-cortex³. This is the distinctive mark of mammals that

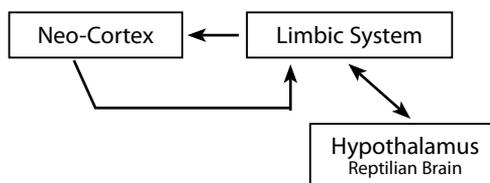
need parenting assistance including food, physical contact (affection), environmental protection, and play (ludic interest) in order to survive. This is the place for affection, emotions, care for others (not seen in reptiles) and love. (Lewis, 2001). Memory resides also in this structure. This is a flexible and adaptable formation ready to function at birth, and where the earlier communication between offspring, parents, siblings and the environment exists. Movement, sound, smell and contact are the language utilised. We can really say that communication exists before the rest of the brain matures. Attachment theory (Bowlby: 1969, 1982) the concept of imprinting (Mead: 1964) and the idea of the nucleus of the ego (Bojas-Bermudez: 1979) all base their relational foundations on this structure suggesting that the relationships established at this point in time are transcendent and create a stable structure throughout life. This means that if the child has been appropriately attached, this solid structure will be there forever, or if not the damaged structure will also persist. If later the child or adult is under pressure or suffering, he or she will have more possibilities, and a quicker means of restoring wellbeing than a person who has not been appropriately 'attached'. This article suggests that using the Play of Life and other experiential and ludic methods the mind can develop healthier and more appropriate reparatory mechanisms to compensate these incomplete or damaged structures. "Flexible brains have yet to germinate the ideas, the songs, the societies of tomorrow. They can create the next world or they can annihilate it' (Lewis, et al, 2001)

The neo-cortex is the newest neurological structure and the most distinctive part of the human brain. It is the base for strategy, planning, reasoning and language. Life constructs and ideologies are developed in

this brain. The neo-cortex also has the power to take control over the limbic brain and the reptilian brain. This is why ideology can be stronger than instinct. It has the power to override emotions and feelings. Examples include revolutionaries using their children as shields, or people reporting relatives to the police for having different political views. It also overrides physiological automatic reflexes as seen in toilet training.



The neo-cortex has bilateral connections with limbic system structures and this in turn with the reptilian brain. McLean calls this three-structure brain the triune brain, (Lewis, 2001) describing a neural web structure that needs constant interconnected activity to function as a unit. The Papetz circuit below shows the brain interactions in a simple way.



The brain is seen as a complex web of connections that enables this hardware to act in a specific way creating the mind. It governs the way humans think, process information and relate.

RELATING THROUGH DIFFERENT BRAINS

Looking at Troy's response in the light of the brain functioning we can suspect that Troy processes information in an unconnected way.

Christmas comes and he wants to give his wife the best present. As she is allergic, "he wants" to be sensitive to her need, show care and love. She has been saying to him since they got married that he's not thoughtful. This time he wants to be! His desire to be helpful is based on the limbic brain but his processing is neo-cortical. Thoughtful for him means "to think". So he thought through all the presents he could give Jan and as she had a very bad allergic season in the previous spring, what could be better than something to help her feel well: an allergy-proof vacuum cleaner. He didn't put in the equation that she has told him very clearly that she hates anything for the house as Christmas or birthday presents.

Jan, and his children, friends and colleagues have been telling him they cannot relate to him. He feels sad, confused, frustrated and impotent. He doesn't know what to do. They have been in verbal counselling a few times without much result. Troy has not been able to understand what is wrong.

THE PLAY OF LIFE

In a new attempt to save the marriage Troy and Jan attend a counselling session in which the practitioner utilises the Play of Life.

I developed the Play of Life, which derives from psychodrama and action methods created by J.L. Moreno and from the Argentinean School of Psychodrama created by Dr Jaime G. Rojas-Bermudez. This method is designed to transform intangible feelings to visible, three-dimensional representations. These can then be re-directed in order to offer novel and appropriate solutions to problems. It can be utilized as a language-independent method as it is based in universal "forms - shapes" of communication. Like other contemporary psychodrama methods that employ aesthetic-

visual techniques, the purpose is to bring subjective and one-dimensional information, into a three-dimensional setting where it can be observed, evaluated, explored and photographed or videoed.

The Play of Life uses a small board, called a stage and small figures that are placed by the client (protagonist) on the stage to represent a specific life situation. Dynamic and interactive techniques (such as soliloquy, role reversal, maximisation) are utilised to provide insight, clarity and understanding to the client about the situation analysed, also giving the therapist a visual language and thus independent information about the client. Through Relationship Mapping (applied sociometry) the protagonist (guided by the director) is able to observe at a glance, simultaneously and three dimensionally relevant issues involved in the client's situation. This mapping also gives the therapist a wide perspective of the whole situation as a social analyst. The objective dynamic created on the stage facilitates the naming of roles played and which roles need to change from fragmented to progressive roles.

After a short introduction to the problem the practitioner asks, "Can you show me?" while opening a bag on the table containing small figures and white boards. Troy and Jan have smiles on their faces. The practitioner places one board in front of each person:

Practitioner: "This board represents your relationships. Each of you choose a figure from the bag that will represent you symbolically. The use of the figure is arbitrary."

The practitioner follows the Relationship Mapping Play of Life technique by which they are guided to objectively depict how

they see themselves, in the present, in relationship with other relevant people in their social atom. The representation is three-dimensional and objectively describes how each person perceives the relational dynamics.

After this, they are invited to represent an ideal relationship dynamic, and then they are asked to look at the two pictures they have created and choose what would be the first movement needed towards obtaining the ideal.

Jan (Fig 1-1) sees herself as frustrated - in the middle facing her husband who is moving in circles (Fig 1-2) without stopping, and she sees their children facing different directions. Her ideal picture (Fig 2) is to have the family sitting around peacefully. Jan's first movement, called the First Step in the technique, is to put her arms down and not be so frustrated (Fig 3).

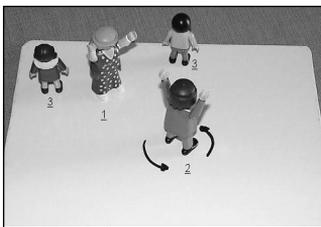


Fig 1

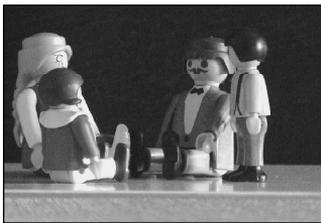


Fig 2



Fig 3

Troy places himself in the middle (Fig 4-1), standing up quietly with everyone around him (Fig 4-2,3) demanding something from him that he must satisfy. He sees them tense and irritable, something he does not understand. His ideal picture is very similar to Jan's, but with people standing up instead of sitting down (Fig 5). When he is invited to look at the first step he is unable to find what else could he do. He can only see that people around him should be more understanding and put their hands down.

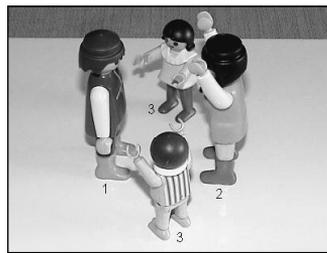


Fig 4

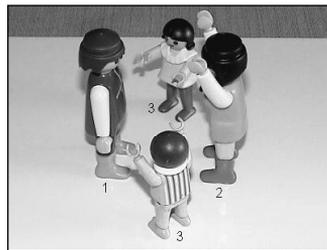


Fig 5

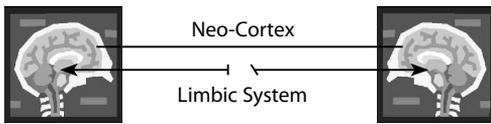
They share with each other their pictures and Troy openly shares that he does not understand what people want of him. Jan brings the issue of the vacuum cleaner to the conversation. He says how thoughtful he was regarding the present. Jan interrupts saying "I'm very angry. You don't understand do you?" He shrinks in his chair and looks at the counsellor saying, "I don't know what else to do."

The counsellor invites him to express his view about the vacuum cleaner issue.

He says that he knew how bad she had been with allergies and that the doctor

recommended her to remove all the carpets and heavy curtains from the house, something they did three years before, without much change in her allergic reactions.

Troy can give a lecture about allergies and the suffering of the person affected by the illness. He has researched the topic extensively. He can connect with it from his frontal lobe, the neo-cortex, but is unable to relate in a "heart to heart" way.



Jan comments to Troy that she feels bad and she doesn't need a professional explanation of the problem or a vacuum cleaner. She has a very good doctor and can buy the vacuum cleaner herself. She needs something else but Troy is not aware of it yet.

The aim of the practitioner in the next direction is to by-pass the neo-cortex, go beyond words, and to stimulate the limbic brain.

Practitioner: "Troy, could you create on the stage, using a figure that represents Jan, a picture of Jan suffering from the allergy."

Troy chooses a figure and creates (Fig 6) a picture of a woman bent over in pain.



Fig 6

Practitioner: "Troy, what do you see in this picture?"

Troy: "A person that needs help."

Practitioner: While revolving the stage, "I would like to invite you to imagine being that person. Project yourself in that position (role reversal technique) and say aloud what you feel in that position" (soliloquy).

Troy looks at the figure and touches it with his hand. "It's like feeling lonely, tired, in the dark and fearful."

We can assume that we are close to our objective. A new way of connecting is happening. The visual attribute of the Play of Life, the three-dimensionality of the figures and the tactile play with the figures forces the brain to activate other parts than the neo-cortex. The emotion felt and the change in the way he is talking now shows he is connecting differently.

Practitioner: (After a few seconds) "Troy, continue imagining you are in that position, what would you need from that position?"

The Play of Life follows the Strategic Relationship Mapping as a theoretical model where everything is looked at in relationships. Every emotion or position is in "relationship with" something else. If we just stay in this individual insight Troy may come back to a cortical rationalization limiting his awareness of this situation. The issue is not the woman in pain, but what is in between her and someone else whom we call the "other". It is in the relationship "between" them that the healing power exists. This is what Moreno calls the auxiliary-ego; he uses the mother as a perfect example of a natural, efficient and life giving force that helps the child to grow in their early developmental stage when they cannot assist themselves.

Troy: "Somebody close to me."

This answer is verbalised in the neo-cortex but it's a limbic insight.

Practitioner: "Move out from that position and chose another figure to represent 'somebody close to that person'".

Troy choses a male figure and places it beside her in a sitting down position (Fig 7)



Fig 7

Practitioner: "Troy, what would be the ideal dynamic in that relationship?"

Troy lifts the arm of the man and makes the woman place her head on the leg of the man.

Practitioner: asking Troy to repeat the action, "What is the meaning of lifting the arm?"

Troy: "Opening a space for her to relax and inviting her to rest on his lap."



Fig 8

Practitioner: "Troy, become that person. What do you feel?"

Troy: with tears in his eyes, "I feel for her. It's like something is opening in my heart."

The power of role reversal is not that "I comprehend", and technically know what the other person feels or thinks, but that is 'as if' I become that person. This is also a limbic connection, the other and I are so close that "I can feel it" and can identify as either person. Isn't this the power that exists between mother and baby? This is what makes her 'know' emotionally and physically (responding with milk from her breasts to the cry of the baby) than her embrace of the baby is more profound than a physical arm around him. I believe that the power of healing resides in this space, 'in between'.

Practitioner: "What is it happening for you?"

Troy: "I think I have never done that. It's nice you know!"

Troy is experiencing, not reading and intellectually rationalising about it. This experience has the power of a new imprint.

Practitioner: "Now become the woman." (There is a role reversal). "This man has opened a space for you and invites you to lie on his shoulders. Feel where the man touches you."

Troy: "He touches my shoulder. It's warm. I like it and I can rest my head."

Practitioner: "What is that like for you?"

Troy: "I can't find words for it. It's wonderful!"

Practitioner: "Have you ever experienced that in your life?"

Troy: "Never. I've always had to stand up for myself. My father was a good man but always away. My mother was too busy with

my four younger brothers. I always needed to be a support for her."

Practitioner: "Touch yourself in a way that could represent this feeling."

Troy embraces himself and stays in that position for a short time. The role reversal and the action of touching himself creates a new relational imprint in the brain and body, but this will have to be stimulated with consistency and regularity to really have a lasting effect.

Practitioner: "Troy, what have you discovered today?"

Troy: "That Jan needs me to just sit beside her with my arm around her."

Practitioner, taking a digital photo and giving it to him: "Troy, this photo is for you to keep and to look at. Every time you relate to Jan, face to face or on the phone, bring this picture into your mind. And you can think: Does she need a vacuum cleaner or a hand around her?"

Troy: "I got it! I think it's not only Jan I need to do this with. It will not be easy."

Practitioner: "No, not easy but possible now."

The session finishes here. Jan has been observing the whole process. She has tears in her eyes. She's very touched by Troy's insight and she's now able to better understand him.

For now, there is not much explanation or rationalisation needed. The idea is to leave the client with a *picture* in his mind not with a *clear strategy*. The assumption is that after leaving the picture as it is the neo-cortex will

utilise that information in the best possible way following the internal brain connectivity. If this information were explained in rational terms, through rational interpretations and a detailed strategy plan, the cortex would be directly stimulated and would probably restrict the limbic insight into a culturally learned 'box'. Each client needs to reaffirm this new imprint in his mind; photos or other visual aids may assist the process.

MAKING THERAPEUTIC METHODS AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE

A new personal Play of Life kit has been developed which enables individuals, families and business people to access the power of this technique by themselves.

Dr Jaime G. Rojas Bermudez was a pioneer in developing this branch of therapeutic techniques. He proposed the use of ludic alternatives in therapy more than 25 years ago in the Jose T. Borda Psychiatric Hospital, Buenos Aires, Argentina, for people with chronic mental illness, ranging from children to adults. His methods were uniquely effective, but unconventional, so they were rejected by the hospital hierarchy. But he received love and acceptance from patients and their families. Despite this scepticism, he developed his work with puppets and the theory of the intermediate object. In 1970 he created the Centre for Psychodramatic Interventions, where he developed and researched the use of masks, puppets, play, drama and psychodrama. He produced films: "Puppets and Psychodrama", "Puppets, Music and Psychodrama", "The Machine", and "Psychodrama with Adolescents" as well as several professional presentations in international congresses of Psychodrama, Psychiatry and Group Therapy.

Dr Rojas-Bermudez' research showed that we do not need to "know" everything. We do not need to be afraid of the expression of the soul of the client, but rather we need to find ways of allowing the person to express the most vital, emotional manifestation of their soul without restricting it to predefined analytical (cultural) constraints. He has proven by empirical research that people who have been professionally guided through ludic interactions, including physical touch and emotional expressions, are able to heal the soul more quickly. They have more profound insights and more permanence in behavioural change and above all relate better with their internal world and with others. Physical contact is an important factor in this profound limbic connection.

This is not surprising at all when we look at the brain. Instead of restricting the communication to the neo-cortex, ludic communication expands and enlarges communication by stimulating the limbic system. This is the centre of the emotions, feelings and love. These interactions activate the intra-brain connectivity in two basic ways. Firstly, connectivity to the neo-cortex, which will later process that information and interaction, developing new and healthier behaviours, but without mindful awareness of that process. (Dr Marcel Ponton, Director of Persona, a centre for neuro-physiological research and therapy in California and professor of Neurophysiology at UCLA is currently researching this method with aphasic patients who have brain damage. He has found a new way of relating with the patient and the patient with their family.) This way of connecting simultaneously with the triune brain has great therapeutic potential for people including those suffering from schizophrenia, severe mental dysfunctions and sex offenders.

Secondly, connectivity to the hypothalamus or reptilian brain, affecting physiological functions such as blood pressure, breathing, glucose balance, digestive system and so on. (Dr Hermes Garbano⁴ suggests that with the use of these methods different neuro-immunological associations are created that will potentially affect immunological responses such as eczemas, allergies, asthma, gastrointestinal disorders and unspecific inflammatory processes.) Research utilising the Play of Life in palliative care is also underway.

In the next session Troy was invited to look back at the pictures and translate them into role dynamics. Unsurprisingly, his eczema almost disappeared in the next few weeks and he has been able to better control his diabetes.

Jan attended a Communication and Relationship Mapping workshop. She also participated in Helping Myself and One-Another (a research project on making therapeutic methods available to the general public). She was able to 'play' at home with the family using the Play of Life. As the major focus of the method is "What can I do?" each person was able to find his or her part in the family dynamic. Through play, they were able to look at their family system from an a lively and fresh perspective.

The way that Troy's family and work colleagues respond to him in the future will also be important in his new limbic development. I must reinforce that this limbic learning process is not the result of a rational research on the topic, rather a 'relational' experience. People around him will also need to learn how to tolerate possible clumsiness and inappropriate responses from Troy for a period of time.

The techniques utilised in the Play of Life are based on psychodrama. The Play of Life is often used by psychodramatists instead of or as a complement to psychodrama, as it requires a smaller room, it is portable, it does not need a group, it is easy to apply, and people have fewer difficulties in expressing themselves through their bodies.

CONCLUSION

The Play of Life enables us to have access to areas of the brain that have been neglected by an over-emphasis on verbal language. This is not to devalue the verbal language but to expand it with other communicational paths. The utilisation of the Play of Life in this case has shown that behavioural change that stimulates the limbic system as an extension of the neo-cortical brain can be more stable than neo-cortical insights and strategies. We have also observed that for change to happen the new stimulation must be repetitive, consistent and for a significant period of time.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 The Huon Pine is one of Australia's longest living trees. Some individuals are more than 2,300 years old.
- 2 Diana Weedman Molavi, PhD, neuroscience tutorial at the Washington University School of Medicine.
- 3 I acknowledge that the use of 'limbic system' as a generic term for this neuro-structure is limiting. It is only a shorthand description of a neural area that is still under discovery and there are some discrepancies among neuro-physiologists regarding which neuro-structures should be under this network.

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Vitality's Back – A Dilemma Framework for Leaders

by Antony Williams

Antony works as a consultant in Melbourne. He is a Psychodramatist, TEP and Honorary Distinguished Member of ANZPA. In this article he illustrates the application of role theory in developing a leadership development framework.

In the mid-nineties, a group of colleagues, notably Chris McLoughlin, Sandra Fischer, Jane Sargeant and myself, working for a major consulting firm on a telecommunications executive leadership project, constructed a leadership framework based on five dimensions.

These were vision, relationship, power, credibility and vitality. Along with each dimension we identified a key role and a related leadership dilemma. Two of these dimensions are explored in this article.

In the last eight years, I have continuously refined these dimensions and roles, and done quite a bit of work on writing them and adapting them to different audiences. At times during this period we despaired, and for three or four dark years we dropped the vitality dimension, and its accompanying role of 'lover of life' as being too hard to describe for potentially curmudgeonly business folk and bureaucrats.

Vitality/lover of life was resurrected in 2000, *deo gratias*, with now 'the right'

dilemma for it, though vitality will never be properly captured in one simple dilemma. In essence, the original five are back, tarted up a bit, and with the vitality/lover of life dilemma being redefined as being between "risking" and "protecting".

Like a suitcase that has been around the world many times, these roles have been tested in countless forums. Their audiences have been bright, easily bored punters, many of them grizzled veterans of training, and quite capable of leaping the wall and heading back to town from whatever 'executive retreat' venue we were in. The original telecommunications audience (thirteen five-day programs over two and a half years) were mostly feisty electronic engineers, accountancy and marketing types who were in the top 800 of an organisation of (then) 80,000. Other audiences have included senior taxation officers, health care managers, environmental managers, finance managers and print executives, logistics people, chemical engineers and university heads of department – including professors of philosophy, vet science, medicine,

education and psychiatry. To each of these audiences the dimensions have appealed, and no one, in eight years, has said, "This is crap", though I must admit my heart was in my mouth with the professor of philosophy. The judgement: "Despicable psychobabble" or "Jejune management cant" or at best, "Interesting, but logically impossible" were anticipated, but did not come. Phew! On re-reading the above, I guess I've been trying to make a case for the dimensions' credibility as robust across diverse and potentially unforgiving audiences.

After eight or more years of road testing, the dimensions and attendant roles seem intellectually complex enough to be interesting, and simple enough to be memorable when you're in a tight spot. They appeal at 'street level' - to leaders who only too well know the nitty gritty of organisational life. You might well want to escape them, but it's hard to get bored with them, because the dilemmas always get you, as do the dilemmas of life. Indeed, their appeal might well lie in their being 'life dilemmas' and not simply 'leadership dilemmas'.

Distributed Leadership

Our notion of leadership is 'systemic', that is, that leadership is *distributed* throughout the organisation. A leader is not only the boss. This means that leadership can take place at any level and be exercised through any role. Leaders at any level go beyond their formal job requirements, responsibilities and roles. Leaders maintain, improve and even transcend existing systems. It's not just leadership at the top; it's leaders all the way down.

Scholtes (1998) suggests that:

- Leaders decide what needs to be done
- Managers decide how to do those things that leaders have decided must be done
- Administrators apply the methods designed by managers in pursuit of the purposes selected by leaders.

In real life, things are not quite so neat. The same person must sometimes act as a leader, a manager and an administrator. In the distributed leadership model presented above, a leader may be neither big "L" leader, manager nor administrator. The leader is the person who is actually leading at the time, whether or not they have the title of 'Boss'. (This fits nicely with Moreno's notion of leadership as the person who has the most spontaneity at the time).

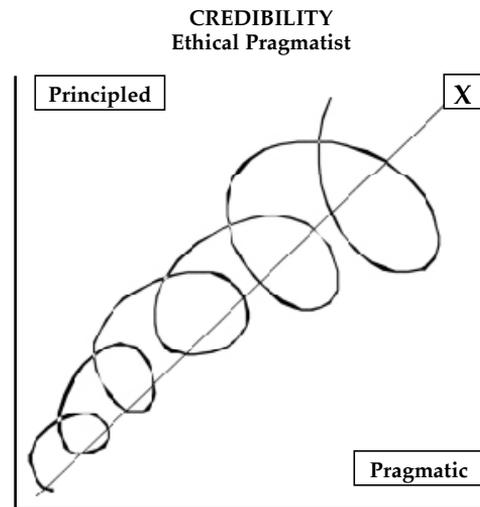
Distributed leadership, however, does not mean chaos. Different organisational roles - bands, levels and so on - are a reality. Leaders who occupy top management roles are responsible for 'breakthrough' and organisational design - the shape of 'tomorrow's organisation' as a whole. Leaders throughout the organisation may not have as much say in direction-setting for the whole organisation - this would become very confusing - but do have considerable influence in their division, branch, team or project. Even people below the level of team leader may initiate important liaisons with other businesses, and make significant breakthroughs in efficiency, data gathering, innovative methodologies, customer service initiatives, and liaison with other teams, projects and branches. Leaders at all levels manage 'up' and 'across' as well as 'down'.

Five Dilemmas of Leadership

Leadership consists of a daily process of resolving dilemmas. The dilemma framework, adapted from the work of Hampden-Turner (1990), captures the complex nature of leadership: it acknowledges paradox, uncertainty and the messy nature of daily business realities. There are rarely sure answers. Collins and Porras (1998) talk of transcending the 'tyranny of the OR'; highly visionary companies liberate themselves by "the genius of the AND." This involves the ability to embrace both extremes of a number of factors at the same time, such as a purpose beyond profit AND the pragmatic pursuit of profit; a relatively fixed core ideology AND vigorous change and movement, and so on.

The dilemma framework suggests that a leader who is strong, say, in the dimension of vision is not necessarily more "visionary" than someone else, but that he or she has resolved the major dilemmas involved in managing the present AND the future. Being strong on something means having the role, and we have defined the role as a resolution rather than 'more' of something. In the two dimensions presented below – credibility and vitality – a leader is not more credible if they are 'more principled' than the next person, but if they have resolved the dilemma of principle and pragmatics. We usually depict the dilemmas as orthogonal – see the diagram below, and have the essential five dilemmas posted on the wall of the training room. We also have the big right angle (minus the squiggly bit) in masking tape on the floor, and ask participants to stand somewhere within the angle where they imagine they are on the given dilemma. The X in the diagram represents the ideal, where the dilemma is naturally (or by dint of hard work over many years) resolved. At the X,

the dilemma itself slips away. A sort of a Zen thing, perhaps.



So here we go. Below are two of the five dimensions, roles and accompanying major dilemmas. At the top of each table is the major dilemma inherent in the role. Through the table are opposed sub-dilemmas, many of which participants easily recognise with an "Oh no!" rather than an "Aha". For example, in the credibility dimension the minor dilemma of 'openly communicates the truth, good and bad' vs 'tactful' is presented. A leader has to do both, and the full resolution does not mean being 'a bit tactful' and 'a bit openly communicating the truth good and bad'. It means doing both fully.

I still haven't got all the sub-dilemmas right, and so the tables imperfectly present apparent oppositions. Give it another ten years, or so, and maybe we'll get there. In some of the narrative after the tables, you may recognise the notions of 'overdeveloped' and 'underdeveloped roles' as familiar language.

Credibility: "Does it!"

Role: ETHICAL PRAGMATIST

Dilemma: How to be Principled AND Pragmatic

PRINCIPLED	PRAGMATIC
Honest	Operationally responsible
Openly communicates the truth, good and bad	Tactful
Has a clear sense of direction	Adaptable
Acts on values when it is not easy to do so	Organisational savvy – 'streetwise'
Attempts to make a better world through the organisation	Understands the limitations of the organisation's role
Creates an institution that he or she can believe in	Creates an institution that survives
Keeps his/her promises	Promises only what can be delivered
Zealous about professional standards	Realistic about limits of what can be offered

Ethical Pragmatist – the Ethical Dilemma Resolved

Values drive us to action; we can't help having them. Clashes of values are inevitable, because life is finite. The work of the *ethical pragmatist* is to manage the clash of values. The essential dilemma is between the desire to create a better world (or at least not to create a worse one) on the one hand, and the necessity to work through numerous stakeholders, interest groups, political processes and financial constraints, on the other.

Typical values clashes in an organisation might be between standards and compassion; between personal and private life; between democracy/collegiality and 'getting things done.' Some say that having strong values allows one to compromise, because one

knows what one stands for. Is this so?

In Kouzes and Posner's (1993) massive study conducted over a decade, 15,000 managers voted 'honest' as the most important leadership quality. They called their book of this research *Credibility*. "No matter where we have conducted our studies - regardless of country, geographical region, or type of organisation - the most important leadership attribute since we began our research in 1981 has always been honesty."

Kouzes and Posner's definition is not an individual one. They say a leader has organisational credibility when he or she "does what s/he says *we* will do". That is, a leader keeps not only individual promises, but delivers on a promise made on behalf of the group.

Credible leaders openly discuss bad news and difficult issues. The academic leader who has resolved the credibility dilemma is highly ethical yet able to exercise his or her political judgement. 'Credible' does not mean credulous - a credible leader knows how the world works; he or she is able to keep secrets, realise both pedagogical and commercial advantage, discern when they are being lied to and give strong feedback when it is required.

A credible institution, one "Built to last" (Collins and Porras, 1998) is "rooted in a timeless set of core values, that exists for a purpose beyond just making money, and that stands the test of time by virtue of the ability to continually renew itself from within." They were writing of business corporations; their words also fit well with academic institutions. What is a credible institution like from the point of view of staff? Staff actually do note what organisational leaders say about their values and observe the interplay between avowed intent and practice, and between financial and non-financial objectives. They translate those perceptions about values into beliefs about how the organisation really works - about the unspoken rules that apply to career development, promotion, decision-making, conflict resolution, resource allocation, risk sharing, contracts, dismissals, performance management, mentoring and coaching. They ask: "What are the real rules that determine who gets what in this organisation?"

Alignment between a leader's statements and behaviours is the key to collegiate commitment. It is often what is undermined most in a change initiative when conflicts arise and communication breaks down. Moreover, it is the dimension along which a leader's credibility, once lost, is most difficult to recover. A problem of leadership, therefore, is *what* to promise.

Overdeveloped Principle at the Expense of Pragmatism

Leaders who have overdeveloped principle at the expense of pragmatism may be 'honesty zealots' trying to track down minute over-expenditure or robbing, paralysing their staff through scrupulousness or adherence to unattainable standards. Their conscience may make them transfer their harsh demands on themselves to their colleagues and subordinates.

Organisational idealism – rigid adherence to traditional 'academic values' – may be overdeveloped to the extent that they excessively attempt to 'save the world' through their organisation.

Over-principled leaders may be naively open, answering any question simply because it is asked, and without regard to political fallout. Or they may be extremely secretive, their troubled ethics throwing the organisation into spasm by making *everything* confidential. Losing spontaneity, their organisation itself can become lifeless, with worried head and tortured heart.

Overdeveloped Pragmatism at the Expense of Principle

Overdeveloped pragmatic leaders, like their overdeveloped 'principle' counterparts, tend to base their decisions on simplistic contrasts: one can be morally worthy *or* politically expedient, but not both. Anyone's attempts at grappling with the tension between the two is greeted with cynical laughter. Moral people are naive children; only pragmatic people deal with the 'real world'.

Vitality: “Relishes the Process”

Role: LOVER OF LIFE

Dilemma: How to risk self and others *AND* Protect self and others

RISKS SELF AND OTHERS	PROTECTS SELF AND OTHERS
Honest	Operationally responsible
Decisive - trusts self and intuition	Consults - seeks others’ opinions before making decisions
Loves challenge, steep learning curves	Knows limits of self and staff, and when to stop
Fully extends self at work	Nurtures health
Resolves issues where private life and family interferes with work	Resolves issues where work interferes with family and private life
Has an unwavering will (Collins)	Is personally humble (Collins)
Daring	Protects core values
Instinctively identifies with quality and ‘best practice’	Carefully follows published procedures that are benchmarked as best practice
Relishes competition	Allows for the diffidence and fear of others

Leaders who promise too much, or who promise because the words sound nice, create expectations in their people that are liable to go beyond the reality delivered. The institutionally violated mission and values statement framed on the walls or in the lifts become the focus of rage or cynicism.

Such leaders are given to political expediency and unprincipled opportunism. For them, ethical practice comes only from ‘rules’; it is not integrated into the personality, and therefore the work. Their favoured change processes falter and die.

Lover of Life - The Vitality Dilemma Resolved

The *vitality* dimension relates to the life force,

the life struggle, relish of competition, and challenge. Vital leaders have a zest for life and work at the same time as protecting themselves and their people from crazy risk-taking, burnout, and life imbalance. Vitality does not equate with effervescence or brilliant personality, far less with long lunches and drinking bouts. Vital leaders rely principally on inspired standards, not inspiring charisma, to motivate.

Effective leadership requires a person to make decisions, and often those decisions are in the face of a good deal of uncertainty. The more uncertainty that surrounds a decision, the more the call for leadership. *Lovers of life* do consult, but they also know when to trust themselves. The Victorian Public Service manager John Patterson once sent

out a celebrated memo that commenced: "I meet, therefore I am not". They avoid this form of death. They trust themselves and risk themselves AND are open to input from others. At some stage of the consultation process, they 'just do it'. Where others become mired in complexity and doubt, they appear to be personally free to take ownership of problems and find the quickest route for resolving them.

David Murray, CEO of the Commonwealth Bank, says (2002) he tries to carve out time each week just to think. "I like to have three days a week in which I have half a day to myself for my own thinking and initiating things that are important to the organisation," he says. He is driven by a passion for strategy and beating his competitors. He relies strongly on his own judgment: "When I go against my instincts and am persuaded to do something by someone else, nine times out of ten it goes wrong. ... Experience helps you to be instinctual. Leaders have got to do their own thing."

For the *lover of life*, life and work are grounded in a natural sense of connection and purposeful direction. Work is joyful; challenge and struggle are part of being alive. *Lover of life* leaders 'clean up' interpersonal issues as they go along, abhorring sulking, petty feuds, silly organisational rhetoric, bombast, and stingy dragging bureaucracy. They know themselves and their own limitations, and have resolved major conflicts in their lives at least sufficiently to inspire and sustain others. They are characterised by spontaneity, an 'inner' sense of best practice based on good judgement. They risk AND preserve. They resolve the dilemma of trusting themselves, yet questioning their own assumptions. They can doubt AND act.

A *lover of life* is also well aware of the dark side, and can be healthily sceptical. Paradoxically, most organisations suppress contention: managers cannot stand to be confronted because they assume they should be 'in charge'. Lovers of Life do not especially seek conflict, but nevertheless understand that it is part of life. The *lover of life* knows that destruction, conflict, death and renewal is part of the life cycle, as it is of the business cycle. An organisation characterised by *lover of life* leaders feels lively. The 'smell of the place' is fresh and vital.

Lovers of life work hard but are not bowed down by overwork. They manage time, and are confident enough to withdraw from unviable and low-priority activities. They apply rigorous business tests to proposals, existing structures, and even their own ideas.

Overdeveloped Risk at the Expense of Consultation and Protection

Over developed risking of self and others can result in burn-out, hostile and irritable interactions, eroded relationship quality, and organisational mania. Overdeveloped 'risk' leaders may become childishly intolerant of any bureaucracy or inevitable slow process. They may be pigheaded, whimsical and feckless, or personally or organisationally narcissistic. They tend to place extreme trust in 'intuition' to the exclusion of research or listening to commonsense. They may make decisions and change direction over-rapidly - 'shooting from the hip'. These leaders may think of themselves as 'decisive' because they make many decisions in a short time, even if these decisions contradict each other.

Confusing vitality with extroversion, a *pseudo-lover of life* may over-value activity and busy work, and eschew listening and

reflection. Their people may experience decreased job satisfaction, productivity, organisational commitment and tenure. Because work and family life is grossly out of balance, they and their people may have to deal with guilt and anxiety about neglecting their partners' and their children's' needs.

Overdeveloped Protection at the Expense of Vigour and Action

Overdeveloped protection may reflect leaders' inability to trust themselves or their own intuition. Such leaders agonise, paralysed by intense fear and doubt. They tend to feel over-responsible. They fear competition for themselves and their staff, and falter at opposition or hardship.

They are easily trapped in complexity, feeling they must act, but not knowing what to do, or which way to jump. They may believe that if they collect enough information they will be able to make a rational and effective decision; but the information never seems to be quite enough.

They might be permanent 'victims', denying responsibility, and 'passing the buck'. They might consistently appeal to superiors to make or justify decisions.

They fear challenge and competition, and shrink from conflict. Their workplace becomes sterile and lifeless. Their overprotected employees may have reduced career commitment and manifest uncertainty by increased absences, tardiness and staff turnover.

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Principles of Psychodrama Training

by Paul Baakman

Paul Baakman is a Psychodramatist; Trainer, Educator, Practitioner (TEP); and is the Director of the Christchurch Institute for Training in Psychodrama. He is currently a trainer in the Christchurch and Dunedin training programs. This article draws from Paul's written work for accreditation as a TEP.

INTRODUCTION

The Spirit of Adaptation

At the time of writing I have been watching a BBC documentary, called 'The Planets'. The program makes it clear that toward the end of the Sun's life it will greatly expand and finally explode. This means 'curtains' for Earth. We may find temporary refuge on other planets, but ultimately we will need to look to the stars for a new home. A bit of a challenge perhaps, but we have about one billion years. Perhaps we will take off with a 'Noah's Ark' of genetic codes, enabling us to conserve Earth's life forms. Perhaps creativity in science will enable us to adapt to alien environments. We surely will need all the creativity and spontaneity that we can muster, and it is just as well that we have some time up our sleeves!

We have the potential to destroy the planet many times over. To survive and flourish instead of perish, we need models and methods that reflect and support the wish to sustain and develop life. One such method is the psychodrama method, which has a theory of spontaneity and creativity at its core.

J.L. Moreno had a grand vision for psychodrama. He said, "A truly therapeutic procedure cannot have less an objective than the whole of mankind." (Moreno, 1993: 3) A true systems thinker, Moreno saw all of life interconnected. He was adamant we should have a system of society in which everyone has a place. He believed that the effect of excluding one person could be immensely destructive, (note the recent spate of high school shooting sprees in the USA: it appears the killer usually is socially isolated).

The Systemic Principle of Inclusion

Moreno's thoughts about inclusion are applicable, not only to individuals, but also to groups within society. This is of particular relevance to New Zealand and Australia, both countries with a colonial past during which the earlier people were overrun. 'Inclusion' does not equal submission to the dominant culture. It means partnership, respect and dialogue, and a genuine attempt to heal the rift that arose through conquest and genocide. Bob and Joanna Consedine (2001:226), put this vision forward: "History verifies over and over again that the human spirit is capable of much more than self interest. There is innate fairness, generosity and grandeur in every human being that has the capacity to reach out and respond to the demands of justice and the common good. The task of every human being is to improve society".

In harmony with the above is the vision put forward by ANZPA's Board of Examiners, in the Training and Standards Manual (1993:2): "the vision is of able men and women all over the place expressing themselves relevantly in the ordinary here and now situations in which they live and work. This expression may be in silence, in building, in planning, in negotiating, in teaching, or in play, but it will be a responsive and creative expression that brings joy to the human spirit, that uplifts the soul, that makes us feel part of the universe again".

This article identifies six principles that undergird a training program and illustrates these using personal experiences and practices. In developing these principles, a central interest has been to make sure they reflect the spirit of adaptation and the systemic principle of inclusion. I also focus

on the need to integrate a personal vision, a creative plan and a developmental model with experiential learning. I illustrate how the psychodrama method itself is applied in the process of training in psychodrama, and how the training takes place in a larger context.

These principles of training represent an overview of the main ideas and values that currently underpin my philosophy and practice of training. I have developed these ideas in collaboration with my trainers and colleagues. They are constantly tested through practice and they are evolving.

PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHODRAMA TRAINING

The training journey is greatly enhanced when the trainee's personal sense of purpose is congruent and integrated with the psychodrama method

Those trainees who go all the way to certification will, at some point, need to examine how to weave the method in with their personal vision. For me this was a gradual process. I was raised in the Roman Catholic tradition, which mostly I found thoroughly uninspiring. However, some aspects of the faith I still value today. These are the music, the singing, the magnificent works in stained glass, and some of the parables. Something that was emphasised, (and which is still with me) is a sense of social responsibility. Although this sometimes went no further than being encouraged to engage in charitable works, I did hear and read of 'heroes' like the bishops and priests working in Central America, putting themselves on the line and aligning themselves with the voiceless and the oppressed. These stories resonated strongly within me.

During my early teenage years, I developed a passionate longing for adventure and the exotic. I would walk along a forest path and imagine strange lands and wondrous happenings. (I now see these daydreams as a womb for my then embryonic roles of emigrant and dramatist). These early experiences are at the roots of my personal vision for a world that can progress, and is sustainable.

When the time came to choose an occupation I felt equally attracted to social work and drama school. I choose to train as a residential social worker and later as a psychiatric nurse. During my initial training, I took part in an elective, which was a 'sensitivity training workshop'. This stirred me, as it made me see what was made possible through inspired group work.

Many years later, during my training as a psychiatric nurse, I enrolled for a psychodrama workshop organised by Mike Consedine and directed by Wayne Scott. This was a revelation for me and reminded me of my early passion for group methods. I took to it like a duck to water. I finally had found something that enabled me to creatively combine my desire for 'working with people for an improved world' (therapeutic work), with my longing for 'adventure and the exotic' (drama).

A Focus on Human Possibilities

The psychodrama method is an inclusive process that encourages people to be all that they can be. Rather than learning to live within one's limitations, people are inspired to live to the full extent of their possibilities. This is a departure from a pre-occupation with illness, dysfunction or pathology. Psychodrama has a focus on creativity, and training in this method, directly

and indirectly, contributes to society's opportunities to endure and flourish. This is in line with my personal vision for a sustainable and progressive world.

Possibilities in the Training Process

To assist the process of training people to become psychodramatists, we must first ask how a training group can endure and flourish. The application of a set of guiding principles is one way of ensuring this. The application of the psychodrama method itself to the training process is a tremendous strength in the ANZPA culture, and ensures training is purposeful. Apart from what is taught, also how the training is delivered provides trainees with another source of learning.

The training, when guided by a creative plan, is purposeful and effective

In developing a creative plan the trainer warms up to imagination and innovation. The training that follows will be imbued with dynamism and novelty, and trainees will get in touch with their love of learning. Training without a creative plan is likely to be experienced, by trainer and trainee alike, as lacklustre, reactive, robotic, and all over the place.

A Creative and Flexible Plan

A creative and flexible plan draws inspiration from the Training and Standards Manual, and takes into account the warm-up created by the curriculum.

ANZPA's Training and Standards Manual is an inspirational document that enables trainers and trainees to monitor development more clearly. It also provides a reference

point for those trainees who wish to present for assessment.

In addition to this the staff at the Christchurch Institute for Training in Psychodrama have developed a curriculum which guides the planning of training. The first step in creating a training plan is to assess the training group - its composition, age and gender distribution, professional backgrounds, training history, and areas of interest indicated by trainees. A flexible plan takes into account the developing warm-up of the group. However, when working with a training group I am always ready to adjust, or sometimes abandon, the plan.

Planning is essential for the warm-up of the trainer. Without a plan, training is haphazard, and the focus of training depends on the luck of the draw. In such a situation the trainer is at risk of merging with the group, in deference to what may seem like a 'spontaneous' agenda. Moreno (1993: 11) made a distinction between spontaneity and impulsivity, by emphasising that spontaneity is the catalyst for creativity, and that spontaneity without creativity makes for "spontaneous idiots".

Training without a plan can lead to lopsided development, and trainees remain with significant gaps in their learning and development. Trainees often are anxious about being in the role of director. The apparent absence of a plan may fuel this anxiety. In response to a lack of leadership, a training group may revert to Bion's (1961) 'basic assumption' mode, and become immobilised by dependence, torn apart by fight/flight, or seek salvation in pairing.

Creating Conditions in Which Opportunities for Learning may Unexpectedly Emerge

Too much of a focus on formal requirements can stifle the very spontaneity we aim to promote. In every training group, events take place that provide material for training or teaching purposes. When a trainer makes use of these 'golden moments', the training has a relevance to the here-and-now experience of group members. Connecting the training with real-life events in the group, adds a significant quality to the learning. The here-and-now event has trainees warmed up not only to their thinking, but also to their feelings and actions and relationships to each other. Teaching or training at this point has immediate relevance, is anchored to an experience and is therefore more readily integrated and remembered. This counters tendencies toward intellectualisation and may avert boredom and detachment. This method of training creates links between theory and real life, models 'learning through experience', and as such is of great practical value to trainees ready to apply the method to their life and work.

Readiness

Having established the need for a creative plan, an immediate challenge arises. Trainees neither develop along a straight path, nor move forward at the same tempo as everyone else. In this sense, every training group is a multi-level training group, and a training plan is designed with this in mind. The plan needs to have sufficient flexibility built in to allow deviations from a linear route towards completion of requirements.

The trainer displays respect for the trainee in considering the trainee's readiness to learn about a particular matter or develop a certain

role. This respect enhances a warm-up to adult-to-adult functioning in both trainer and trainees.

Also as James Masterson (1988:208) states: "Not all individuals have the same capacity for creativity, of course, since it, like all other capacities, is a product of both nature and nurture, of genetic inheritance and developmental encouragement".

Flexibility

Rigidity in holding on to a training plan is contrary to the spirit of spontaneity and creativity, and does not take into account the warm-up or ability of the individual trainee or the training group. I picture cloned units, identical and 'correct' directors, technically perfect but without a soul, would emerge in response to this rigidity. Trainees with an obsessive streak in their make-up might feel reassured by a tight program, but their entrenched coping strategy remains unchallenged. Flexibility is one of the key aspects of spontaneity, and this helps a trainer to adapt to the real needs of the trainee or group.

A Changing Culture

There are further reasons to emphasise flexibility in the training program. Flexibility is of high value in processes involving change. Psychodrama training takes place in a culture that is changing rapidly. Many public as well as private organisations face under-funding or relentless bouts of 'restructuring'. More than ever the phrase 'ongoing change is here to stay' seems to apply.

In the mental health field, large numbers of disturbed and/or distressed people are kept out of institutions, and referred to 'community care'. This means they are left

in the hands of workers who often have only minimal training. The workers who remain in the institutions face a higher concentration of highly disturbed clientele. Demoralisation and burnout take their toll. The implications for our training programs include an increasing emphasis on safe practice, and on recognising the fragmenting roles that are associated with psychosis, severe depression, or suicide potential. Psychodrama is a vehicle to greater self-expression. However, it is essential to see the method also as a vehicle for containment! This is especially so in relation to working with those people who have been diagnosed as having a 'personality disorder'.

Psychodrama is a method par excellence that assists trainees and practitioners to rise to the challenge of working with disturbed individuals. In psychodrama a 'problem' is re-framed as a 'challenge to creativity'. A 'problem' orientation can lead to headaches and is joyless, however a 'challenge to creativity' is an invitation to live with zest and vitality.

Example

In individual supervision John has complained of his lack of assertiveness when faced with competition, and the impact on his development as a psychodrama director. In supervision the work proceeds at a slow pace and has a lacklustre quality, since John has difficulty with getting in touch with his feelings. In the training group an unexpected 'golden moment' arrives. Prior to the training session John has resolved that this night he will put himself forward as Director. As it turns out, a number of people express their wish for the evening before he does, and someone else ends up directing.

After a break, John suddenly bursts out in tears and says: "This is how it always goes, I always wait and then someone runs with the ball before I have even blinked, I am so sick of this!" He ends up being a protagonist in a brief drama in which he confronts the forces that are holding him back. The next training session, a week later, he is the first one to speak.

The above demonstrates that John's most effective work takes place when he is in touch with his experience. These experiences are less likely to be generated in a one-to-one session, since there is no actual competition in this setting. It took the 'here and now' event in the training group, which involved competition, for John to truly warm up to wanting to change.

Training is based on a developmental model in which the trainee is recognised as a dynamic entity, whose learning requirements evolve

Developing a new role takes time. To develop a whole set of new roles and integrate these into professional practice and daily life takes years.

We live in a society that is imbued with the values of instant gratification. Holiday now – pay later. Something doesn't work? Throw it out. Are you in emotional pain? Take a pill. Much of marketing and advertising not only stimulates but also cashes in on this trend. One particular training course I saw offered, promised 'master-practitioner' status after only 30 days of training.

Psychodrama training involves more than learning a set of skills or mastering techniques. Training is based on the understanding that roles gradually develop, and must be tested through practice in order to be strengthened and integrated. This takes time and commitment. The techniques can be taught in a weekend; the integration takes years. Some trainees new to training expect to learn a set of 'quick tricks'. Some don't last long when they discover they need to turn themselves inside out and upside-down in order to develop as psychodramatists. Others rise to the challenge and commit to an ongoing training process.

Carl Hollander (1969) noticed the same thing: "All too often neophytes to psychodrama falsely assume from a few sessions that they are adequately prepared to direct others in psychodrama".

Evolving Ideas

My ideas about education and training are evolving. In my early days of being a trainer I was more likely to focus on the 'right way' of doing things. My understanding has deepened and now I regard training as a developmental and transformational process. As a result I am much more focused on the consciousness and immediate experience of a trainee director, and the roles and role-relationships that come forward.

Grace Kennedy (2000: 9-12) contrasts three different educational approaches:

- **Transmission**

The student is seen as an empty vessel that needs to be filled. A good example of a proper application of this model is in driver education where a series of competencies have to be mastered. However, it does little

to assist people to value themselves, or how to be reflective and then active in the world.

- **Transaction**

Reform in education led to education being seen as an interactive process between the students and the curriculum. An attempt is made to link the material to the developmental ability of the student. Still, these ideas attend only to cognitive development.

- **Transformation**

The student is seen as central, positive, purposive, active and involved in organising life experiences. The experience of the learner is primary and choice, creativity, values and self-realisation are central. There is an orientation to social change and reflection upon one's actions.

Psychodrama training is in harmony with the third approach: transformation. The intensity and personal challenge inherent in the training process often does lead to transformation.

Role Development

Role development is central to training. Personal growth is a by-product of professional development. Much role development takes place in the course of training. There is a significant advantage in trainees becoming familiar with the role of protagonist and getting a first hand experience. Learning through experience means that new material can immediately begin to be integrated. A beginning director is more likely to be sensitive to

the vulnerability of the protagonist when this vulnerability has been personally experienced.

When a trainee is highly warmed-up to personal concerns then this does not need to be in conflict with the purpose of the training group. In fact, a trainer can take advantage from a trainee's warm-up. When personal and professional development are seen as complementary to each other, a link can be made between the emerging concern of the trainee as protagonist and how this relates to professional roles, and thus a professional training focus is maintained.

There are occasions when a trainee has a great deal of personal work to do. This has the potential to dominate the group or hold a trainee back from advancing. On a few occasions I have suggested to a trainee that he or she enter into personal therapy, or take part in one or more personal development workshops. This highlights the notion that not all role development needs to take place in the training group itself. Indeed, some is better done elsewhere.

Example

Mary has been in training for several years. She struggles to find her voice in the sense that she speaks softly and demurely. Despite doing several dramas with a focus on resolving this struggle she still does not breathe properly or uses the full strength of her voice. This hinders her whenever she is in auxiliary or director roles. I suggest she does singing lessons or, since she belongs to a church, joins the choir. As her trainer I am keen to see her find her voice.

Attempting to address unresolved intra-psychic conflict, in her case had led to 'going around in circles'. Joining the choir proved more effective. At choir practice she was, after all, surrounded by dozens of 'supportive doubles', and this had the effect of her feeling more accepting of herself in her effort to find her voice. The work could be done through play.

The curriculum has an emphasis on experiential learning which promotes the integration of experience with theoretical concepts and practical ability

Whereas in order to develop as a psychodramatist it is essential to read the literature or learn from lectures, this in itself cannot be enough. No one has ever obtained a driver license by watching someone else drive or attend a lecture on driving. Through being in the driver's seat a person learns about what is not known or needs to be developed. Similarly, through actually directing a drama, a trainee will learn which roles are well developed and which need further development. The 'director's role' is in fact a cluster of roles, and a director, in the course of their training needs to become exceptionally flexible and adaptable in working with protagonists from all walks of life. Learning from moment to moment in the actual 'cauldron' of a session, may counter a tendency toward intellectualisation or distancing through objectification. Directing under supervision in front of one's peers can be a challenging experience. The fact that the trainee director is likely to be emotionally aroused during a training session increases the likelihood that learning is integrated into the whole being of the trainee.

To become an effective director of psychodrama, an aspiring director needs to develop the ability to function in a great number of roles, love life, and have a genuine interest in human beings. There is an assumption that certain professional roles have already been developed, or will be developed, through tertiary study.

Further role development initially takes place through functioning as a group member, protagonist or auxiliary. This is taken into account when a curriculum is developed. The Christchurch staff collaborated in developing our curriculum over the course of several days.

Curriculum

Year One

The first year has an emphasis on experience and learning in the role of:

- Group member (to learn from self-display and sociometry in action)
- Auxiliary (to function and be facilitative in a variety of roles)
- Protagonist (to experience and develop trust in the method)

The aim is that at the end of the first year all trainees have had extensive experience of all three aspects, and have developed trust in the psychodramatic process.

Throughout training I refer to some fundamental concepts in psychodrama. I have increasingly come to see some of these as essential in the early part of training. These are: tele, sociometry, role theory and the social and cultural atom.

I see these as four vital concepts that help to provide a structure. Such a structure can assist in the building of safety in the early stages of a group, and can help in making sense of the myriad of sometimes overwhelming and confusing experiences trainees may have. All four concepts relate to roles within relationships, and relationships between roles. Consciousness of relationships and roles within relationships are of vital concern in the early development of a group, and can be used to immediate benefit in the building of a cohesive group.

Year Two

The second year sees an increasing emphasis on the role of the director. Having been challenged to display him- or herself in the first year, the trainee can lead a group-directed warm-up with greater awareness, sensitivity and effectiveness. Having been trained in auxiliary roles the trainee director is more equipped to pay proper attention to the quality of auxiliary work by group members. Having been a protagonist on a number of occasions sensitises the trainee to the experience of the protagonist. None of these beneficial effects is guaranteed. However, without these prior experiences a trainee director is more likely to function poorly (like driving a car without a map). Psychodrama is an experiential method, and the training is experiential training. Personal experiences of the method are part of the unfolding map.

Years Two and Three

The second and third years include teaching and training in role training, sociodrama and sociometry. The term 'psychodrama' is now used generically to describe these sub-modalities. Trainees have experiences of role training and sociodrama, and refine their understanding and application of sociometry

and other dramatic interventions. The emerging identity of the psychodramatist starts to be interwoven with the trainee's personal vision of his or her life's purpose.

Year Four

Year four (and beyond) has an overall focus on integrating the identity of the psychodramatist, and refinement of practice. By this time the trainee will have written, or is preparing to write, a social cultural atom paper, as well as developing a thesis topic.

Further work at this stage involves strengthening a professional identity; greater familiarisation with ANZPA's code of ethics; deepening peer relationships; maintaining authority in the presence of the trainer; further reading; and commitment to ongoing personal and professional development, as well as to supervision. Finally, the trainee prepares for assessment.

Learning is enhanced when the process and structure of training is based on the spirit of the psychodrama method

Selection of Trainees

In harmony with the spirit of psychodrama the Christchurch Institute is 'inclusive', and in principle welcomes trainees from many different backgrounds. Prospective trainees are invited to a training interview, during which clarity is gained about the suitability of a training program for a particular person. It is assumed the trainee possesses, or is working toward, a degree or equivalent qualification in their chosen field.

Discontinuance of Training

Experience over the years has shown that a good number of trainees will dip in and out

of training. Whilst some trainees have good reason to interrupt or cease training, for others it has meant ending up as 'chronically advanced', meaning that he or she is treading water but not making real headway in the swim toward certification. The Christchurch Institute has responded to this development by attempting to forge stronger relationships with trainees who come and go. We have abolished the notion of 'terms' in our training program, and have warmed the trainees up to enrolling for the whole year. However, enrolment for a 'term' is still possible in exceptional circumstances.

Ongoing Assessment

Trainers make ongoing appraisals by noticing the functioning of a trainee at every opportunity. The appraisal is based on observations of the functioning of the trainee as a director, auxiliary, protagonist and group member. Any assessment is further enriched through what transpires from a trainee's writing assignments.

The trainee's ability to self-evaluate is valued and respected, and some form of self-appraisal is part of most training sessions.

The trainee's role in social events, an Open Day, ANZPA branch meetings, and functioning within the community at large, provides further material for reflection and ongoing assessment.

Three times each year every trainee is reviewed in a meeting of training staff, where assessments are shared and processed.

Structure of a Training Session

A 'typical' training session has the following format:

- **Warm up**

In the Core Curriculum Group I am likely to opt for a director-directed warm-up. In the Advanced group I work more with a group-directed warm-up, since staying with director-directed warm-ups would encourage early dependency dynamics to persist. Advanced trainees can benefit from running complete sessions, and this may involve facilitating a group-directed warm-up too.

- **Action**

A typical scenario involves a trainee director working with a protagonist. As the trainer/supervisor I take notes. The timing and nature of my interventions depend on the developmental level of the trainee director, and the contract for supervision that is established at the start. With a trainee ready to function more independently I may not intervene during the session (unless it looks like the protagonist could be harmed through incompetence or neglect), and save my comments for the processing session. Alternatively, I may intervene throughout, and use what occurs as 'grist for the mill'. I will use doubling, mirroring, modelling, concretisation or whatever else may be useful in raising the trainee director's spontaneity and effectiveness.

- **Sharing**

This phase involves the group members relating to the protagonist personally and with emotional involvement. The purpose is to connect the protagonist with the group again in ordinary, here-and-now time, and for group members to express something of their experience to the protagonist. During this sharing phase trainee directors are encouraged to maintain their functioning as a director. Sharing time often offers excellent

opportunities for integration of new learning, and so the benefits of the earlier drama can be maximised.

A second round of sharing, this time with the director, helps trainees to shift from their identification with the protagonist to identification with the director, and brings the trainee director back into the group as a group member. This process helps trainees to shift from a protagonist-centred focus to a director-centred focus, and thereby smoothing the transition to the next stage.

• Processing

At times I have found it useful to have a short break between the sharing and the processing. The break helps trainees to make the shift from sharing to processing. Processing involves the trainee director, the protagonist, the auxiliaries and the group members. I avoid the word 'supervision' for this activity, as I see this term more fitting with the overseeing of actual work done outside of the training group.

- Comments from the protagonist are valued for the immediate feedback it provides for the trainee director. I discourage situations in which the protagonist is involved in extended discussions of the therapeutic effectiveness of the drama. Too much evaluation too soon, can take the protagonist away from their recent experience, and runs the risk of turning into an overly analytic session. If there is a need to discuss the more personally therapeutic aspects of the drama, or when the experience has been especially profound for the protagonist, then that person has the option of not being present for this part of the session.

- Trainee directors assess their own functioning. We engage in a discussion about the rationale for choices in direction and techniques used, including the exploration of alternatives. Sometimes trainees have a good appreciation of strengths and weaknesses in their functioning. If a trainee can identify an area of functioning that needs attention, then this is preferable to me pointing it out. As Goldman and Morrison (1984:95) observe: "when the neophyte director is aware of the missed cue or mistake before being told, he/she is less likely to repeat that error".

- The group members may ask specific questions about a scene, dramatic technique, or another intervention. Auxiliary work may be explored and refined. I encourage trainees to come up with some of their own answers. Activities may involve re-playing part of a scene, and trying out alternative interventions. This can be an ideal time for mini-teaching sessions or the introduction of a training exercise that involves all group members.

- I will give a general appraisal of the work done. I will highlight the strengths that were displayed. When it comes to focusing on problematic areas in the trainee's functioning I tend to comment on one area only. More is not necessarily better, and the trainee cannot learn when feeling overwhelmed.

When trainers and training institutes relate to a larger system, the effect is greater accountability and cohesion

The Christchurch Institute is part of and relates to a larger system. Under the auspices of the ANZPA Board of Examiners, a

number of training institutes have sprung up throughout Australia and New Zealand. The Board of Examiners has the task to ensure staff appointments are appropriate and affirms the need for, and supports, ongoing staff development. Most of the staff of the New Zealand training institutes meet once or twice a year in 'trainer development workshops', as well as a yearly meeting of the Federation of NZ Training Institutes. These meetings have led to the development of a greater cohesion between the training centres, and between the staff from different regions. The continuing interchange has made training efforts throughout New Zealand better co-ordinated and more unified. The yearly ANZPA conference is another venue for contact, and promotes interchange between New Zealand and Australian colleagues. Unified training efforts are further supported by the fact that all training institutes subscribe to the ANZPA Code of Ethics, and have the ANZPA Training and Standards Manual as a point of reference and inspiration.

The Christchurch Institute has also developed a functional relationship with the local ANZPA Branch, to the extent that some events are organised jointly, such as a 'psychodrama community gathering', or an 'open day' for the public. Institute staff are also involved with 'outreach activities' such as providing speakers or facilitators for the conferences or meetings of other organisations.

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Relationship Capital – True Success Through Coaching and Managing Relationships in Business and Life

by Carlos Raimundo

(2002) Pearson Education Australia Pty Ltd.

Reviewed by Judith McMorland

Many years ago I was asked to help a senior executive in a very demanding position review his leadership over the past five years, and help plan his way forward. We explored, in action, with the actual people concerned, the impact of his work on his relationships with family (wife, son, daughter), and chosen and trusted colleagues and subordinates. As the story unfolded, so too did the tragedy of relationships lost - of the sacrifice of family to work obligations. His young adult son wept when he said, 'Dad, you were never there for us!' - unleashing, not only in this father, but in the other older men in the room, who were also stalwarts of their own businesses and organisations, tears of longing and deep grief over what might have been, and touching for the women present the losses they had known. The outcome of this review was that the executive chose to step down from his position early, rather than take on another gruelling term of office.

This incident has remained poignant in my memory, the more so because over the past ten years I have been involved with management education and training and see how little attention is paid within the educational institution to investing in relationship building. 'Transformational learning' and 'transformational change' are buzz words in the management lexicon, but they are seldom attached to personal relationship maturity. The simple, but profound action of exploring what roles and relationships we create is not one that managers or business people willingly embrace. Even for people whose work requires sound relationships with clients and consumers, experiential learning in relationship building seems to be problematic. 'Not role plays!' people cry.

Recently, I have had the opportunity to introduce psychodramatic methods to two classes of postgraduate students in the Business School in the University of

Auckland. While initially sceptical, as the sessions progressed many students have seen for themselves the potential of learning about relationships 'from the inside', that life is lived through everyday interactions and these need to promote personal as well as corporate wellbeing. They are moved by the power of personal learning that can come from rehearsal and exploration, mirroring and modelling and the opportunity to have a second go. This is the issue that Dr Carlos Raimundo addresses in his book providing practical techniques for enhancing relationships at home and work. This is not a text book - it is designed so people can take their own steps to greater wellbeing, but it is well grounded in personal development theory (from a range of disciplines) and supported by Carlos' own website www.playoflife.com

Carlos uses the story of consultancy and coaching work in one organisation, TML, as the framework on which to hang the steps of his Strategic Relationship Management Model. He traces his work from the initial engagement with the CEO, Rolf, and directors in the senior management team, through to the organisational surveys, workshops and action planning approaches he designed to bring wellbeing to a dysfunctional corporate culture. Rolf's wife, Inge, is also a key character in the story: it is she who learned to confront Rolf (through a workshop on living with busy partners) that changes needed to be made if their marriage and family were to survive. Inge learnt that though she still loved Rolf, she no longer liked what he had become, he was no longer her 'beloved'. They had lost sight of the vision of life they wanted to share.

Changes had been attempted in the organisation over many years, but none were successful. "The corporate culture (Rolf)

was living in, even though he didn't like it, was not restrictive enough to awaken his determination to do something about it. He was not aware that he was dying within himself and that the same was happening to his relationship and the company" (p51).

The story that unfolds is one many business people can identify with. The scenarios given are familiar: the marketing manager who does not trust her staff fully and is on the verge of burnout; the section heads who have lost the confidence of their staff because of poor communication; the CEO who is defeated in the face of external pressure from Head Office. Carlos uses the breadth of his experience as psychodramatist, psychotherapist and business consultant to bring together hard-nosed good business sense and practical, efficient use of action methods to addresses these issues, through the technology he calls the Play of Life® and a range of other organisation development tools. The Play of Life takes the disciplines of action methods from the psychodrama stage, to the table-top. Using small figurines, individuals are invited to explore situations as they are, and as they want them to be. In Rolf's case he recognised his desire to change from being a *defeated mule* to *creative, insightful guide*, and the platforms (stages) on which these specific roles were enacted.

The book as a whole calls attention to the need to invest in relationships with as much concern as one watches the stock market or attends to superannuation plans, advocating the use of a relationship coach to enhance good business practice. Relationships take time to build, and when successful, provide abundant returns. The irony is that though businesses think seeking financial advice is smart, seeking emotional advice is seen as a sign of weakness. As Carlos says, many people lavish much more planning

and attention 'on the wedding than on the marriage,' because it is easier to focus on the concrete things of life, than on the spaces between people, the relational dimension through which life is lived.

Having enjoyed Carlos' workshops on a number of occasions at ANZPA conferences, I found this book helpful in integrating psychodramatic methods into my practice as an organisational development consultant. At one level, there is nothing 'new' in this book, the strength lies in the integration of methods used, and their groundedness in good organisational development and business practice. Carlos shows how psychodramatic methods can be transferred into an organisational setting, and made available to members of organisations for their own use. He demonstrates and explains the power of appropriate warm up for meetings, the diagnostic strength of sociometry in providing information about relationship reciprocity or vulnerability in groups; and the educative impact of role analysis (role cascades) so individuals can map, and make choices about, their interactions with others. All these techniques are clearly and simply brought together into the Strategic Relationship Management Model that he has developed.

I appreciate the way in which Carlos has shared workshop formats and demonstrated his own practice of coaching and consulting. Provision of simple techniques and tools, even check lists and questionnaire formats, makes this book accessible to any manager or human resources professional wanting to support relationship building in their organisation. The theoretical base of the book is sound, implicit rather than explicit, but gives enough information for people wanting

greater depth to follow up on concepts and ideas. This is a book that I can comfortably recommend to postgraduate (Dip.Bus.; MBA and MCom) students alike. It has value for psychodrama trainees in showing clear applications of the method – and Carlos' love affair with life - enacting what I believe Moreno was indeed advocating. The book also provides resources for personal development and can support work that supervisors or coaches do with individuals.

What I gain from the book, in particular, is a strong reminder of the importance of positive thinking and languaging, of helping members of groups to identify and hold on to the values and strengths of their lives – 'the creative force for survival' (what Carlos calls the Pillars of Life). Carlos' spiritual conviction in the essential goodness of life and the realms of possibility available to each of us underpin his method. Overall, I enjoyed the book immensely. The challenge I take from it is that I need to articulate for myself the model(s) that form my own practice – and recognise which of the platforms, and which pillars of life, I draw on. These are valuable challenges that take me forward and sharpen my appreciation of the need to invest seriously in relationship building, building capital (treasure) that 'neither moth nor rust corrupts and where thieves cannot break through and steal' (adapting Matt 6.19). If these are neglected, as Rolf and Inge and the rest of TML staff found out, they wither and die. This is 'living for something', not 'against' it. In this book, Carlos shows how this can be done, and how the essential health of our relationships, at home and in the work place, does indeed determine our business success and quality of life.

Group Action – The Dynamics of Groups in Therapeutic, Educational and Corporate Settings

by T. Martin Ringer

(2002) Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London

Reviewed by Don Reekie

Martin is indebted to psychodrama training which informs and undergirds his development as a psychoanalytically-oriented social analyst and group worker. His formative experience in outdoor pursuits and life skills education was later expanded through his work and related study in therapeutic, educational and corporate settings. Franciose Ringer, his life-partner to whom he has dedicated the book, has gifted the core element of attachment to Martin's theoretical stance. Forewords by well-known European group analysts Malcolm Pines and Claudio Neri indicate their regard for his writing.

This book offers is an important reference for psychodrama practitioners and trainees. It provides common language descriptions of many processes we usually read in Morenean terminology. Martin bases the writing on stories drawn largely from outdoor adventure groups which earths theoretical ideas and therapeutic

analysis in the everyday encounters that are recognisably the 'normalis' of human life and not the pathology. However this book is also packed with easily digested psychodynamic terms in common use. These are expounded for group workers with simplicity and clarity.

"The reflective space" stands central in the book and in Martin's work with groups. It means that the leader and other group members have the ability to hold the group consciousness and flow with each other in growing trust and resilience. Each member expands her or his presence to include others and to work with the group anxieties and beyond them, in active and group-reflective mode. Attachment theory views each person - whether leader or group member - as "building ... a phantasy space (which) begins at birth and is associated with having experiences of secure attachment to caregivers... Later in life positive relationships with significant others

and positive experiences in groups strengthen the internalised reflective capacity".

This indicates that Martin has taken up a way of being a group worker which involves living in the moment. He recognises how crucial it is that the leader develops an ability to hold her or his own anxieties and to also co-produce a culture in which the group strengthens its collective holding of group anxieties. He notes that "when a leader is connected to the emotional field of a group, his/her feelings are not solely his or her 'own', but are a mixture of personal tendencies and a response to what is unspoken in the group." He concludes effective group leaders work with the unconscious as well as the conscious processes. Groups need to have a rationale, purpose and structure that can be expressed in terms of logic and rationality. Yet for every aspect that occurs within the consciousness of group leader and group members, there are associated processes that occur in the unconscious life of the group. His book outlines a frame for enquiry, observation and thinking, rather than providing a set of tools. He notes that personal authority results from having the ability to manage one's own internal world of feelings and phantasies so that one is not overwhelmed or seduced by them. It is certainly not a 'painting by numbers' approach.

Martin notes that the current Western political and economic climate supports the marginalisation, trivialisation and fragmentation of complex fields of endeavour such as group facilitation and leadership. "The business literature abounds with descriptions of how to achieve significant results by following a number of prescribed steps and these may be useful as a starting point, but will rarely hold up for long periods in complex or conflicted situations."

The book gives huge assistance to a thinking group-worker involved in integrating their own person, with their strengths and frailties, as they accept the challenge to lead, contribute, and intervene in groups. Where, and in what ways this work may be engaged with, are indicated by Martin.

He works largely in corporate workplaces and finds that most corporations do not acknowledge the central role of reflective thinking and collaborative learning. In his own experience having personal psychotherapy, professional supervision, clinical supervision, and a disciplined focus on his own process in relation to others has been worthwhile. Yet, "the corporate world has largely managed to perpetuate the myth that reflective, emotional and relational matters are either 'fringe' or at best peripheral to 'core business'. The cost is exceptionally high levels of splitting, projection, projective identification and consequent scapegoating in organisations." Of course therapeutic and clinical organisations too do not necessarily bring forward their reflective, emotional, and relational intelligence to the advantage of their own 'house' and 'back-yard'.

Martin uses the term 'role' throughout the book to mean function, with accompanying expectations, tasks and responsibilities, or position, with its accompanying sets of relationships. 'Role' for the psychodramatist is more idiosyncratic and includes much wider areas of being and doing than function and position in relation to others. These differences are of course fundamental. Yet Martin writes in a manner that encompasses the essence of role dynamics and theory. There is never doubt that he is attending to the whole way of being a person has in the specific environmental, social and even cosmic context. However it seems that Martin

misses a connection to Moreno's appreciation of and application of role to personality structure on the one hand, and to the nature and measurement of group life on the other. He describes psychodrama as "a group centred methodology with strong action and experiential bases...that claimed to have invented group therapy". He expresses surprise at the absence in psychodrama of the theory of 'group' to supplement the 'role theory' of individual functioning. In contrast my own view is that role theory and sociometry are 'theories in use' focussing on group and intra-personal psychology. In spite of the developments within ANZPA to apply cultural atom concepts to social and to personality measurement perhaps there has not been sufficient clarity of communication for these understandings to be strongly recognised and applied amongst us. Unless Martin is simply right here. It is true that Moreno's writing is not cohesively organised to carrying a theory of groups and yet all his writing is based on the premise of groups from cosmos, to society, to social atom.

While Martin does not refer to 'psychological social and cultural atom', his notion of working models underlaid with internal working models covers much that is also encompassed in the concept of 'social and cultural atom'. For a psychodrama practitioner, reviewing this area with Martin as guide, brings alternative viewpoints and slants of lighting that open up familiar territory in fresh and stimulating ways. To review the subjectivity of personal mapping and to investigate memory, the conscious, pre-conscious, fantasy, phantasy (with some similarities to 'surplus reality'), attachment, and transference is a fascinating and informative journey.

Boundaries' and 'containment' are not

my favourite words. Not surprisingly a psychodynamic group-worker steeped in psychoanalytic and attachment conceptualisation will use both of them. (Martin calls to my attention as reader the "out of awareness" responses we all make to "words and concepts"). He writes: "... you have in the back of your mind ... out of awareness ... sets of codes that you call on to interpret each event". So my aversion to these 'words' may not just be from my observation of group patterns, but also arise from my 'cultural atom' or 'internal working model', with all its phantasies.

My avoidance of the words is not about the concepts that stand behind them, but the metaphoric power they carry to produce damagingly restrictive patterns of interaction between people. They promote the imposition of prohibitions rather than personal discernment and group norms with overtly negotiated agreements. Martin uses these words, but I am delighted that they do not prevent his working thoroughly with the realities of each area of life, each with its own range of functional behaviours, and considerations for respectful and life enhancing interactions. Martin's approach will not get us stuck at the edges fearfully incanting 'commandments'. He focuses on containment that is the holding by the leader and the group of the reflective space.

In the author's preface Martin writes: "The book is for people who want to develop their ability to create their own activities and ways of intervening in groups, rather than for those who want to be given ready-made interventions." "This fits what I've read. It was worth the read.

Foundations of Psychodrama History, Theory and Practice, Fourth Edition

by Adam Blatner

(2002) Springer Publishing Company Inc., New York.

Reviewed by Jenny Hutt

Adam Blatner's new edition is a stimulating exploration of the underlying ideas at the foundations of the psychodrama method. It is an intellectual complement to his book *Acting-In: Practical Applications of Psychodramatic Methods* (1996). This fourth edition takes an expansive view over the last century, drawing from and referring the reader to the expanding literature on psychodrama as well as a number of interesting and related fields.

Blatner reviews the history of psychodrama including J. L. Moreno's origins, the precursors to classical psychodrama and the refinement and application of his methods. These are set within the wider context of developments in group therapy, social psychology, self-help groups, T-groups and the mainstream of psychoanalysis.

Blatner locates key people in the field in time and place. These include professionals working with Moreno in the

1940's and 1950's to develop the method in the fields of psychiatry, sociology, criminology and education, including pioneers in the USA, Europe, Canada, Japan and Cuba. The 'second phase', those who became teachers from 1960 to the mid-1970's in the USA, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, South America, Japan and Greece includes Max Clayton and Lynette Clayton.

Blatner explores why, despite the power of the method and its theoretical richness, psychodrama is not very widely appreciated in the field of psychoanalysis. While historical unreadiness and Moreno's personal idiosyncrasies are highlighted, other factors mentioned are still significant today. These include the fear of action; demands on time; distrust of the theatre; irresponsible use of the method by relatively untrained practitioners; and the demands of the method on practitioners who must be spontaneous and resilient, in contrast to the more protected role of the 'talk therapist'.

Blatner attributes the survival of psychodrama to "J.L. Moreno's courage, persistence and vision"; and to "the work of Zerka Moreno who moderated many of his faults and championed his work"(p.49). However he concludes that psychodrama has not yet achieved the popular or professional recognition it deserves. He says, "Moreno's ideas are basically valid, powerful and relevant, now more than ever. In a time of pervasive dehumanisation, his contributions to developing the value and individuality of each person through sociometry and spontaneity training principles are most timely" (p49).

I particularly enjoyed Blatner's accessible exploration of contemporary thought, including postmodernism, constructivism, narrative and hermeneutics, which illuminate and support Moreno's ideas. He contends that "Moreno's theology, his philosophy of creativity, spontaneity and surplus reality, and his social psychology all rest on assumptions essentially at odds with the conventional attitudes still prevalent in our culture" (p51).

In particular, concepts such as surplus reality, the place of play and the deeper meanings of creativity don't mesh with ordinary ideas about objectivity and rationality (p51). Hence psychodrama goes against the grain of much of our cultural conditioning. It requires some re-learning of fairly basic modes of thought, and a shift from tendencies to rely on what others have created to spontaneity, daring to create anew (p58).

In a chapter on Moreno's theology Blatner contrasts immanence (the idea that God acts in and through the creativity of every being in the world) with transcendence (the idea that God is predominantly if not completely transcendent, wholly beyond our being and wholly other). Blatner critiques Moreno's

theology as overemphasising immanence rather than recognising a balance between the two.

Blatner's explorations of a wide range of theoretical considerations include chapters on creativity; spontaneity, play, imagination and surplus reality; expression and action; catharsis; skills learning; therapeutic factors; role theory; and sociometry. These chapters are full of interest and some refreshing perspectives. However I found his chapters on role theory somewhat elusive and removed and think they would have benefited from case study material to adequately illustrate the living reality of roles.

Blatner also devotes a chapter to what he calls the 'related approaches' of role-playing and role training; action methods; sociodrama; bibliodrama; drama therapy; drama in education; interactive theatre; playback theatre and the art of play. He concludes his book with some general principles about the application of psychodrama techniques and an extensive compendium of psychodramatic terms and techniques.

In a chapter exploring the integration of psychodrama with other therapies he describes it as a tool which transcends any particular approach to therapy rather than a stand-alone therapy itself. From his perspective it may be integrated with most other psychotherapeutic methods. This belies the difficulties of meshing therapeutic frameworks, particularly for the student attempting to integrate these approaches as they learn them and for the psychodramatist working in a multi-disciplinary team. My own recent experience, as a psychodramatist learning to apply a psychodynamic approach to organisational consulting, revealed to me significant differences in philosophy, underlying values and therapeutic directions.

Blatner thows the reader plenty of inspiration and challenge. He emphasises the need for psychodramatists to learn from the general group psychotherapy literature, because there are many dynamics and strategies noted there that are not fully articulated in the literature on psychodrama. For example, he notes that the field of child development has made great progress and that psychodramatists should not base their

understandings on Moreno's speculations.

He also warns that J.L.Moreno's writing and Zerka Moreno's teachings must not be over-idealised and calls for readers to find their "own courage in creating, making up new variations, discovering new facets and building bridges to new fields of endeavor" (p88).



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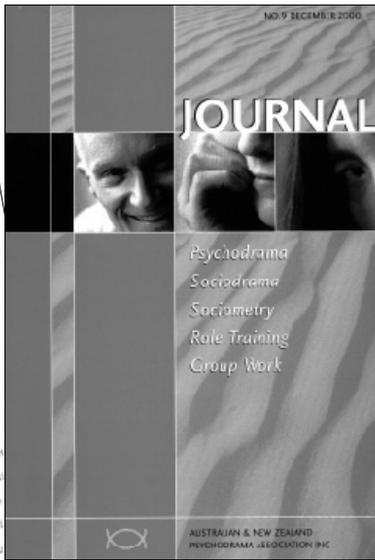
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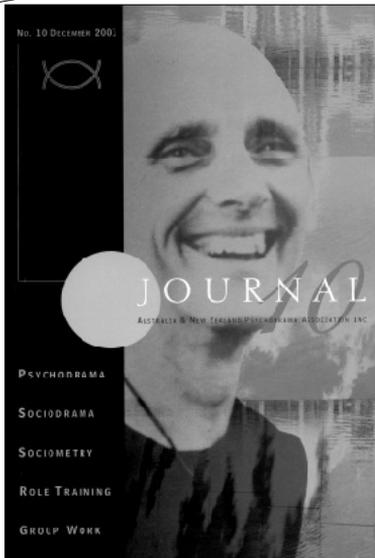
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The purposes of ANZPA include professional association with one another; the setting and maintaining of standards; and establishing and promoting the reputation of this method. The Journal aims to fulfil these purposes through the dissemination of good-quality writing and articles on the psychodrama method and its application by practitioners in Australia and New Zealand.

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