Contents

Through a Glass Darkly

Coming Face to Face With Mirroring in Psychodrama

Tim Mapel

Abstract
Mirroring is a central element in psychodrama but the term is used in variable ways in different contexts. In this article, Tim Mapel investigates these various meanings. He focuses first on the historical development of the mirror concept in the writings of J.L. and Zerka Moreno, both as a therapeutic technique and as a stage of human development. Later writings, particularly contributions by Dr. Max Clayton, are then considered followed by a discussion of the contemporary uses of mirroring in psychodramatic production. What emerges is greater clarity regarding the concept and technique of mirroring.

Key Words
J.L. and Zerka Moreno, Max Clayton, mirroring, mirror stage of human development, mirror technique, psychodrama

> *For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face:*
> *now I know in part;*
> *but then shall I know even as also I am known.*
>
> I Corinthians 13

Introduction

I remember being introduced to mirroring at my first psychodrama session. We were asked to pair up and simply mirror our partner's body posture, movements and non-verbal gestures. I became aware of being highly tuned in to my partner, carefully and attentively noticing them. And in turn I noticed I became much more aware of my own body, thoughts and feelings as my partner sensitively reflected what they saw in me. Mirroring seemed such a simple and powerful way to align myself with the experience of another and deepen self-awareness. Later in my psychodrama training, mirroring was used in another way. The director would

pause the action to allow the protagonist the opportunity to see themselves as others saw them through auxiliaries mirroring their thoughts, feelings and actions. These mirroring experiences were powerful in raising awareness in the protagonist and often led them to develop new and spontaneous responses to old situations as they re-entered their drama. They were also satisfying pieces of auxiliary work. They required me to sensitively tune in to the experience of another and accurately portray the essence of it back to them. Both these uses of mirroring are probably familiar to anyone acquainted with the psychodrama method.

Over the years my interest in mirroring has increased and my confusion has grown alongside it. I have heard the word mirroring used in a number of different ways and wondered, are we all talking about the same thing? As a counsellor trainer I hear my students say, "I was mirroring my client's body position there as I leaned forward and uncrossed my legs". In other places, I have heard colleagues mention that a client "wants to be mirrored all the time" or clinicians assess that a client "didn't get enough mirroring as a child". I have also heard an oft repeated phrase in the psychodrama community that "doubling is for self-acceptance and mirroring is for self-awareness" or was it the other way around? I was often unsure. These confusions heightened as I listened out for the term and realised that it *was* being used in different ways.

This questioning led me on a search to understand the term mirroring. Whilst it is an important element of psychodrama, there is not a lot written about it in the literature. My quest for clarity became a bit of a detective game as I looked for different uses of the term mirroring and researched its historical origins. I examined the original writings of J.L. and Zerka Moreno and, to my delight, found their writings not as impenetrable as rumours had led me to believe. I discovered that they conceptualise mirroring as both a therapeutic technique *and* as an early stage of human development. The quote at the beginning of this article describes both the essence of the mirroring experience itself and my own journey of discovery as I investigated this topic. My confusion about mirroring had arisen because the *same* term is used in related but different ways, often without any distinction made. When we are mirrored accurately there is usually greater self-awareness *and* the feeling of having been seen by a sensitive other. Ideally we feel recognised, accepted and more complete through the experience of being mirrored. We move from seeing things "through a glass darkly" and only "in part", to knowing our self more fully and being known "face to face". While I had started out looking through a glass darkly, I ended up feeling I had a more face to face understanding of mirroring. Hopefully this article will provide greater clarity and also bring us face to face with mirroring.

The article begins with an historical perspective on the context and development of the mirror technique in the psychodrama writings of J.L. and Zerka Moreno. Extensive quotations are included to convey the full flavour of their ideas. Attention is then turned to the Morenos' use of the concept as an early stage of human development. More recent writings on mirroring are then

discussed, including a summary of Max Clayton's work, followed by a consideration of the timely use of mirroring as a psychodrama production technique. It should be noted that this article confines itself to the topic of mirroring and does not enter into a comparative discussion regarding mirroring and doubling.

The Mirror Technique in the Writings of J.L. and Zerka Moreno

In 1946 J.L. Moreno, the founder of psychodrama, published the first written description of his work in *Psychodrama First Volume.* He wanted to publish thoughts and practices that he had been developing over the past 20 years in order to reach a wider audience. Primarily he was writing for a traditional psychiatric community, detailing the unique and effective features of psychodrama, sociodrama and sociatry. Outlining the main features of psychodrama, Moreno (1946:177) writes:

> *Psychodrama puts the patient on a stage where he can work out his problems with the aid of a few therapeutic actors. It is a method of diagnosis as well as a method of treatment. One of its characteristic features is that role-acting is organically included in the treatment process. It can be adapted to every type of problem, personal or group, of children or adults. It can be applied to every age level. Problems in the nursery as well as the deepest psychic conflicts can be brought nearer solution by its aid. The psychodrama is human society in miniature, the simplest possible setup for a methodical study of its psychological structure. Through techniques such as the auxiliary ego, spontaneous improvisation, self-presentation, soliloquy, the interpolation of resistance, new dimensions of the mind are opened up, and, what is most important, they can be explored under experimental conditions.*

The telling aspect of this summary, and of the 100 or so pages of *Psychodrama First Volume* where Moreno describes psychodramatic techniques in detail along with case studies, is that there is *no* mention of mirroring anywhere! In his earliest exposition of his therapeutic approach, there is no discussion of what we today would consider a central element of psychodrama production. It is of interest that in the introduction to the third edition of *Psychodrama First Volume* published in 1964, Moreno does mention "mirror playing" (p.v) as a type of role playing, but this did not appear in the 1946 edition. However, while Moreno does not directly use the term mirroring in 1946 he does extensively discuss a "new technique" (p.243) central to his work, which he calls the auxiliary ego. It is important to remember that Moreno was primarily working in a psychiatric hospital setting with deeply disturbed psychotic or catatonic patients. In this context the auxiliary ego was usually an assistant, although sometimes it was Moreno himself, who was well acquainted with the patient's clinical history and was able to portray their life to them while they passively observed it. In this next

quote, Moreno (p.235) describes the way in which he portrayed important life events to a catatonic or locked in syndrome patient in order to try to help the patient regain his memory.

> *I proceeded in the course of the session, to aid his memory and to bring back, piece by piece, the things he had forgotten, things she had done for him, words she had said to him, and promises he had made in return. This technique should be of particular interest to the individual-centered psychoanalyst who comes often to a deadlock in the course of treatment.*

Moreno does not call this technique mirroring as such, but we are certainly seeing the spirit of it here in his attempts to show the patients to themselves through the auxiliary ego.

While J.L. Moreno was publishing his three psychodrama volumes as large books, his assistant and soon to be wife Zerka Toeman was publishing their collaborative work in scholarly journals such as *Sociometry* and *Group Psychotherapy*. Her writings are more technical and technique oriented while his tend to be more visionary and inspirational. In an early *Sociometry*, Zerka Toeman (1946:181-182) clearly describes the first written instance of the mirror technique and the way in which the Morenos used it with their patients.

> *In the mirror technique the patient remains in the audience as spectator while the auxiliary ego takes the patient's part, reproducing gestures typical of the patient and creating a series of scenes and situations which the patient will recognize as her own experiences, enabling the patient to 'see herself as others see her.' This technique is perhaps more difficult as the patient does not lend support or point the way for the auxiliary ego. It is used a) with patients who are completely non-cooperative and need to be stirred into action, b) for the purpose of restoring amnestic experiences to patients, and c) for patients who have never registered the events taking place around them, that is, not to restore memory but to acquaint them with certain facts and events.*

Toeman goes on to describe an episode where she utilised the mirror technique with a mandated amnestic patient. She mirrored the patient's actions by throwing furniture around, cursing and threatening to hit a nurse, as the patient had done during her hospital stay. This caught the attention of the patient and shocked her into realising the magnitude of her behaviour. Toeman's last remark is worthy of note. "It should be added that deep action catharsis is gained in mirror technique, not only by the patient but also by the auxiliary ego…" (p.183). When performed successfully, mirroring can have a profound effect on patient and therapist alike.

In 1952, J.L. Moreno wrote an important article on psychodramatic production in which he illustrates the use of the mirror technique to a group of interested nurses. He describes how the technique is often used to provoke the patient out of non-involvement with their lives because they cannot tolerate the

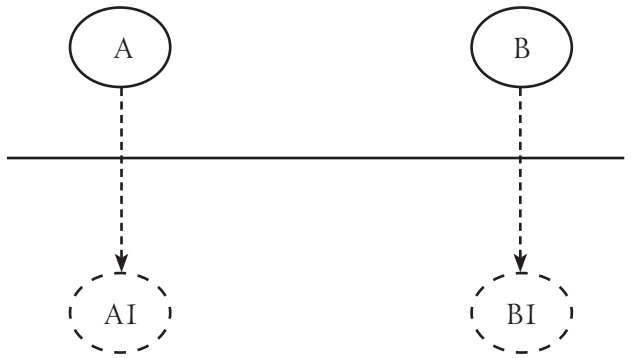
distortion and misrepresentation of themselves that the mirror offers (p.263). By changing the recapitulation of their story somewhat, the patient's warm up is increased and they are more likely to move into action.

> *When a person looks at himself and sees himself looking ugly, he may try to do something about it. We want him to become provoked by the mirror. This is one reason we use this technique. The mirror portrays you in a distorted way. You may become angry with it because it does not appear to be you. . . The technique has achieved its aim if the patient realizes that a mirror of him is attempted. If some part seems distorted or misrepresented, they step in and interfere with the mirror. They tell the portraying ego that he is an imposter! That is exactly what we want from a person who has been mute and uncooperative and non-active, in order to get him going.*

Seven years passed and in 1959 *Psychodrama Second Volume* was published. In it Moreno details ten therapy techniques, listing the mirror technique as number ten and describing it with an illustrative diagram in the context of in-depth couple's therapy (p.53).

> *The technique of the mirror 'portrays' the body image and the unconscious of A at a distance from him so that he can see himself. The portrayal is done by an auxiliary ego, who has made a close study of A. The same process of mirroring is also applied to B, the other partner of the pair. A and B can see each other in the mirror of the two auxiliary egos portraying them. In the mirror technique the protagonist is a spectator, an onlooker, he looks at the psychological mirror and sees himself.*

Technique of the Mirror



This simple diagram portrays the essence of the mirror technique in early psychodrama. A and B, the patients or protagonists, observe themselves portrayed by their auxiliaries AI and BI in a series of situations. They may "resent" or "approve" their mirror, as well as learning about their partner through the

auxiliaries' representations. Mirroring, as illustrated by this diagram, is inherent in Moreno's (1959) vision of psychological health, the ability to see yourself as others see you.

By 1959 Zerka Toeman had become Zerka Moreno and continued to publish in scholarly journals. In an article (1959:9) in *Group Psychotherapy*, she details a range of psychodrama techniques including:

> *Mirror technique – This is used when the patient is unable to represent himself in word and action as, for instance, in catatonia, or after psychotic episodes or shock therapy which produced residual or pseudo-amnestic states. An auxiliary ego is placed on the action portion of the psychodramatic space, the patient or group of patients remaining seated in the audience or group portion. The auxiliary ego proceeds to represent the patient, assuming his identity, is addressed by the director by the patient's name, and reproducing the patient's behavior and interaction with others, either real or delusionary – all as seen through the eyes of the patient. The patient sees himself 'as if in a mirror' how other people experience him.*

The mirror technique is well described here and is certainly recognisable to psychodrama practitioners today, but it continues to be represented as an application with severely ill patients who remain passive recipients. No doubt this was due to the psychiatric hospital setting and the severity of mental health issues treated there, but the passivity of the patient and the consequent need for a knowledgeable auxiliary is striking. In the same 1959 article Zerka Moreno briefly mentions three other "Behind Your Back" mirror techniques used at the Morenos' Beacon Institute to stimulate response and recovery from their "physically present, but psychologically absent" patients (p.12).

1. Behind the Back Audience Technique – where the audience is "asked to leave" the theatre but remains, "pretending" not to witness the protagonist's drama.
2. The Turn Your Back Technique – where protagonists and director literally turn their backs to the audience if shame or embarrassment is present.
3. The Black-Out Technique – where the lights are turned off and all actions are carried out in the dark so the protagonist can go through a painful experience unobserved.

Ten more years passed before *Psychodrama Third Volume* was published in 1969, jointly authored by J.L. and Zerka Moreno. On page 240 they describe the main rules and techniques of psychodrama, including mirroring. Zerka Moreno's publication (1969:80-81) in *Group Psychotherapy* that same year utilises the identical quote to describe the mirror technique. Notice again how it is described for use with patients who are primarily unwilling or unable to engage in action themselves.

Mirror: When the patient is unable to represent himself, in word or action, an auxiliary ego is placed on the action portion of the psychodramatic space. The patient or patients remain seated in the group portion. The auxiliary ego re-enacts the patient, copying his behavior and trying to express his feelings in word and movement, showing the patient or patients "as if in a mirror" how other people experience them.

The mirror may be exaggerated, employing techniques of deliberate distortion in order to arouse the patient to come forth and change from a passive spectator into an active participant, an actor, to correct what he feels is not the right enactment and interpretation of himself.

Thus over 23 years and three volumes we see a gradual shift. What J.L. Moreno referred to originally as an aspect of the auxiliary ego developed into the mirror technique that is recognisable today. Its purpose, to reflect to a patient others' experiences of them, was consistent but its application remained limited. While the Morenos may have been using the mirror technique in other contexts with higher functioning individuals, their writings were confined to the treatment of severe psychiatric illness. Their hope was that the mirror technique would catalyse catatonic patients to action, either through self-recognition or through rejection of the mirror's portrayal. Undoubtedly, there were other applications of mirroring being used in various clinical and training settings throughout the psychodrama world. However, the further development of the mirror technique and its broader utilisation in training and therapy groups would wait another 23 years for the work of Dr. Max Clayton. But before moving to this we must consider the Morenos' other use of the term mirror, as an early stage of human development.

The Mirror as a Stage in Moreno's Theory of Human Development

The other context in which J.L. Moreno wrote about the mirror was in terms of human development. He proposed a theory based on five developmental stages: the matrix of all identity, the double, the mirror, role reversal and acting in the role of the other (Fox, 1987). Regarding the third phase, when a child can recognise themselves in the mirror a new stage of the developing self has occurred. In this stage the infant begins to differentiate themselves from their mother and environment, and two way relationships develop (Moreno, 1952). Ideally from a base of unconditional acceptance the mother or significant caregiver offers the infant mirroring, reflecting back the child's feelings, behaviours, ideas and attributes. The child is then able to safely explore their sense of 'Who I am' to gain self-acceptance and develop self-awareness through seeing themselves as others see them (Maher, 2009).

If the child's mirroring experience is adequate it will also enable them to develop an ability to be aware of unpleasant aspects of the self. This in turn

enables fragmenting roles to be brought into relationship with more progressive roles, generating greater harmony and integration (Daniels, 2006). Discovering this developmental sequence, Moreno developed the mirror technique to correct inaccurate or insufficient mirroring that may have occurred in early childhood. Inaccurate or insufficient mirroring makes it difficult for an individual to accurately differentiate themselves from others and have a clear perception of self. Individuals may feel somehow deficient or shamed and experience difficulty in labelling internal states, self-regulating and feeling empathy for others. Moreno would often encounter this phenomenon in his clinical work and had thus devised both a developmental theory to explain it, the stage of the mirror, and a therapeutic tool to address it, the mirror technique. According to Moreno (1959) then, an important aspect of psychological health is being able to see ourselves as others see us. This ability emerges during the stage of the mirror and can be corrected later in life through the technique of the mirror.

The Mirror Technique After the Morenos

Following on from the Morenos' writings, little attention was paid in the literature to the topic of mirroring over the next few decades. In his popular book *Acting In* (1988), Blatner devotes less than a page to the subject, but does maintain that mirroring facilitates greater awareness particularly of non-verbal messages and can be used as a tool for "self-confrontation" (p.15). During this period another important book (Williams, 1989) mentions mirroring briefly and discusses a "mirroring position" from which a protagonist can watch the re-enactment of the scenes of their drama from an observer's position. And in 2007 Kellerman makes an important contribution, discussing the wider therapeutic benefits of mirroring and drawing a distinction between idealising, validating and subjective mirroring. However, the clearest articulation of mirroring, its rationale, use and limitations, remains Clayton's 1992 book *Enhancing Life and Relationships: A Role Training Manual*.

In this book and in other writings, Clayton discusses the purposes and benefits of mirroring and gives clear guidance on its production. In his view, the primary purpose of mirroring is to bring greater self-awareness and differentiation to the protagonist. "Any behaviour by others to enhance that person's awareness of their physical body, impulses, emotions and feelings will further autonomous development at that stage" (Clayton, 1991:16). He emphasises the non-evaluative nature of mirroring. It is purely to focus attention on a person's functioning and any moralising or criticism is unhelpful and confusing to the recipient. Mirroring is therapeutic and while the truth presented sometimes shocks, confirmation of accuracy from group members and repetition makes it difficult for the protagonist to dismiss. The purpose of mirroring is thus both mundane and lofty. "It's designed to heighten awareness, to enlarge our senses and through the enlargement of our senses to enable us to enlarge our whole beings" (Clayton & Carter, 2004:43). Clayton (1992) goes on to provide detailed guidance for the effective

application of mirroring in the course of a psychodrama.

1. Capture the attention of the protagonist and the group in order to propose an interlude of mirroring will occur and to ensure they remain spontaneously warmed-up.
2. Decide which moment of the protagonist's action the mirroring will focus on.
3. Identify which of the auxiliaries was attuned to that action and could thus act as a mirror.
4. Warm the auxiliaries up to what they saw, felt and heard in order to portray it.
5. Remind all participants that the purpose of the mirroring exercise is for observation and exploration in order to gain a new perspective and not for evaluation of the protagonist's actions.

Adequate mirroring occurs when the auxiliary "…virtually repeats what the protagonist has already said and done" (Clayton, 1992:27), thus capturing the meaning and feeling tone of the experience. There is conviction and congruence in the portrayal. It looks, sounds and feels real. This enables the protagonist to warm up to themselves and accept the mirroring. Poor mirroring can leave the protagonist conflicted or divert the purpose of the drama. If there are multiple mirrors, Clayton (1992) recommends that the first two or three portray the protagonist more literally while the latter can exaggerate or emphasise different aspects of functioning. He highlights threefold benefits of mirroring for the protagonist.

1. During the mirroring, the spontaneity of the auxiliaries increases the spontaneity of the protagonist.
2. There is an increase in self-awareness that comes about through maintaining a positive emotional connection with the mirror. "This has the sole purpose of making a person see and experience themselves as they are. That is, the person sees a portrait of themselves" (p.28).
3. There is a positive impact on the protagonist's social atom that comes about through their increased self-awareness and the strong bond that can occur with their auxiliaries, which often continues to develop outside of the session.

Clayton and Carter (2004) suggest that effective mirroring enables a greater warm up to creativity and a stronger motivating force to be present in a protagonist. They provide an illustration of the director encouraging other group members to mirror a protagonist. The director encourages the protagonist by saying, "…we'll just have a look. It's not for the purpose of evaluation, it's just to have a look. It's just to make sure that you can develop your experience as

you get together with yourself" (p.40). This example demonstrates the way that mirroring can take a moment out of time, examine it and bring all its various aspects into a protagonist's awareness. Clayton (1992) also recommends immediate enactment after a mirroring interlude, because the protagonist's warm up and spontaneity levels will be high. To reflect on or intellectualise the mirroring is to waste it. A producer should simply direct the protagonist to re-enter the scene and act.

The Use of Mirroring in Psychodrama

While mirroring has become an important element of psychodrama production, it is not a panacea. Care and skill need to be exercised in its use. Clayton (1992:28) cautions that mirroring should take place only after the protagonist has "developed a trusting connectedness with the surrounding environment". This surrounding environment would include both the therapeutic group of which they are part, as well as their inner relationship with themselves. Without this trusting connectedness a protagonist is much more likely to orient to self-criticism or self-rejection. That is why mirroring should not involve judgment but merely facilitate awareness and appreciation of what is. In order for a protagonist to accept mirroring, there needs to be a reasonable level of self-acceptance already established. Some individuals find mirroring unacceptable, particularly if they have developed a highly fragmented role system (Daniels, 2006) or have previously experienced negative or inadequate mirroring and are habituated to self-rejection (Maher, 2009). This self-rejection might indicate that there are unresolved issues from an earlier childhood developmental stage. In this case doubling may be a more appropriate intervention to increase self-acceptance and build up progressive roles. Knowledge of Moreno's developmental stages thus assists the practitioner to assess the most appropriate intervention, mirroring, doubling or role reversal, for a particular protagonist. The psychodramatic axiom, "doubling is for self-acceptance and mirroring is for self-awareness" is therefore a good rule to bear in mind when considering the needs of a protagonist.

Conclusion

The early writings of J.L. and Zerka Moreno give us insight into the development of their ideas regarding mirroring, both as a technique and as a stage of human development. Both these meanings are often referred to generically as "mirroring", which has been the source of confusion. The mirror technique began as one aspect of the auxiliary ego's therapeutic work with severely withdrawn patients. While described as a method to assist memory recovery and self-portrayal, the recipient of the mirroring was passive and the technique dependent on the auxiliary having extensive knowledge of a patient's life. Thus while this early

feature is familiar to us, its application was different from the way that mirroring is generally conceptualised today.

J.L. and Zerka Moreno also developed a theory of human development which included the mirror stage. This occurs when a toddler is able to recognise themselves as separate from their environment, enabling them to differentiate thoughts, feelings and actions. Mirroring deficiencies can lead to difficulties with differentiation, self-esteem and shame and can be remedied using the mirror technique to increase awareness of self through the eyes of others. In more recent times, Max Clayton has given fullest expression to mirroring as one of a number of important psychodramatic production tools. He describes the effectiveness of the technique in enhancing self-awareness and as a remedial intervention for developmental deficiencies, while cautioning against its use for evaluative purposes.

My investigation into the differences between the mirror as an early Morenian technique and its conception as a stage of human development has assisted me to "see through a glass darkly". I have benefitted from delving into the Morenos' original writings and appreciated both the historical development of the mirror technique and the therapeutic context in which it was utilised. I can now see how it is both an important psychodrama production method and a useful assessment tool for identifying remedial work. I am increasingly coming to a "face to face" relationship with mirroring that assists me to understand and apply it with greater satisfaction and effectiveness.

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Dancing in the Sun

The Creative Combination of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Psychodrama

Jenny Wilson

Abstract
Clinical psychologist and psychodramatist Jenny Wilson values many different approaches in her work as a psychotherapist, particularly the modalities of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and psychodrama. Following an earlier article comparing their origins and philosophies (Wilson, 2011), she focuses here on practical application. Working with a client who has an essay writing phobia and involving a clinical psychology trainee as observer and psychodramatic auxiliary, she demonstrates that CBT and psychodrama can be creatively combined to facilitate both effective therapy and student learning.

Key Words
action methods, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), essay writing, psychodrama, specific phobia, training

Introduction

Academic psychology and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) draw me in. Clever research designs, well described theoretical principles and clear recommendations appeal to the Jenny who loves order, clarity, structure. The more complex and puzzling my clinical work becomes the more I turn to psychology peers and theories for anchorage. And yet the world of psychodrama calls me too - richness of relationship, creative process, messy reality brought to life on the psychodrama stage in collaboration with close companions. Over the past decade I have gradually found a way to bring these two facets of my life and work together, an integration that works for me, my clients and my students.

Others have combined psychodrama and CBT. Jacobs (2002) and Hamamci (2002, 2006) used psychodrama methods within a CBT framework. Treadwell,

Kumar and Wright (2002) and Kipper (2002) describe CBT techniques that can be used to enhance psychodrama. Fisher (2007) and Baim (2007) describe the way that CBT and psychodrama theory enrich each other. Influential CBT writers Padesky (1994) and Beck (1991) mention the use of emotive and enactive techniques drawn from psychodrama.

In our university clinic I supervise student learning and conduct assessment and therapy sessions with students sitting in as observers. The main therapy model used is CBT and I frequently combine it with psychodrama. In an earlier article I compared the origins, philosophies and theories of these two approaches (Wilson, 2011). In this article I focus on the practical application of CBT combined with psychodrama using a case example. In each section the case notes are provided first in italics, followed by discussion regarding principles and practice.

CBT and Psychodrama: A Case Study

The client, Gail, is a 28 year old sociology student who has been suffering from depression and anxiety. The student observer, Sally, is a mature woman in her second year of postgraduate clinical psychology training who has attended lectures on CBT and worked with clients at the clinic. Sally and I have discussed the use of role play and other psychodrama methods within a CBT framework. I know that she has the capacity to be spontaneous and take up roles. Client and student consent was given for the use of this material and names have been changed.

A student observer acting as auxiliary and audience member facilitates the experiential learning style of psychodrama within a traditional CBT one to one framework.

Session One

On assessment Gail meets DSM-IV criteria for a specific phobia regarding essay writing. She describes a childhood trigger, a shaming interaction with a teacher in response to creative writing. She also notes that her father, although wanting the best for her, could be extremely critical. Her performance in exams and presentations is unaffected and she has achieved good grades in the past. Previous essays have been written in tightly defined 'safe places', a strategy that, although useful at first, limited Gail's ability to write. Following a recent sequence of stressful events, Gail has been unable to write essays at all. She has successfully overcome other anxiety problems using CBT and her main goal for these sessions is to complete current essay writing requirements.

In CBT specific goals for therapy are negotiated with the client, in a similar way that a protagonist might state a clear purpose for role training in psychodrama. I also find it useful to remember that the general purpose of psychodrama is to develop a new response to an old situation or an adequate response to a new situation. This stance allows me to appreciate therapy 'detours' that sometimes have unexpected value in their own right.

Gail describes a recent deterioration in self-care. She agrees to engage in regular self-care activities and to monitor thoughts and feelings as she tries to write. I provide some reading about anxiety and recommend chapters from a CBT book (McKay & Fanning, 2000) that I find particularly helpful for clients with persistent critical self-talk.

The setting of homework and self-help reading is typical CBT practice because it facilitates the completion of much independent therapy between sessions. In this case the reading will assist the client to make sense of her experience and provide the rationale for the difficult exposure tasks to come. From a psychodrama perspective the critical self-talk could be considered an aspect of an overdeveloped coping role.

Session Two

We begin by setting an agenda: check in, homework, essay writing, CBT skills, feedback.

Typical CBT structure includes setting an agenda at the beginning of each session, reviewing and setting homework and eliciting feedback from the client. Considering the agenda setting process as a warm up phase creates an atmosphere of collaboration that is consistent with both CBT and psychodrama. In eliciting feedback at the end of the session, I invite clients to comment on both the process and content of therapy. The information they provide assists me to tailor future sessions.

Gail has completed her homework, reinstated good self-care including regular exercise and has been practising abdominal breathing. She is animated as she talks about the reading, noting that it fits her "exactly". She has been monitoring her thoughts during an unsuccessful writing attempt. I write the situation, the negative automatic thoughts (NATs) and her feelings on the white board. Gail's thoughts occur in shorthand, each word loaded with meaning and memory.

Situation: essay attempt
Thoughts: stupid, useless
Feelings: shamed, despairing

Gail has tried to respond to the NATs using previously learned CBT evidence based self-talk, "you are intelligent" and "you can do this" but these have been drowned out. As I write her statements on the white board, she tearfully recalls that this is the way it was with Dad and Mum. Dad always drowned out and bullied Mum. I observe that Gail's NATs are like a replay of parental conflict and invite her to set out small figures on the coffee table to concretise the situation. Chuckling and feeling "a bit silly playing with toys", Gail nevertheless becomes extremely focused and carefully selects figures.

The CBT focus on a specific goal influenced my initial decision to concentrate on the presenting problem. However, given that CBT skills were not working

and the client had identified her parents' contribution to the problem, I quickly became more psychodramatist than CBT therapist. Consideration of Gail's original social atom became an important part of the session. Although it is possible to explore this from a CBT perspective, psychodrama offers a more potent range of methods and a refreshing stance of playful, imaginative exploration.

Using the miniature figures, Gail sets out a small sitting child, a mother also sitting and a top-hatted father with arms raised in a standing over posture. Tearfully, she takes up each of the roles in turn and expresses the situation. The child Gail knows that Dad is critical but loves him, while believing her downtrodden Mum to be useless. Now the adult Gail knows that Mum was and is very capable. Encouraged by me, she places a figure to represent herself as an adult experiencing the childhood situation and then places more figures to be her supporters around her, her friends, myself and Sally the student. Noticing that Gail's body is still and passive, I invite her to stand. I stand beside her and instruct Sally to also come alongside and double Gail's body position. I invite Gail to take a moment 'in her mind's eye' to feel her friends also standing together with us. She closes her eyes in concentration, her breathing steadies and her body tone firms – legs firmly planted, shoulders squared, arms crossed. I direct her to express herself to each family member in turn.

Using the psychodrama method Sally and I had become supportive doubles, extending and validating the client's experience. This doubling was mostly expressed physically rather than verbally through use of movement and body posture. I had coached Sally to follow Gail's body position, thus maximising the client's kinetic, visual and spatial experience, heightening her warm up and deepening her emotional experience. Much of our work was done standing. I warm up more fully to being a director of action when I stand up. The client became much stronger and more expressive in her interactions once she was on her feet.

In surplus reality, Gail is adamant that she cannot express anger towards her father because he suffers poor health. "It might kill him." In role reversal, he is extremely sad that his harsh words have had such a terrible impact during Gail's childhood. However, he insists that he will not act differently. Adult Gail then expresses herself to the young child Gail, who is lonely and unhappy. She reassures young Gail that she is intelligent and resourceful and that she will get through these difficult years. She will find good friends at university, people who are "strange and intelligent" just like her. Discussion with her mother is warm and lively. Gail acknowledges her mother's strength and inspiration and sees her in the afterlife "dancing in the sun". Reversing roles, Gail as mother sways and laughs warmly. Sally and I double her and all our bodies move and sway. The mood is playful and easy. I coach Gail in the role of her mother to talk to her father. Mum stands up strongly to Dad, firmly telling him that his critical behaviour must stop. Gail is delighted by this, becoming cheeky and playful in interaction with her mother. Dad hears Mum's words but withdraws and does not respond.

Role reversal is a powerful intervention. In physically moving to take up the role of father and mother, Gail developed a new emotional and intellectual perspective. This was not just a cognitive shift but a complete shift in role. Compassionate feelings, thoughts and actions were aroused in the mother role and utilised to good effect. More so than CBT therapists, psychodramatists attend to the quality of the role during role reversals. Subtle changes in tone and timbre of voice and tiny movements of eyes and mouth were clues that indicated that the client was fully engaged in the enactment, with emotions and cognitions heightened. Changes of body posture and eye focus indicated the moment when the client shifted roles and developed a different functioning form or way of being. There were also time shifts from past to present. For example, standing to the side of the stage and not immersed in the childhood enactment Gail was reflective, her voice and eye contact clearer and sharper. Returning to the action, her voice seemed to catch in her throat and fill with emotion.

After this enactment, Gail sets out a new picture with the figures on the table. Mum and young Gail are dancing in the sun. Dad is lying in hell underneath the table. I suggest Gail walk around the table and express herself in soliloquy. She expresses guilt and mixed feelings about Dad, both loving him and feeling extremely angry towards him. I invite her to concretise the Dad she loved and on the table she builds a house and yard. As she does so, she expresses appreciation that he was a good provider and cared for her in his own way. There is a reflective pause and we finish the drama at this point. Sharing follows. Student Sally praises the work that Gail is doing and, when coached, expresses her own feelings of anger and protectiveness. I share my experience of having one of my own parents 'grow up' after death.

True to psychodrama's principles, I included sharing by audience and auxiliaries in the integrative phase after the enactment. As Sally and I acknowledged our common humanity rather than standing back as experts, our sharing normalised the experience for the client. In coaching the student to share, I assisted her development and she became an integral part of the therapy process rather than a mere observer.

My earlier notes of the two styles of self-talk are still on the white board. We discuss ways in which Gail can develop 'mother's voice' by using some of the images and body movements from the drama.

In returning to the point at which we started with negative automatic thoughts (NATs) and more rational alternatives, I had framed our work together in a simple CBT structure. This assisted the client and the student to develop familiarity with the basic CBT model. Teaching this model and transfer of skills from therapist to client is an important part of the CBT process. There is an explicit expectation that clients will make use of knowledge and practice strategies independently, becoming their own therapists once sessions have ceased.

Gail has already completed preparatory work for her essay writing task. We now discuss a plan to break this into small steps, a process known in CBT as graded exposure. I suggest a patchwork quilt metaphor for working on each piece of the essay and Gail recalls making peggy squares with her mother. She agrees to new homework. "One peggy square, with dancing if needed." In the feedback phase, Gail volunteers that she found the session "cathartic". She enjoyed using the psychodrama methods and found that they helped her to fully engage with her situation in a new way.

The enactments described in this session and in session three, below, brought psychodrama into a CBT structure. This requires training in psychodrama so that a therapist can be genuinely open to the direction of the session and develop the quality of relationship necessary for sensitive production. This is particularly so given the possibility of a catharsis of abreaction or integration occurring, both of which took place during Gail's sessions. From the perspective of CBT, psychodramatic enactment allows access to negative automatic thoughts, feelings, cognitive schema and core beliefs and helps to identify their origins. Cognitions 'hot with emotion' are an important element in facilitating cognitive change. In the enactment both the negative thoughts and the powerful positive voice of the client's mother were identified and acted upon. Psychodramatists will notice these same elements and more. For example, use of the body in action may link new learning with body movement and visual spacial cues may help access and process multiple layers of memory. Concretisation heightens the warm up for the protagonist, facilitating the engagement of many different senses. Working in the flow of existential time, where past, present and future are experienced in the present moment, there is ample scope for working with client experience from the past and current day simultaneously, in a way that is difficult in traditional CBT.

Session Three

Unsurprisingly, Gail's anxiety is still high and she has been unable to write. The third session becomes a psychodramatic rehearsal of essay writing with Sally undertaking excellent auxiliary work. She enacts the role of Gail's 'compassionate companion' and during role reversals, Gail strengthens her ability to companion herself.

In coaching Sally in the role of Gail's 'compassionate companion', I assisted her to accurately mirror a client and become a spontaneous auxiliary. This coaching also created two mirrors for Gail. She saw an aspect of herself reflected in me, the therapist, and then by Sally the auxiliary. Multiple views of herself and at least three perspectives, the first from within the role, the second as she eavesdropped on my coaching of Sally and the third as she interacted with the role, deepened her experience of herself and intensified her ability to become a compassionate companion to herself.

Sessions Four to Six

In spite of our good work together, Gail continues to avoid essay writing. I experience my own anxiety as essay deadlines pass and Gail does not put words on paper. I review my CBT books and am reminded of the importance of exposure to feared stimuli. Sessions four to six follow a CBT structure of graded exposure to real life essay writing tasks with added psychodramatic support in the form of concretisation and role reversal with Gail's psychodramatic mother and the 'compassionate companion'.

CBT prescribes exposure as an essential element of therapy for most anxiety disorders. Creative CBT therapists prepare and support their clients to go into the world and gradually practice the tasks that they find most difficult. For example, the client with social phobia may be assisted to draw attention to themselves (and accompanying therapist!) by dancing in a city mall. The client with an obsessive compulsive disorder might eat a snack together with their therapist after touching a toilet seat. Predictions and discussions about outcomes of these experiments play an important part of new learning.

Gail is willing to take the step from psychodramatic enactment to actual essay writing on my office computer. However, as we plan this the gap between enactment and the real life task becomes starkly clear. Even the idea of it fills Gail with fear. We discuss the importance of the exposure task. Gail learns to give a numerical rating to her anxiety levels, something CBT therapists call a subjective units of distress scale (SUDS) or anxiety barometer. In keeping with behavioral principles, we plan for Gail to stay in the essay writing situation until the barometer is falling and habituation begun. At her first attempt she experiences panic attack symptoms and tearfully rates her anxiety at 9/10. I am immensely grateful for the solid relationship I have built with Gail as she struggles to stay in the situation. Student Sally is unable to attend the exposure sessions and we both miss her support.

For this client to tolerate the difficult task of CBT's graded exposure, a strong relationship with me and with herself was essential. The confrontation of feared situations is a frequent theme of psychodrama as well, commonly occurring within the group process.

Overcoming the hurdle of beginning, Gail writes fluently. However, any pause in the flow of writing is enough to break the spell and tears, distress and old anxieties return. At these times I direct Gail to reverse roles with her mother and her compassionate companion selves, now concretised with soft toys, and then to return to the writing task. As director of the enactment I stay in close proximity, initially doubling Gail with my body until anxiety levels drop to a more tolerable 4/10. This takes 40 minutes on the first occasion but reduces to 20 on the second. As Gail's anxiety levels drop and she types her essay, I gradually move away until I am seated on the other side of the room.

My physical presence became another gradation in the CBT exposure task. Gail progressed from writing with the close support of another to writing alone.

Gail and I discuss what CBT calls cognitive avoidance. In order to complete written assignments Gail would tell herself, "This is not an essay, just short answers to an assignment". This 'tricking herself' has worked in the short term but prevented new learning. During our exposure sessions, I therefore instruct Gail to be fully aware that she is writing an essay rather than lose herself by focusing on the task. Increased awareness initially heightens her anxiety, but over time allows new learning to occur. She discovers that she can successfully choose to write essays.

CBT training primes therapists to look for and confront the avoidance that theoretically is always present and significant in maintaining anxiety. It reminds me to be alert to cognitive avoidance that is easily missed.

Over time, Gail's predictions become less catastrophic and more realistic. Rather than expecting intense fear and failure when planning to write, the evidence from real life exposure tasks tells her that she is likely to experience modest levels of anxiety and can continue to write in spite of these. This information assists her to engage in, rather than avoid, the writing task. In line with CBT, I assign self-exposure homework tasks such as essay writing in a variety of places. The small stuffed dog chosen to represent her 'compassionate companion' travels with her during the essay writing weeks, as well as a CBT flashcard reminding her of strategies to employ during times of anxiety. Due to the late start, Gail is able to complete only two of six essays by the deadlines. Thus achievement of her CBT goals after a total of six sessions is partial. However, she is proud of her success and notes that her mother's voice and her 'compassion companion' have successfully displaced the critical voice of her father on most writing occasions. In our final session, Gail expresses appreciation for psychodrama's concretisation technique. She reflects positively on having the abstract nature of her difficulties and her supports transformed into something tangible that she could "see and feel and touch". We make a plan for booster sessions the following academic year, well prior to assignment due dates.

In Gail's case, my conviction that a key element of overcoming fear of writing was exposure to the actual writing task took us on a CBT exposure therapy path. Psychodrama enactments alone were not enough, but they did assist in the preparation for real life tasks. Furthermore, psychodrama and role training contributed to the achievement of Gail's CBT goal of essay writing through the development of the progressive relationships with mother and self. My hope is that they also provided some healthy foundations for dealing with other anxiety provoking situations. I imagine that Gail may benefit from addressing the difficult relationship with her father at some stage in the future.

Reflections and Future Directions

In the case described, both CBT and psychodrama principles and practices influenced my thinking and interventions. As a psychodramatist operating within a CBT framework, I find ample opportunities to work with the cognitive distortions and behavioral patterns that are important to CBT therapists. I also have opportunities to explore the roles and role relationships that are essential to psychodrama. CBT theory regarding avoidance and the maintenance of anxiety provides useful rationales and research evidence for adhering to the difficult task of exposure therapy. But it is psychodrama that puts relationship at the heart of the sessions and provides the production methods to do this difficult work well. Psychodrama also provides the means to deal with the multi layered experiences of past, present and future. In the personal work completed during training the psychodramatist learns, with their whole being rather than just their intellect, that on the other side of distress and catharsis there is hope and new discovery. This essential psychodrama experience greatly enriches my CBT practice.

I predict that psychodrama will continue to stimulate CBT theory, practice and research. Most CBT practitioners attending experiential psychodrama sessions can immediately see its relevance for CBT, supervision and training. They realise that psychodrama can facilitate exposure to feared situations, create realistic role plays and provide opportunities for behavioral rehearsal. Some have the skills to adopt one or two strategies to make their CBT more active and creative. In implementing apparently simple methods such as concretisation, they come to appreciate their complexity and the training required to conduct full psychodrama enactments. From the other perspective, psychodramatists in clinical settings may increasingly find aspects of CBT useful. It can raise awareness of the cognitive aspect of role. Furthermore, its descriptions of common patterns can prime the psychodramatist for the difficult task of 'seeing what is absent' in a drama, as for example the cognitive avoidance in the case study. Most of CBT's strategies for specific clinical problems can be adapted and used in action.

I find that CBT and psychodrama complement and enrich one another. Both approaches appreciate human beings as meaning makers and value the client's subjective and objective experience. However, I acknowledge significant and possibly irreconcilable differences in their philosophical underpinnings. The spiritual and existential values of psychodrama contrast with CBT's focus on predetermined goals, specific outcomes and measurable symptom reduction. The tension between the two worlds of psychodrama and CBT is stimulating, adding an intriguing edge to my work and prompting deeper creative exploration.

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History on a Bus

Using Sociodrama to Address Racism and Reconciliation

Helen Kearins

Abstract
In Sydney's Redfern Park on the 10th of December 1992, the launch of the International Year of Indigenous People, the then Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating delivered a ground breaking speech that gave great hope to people working for reconciliation with Aboriginal Australians. One of those inspired to continue this work, Helen Kearins developed a workshop that assists participants to own racism and move beyond it towards genuine reconciliation with Aboriginal people. In this article, adapted from her 2011 AANZPA Accreditation thesis, she demonstrates the efficacy of sociodrama in this work.

Key Words
Aboriginal Australians, racism, reconciliation, sociodrama, warm up, White Australians

Setting the Scene

On my way to or from work in Sydney, I often drive past Redfern Park. Many Australians associate the suburb of Redfern with a stereotype of Aboriginal poverty and dysfunction. Apart from the fact that the stereotype is grossly inaccurate, I have a very different association with Redfern Park. It was here on the 10th December 1992 that Prime Minister Paul Keating gave a speech, often referred to now as the Redfern Park Speech, to launch the 1993 International Year of the World's Indigenous People. I was there.

The speech was significant because it was the first time that an Australian prime minister had acknowledged that, "...the problem starts with us non-Aboriginal Australians". He went on to say, "It begins I think with an act of recognition" and to name the elements in need of recognition. He emphasised the opportunity provided by this international year to address the injustices suffered by indigenous Australians and to continue working towards reconciliation.

As part of progressing reconciliation The Sisters of Mercy, for whom I was working at the time, decided to engage in 'a process of education' regarding entrenched White racism. I planned a series of workshops with Mercy groups and agencies around Australia titled, Owning Our Own Racism and Moving Beyond It. This article, related in the present tense, draws on workshop experiences to demonstrate the efficacy of sociodrama in enabling White Australians to take the first steps beyond racism towards reconciliation with the indigenous Aboriginal people.

Warming Up to the Reconciliation Workshop

Prior to the workshop, I send invitations to leaders of Mercy congregations inviting them to host a workshop that includes Mercy communities, colleagues and others who share an interest in reconciliation. In bringing together people of a common vision, I hope that there will be reflection and the creation of new steps towards reconciliation. My intention is to warm participants up to the reality of 'restrictive solutions' where fear is already present and offer the possibility of moving beyond them to 'enabling solutions', where the progressive roles of *willing relater, value-based reflective practitioner, safe and open learner, effective change agent* and *respectful collaborative reconciler* might be present.

All the participants, some known to one another and some not, have an affiliation with the Sisters of Mercy so have a shared value base underpinned by compassion and a commitment to social justice. They include teachers, educational administrators, consultants, nurses, social workers, retirees, Sisters of Mercy and Guide Dog Association members. The latter have seen an increase in the number of Aboriginal people using their services due to diabetes related blindness.

At the beginning, I observe that the workshop focus on racism may hold some embarrassment and shame but that it also offers the hope that we can work together and find new ways to move beyond it. I invite the participants to share in twos and threes their purposes in being present. I observe that some have come from the same organisations with a diversity of intentions. The group members enact roles such as *delighted companion, welcoming group member, eager explorer* and *attentive learner* which indicate strong connections, good levels of spontaneity and a readiness to engage in the work. These all contribute to a healthy level of safety in the group.

I continue to build on this safety by outlining the overall process for the day. I observe that some participants are familiar with it and others by nods and positive murmurs indicate readiness. I notice people becoming more relaxed, especially when they hear my assurance that their experience can be shared but will not be judged. As we move forward, I hold a sociodramatic question in mind. Given our history of colonialism and racism in our relations with Aboriginal people, how can we move forward towards reconciliation?

Warming Up to Sociodramatic Exploration with Stories of Racism

I invite participants to remember a time when they were affected by racism towards an Aboriginal person. This might be a direct experience or a reported account, because I recognise that many Australians have no direct encounters with Aboriginal people. Participants share in pairs and the stories are then shared in the group.

- A radio report about an Aboriginal actor who was pulled up by police and interrogated roughly, apparently because he was black and driving a late model car.
- An Aboriginal woman who told her friend about the checkout person who always put the change on the counter, never into her hand.
- An Aboriginal woman who grew up in a mission related the way that Aboriginal women were obliged to walk fifty kilometres to the hospital when they were due to give birth and were put in a section of the hospital separate from White mothers.
- An Aboriginal man taken from his family related how as a little boy in Kinsela Boys Home, he and the other inmates were not provided with shoes. On freezing mornings as they brought the cows in for milking they would stand in the fresh cow dung to warm their feet.
- A White woman tells the story of a bus driver who made no apology to ten Aboriginal passengers and two other White passengers for keeping them waiting three hours, in the early hours of the morning, at a bus stop in Halls Creek, Western Australia.

During the telling of the stories, I observe that the pairs are very attentive and respectful. There is a growing softness in the group, observable in participants' body language and tone of voice. As the stories are shared in the whole group, I perceive with growing excitement the roles of *relieved truth teller*, *embarrassed sorrowful witness of racism, active listener, non-judgemental companion, purposeful contributor, anxious searcher for a better way of relating, open curious learner* and *secure explorer of new possibilities*. This tells me that the group is ready to move into an exploration of the restrictive system that may shed some light on the sociodramatic question.

The Sociodramatic Enactment

Setting Out the System

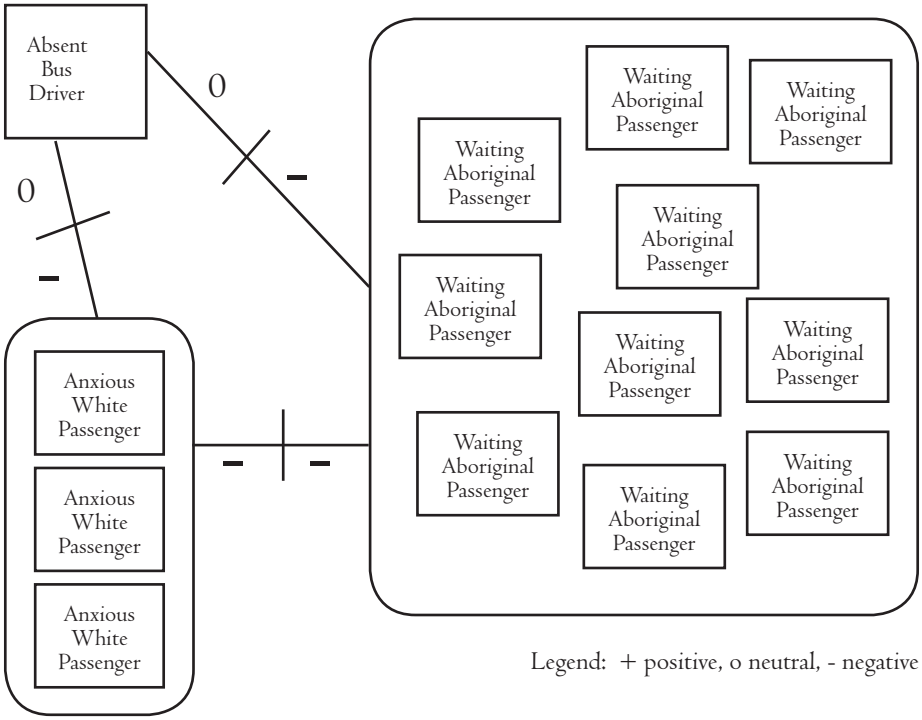
Based on its connection to other stories, the level of affect and the potential for displaying a broader social system, I select the story of Emily, the woman at the Halls Creek bus stop. My purpose in directing this sociodramatic enactment is to explore the restrictive social system that is created by racism. Emily promises to be a good protagonist for the group in this regard as she holds both the

motivating force and the reactive fear in her being. She describes the scenario thus:

Emily*: I have lived and worked with Aboriginal people in the Kimberley area of Western Australia for many years. On this occasion I was waiting at Halls Creek for a bus that was due at midnight but didn't arrive till 3.00am. Also waiting were two other White Australians and about ten Aborigines. Even though I knew several of the Aborigines, as the waiting time stretched into the early hours of the morning I became increasingly anxious.*

In my mind I see two separate groups, the White and the Aboriginal Australians, waiting at the bus stop. This helps me to name the system subgroups and orientate to the tele relationships between them, as illustrated in Diagram I below.

Diagram 1: The Social System of Passengers at the Bus Stop Showing Subgroups and Tele Relationships



Legend: + positive, o neutral, - negative

The role relations within each group are generally positive. The usually neutral or positive tele between the two groups shifts to negative as a result of the White

passengers' increasing anxiety, which turns to fear as the hours pass. As events later demonstrate, the bus driver was neutral towards both groups and both groups were negative towards him.

I invite Emily to step into the action space.

Director	Emily, step forward … *Emily steps into the stage area* … What happened when the bus arrived?
Emily	Well, when the bus finally arrived, almost three hours late, I scurried onto the bus and sat directly behind the driver, for safety. So did the other White passengers. As I settled into my seat I realised I had allowed my fear to overtake me. I knew most of these (Aboriginal) people! I don't usually act like that with them.
Director	What happened next?
Emily	When everyone was on the bus we headed off. But the bus driver made no apology or explanation for being so late!
Director	Set up the bus … *Emily uses chairs to set out the driver's seat and passenger seats.*
Director	Choose someone to be the bus driver … *She does so and the auxiliary, who is very warmed up, goes directly to the driver's seat.*
Director	*to the auxiliary playing the bus driver* … You look as though you are well acquainted with this job.
Driver	Yeah. Been driving these things for twenty odd years.
Director	You're running a bit late tonight.
Driver	Yeah! Bus from Darwin was late getting to Kunnunurra.
Director	I noticed that you gave no explanation or apology to the passengers for arriving so late.
Driver	Yeah, well, most of 'em are 'blackfellas'.
Director	So, they don't need an explanation or apology?
Driver	No need to apologise. They don't matter.
Director	When do you think you learnt this approach to Aborigines?
Driver	Oh! Years ago! Me mother always told me never to play with them black kids.
Director	Why do you think she did that?
Driver	Well, you know. Couldn't be sure of them. Where they'd been. Usually a bit dirty. All that stuff.
Director	Choose someone to be your mother … *An auxiliary is chosen and directed to stand in relationship to her son, the bus driver.*
Director	*to the auxiliary playing the bus driver's mother* … Thank you for being here. I'm wondering if you can throw some light on this situation. I understand from speaking with your son that you used to tell him never to play with black kids.
Mother	Oh Yes. We all did. All the mothers. You just couldn't trust them.

And it probably sounds a bit racist, but they were usually a bit dirty you know. And living on the edge of town. Well that's why the police had to take the children away sometimes. The parents couldn't look after them properly.

Director Choose someone to be a policeman authorised to take the children away … *The auxiliary playing the mother chooses an auxiliary to be the policeman.*

Director Where is the policeman in relation to you?

Mother A bit away from me. I didn't really know the police were doing this, taking the children away, at the time but I knew there were homes for Aboriginal children. The police were just doing what they had to do.

At this point in the enactment I make a statement to the whole group, with the intention of bringing to life the historical social forces acting on the bus driver as set out in Diagram 2 opposite.

Director In this moment we are beginning to see the historical social forces that were impacting on the mother and through her, on the bus driver. We'll continue to build a picture of these historical and social forces. As we do, I invite you to contribute what you know about these forces. They may be particular people or groups of people or institutions. Let's continue building a picture of this social system. So, who or what gave the policeman authority to take Aboriginal children away from their families?

Group Member 1 (GM1) The Aboriginal Protection Board.

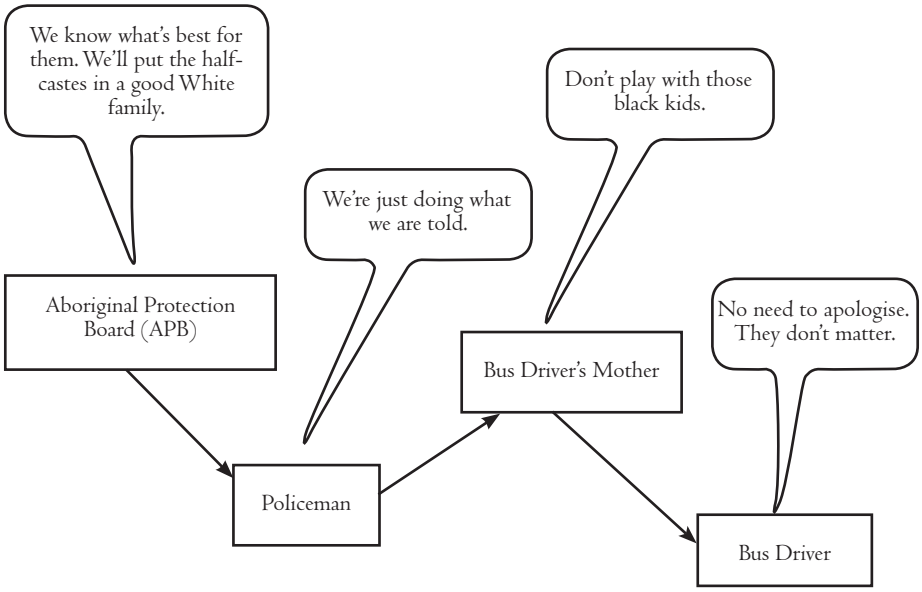
Director Come and be the Aboriginal Protection Board (APB). Place yourself in relationship to the policeman.

GM1 *as the APB* … I'm behind him. I give the orders and tell him which children need to be taken.

Director And your purpose in doing this?

GM1 *as the APB* … As the name says, we're here for their (Aborigines) own protection. We know what's best for them. They can't look after their own kids. So we take the half-castes and put them in a good White family and that way they'll become good Australians.

Diagram 2: The System of Social Forces Acting on the Bus Driver



Expanding the System

This narrative sparks animated discussion. Group members conclude that Aboriginal women were often forced into relations with White men and left to look after the resulting children with no support from their White fathers.

Director *with curiosity* . . . Who are these White men? We need to make them real so we feel their lives.

Silent at first, group members then begin thoughtfully to name "these White men" variously as mission and reserve managers, squatters, farm labourers, drovers, ordinary men and government officials, any male colonist in fact who fancied 'a bit of black velvet'.

Director Someone take up the role of the White fathers.

A group member (GM2) steps forward to take up the role of the White fathers. I interview him to fill out the socius, the values and the worldview, around this role. He had come from England but others like him hailed from Ireland and Scotland. Some had arrived as convicts and, having served their term, were now settled in the colony. Some had come as part of the military forces to keep the convicts under control while others landed as free settlers. All believed the land was empty, 'terra nullius' and theirs for the taking. There is a momentary silence

as the impact of this worldview sinks in and deepens the warm up of the participants.

Director Who else do we need here?
Group Member 3 (GM3) *calling out* … It all started with Captain Cook!
Director Come out and be Captain Cook.
GM3 *as Captain Cook* … I discovered the Great South Land and I claimed New South Wales for the British Empire!

A group member (GM4) reminds the group that William Dampier had actually landed at Cygnet Bay on the west coast of Australia in 1682. Here he met some of the Aboriginal people and recorded his impressions in his journal.

Director *to GM4* … Take up the role of William Dampier recording his observations in his journal. Speak them out aloud.
GM4 *as William Dampier* … The inhabitants of this country are the miserablest people in the world. Setting aside their humane shape, they differ but little from brutes.

The group warms up to rage and shame at the naked racism displayed by the explorers and colonisers in this drama. They are named the front line force of the urge to colonise. As superiority is the driver of racism, I realise that this touches on the core purpose of the workshop, owning our own racism and moving beyond it. One of the participants advances the story by pointing out that in 1901 all the colonies on the Australian continent united to form the Commonwealth of Australia. Another adds that its first Constitution excluded Aborigines from federal legislation and from the census. I invite an auxiliary to take up the role of The Constitution and knowing that this element of the system might well emerge I have a copy of the relevant parts[1].

> Paragraph 51: *The parliament shall, subject to this constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to: the people of any race, other than the Aboriginal race, in any State, for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws.*
>
> Paragraph 127: *In reckoning the numbers of people in the Commonwealth or of a state or other part of the Commonwealth aboriginal natives shall not be counted.*

The auxiliary is moved to tears and at times struggles to speak the words. I notice bowed heads and sympathy with her grief. Group members are seeing with new clarity the mindset that framed Australia's constitution. They recognise 'institutional racism', the belief in White superiority that is embedded in the fabric of Australian institutions, laws and practices. This is an important step in their growing awareness

because it shifts the focus from an individual to a systemic analysis. Rather than addressing individual racism, questions are asked regarding one another's roles in benefiting from and contributing to institutional racism.

Enacting the Whole System

The system of social forces acting on the bus driver, illustrated in Diagram 2 above, has now expanded to include many of the wider historical elements. I judge that it is sufficiently developed but note that something is missing. I immediately see that the Aboriginal people, on whom this system impacts, are not yet adequately present in the drama. I invite the remaining workshop participants to take up the roles of the Aboriginal passengers and "board the bus". When they are seated, I direct the other group members to take up their roles again and enact the timeline from the earliest scene of William Dampier up to the Halls Creek bus stop scenario (see Diagram 3 overleaf). As the timeline is enacted, the participants playing Aboriginal passengers sink down in their seats and as it progresses they sink ever lower.

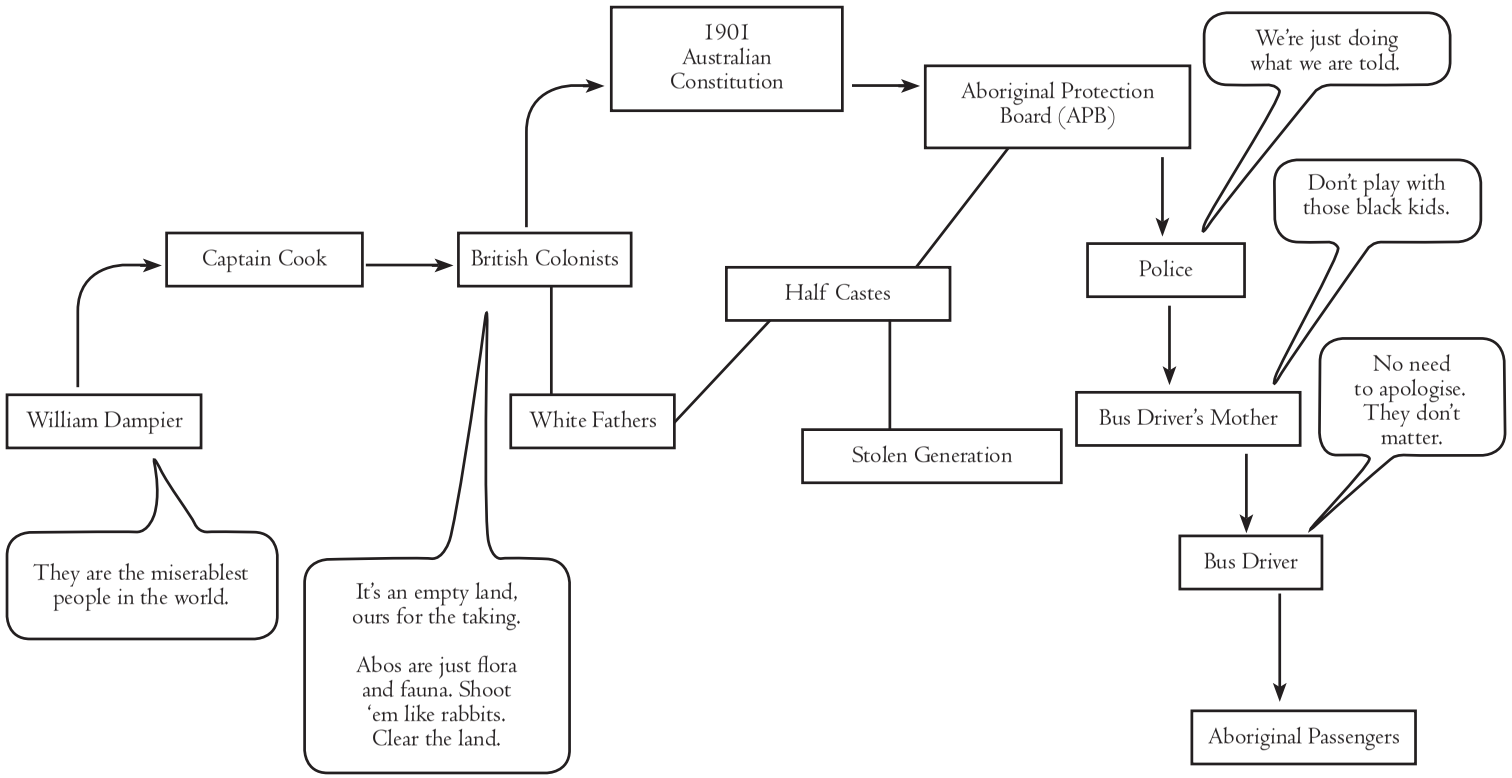
A Defining Moment in the Sociodrama

I am struck by the potency of this moment. As the social forces are enacted, their impact on the Aboriginal passengers is felt and movingly displayed. It is the defining moment, happening right here, right now. We have reached the sociodrama's essence. At the end of the timeline enactment I invite the group members in the roles of Aboriginal passengers, still in their 'sunk down' positions, to comment on their experience of this enactment.

Group Members *as Aboriginal passengers* … I have slid down in my seat.
I'm trying to escape.
Yes, escape the pain and burden of all that history.
My head is bowed down.
I feel very little.
I'm trying to disappear.

All the participants in the sociodrama experience the full weight of the forces in this social system. The group members playing the various social forces have already been deeply affected by their roles, but now they become aware of the impact of these on the people to whom they are directed. As explorers, colonisers, lawmakers and law enforcement officers they experience firsthand the unassailable power of their position of authority and superiority. Most importantly, they witness and are moved by the effect of this power on the Aboriginal passengers and there are shocked looks and tears. Some experience the disjuncture and discomfort of reconciling this experience with their own worldviews and values. The participants playing Aboriginal passengers experience the belittling and totally

Diagram 3: The Expanded System of Social Forces Acting on the Bus Driver



demoralising effect on them of the social forces expressed by the White authority figures. Their spontaneous reaction of physically sinking down in their seats speaks louder than any words. I now close the enactment stage of the session.

The Integration Phase of the Sociodrama

The integration phase includes the sharing of the enactment experience from both an individual and a systemic perspective.

Individual Sharing

Group members express with some surprise and satisfaction that their experiences had been valued during the warm up. "What that did in the group experience for me was that I could actually present my own experience in a way that was totally honoured." Others express relief at seeing that so much of the racism experienced by Aborigines is institutional. "Not that it lets me as an individual off the hook but I felt relieved that I wasn't personally a racist." The reading of extracts from the constitution has deeply affected the auxiliary playing that role and brought up feelings of shame for the whole group. Some refer to it as a "profound moment" and one says, "That's when my heart started to spin". The participant who played the role of the bus driver is a little shaken by her experience. "As the bus driver, I began by enjoying it then didn't want to own that role. I was shocked that I so easily discovered my irrational feelings." There are feelings of anger at the arrogance of the explorers and colonisers and the blatant mistreatment of other human beings. Some of the anger is also related to the shame of not knowing our own history and group members ask, "Why weren't we told this at school?"

Feelings of sadness are also expressed, at what has been done to Aboriginal people, at the obduracy of the colonisers and the loss of so many opportunities to engage with the First Australians. There is also a heightened awareness, at a feeling level, of the effects of years and years of displacement and exclusion of Aborigines. This was especially experienced as the timeline was enacted and the years of cumulative oppression were observed to weigh down the Aboriginal passengers, poignantly symbolised by their sinking in their seats. Several group members ask, "If this short enactment can have that effect, what is it like for Aboriginal people who have been living with that history all their lives?" Another says, "People have carried all those little whispers of time right up to the present".

Sharing about the System

In the sharing from a systemic perspective, participants discuss aspects of the system revealed in the drama. One is forcibly struck by the attitude of total superiority and the fact that this attitude still pervades White Australians' relations with Aborigines. Others comment and nod agreement. Some group

members name the dynamics of the system a clash of cultures, but the particularly insidious element in this clash is that Aboriginal culture is not recognised as a culture and therefore not respected. Others note that the exertion of power over people and the total control of their lives led to powerlessness and dependency. Several participants remark on the way that the sociodrama, in capturing the historical length and depth of impact on Aboriginal people, has highlighted the extent of colonial exploitation. Other group members observe that the display of the system has made them aware of a national consciousness, that racism is institutional and goes right through society.

When asked to name subgroups in the system, participants identify explorers and empire-builders and those displaced by colonial expansion. They also see depicted in the bus scene a parallel with contemporary society where there are Black and White, those who need an apology and those who do not, those who drive the bus and those who wait to be picked up. As one person observes, "The present is affected, maybe we should say, infected, by the past". Group members grapple with this issue asking, "How do we move on from this?" At this point I pose the sociodramatic question that I have been holding. Given our history of colonialism and racism in our relations with Aboriginal people, how can we move forward towards reconciliation? Participants agree, "This is the challenge". With sufficient personal sharing and systemic analysis completed and a connection made from the enactment to the present day, I conclude the integrative phase of the sociodrama.

Reflections on the Sociodrama and Steps to Action

We have satisfactorily concluded the stages of a sociodrama, warm up, enactment and integration. The sharing from both personal and systemic perspectives has led to an 'experiential analysis' by the group of the presenting situation and its meaning. Several of the participants note that this analysis is different from what they usually undertake, in that it is "analysis with feeling!" The sociodrama has provided participants with the experience of deep feeling in conjunction with insight and many realise the significance of this way of working. They see the systems in which they are involved with a new clarity and are open to further learning and action.

Group members begin to question what they can do about reconciliation between Aboriginal people and non-indigenous Australians. I invite them to gather in groups related to their work places or common interests. My thinking is that action will be better planned and executed in collaboration with others rather than alone. I remind participants that they are still responding to the critical sociodramatic question posed earlier. Given our history of colonialism and racism in our relations with Aboriginal People, how can we move forward towards reconciliation?

I suggest that group members plan their actions using a basic guideline. What

actions, who will take them forward and when? I am also aware that most of the participants are professional people who are well able to plan in a strategic manner. I notice their eagerness to go to the next step. They are in touch with their own progressive roles in the world. The groups work enthusiastically and each comes up with practical actions. Some are personal actions relating to Aboriginal people they know and with whom they intend to continue building relationship. Others are institutional, such as plans to review or follow through on implementation of indigenous education policies, plans to celebrate reconciliation week in schools and plans for reconciliation events in local communities. As the plans are shared in the whole group, some participants name possible resources including people, books, videos and music. These resources are listed, others added and one group member undertakes to type the list and disseminate it to all participants.

As a closure, I invite everyone to stand in a circle and make a one word or phrase statement that expresses an element of the work they take with them. A sense of companionship is palpable as people speak. I realise that a satisfying sociodrama can effectively begin to address complex social issues such as racism.

End Notes

1. Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, 1901. Chapter I: Powers of the Parliament, Section 51 (xxvi) and Chapter VII: Miscellaneous, Section 127.

Helen Kearins is a qualified sociodramatist working as a group facilitator in the social justice area. She noted the potential for sociodrama when she became involved in social justice education and has used it to deepen people's understanding of a variety of issues. When time allows Helen plays the guitar and writes songs. She can be contacted at <helenkearins@gmail.com>.

A Traveller's Guide to Supervision

Principles and Practice

Liz Marks

Abstract
In this article, Liz Marks reflects on over twenty years of experience as a supervisor of counsellors. Providing illustrations, she draws out some of the principles and practices that have guided her on this journey. Of particular note are the development of adequacy in warm up, relationship and learning culture, taking a systems approach, relating to the developmental stage of the supervisee and viewing the supervision process as an ongoing, unique and highly valued enterprise for both supervisor and supervisee.

Key Words
development, learning culture, learning style, Moreno, relationship, supervisee, supervision, supervisor, systems, warm up

Starting Out on the Supervision Journey

I well remember my first experiences of supervision, when I had almost no idea what it was. Prior to the first session Mary, my workplace supervisor, had already developed an open, positive relationship with me, displaying high regard and trust in me as a professional. As a beginning counsellor and having no awareness of most of my own abilities, I was surprised and pleased whenever she mirrored me. However, I was sometimes unable to take in her words, doubting myself and sometimes her motives.

I was amazed and moved by some supervision experiences. In one of our early sessions she made some comments followed by a gentle, naïve inquiry.

> *Today, and in the last session, I notice that you have questions for supervision about two clients. One is a retired man who persists in thinking he has a heart condition, despite being reassured by cardiac specialists that he is experiencing symptoms of stress. The other is a young woman facing the end of a relationship, who has been experiencing what you describe as 'a blow to the heart'. Is there something for you about hearts or heart problems in your life?*

It was like a punch in the guts. Tearful and hardly able to recover my breath, I made the connections with my life: my elderly father with a heart condition, my recent separation, a Chinese medical practitioner's description of a relative having experienced "a blow to the heart". I experienced my supervisor's doubling as I differentiated between my experiences and those of my clients.

As a naïve beginner who did not yet know about theme interference and parallel process, I was learning to reflect on the impact of personal factors in counselling work. I also began to understand my supervisor as a non-judgemental person who I could trust to accompany me in dark places. Without awareness of it, we were involved in social atom repair. Reflecting on my experience with Mary, I have an appreciation of our supervision journey together and the essential principles that were inherent in our work. In this article, I will discuss some of these highly valued principles and practices that guide my work as a supervisor.

Essentials for the Supervision Journey

An Adequate Relationship

The first essential for the supervision journey is the fostering of an adequate relationship in order to maximise the supervisee's learning. Nourishing a positive, attuned connection with the supervisee builds trust and facilitates discussion of aspects of the work with which they are having difficulty. Without this, supervision is likely to be shallow and of limited value. Expectations of supervision are often coloured by previous experiences of it and of other learning situations. Therefore, there is great value in discussing previous supervision experiences and discovering what the supervisee might like to have happen similarly or differently. Clarification of the supervisee's and supervisor's expectations, purposes and responsibilities provides structure, safety and clarity at the beginning of the supervisory relationship and the supervision process. For example, Mary had distinguished clearly between therapy and supervision, always linking the focus on personal connections back to my work with clients. The clarity of this expectation and boundary contributed to my feeling respected by her and meant that I did not warm up to feeling pathologised.

Tuning in with the supervisee involves ongoing role reversal with them and often mirroring and doubling. As different matters emerge the supervisor's vitality, enjoyment, interest and willingness to make generous assumptions about the supervisee, such as my first supervisor displayed, contribute to a positive relationship. If the supervisor is able to be spontaneous when the supervisee is experiencing distress, the supervisees' ability to sit with her distress and that of others is likely to increase. A climate is created in which social atom repair can occur within what the supervisee most likely experiences overall as an authority relationship.

The maintenance of an adequate relationship involves relating in the here and now during sessions, with awareness of the flow of tele from supervisor to

supervisee and vice versa. The moment by moment tele can reveal something of the nature of the real bond or underlying tele between the two people. Sometimes when the tele appears puzzlingly different between supervisor and supervisee, this can reveal parallel aspects in the relationship between the supervisee and her client. The supervisee's roles in relationship to the supervisor can also expose projections or transference reactions and counter-transference may also become evident. The more that the supervisor is conscious of these reactions and is able to nourish a positive, reality based relationship with the supervisee, the more such reactions can drop into the background.

An Adequate Learning Culture

The creation of an adequate learning culture strengthens everyone's warm up to the supervision work and optimises learning. When its creation is an ongoing process from the very beginning of a supervisory relationship, norms that facilitate a positive learning culture become established. Starting the supervision session on time is a simple example of a supervisor creating such a norm. Some factors involved in the creation of an adequate learning culture are outlined next, followed by an example from my work during the first session of a new supervision group. This example will be referred to at other relevant points in the paper as well.

A broad, clear opening statement about supervision and its purposes assists supervisees to warm up. If the supervision is to take place in a group, clarification of the group purpose and that of each participant enables everyone to warm up to one another and to the work. Framing the initial session creates further structure and increases safety. Clarification of a boundary regarding the confidentiality of matters raised in supervision also contributes to supervisees feeling safe and respected enough to discuss work difficulties. The supervisor is involved in doubling, mirroring and role reversal, as well as working with supervisees' responses to one another. As supervisees' purposes are named, disturbing and reactive forces become evident. Differences in supervisees' learning styles and stages of development may also begin to emerge. Finding simple language to refer to these and to work with them sociometrically as they arise assists with establishing respectful norms to do with valuing difference.

Throughout the life of supervision groups or a supervisory relationship there is a focus on relationships with one another, as well as on the more generally recognised tasks of supervision. Building mutually positive relationships with and between supervisees in the early part of a first group supervision session assists in the development of a hopeful, warm and respectful atmosphere. Working with the sociometry or tele serves a number of purposes. It builds cohesiveness and a sense of the universality of concerns that commonly arise, as well as an appreciation of difference. It also fosters increased awareness of participants' relationships with one another and facilitates a deepening of their connections. Experiences of connecting spontaneously with the supervisor and with one another strengthen supervisees' abilities to be with others in the moment.

Illustrating the Development of an Adequate Learning Culture

I made the following opening remarks at the first session of a supervision group in which all the members worked for various programmes within the one agency. Some members were quite new and had limited experience as counsellors, while others had worked there for a number of years.

> *I've been thinking about this supervision group and about the kind of culture we can create together this year. There's lots of experience here and I'm hoping that over the sessions we'll develop an enlivening learning climate, where everyone learns from each other and we can explore varied ways of working. Each of us has had experiences in supervision before and most of us have met each other in different ways over the years. So maybe it would be easy to fall into old habits with one another. Yet this is a new group and I'm hoping we can see each other freshly. By the end of the morning I think if you can raise what it is that you want for yourself in this group, that will assist everyone in the work we do together. And if you bring something forward it's our job to get going respectfully with you. And after that there'll be time for you to raise any matters for supervision before we finish for today.*

Rachel, an experienced clinician, was the first to seek supervision regarding her work with a seven year old girl. When bringing forward her purpose in the warm up phase of the group, she had expressed her desire for a group culture of care and respect as this would assist her to openly receive challenges. While initially self-contained, Rachel warmed up to intense feelings of helplessness regarding the child's circumstances and the unlikelihood of a positive outcome. I suspected that there may be theme interference from Rachel's original family system but I was also conscious of her reactive fears and need for care and respect. I was aware too of the need to build the group's sociometry at this early stage. As she had mentioned that a colleague in the supervision group was working with a member of the same family, I decided to continue with a systemic focus at this point.

In indicating that a more personal aspect of supervision was being 'put on hold' while the larger system was attended to, I had modelled a structured and adequately directed supervision process that supervisees could take up in their work. This approach helps create a sense of order and safety in both individual and group supervision sessions and thus contributes to the development of an adequate learning culture.

A Systems Approach

A systems approach to supervision is essential, so that supervisees learn to take into account the multiple factors and varied perspectives influencing their work. Working with the sociometry between the supervisor and supervisee, and between the supervisee and the client, is vital to a systems approach, bringing immediacy, vitality and freshness into the process. Transference reactions, projections and parallel processes become evident when the supervisor notices

and hypothesises systemically about the way in which case material is presented, rather than merely focussing on content.

Working systemically, a supervisor will begin to view the supervisee's roles overall, perhaps noticing patterns in their functioning. For example, the supervisor might observe that one supervisee's thinking is highly developed and connection with emotion is absent, while another's emotions are apparent in many of their roles with thinking in the background. She is likely to consider the possible origins of such functioning in a supervisee's social atom and to reflect on the probable effects of it on the therapist themselves, on their clients and on their colleagues. Consequently, the supervisor is guided by valuing the development of an increased balance of thinking, feeling and action.

A supervisor who takes a bird's eye view can also take into account the web of inter-connecting personal and professional relationships that are involved. This systemic focus fosters consideration of the beliefs, values and norms of the broader culture, of the sub-culture of the supervisee and their clients and of the agency within which the work is undertaken. Such an approach requires the supervisor to become aware of her own beliefs, values and norms, while relating to those of others in the system. The supervisor must also be conscious of the norms associated with her professional organisations and of the broader culture, so that appropriate boundaries and other ethical considerations are woven into the supervisory process.

Illustrating a Systems Approach

In her presentation, Rachel named various workers and services involved with her client's family including two agency colleagues, one of whom was in the supervision group. The other group members were interested, asking who was involved with different family members and with what purpose. While initially animated and well organised, Rachel's presentation style rapidly became scattered. In a bid to facilitate clarity, I invited her to concretise the system on a whiteboard. Another group member who was working with an adolescent in the same family contributed to the presentation. Although initially this intervention brought Rachel's thinking to the fore, she gradually became scattered again. It seemed to me that she was isolated and constrained in her voice and body, as if something was unexpressed. In addition to the systemic focus illustrated here, other facets of supervisory practice were needed. These are discussed next, after which we will return to the work with Rachel for the purposes of illustration.

Relating to the Developmental Stage of the Supervisee

Relating to the developmental stage of the supervisee maximises the supervisor's interventions. There are two ways of conceptualising this that I find particularly helpful.

The Supervisee's Level of Experience and Learning Style

The first framework considers level of experience and learning style. When working with an inexperienced supervisee who is in the early stages of a career, there is often a need for some direct teaching of pertinent approaches, perhaps some exposure to the psychodrama method and as well reflection and discussion. At the other end of the spectrum, with highly experienced supervisees the process is less likely to involve direct teaching of approaches. Reflection on the learning style of supervisees and the principles of adult learning also enables me to consider the supervisory roles and functioning that are likely to be most effective for them.

Moreno's Stages of Development

The second paradigm is J.L. Moreno's (1972) theory of developmental stages. My interventions are guided by assessing a supervisee's stage of development, either the double, the mirror or role reversal. Putting myself in the supervisee's shoes engenders a powerful experience for them. Certainly this was so when my first supervisor reversed roles with me regarding issues of the heart, as described earlier. Through role reversal an assessment of the supervisee's stage of development, roles and learning style can be undertaken, so that role development and supervision can be effectively facilitated. Role reversal includes identifying with and taking a genuine and abiding interest in the overall purpose and present goals of supervisees. Thought can be given to interventions and role development that might best further these.

Such thoughtful interventions might provide positive experiences of mirroring to a supervisee at the stage of the mirror, enabling them to know the value of it from their inner experience as well as increasing their awareness of progressive roles. It is my own experiences of being repeatedly and adequately mirrored and doubled that have strengthened my abilities to function independently and double others. These experiences also modelled for me ways to be with different kinds of clients. In supervision groups, the participants gain additional learning experiences from doubling, mirroring and reversing roles with others and seeing others being doubled, mirrored and so on.

Illustrating the Importance of Relating to the Developmental Stage of the Supervisee

In the next part of the supervision session I reversed roles with Rachel, who stood isolated at the whiteboard. She appeared to be a helpless orphan with an anxious learning style. Concluding that she was at the stage of the double, I stood next to her and doubled her. I commented on her concern for the child, the complexity of the system and her apparent wish for clarity. I reminded her of her stated purposes, to be open to challenges and increase her awareness. I reminded her of our collective aim that we get going respectfully with one another and my wish to do so with her. Standing together at the whiteboard, we

were companionable and she became thoughtful.

I commented that the circumstances of the child with whom she was working would be a concern for any worker. I shared that when I work with a child sometimes things come up for me that are related to my own childhood and that this can occur for any therapist. Then I enquired if there were similarities between her feelings for this child and her own childhood experiences. Rachel's tears came immediately as she connected with her own isolated distress and helplessness as a seven year old and group members were warmly present with her. Her tears easing, Rachel became thoughtful as she recognised the influences of her own childhood experiences on her work with her young client. As she differentiated these she appeared centred and relieved, able now to adequately plan future systemic interventions. During a subsequent supervision session, Rachel reported feeling clear and positive in the following session with the child.

An Adequate Warm Up in the Supervisor

Writing this paper, I have been continually reminded of the need to create an adequate warm up in myself as I approach the work of supervision. Warming up prior to a session requires my reconnecting with my purpose, with any specific focus and with the supervisee who will be attending. There is a need to warm up to the relationship with the supervisee as well as to the session's purpose. While the major focus of supervision is to further the overall learning or role development of supervisees, I am aware that I am also learning. Continually staying conscious of and strengthening my warm up prior to supervision sessions are growing edges. Similarly, I am working to expand my ability to be productively aware of what is emerging in the moment in myself, in supervisees and in my relationships with them. There is value in making time to reflect on the supervision process in order that there can be thoughtful planning and self-correction when appropriate. This then impacts positively on my warm up process for the next session. An illustration follows.

Illustrating an Adequate Warm Up in the Supervisor

I had been supervising Annie, a young provisional psychologist, for several years. In the weeks preceding this session, I had become conscious that she and I frequently slipped into a comfortable rut. She would ask me what to do and I would all too often take up the counter role and make suggestions. At such times I forgot that two of her goals were to increase her confidence as a counsellor and to feel competent enough to apply for registration as a psychologist. This reflection helped me to warm up differently in the next session with Annie.

Annie presented with what at first sounded like a simple request for information. She related the way that a 16 year old client, Joanna, had revealed, "You know you're seeing my cousin, Emma, too. She's behaving so badly at home that my Auntie can't stop crying and she and Uncle Fred keep fighting about it. I think you should see the whole family". Annie had hesitated, feeling terrible

and not knowing how to respond. She felt uncomfortable hearing things about Emma and her family that Emma might well prefer she did not know. Feeling "very awkward", Annie replied that she could not say anything about anyone else who might or might not be attending counselling, just as she would not discuss Joanna's attendance with any other client. In her perception though, Annie considered this response cold and heavy handed and she thought it likely that Joanna felt embarrassed and judged by it. Annie wanted to know what to say when something similar occurred again.

While Annie had not mentioned anxiety, her hesitation, discomfort and a drop in her spontaneity were evident. She was an anxious tightrope walker, a cat on hot bricks. Putting myself in her shoes enabled me to mirror Annie's motivating force and reactive fear and to plan the session with her. It was apparent to me that while simply giving her information about what to say in similar circumstances might satisfy Annie's intellect, rehearsal for life would be more likely to enable a reduction in her anxiety so that her response would be free-flowing. The latter intervention would also be in line with her declared goals for supervision.

Although Annie had no formal psychodrama training she readily warmed up to rehearsal for life, enacting the original interaction with her client. Subsequently, in the mirror position, we discussed her perception of her response. I warmed her up to the role of objective reporter but she was unable to maintain this role, referring to herself as having been "a cold, hard bitch". Mirroring, investigation and coaching enabled her to perceive her functioning in a less harshly evaluative and more objective way. She began to relate to herself with measured thoughtfulness, recognising value in the boundary she had set. "What you said to Joanna was okay. It's the delivery that needs work!" As the role training continued, Annie warmed up to experimentation without judgement. She was able to develop an adequate response to Joanna while reversing roles with her, maintaining a positive connection with both Joanna and herself. On seeing her new functioning mirrored, Annie gave herself a 'high five' and spiritedly took a lap of honour around the room.

Supervision as a Valued Ongoing Process

When supervision is openly valued as an ongoing process throughout the professional lifespan, supervisees learn to value the continuing development of their abilities and vision in the face of new and more challenging experiences. Referring again to my supervision work with Annie, I illustrate this principle below.

Annie and I were reviewing her development and emerging growth one day. She commented that she wished to continue being supervised by me and recounted a conversation with a colleague that had bewildered her. Deborah, who routinely changed supervisors had said, "Haven't you learnt everything Liz has to teach you yet?" This question re-opened our conversation about the purposes of supervision and the learning of far more than techniques and

strategies. Annie readily named many aspects of her learning and the factors that contributed to her seeing value in continuing our supervisory connection. She values, as I do, learning from the unique relationship between supervisee and supervisor. She is conscious of the positive tele and trust that have developed between us and the social atom repair that has occurred. She is delighted by her continuing role development and expanding vision of what is possible for her. She knows that I believe in the creative genius within her. She values continuing reflection on possible parallel processes, theme interferences, transferences and projections as a lifelong process.

The Continuing Supervision Journey

Overtly valuing and displaying my ongoing learning as a supervisee and supervisor wakes supervisees up to the fact that I am not merely paying lip service to it, that I am dedicated to this learning process. Supervisees are sometimes startled and often pleased at the equalising knowledge that we are all in this learning-and-developing-boat together, as we face experiences that are challenging or foreign to us. This is one way of transparently displaying a valuing of supervision and its purposes. It also provides valuable markers by which supervisees can take stock of their development and expand their consciousness of visions and goals. Such conversations serve to inspire and nourish supervisees and supervisors alike.

As I conclude this paper, I recognise that writing also nourishes me. In reflecting on and writing about my work as a supervisor and supervisee, I have been rediscovering principles that inform my work and strengthen my understanding and enjoyment of the practice of supervision.

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The Way We Do Things Around Here

The Role of Leadership Teams in Shaping Progressive Organisational Cultures

Diana Jones

Abstract
The links between organisational culture, leadership and success continue to capture the attention of organisational leaders. Providing illustrations from her work as an organisational leadership coach and drawing on J.L. Moreno's concept of social and cultural atom, Diana Jones proposes that leaders can shape positive change in their organisation's culture by enacting and modelling progressive functioning in their relationships with one another and their staff.

Key Words
behaviour, leadership teams, Moreno, organisational culture, relationships, social and cultural atom

Introduction

Google tosses up 1,333,333 articles on organisational culture in .09 seconds. With understandable trepidation, therefore, I add one more. Increasingly, I have been entertaining the idea that the inter-relationships amongst leadership team members and their behaviours with one another as well as with their staff have an influence in shaping the culture, 'the way we do things around here', of their organisations. As a sociometrist, my intellectual heritage tells me that significant behaviours within a leadership team could be the result of the interconnected social and cultural atoms (Moreno, 1993:40-41) of the members. While a leader's overt function is the chisel-jawed, rational decision-maker, less obvious emotional responses exist within leadership teams. These result from team members' interactions with one another and their experiences of being liked or not, accepted or not and influential or not (Schein, 2003:437-460).

How does this work? Let me provide an illustration from my work. A recently

appointed general manager (GM) invited me to assist his organisation to move from separate business units to greater collaboration across the work group. I am sitting in a leadership team session, listening to an animated discussion regarding a new stakeholder selection process for business development in Aotearoa New Zealand. One group member proposes they meet daily for 10 minutes to update one another so that "everyone is on the same page". Others agree, reluctantly. I become aware that one leader avoids looking at others when he speaks. As well, I am sitting opposite another who is joining the meeting via video-conference screen. He also has his eyes downcast for the duration of the meeting. I realise that I am the only person looking at him. The others are positioned so that they are not able to see him on the screen. "What is going on here?" I wonder. On meeting with individual leaders afterwards, I discover that:

- Not one person was talking about the issues that interested them.
- Group members were frustrated with the GM's agenda.
- Each wanted to discuss strategic concerns rather than day to day operations.
- The GM was, up until that point, unaware of his team's agenda.
- No senior leader was willing or able to indicate their agenda.

So while the discussion seemed animated, with each leader contributing, not one was speaking about the issues/matters/elements that they thought would progress the business. It was possible that this group culture was one of compliance, of being polite and agreeable with one another. I could not help thinking that while the discussion and decision making appeared collaborative, individual group members were keeping their thoughts to themselves. The ensuing individual meetings with them made me more aware of their frustrations with one another and with the meeting. I sensed that this frustration would be the very thing that their staff might notice and discuss with one another.

What was to be made of all this? To be sure, culture, even a fragment of it, is complex and there are many layers even in the snapshot example above. But you have to start somewhere. I predicted that the emotional relationships between the GM and leadership team and amongst the team members themselves were weak. I began to ask myself questions. What might assist group members to develop stronger relationships with one another? What was needed for them to warm up to progressive roles in their interactions with one another? In this article I intend to address these matters, focusing particularly on the way that leaders' modelling of progressive functioning in their relationships with one another and their staff can permeate an organisation and influence positive cultural change.

The Creation of Cultures in Organisations

Three of the many forces that shape organisational culture are interwoven and pertain to leadership teams.

- The organisational contexts and the extent to which they are integrated by the leadership team
- The emotional quality of the relationships amongst the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the leadership team and their staff
- The behaviours of the members of the leadership team

I will address each of these factors in turn.

Organisational Contexts

Organisations are made up of many parts or teams. Each team has its own context, meaning its functions, influences and events. These contexts inevitably impact on team members and produce a team's particular version of the organisation's culture, a kind of dialect of the main language as it were. For example, a finance team and a policy team in the same organisation will be characterised by different cultures, as their contexts are different. Finance teams value accounting transparency and expenditure approval systems, whereas policy teams value quality of discussion, consultation and position papers shaping future directions and current action. Thus the variable nature of the work amongst the groups means that behaviours will vary considerably, along with interactions between the players and with colleagues and stakeholders.

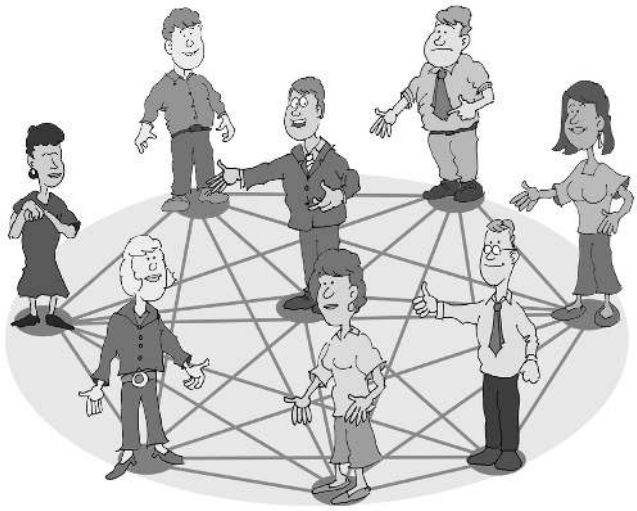
Organisational contexts tend to shift significantly over time as financial constraints, government directions and natural and social events come into play. Each shift creates the potential for disintegration, where leaders coping (defensive) responses (Clayton, 1982; Clayton, 1994) come to the fore. It is up to the leadership team to head these behaviours off and restore progressive (responsive) behaviours. In these circumstances, leaders who hold to their function ensure that everyone in the organisation continues to feel that they are part of the whole, that their contributions are valued and that their work contributes to the organisation's goals. This usually requires leaders to have an emotional expansiveness (Hale, 1981), a capacity to retain companionable connections under otherwise stressful conditions.

The Emotional Quality of Relationships

The quality of the relationships amongst the CEO and members of the leadership team varies. Even though they are purportedly 'equal' as shown in Figure I following, that is all are equally important, each team member has an emotional response to each of the others in the team. Each will feel closer or further away from the action depending on who the CEO or other senior leaders

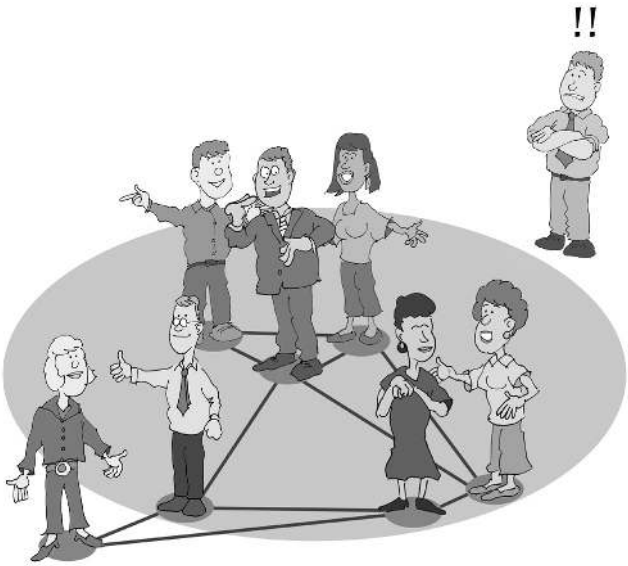
allow into an unspoken inner circle. Though many of the signs of this inclusion are hidden, somehow the position of team members in relation to one another is known or felt.

Figure 1: An Example of Equal Mutual Relationships Amongst CEO and Leadership Team Members



Relationships amongst leadership team members often reflect choices regarding who they work most closely with and favour as trusted advisors. The quality of their experience also varies to the extent that they feel either 'in or out' with the CEO or 'in or out' of the team. The resulting emotions experienced by group members and their feelings regarding their place in the group and in their relationships with one another are important influences on the success of the enterprise. In turn, the resulting behaviours are likely to directly impact on the quality of the experience of the staff members with whom they interact. Imagine the emotional experience of a senior leader where the members of his leadership team are in small cliques, as illustrated in Figure 2 following. He may well be relieved that he is trusted and the sociometry gives him the freedom to manage his time and interactions. Alternatively, he may be hurt that he is not included and feel frustrated and angry. His experience will influence his consequent behaviour towards his leadership team and in turn theirs towards their staff. The emotional quality of the relationships amongst the leadership team matters because it shapes the creation of an organisation's culture and that culture in turn influences the successful realisation of organisational goals.

Figure 2: An Example of Leadership Team Relationships based on Criteria of Closest Work Colleague



What creates the emotional quality in a work relationship? Few people would disagree that every communication has at least two elements, the content and its means of delivery. In many situations the way the communication is delivered determines the quality of the relationship with those involved. Imagine a manager who habitually continues word processing while he says to a staff member, "That was a great piece of writing you delivered. Keep it up". Then imagine another manager who appreciatively looks his staff member in the eye and says the same thing. Personal engagement tends to create a positive emotional relationship where both parties experience mutual valuing of one another and their work.

What are the implications of leaders' communication styles for team cultures? It could be that leaders are aware of their defensive behaviour triggers and coping roles and are able to manage these. They continue to think and act in a positive way (progressive roles) when things are failing around them and thus directly contribute to the maintenance of a positive organisational culture. Given this, leaders may find it worthwhile to be mindful of these aspects as they interact:

- Producing positive working relationships
- Creating unity in goals and directions
- Intervening early when relationships are dysfunctional and destructive
- Consciously expressing the value of each person's contribution

The Behaviour of Members of the Leadership Team

Given no leader is perfect, the behaviours of members of the leadership team are likely to fluctuate between coping and progressive. In attempts to shape culture, some leadership teams develop value statements and identify expected behaviours. Despite these statements, as leadership team members behave and interact the real quality of their interactional style is revealed, either enabling or disabling those on the receiving end. "No one in organizational settings believes what they read or what they hear, so memos, instructions, training programs, wall plaques and the like are useless. People only believe what they see and what they experience" (Weiss, 2012:1).

Leaders frequently seek assistance to develop progressive behaviours. Here is an illustration from my work as a leadership coach. Richard, an experienced and successful executive, was shocked to discover through feedback that his leadership team experienced him as abrasive, task focussed and competitive. He discussed his desire to develop affiliative behaviour with his manager and I was invited to coach Richard to strengthen progressive roles and diminish overdeveloped coping roles. Richard and I discussed the impact of the identified behaviours. Several months into our coaching I asked Richard what he was learning.

> *I was aware I can be direct and focused on details. I was not so aware of the impact of this on others. I have learned the breadth and extent of the impact on people - them finding me harsh, immediately zeroing in on the negative, and lacking in empathy. I began to see I was difficult to talk to and people found it difficult to let me know what they thought or how they felt about things. That made me less accessible.*

Down the track, Richard and I again discussed his learning.

> *I began to recognise I was creating a sense of self-doubt in my team and they were disheartened rather than being self-assured and having a sense of achievement. I was undermining their confidence by only noticing the negatives. So while I knew I was creating an environment where people worked hard, my team had no sense of achievement. And I had wanted to create an environment where people thrive and achieve their potential.*

Richard, taking into account further feedback from his team, identified four new behaviours.

- He had begun acknowledging team members' work, thanking them for their efforts and insights and exploring additions with them.
- He was using more appreciative language, more 'feeling' language and less 'thinking' language. He was more likely to notice when people opened up and his feedback became personable.
- He prepared for work conversations and was more thoughtful and calm rather than biting back. He noticed that this new behaviour

meant conversations became more open and less confrontational.
- He began putting "annoying things" into perspective so that he did not lose sight of "all the good things".

Richard summarised.

> *All in all I see I am getting the results and where I am not, I still have the abilities to be direct if I choose to. It is just not all the time. Being direct and decisive is relevant in some circumstances and I am using that style in chosen circumstances.*

Assessing Organisational Culture

If leaders are to consider shifting their organisational culture, it helps if they can develop the capacity to assess 'what is going on' behaviourally, emotionally and relationally. Put simply, much of an organisation's culture can be 'read' from observing the daily interactions between and amongst the members of its staff. To be sure, these interactions form a complex pattern but when the pattern is at least partially understood intervention possibilities become more apparent. My own experience tells me that direct observation of groups at work, supported by some well-placed questions, is helpful in discerning culture. A consultant can simply ask, "What is going on here?" The answer received depends, of course, on who is asked and when.

Workers in organisations will answer the question differently depending on their position, relationship with their manager, level of acceptance from their peers and so on. One first tier leadership team described their team culture as, "Results focussed, collaborative and inclusive". Ironically, the third tier managers in this same organisation described the leadership team as, "Smoking something! They are having a good time together and are completely out of touch with what is going on. We are 20% down in staff and have had our budgets slashed and yet we are still expected to deliver the same results. It's just not happening". To say the least, these two parts of the organisation had different views of the leadership team.

In order to bridge the difference, a leader needs some capacity to know that different perspectives exist, to make sense of them and form some views as to the causes. The "smoking something" speaker quoted above may have been a hostile outcast from his own group or he may have been reflecting the widely held opinion of third-tier managers. Answers taken from several sources, however, are likely to reveal a pattern that can help a consultant and leaders assess how well the culture of the organisation is likely to assist or retard the outcomes the leadership team is seeking. Responses may also hint at potential places for interventions.

Changing Organisational Culture

When one dares to think about changing culture, a good but deflating assumption to begin with is that organisational cultures do not develop in a linear way and so are unlikely to respond to linear interventions (Wheatley, 1999:142-146). If they did, one could simply line up all the members of an organisation and tap them into perfect formation. I believe culture is best understood from a systems perspective, including the context, players, interactions, engagement, belonging and emotional states. With a systemic perspective it is possible for leaders to identify interventions that have the capacity to impact on the whole organisation and achieve more satisfying results for the staff and clients. This of course is easier said than done as any consultant, or CEO for that matter, will testify.

One significant element, discussed earlier, is for senior leaders to understand that they can change the culture of their organisations by shifting their behaviours and interaction responses, both with one another, their direct reports and within the wider organisation. Another intervention, helpful in some settings, is for leadership teams to produce sculptures of their perceptions of their team's working. This can be done in many ways. I use objects or the team members themselves to concretise sculptures. Participants are then invited to reflect on the ways that they experience one another and come up with new ways of relating. More often than not these reflections become part of a shared conversation. For some, shifting behaviour means no longer being the dominating vocal expert but a curious collegial explorer, inviting others' views by asking questions such as, "What do you think?" and "How would that work?"

There are many other points where a consultant might intervene. I want to focus on the specific area of candour (Ferrazzi, 2012) because as far as I am concerned it is the litmus test in discerning 'what is going on' in an organisation's culture. Candour constitutes the capacity to speak up collegially, plainly, respectfully and relevantly. It is vital that team members are able to express their original thinking to the group even when it goes against cultural conserves and includes bringing forward 'the elephant in the room'.

There are two parts to candour, speaking candidly and the consequences of speaking candidly. Speaking candidly is the opposite of complaining, 'blurting something out', wanting things to be different or trying to change someone else's behaviour. Candour is letting others know your thoughts, tentative ideas and experience. Frequently I meet senior leaders who criticise the culture in their leadership teams and organisations. "Our leadership team culture is poisonous", says one. "What is happening?" I ask myself. "The IT (read sales, finance or corporate services) manager is driving in a direction none of us other GMs want", says another. How come none of them speak up I wonder to myself. "I think the CEO approves of what is happening, although he isn't saying so", says a third. Hearing this, I have at least two thoughts. The idealist in me wonders who this GM thinks is responsible for creating culture if it is not the leaders themselves. But the realist consultant in me, noticing that people do not speak

up, begins an investigation by asking questions. Is the capacity to speak up underdeveloped in the individual or in the group as a whole, or are the consequences of speaking up too risky in this organisation? If I conclude that assertiveness is lacking, I might embark on a coaching path with that individual. If I conclude that the person is well able to speak up in other contexts save this one, I might make a start on discussing the risks of so doing at senior team meeting. This in itself is a perilous journey, since the consultant cannot take away these risks and make people's working lives safe from power and its abuses.

Ideally, being a senior leader means being willing to air concerns when your view is different from others, including the CEO's. Of course, speaking up is risky. You may not be listened to or liked or backed up by anyone else. You may end up standing alone. Research (Eisenhardt et al., 1997:77-84) has identified five elements which contribute to the development of progressive cultures within leadership teams.

- Shared goals
- Work with information rather than subjective experience
- Humour
- Generated options
- Depersonalised disagreements

The idea here is that senior leaders should function to ensure that it is safe for others to speak up, that they are listened to and their ideas taken seriously and appreciated, even if not taken up. This involves leaders finding ways to be collegial and inclusive, ensuring that contributions are valued and productive working relationships enhanced, including when there are differences. How is it possible to have a transparent organisational culture if the leaders are *not* willing to share their thoughts honestly and listen to the candid responses of others?

An Example of Change in an Organisational Culture

Allow me to provide you with an example of a successful intervention with a newly formed leadership team of five, a GM and four other managers, who wanted to shift from a bureaucratic to a transparent customer focussed culture. They invited me to assist them to think systemically. They wanted to learn to take action after reflecting on and moderating their own inter-relationships and behaviour. I helped them to make a direct connection between the way that they were interacting and the way their staff would interact. With our work underway, they undertook to model the culture they wanted in all their interactions.

The managers made progress within their own groups, but found that staff complained about peers in other teams. To model a progressive way forward, the managers decided to lunch together weekly and get to know one another's

business issues and team members. They encouraged team members to work out their differences and followed up with simple "How is it going?" type questions. When a rift appeared between the leaders' strategic direction and the day to day demands of the business, the group identified 14 specialists in the organisation and set up weekly group meetings with the new 'Group of Nineteen'. To begin with, the leaders ensured that all 19 members of this group could describe to all others their work role, the results of their work and the support they received from their manager. Within two months this group was able to explain the relationship between current action and strategic direction to every other person in the wider organisation.

The leadership team worked systemically over the year to ensure that the culture they wanted to develop throughout the whole company was actually embedded within their own relationships. They began their meetings by applauding one another's successes and appreciating assistance that they had received. They identified and elaborated positive contributions of specific staff. They demonstrated empathy for one another regarding the pressures each faced within the business and within their families. At times they faltered under the pressures of delivering a strategy and results whilst also ensuring the maintenance of business as usual and struggling with inadequate staffing and imperfect financial data. But they gained ground in translating to one another and staff the reasons for shifting goal posts and a major restructure. This leadership group persisted in their goal of being united and transparent in all their decisions, despite their shifting context. They are currently on track in delivering major government outcomes.

In assessing the change brought about in their organisational culture, this leadership team noted four behavioural shifts.

- From thinking that the GM had all the answers, to everyone contributing to discussions and wanting to hear from one another
- From not knowing each other well, to understanding one another's drivers and foibles
- From being silent and resentful when piqued, to understanding interpersonal clashes as inevitable and sorting them quickly
- From being subject matter experts, to providing direction through their relationships with others

Conclusion

Moreno's concept of the social and cultural atom forms the backdrop to my thinking about leadership and organisational culture. It provides the concepts and language to describe relationships and the roles that form patterns of behaviour. In this article, I have discussed and illustrated the way that a leadership team's enactment and modelling of progressive functioning in their relationships

with one another and their staff can filter through an institution to shape positive cultural change. Personal engagement amongst the managers and staff of an organisation tends to create emotionally positive relationships. Such a progressive culture potentially leads to the successful realisation of institutional goals. Thus when leaders wish to change the culture in their organisations they already have two of the most important levers at their disposal, their own behaviour and the quality of their inter-relationships.

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Being an Effective Auxiliary

Some Reflections on Doubling and Dependency in Psychotherapy

Hamish Brown

Abstract
As a term, J.L. Moreno's concept of 'auxiliary' captures the idea of entering into a psychotherapeutic relationship for the purpose of consciously assisting another person to develop spontaneity in a specific context. This paper focuses on a number of important elements in this regard: the importance of being an adequate auxiliary able to enact roles in response to specific social atom constellations; the importance of doubling within a role constellation to bring about social atom repair; the importance of allowing dependency in long term therapeutic relationships so that effective auxiliary functioning is maintained over time to promote the development of progressive embryonic roles. The concept of auxiliary is particularly helpful if we keep ourselves involved with the role constellations present in a person's inner world and the needs of the client within a specific context.

Key Words
auxiliary, clinical psychodrama, dependency, doubling, relationship matrix, role constellation, social atom

Introduction

Over the last few years I have become interested in the clinical aspects of psychodrama, by which I mean appreciating the way that change happens for a client or group through my work as a psychotherapist. The purpose of this article is to explore the phenomenon of dependency in this relationship and to reflect on the psychodramatic method as it relates to this. It focuses on four significant areas in this regard.

1. Moreno's notion that a role develops in response to a specific relationship matrix, exists in this specific social context and tends to be re-enacted when similar role constellations are present.
2. The psychotherapist, as effective auxiliary, enacts roles in response to the client's specific social atom constellations with the intention of producing spontaneity.
3. The value of dependency when effective auxiliary functioning is maintained over time and the way this promotes the development of progressive embryonic roles.
4. Effective doubling as an auxiliary function within a role constellation.

The paper interweaves reflections on these four conceptual areas with two illustrative descriptions, one drawn from my family and the other from my work with a client in long term psychotherapy.

Being an Effective Auxiliary 'In Situ'

My daughter Kate is 6. One and a half years ago she began school and as we live just 200 meters from the school gate, she and I enjoyed walking together to her school. During these walks she enjoyed holding my hand and at her classroom door she liked to give me a kiss and a cuddle before bidding me farewell.

After a few months I suggested she might like to walk on her own to school. She became very excited at this prospect and a while later, I walked her to the front gate of our house and we said good-bye with a kiss and a cuddle. Kate walked off and about every twenty meters she turned around and waved excitedly, enjoying the fact that she was walking herself to school and sharing this enjoyment with me. Over the last year and a half, she has sometimes preferred to walk by herself and sometimes preferred that I walk with her. When we walk together, she has mostly stopped holding my hand and she just waves goodbye at the school door. Sometimes she complains that I walk too fast and at these times I walk just behind her shoulder and match her pace. At these moments she takes great delight in going faster and slower, appreciating the way that I stay with her. With this doubling she becomes experimental.

Before suggesting Kate might like to walk by herself to school, her mother Johanna and I had several conversations in which we addressed our anxiety about Kate walking along the road. We had to consider to what extent our fears were reality based and what chance there was that Kate might be taken from our street on her way to school. We decided that the street was safe enough. We did not share our anxiety with Kate although we did have some conversations with her about strangers.

I draw your attention to several aspects of this description. Notice the development of Kate's warm up to being self-reliant and the expansion of progressive roles that this warm up leads to over a period of a year and a half. This warm up develops within Kate and exists within the context of her relationship with me and Johanna. While it is unique to Kate and emerges from

Kate's spontaneity, it requires the relationship matrix for its existence and expansion. This process of development seems congruent with Moreno's (1946:153) concept of role: "The functioning form the individual assumes in the specific moment he reacts to a specific situation in which other persons or objects are involved." Lynette Clayton (1975:144) explicates. "A role is therefore a unit of behavior which is observable. It is specific to a situation and to the people or objects present in that situation. Its meaning as an act cannot be understood outside the context in which it takes place." Roles are interactive and require relationship for their development.

Kate's development of self-reliance in walking to school has taken a year and a half and she has had many experiences of doubling over this period. It is significant that this doubling occurred in consistent relationships. It seems to me, that for her, self-reliance is invigorating within the context of being in the wider social system while knowing support is available when she needs it. The relationship matrix is secure and thus supports exploration, new endeavours and new functioning. There is no sense within this relationship matrix that self-reliance is a necessary coping function to resolve issues of isolation or achievement anxiety.

The second area I want to bring to your attention is the quality of mutuality between Kate and myself. I have a close and attentive appreciation of Kate and her developing self-reliance and I take great delight in playing with her and being responsive to her experience of walking with me. She also delights in my relationship with her. I am aware that as she becomes more self-reliant she initiates less closeness. Her developing self-reliance informs her whole experience of living, so that later it is evident that hand holding was, to some extent, a reassuring thing to do and kissing and cuddling at the school door a necessary process in her leave taking. As her lived experience changes, these rituals are no longer needed in the same way and so she modifies them. I can see her as Amelia Earhart, an enlivened expeditionary. Amelia flew above the earth with the security of knowing that she could return. However, I doubt that Kate would maintain a reciprocal relationship with me if I was to introduce my anxiety about the safety of the road into my relationship with her. The capacity for role reversal will develop later, when she does not need me as a figure of security and certainty in quite the same way. Thus for me, an important aspect of my total warm up to the situation remains in my awareness and is not communicated to Kate, so that I am an effective auxiliary to her developing self-reliance.

Dependency in Psychotherapy and Recognising the Enactment of Auxiliary Roles

A therapeutic relationship can potentially provide the relational context that was missing in the original social atom. For clients where there has not been adequate parental attunement and doubling, many roles remain embryonic or underdeveloped or there is a tendency towards an over-reliance on coping roles.

Being in an effective auxiliary relationship allows a person to experience themselves enacting progressive roles rather than the conserved coping roles they rely upon when they are isolated or needing to be self-protective. For some people, such as the patient with the developmental needs I describe below, doubling and other effective auxiliary work may be needed over quite a long period of time in order for lasting change to occur.

I introduce you to Jane[1] in order to reflect on and illustrate individual psychotherapy as a series of opportunities for the development of effective auxiliary relationships over time. I present three vignettes from the first three years of our work together, when Jane comes to weekly therapy and also attends three day experiential psychodrama workshops every four months.

Jane is an upper middle manager in a large organisation. She is currently 61. She self-refers to therapy and initially presents issues to do with her workplace. Jane is known by her staff, behind her back, as the 'ice queen'. At the time of presenting for therapy, she is heading and organising a panel. She is experiencing overwhelming terror in the face of the public nature of her panel position, which requires more visibility than she can tolerate. This terror causes her to dissociate, to freeze and to lose her ability to speak.

In the first six months of therapy Jane is unable to talk about herself. Often she sits quietly with her head down, struggling silently with her experience. In the therapy room she appears very fragile. She describes going to therapy once before and running away after seven sessions. She seems determined to do something different this time but she is also very scared. When she does begin to talk about herself, with me doubling her, she stops abruptly and giggles appealingly. Gradually an effective auxiliary relationship develops. As she comes to trust that I will allow her to speak, Jane begins to experience her feelings of vulnerability and sadness and she spends long periods sobbing. Slowly she begins to speak of her father's violence towards her. Haunted by images of violence, she describes waking up one morning at age seven to find a hole in the wall, and her mother's cherished sewing machine and means of work broken and in pieces against the wall. This is not spoken about in her family.

It becomes clear that Jane experiences work as a dangerous place. She persistently warms up as if almost every person she meets is a violent and dangerous ogre. This warm up makes sense in relation to a constellation of roles in her early social atom and I find myself appreciating some specific elements of it. I begin to consider that she is experiencing her violent family system in her work place. This leads her to protect herself by enacting the coping roles she has developed in relation to these specific early social atom experiences which included violence, the threat of violence and an absence of adequate parental relationships or doubling. Jane comes to therapy at a point in time when she is experiencing these coping role constellations as no longer sufficient to sustain her functioning.

At the beginning stages of therapy, Jane regularly expresses a fear of dependency. I understand her to mean that she is frightened of losing her sense of identity and perhaps that if she allows herself to depend on me I will

dominate her, hurt her or prove myself unreliable. Yet as she begins to talk and feel, she experiences great relief. It is as though something that has been missing is now present. Many progressive embryonic roles begin to emerge and develop as she experiences this relationship with an effective auxiliary. For example, she begins to trust herself to speak. This new warm up is possible because she has placed herself within the context of an ongoing and reliable therapeutic relationship in which the original social atom experiences of violence are related to by us, rather than being enacted between us. I think of this as an adequate role relationship. Jane can now allow herself to experience dependency as this is inherent in the role relationship that is being enacted between us. That she is also frightened of this dependency is congruent with her early role system in which there was no one upon whom she could safely depend. The relationship dyad contains the complexity of past experience and present experience. Both are present in the therapy room simultaneously. Awareness of this complexity, accurate doubling and Jane's experience of being visible, enable change. These are some features of an effective auxiliary relationship that encompasses the need for therapeutic dependency.

During the second year of therapy, Jane begins to understand that her mother abandoned her to her violent father. It is during this period that she makes sense of a childhood image, mentioned frequently in therapy and retold like a dream, that has haunted her throughout her life. In this image she is wandering aimlessly and alone in the hallway, age eight. Strong and excruciating feelings of isolation now fill this image.

Now that a sufficiently reliable doubling relationship is established between us, Jane begins to experience the feelings associated with this image. This context of an ongoing, regular therapeutic relationship provides the means for her to experience her feelings of isolation. As a result, the roles that will enable her to form genuinely mutual relationships with others begin to develop. As we talk about her isolation and she begins to experience its depths, it becomes apparent to us that hiding her experience from others and denying it to herself is a self-protective response that makes sense in relation to her early home environment. There is a resulting experience of despair that fills her daily life. It has not occurred to Jane that the despair is specifically related to emotional isolation until we experience it together, in relation to her image of being alone in the hallway. I use the phrase 'we experience' here because I feel Jane's isolation when I am doubling her and therefore 'experience' alongside her. In this instance, being an effective auxiliary means being willing to 'be with'. It is significant that these feelings do not take over my whole experience. I am neither overwhelmed by them nor do I avoid them. Jane's dependency on me is enabling her to become aware of her earlier lack of dependable doubles.

In the third year of therapy, Jane frequently enacts the role of the 'ice queen'. Initially this results in a symmetrical relationship pattern in which Jane demands I accommodate her, for example by finishing the sessions at the time she considers the end, and I refuse. Jane then rejects my refusal but does not reject me. She experiences a fair amount of rage during these interactions. It is a new thing for Jane to fight like this and for a long period of time she expects me to retaliate. There is a dance between us in which she stands up for herself and I work to value her for doing so, while also holding to my sense of things. Perhaps she is testing our relationship. Can she go against me and will I retaliate? During one of these conflicts Jane experiences the pain of clashing with me. Until this moment she has been a frightening foe. Now, as I double her, she becomes more aware of our interaction, noticing that it relates to many specific early social atom experiences when she needed to make herself invisible to avoid her father's anger. Jane recognises that she hates being aggressive because it reminds her of her father's behaviour, which she describes as ugly. At the same time, although still fearful that I will retaliate, she loves being visible and expressing herself. A new social atom experience is being constellated as Jane notices how good it is to be able to fight. Gradually she stops feeling so frightened.

This period of the therapy is about Jane experiencing and strengthening herself as an independent and interdependent person. I see this as an individuation process, which could be described as progressive role functioning to express one's individuality while at the same time maintaining mutuality in relationships. Jane is working to stay in relationship with me while expressing difference and rage. She is developing progressive roles as a result of the constancy of my involvement with her, for I neither pull away nor become aggressive in response to her.

It assists both of us that this work is happening within the context of a consistent long term relationship which we have specifically created together. We have a history in which a strong mutually positive tele has developed. Jane is coming to trust that whatever she is experiencing at the end of each session, I will keep working to be with her and will not move away. We have a relationship that is not further complicated by dual roles and this allows the process to keep unfolding between sessions. A reflective process develops in which dreams and other symbolic activity, indicative of new development, occur regularly. Jane and I remain intently involved with each other and the tension between us, as it develops and changes.

These three illustrations describe aspects of a therapeutic process intended to bring about individuation through meeting Jane's need to depend on a reliable person. Jane develops the ability to express her difference crisply while remaining self-reflective and focused on her purpose. This development makes a considerable difference to her work place functioning, where she is increasingly able to enact progressive roles in her leadership position. In her family, she is able to double her father as her mother dies. This makes a tremendous positive difference to the family system, as her sister and brother are unable to remain conflict free.

Psychotherapy, the Social System and Leadership

Through the psychotherapeutic process described here, Jane developed much greater personal authority and leadership capacity. In her early years she had not experienced significant others as dependable and nurturing and thus developed ways of surviving based on the reality that she was alone. She developed an inability to trust others, an inner sense of not belonging with others and in turn not being responsible for the difficulties her functioning caused within the broader social group. She was unable to feel confident or vital in her leadership position. These could be described as social failures of trust and belonging.

As I have illustrated, the therapeutic relationship needs to include dependency when it is treating these failures of trust and belonging. Maintaining an effective auxiliary relationship while these dependencies are present will allow the person to develop the personal authority that has lain dormant in them, unable to develop because the social system lacked the necessary relationship matrix. Jane developed healthy leadership functioning through this therapeutic process. Leadership is a natural social function based upon personal authority and the capacity to maintain mutuality in relationships. It is the felt recognition that one belongs to the social group coupled with the capacity to maintain mutuality with others while being oneself.

Some Concluding Remarks

Adequate auxiliary relationships need to be developed and maintained over time if individual and group psychotherapy are to produce progressive change. This paper has presented the application of this concept in two different contexts. The first situation was 'in situ' in daily family life, where I have demonstrated that dependence is a normal phenomenon in human development and that accepting this, and being an effective auxiliary at this stage of development, enables the natural emergence of progressive roles. The second situation was in the therapy room where adequate auxiliary roles were enacted in response to specific social atom constellations, enabling substantial social atom repair over time.

To be an effective auxiliary we need to be aware of the person's inner world as well as their needs within their specific context. It is also particularly necessary that we keep ourselves aware of and involved with the role constellations present in each person's social atom. This requires significant clinical capacity.

End Notes

1. In this example the name has been changed to preserve anonymity. 'Jane' has agreed to have these words published. She has read the transcript, provided feedback about its accuracy from her point of view and reviewed the subsequent changes.

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The Moving Forward Project

Reflecting on the Efficacy of Sociodrama and Playback Theatre in Addressing Family Violence

Sandra Turner and Cinnamon Boreham

Abstract
The Moving Forward Project is a collective endeavour established in Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand to address family violence. It aims to raise awareness of the subtleties, complexities and systemic nature of domestic violence, reduce isolation for those affected by it, promote healing and strengthen moves towards change. In this article, facilitators Sandra Turner and Cinnamon Boreham describe the project's pilot programme. They discuss the way that, in designing the programme, they matched the systemic nature of family violence with the systemic perspectives of sociodrama and playback theatre. The authors also present the programme's participants and evaluation research undertaken with them at the programme's close.

Key Words
domestic violence, family violence, playback theatre, psychodrama, sociodrama

The Backdrop

In 2010 a partnership was established between the Dunedin Collaboration Against Family Violence, Stopping Violence Dunedin, the Dunedin Playback Theatre Company and the local psychodrama group. Named The Moving Forward Project, its pilot programme involved a two hour public session held every second month that focused on the complex dynamics of family violence using the mediums of sociodrama and playback theatre. Invitations were particularly offered to men undertaking domestic violence programmes, men and women involved in domestic violence and professional workers in the field. The objectives were to raise awareness of the subtleties and systemic nature of family violence, reduce isolation for those affected by it, promote healing and strengthen moves towards change. The programme was evaluated

via research questionnaires and interviews.

In this article we, the facilitators, describe The Moving Forward Project's pilot programme and its participants, introducing the reader to one in particular. We discuss the way in which the programme design matched the systemic nature of family violence with the systemic perspectives of sociodrama and playback theatre. As well, we present and reflect upon the results of the evaluation research that was undertaken at the programme's close.

Matiu: A Story

Matiu, a young Māori man attending his first session, reported that on a previous occasion he had arrived at the door but could not come in. He said he was not sure 'what stopped him, just that he was whakamā (shy and unsure of what to expect)'. He was disappointed but had nevertheless returned for this following session. This time Matiu was able to enter the room, but with his head down he made no eye contact. Some participants were familiar to him but he felt unable to move towards them, instead sitting alone. Matiu was quiet for the first part of the session, maintaining his bowed head. He reflected the stereotypical image that some young Māori men adopt, wearing their hoodies pulled full over their heads whilst gazing at the floor. Although he clearly demonstrated that he wanted to be invisible, he also took in what was occurring.

The sociodrama was focused on valuing family Christmas traditions and passing them onto the next generation. A woman enacting the role of a grandmother expressed herself to Matiu, who had agreed to play her eight year old mokopuna (grandchild). "Your dad doesn't want you at all. You don't know where you belong. I can see you are a bold little boy and that you do things really well. I love you." Full of pride, the grandmother gazed lovingly upon Matiu and held him warmly. Matiu heard her loving words, words that were strange to hear yet nevertheless sorely longed for. He was a generous auxiliary, who despite his self-consciousness made himself available and contributed to the session. The sociodrama also benefitted Matiu. In experiencing unconditional love and acceptance, this significant moment provided him with much that was missing in his own life.

Later, during the playback theatre, an invitation was issued for one more story before closure. Matiu, head still bowed, got up, took the teller's chair and proceeded to tell his story. "This will be the first Christmas in six years with my family. I have been in jail. I want to leave my old ways behind. It's time to have a change of heart. In my family it was bash first and ask later. The path I am going down is just the same. It is bad. It's a transition time for me to make myself healthy. I'm leaving my old life (gangs) to be with my real family. I want to make the change." The playback conductor asked what this might be like for him and Matiu replied, "No violence. No hurting other people". The performance began as one actor took up the role of the gang, another represented Matiu's whānau

(family) and a third played Matiu. The gang's seductive quality was enacted, graphically illustrating its hold over Matiu. As he sat in the witness position he saw himself with his back to his whānau, rejecting them for life in the gang. The karanga (call) came from his family. "Come home Matiu. Come home." The tension was mirrored to him as the actor playing Matiu fell again into the arms of the gang whilst challenging the whānau. "Where were you when I needed you? They (the gang) were here for me." The karanga became stronger. "Matiu, we love you. Come home." Matiu replied, "I don't know the way back". The whānau responded, "Get on my back. I will carry you. We love you. Come home". At the drama's end all three actors held the tension, potently illustrating Matiu's ongoing struggle. Matiu was engrossed. The conductor asked, "Is this how it is?" "Yes", he clearly replied. More fully in his body, he was able to hold eye contact with the actors and speak directly to the conductor. The audience was powerfully affected by Matiu's story. During the social and refreshments time afterwards, many moved towards him with warmth and respect. Here was healing for Matiu, healing for others, a community healing itself.

Family Violence: Systemic in Nature

It is an easy and seemingly logical idea that the person who commits the violent act is the one who is wrong and then not a big leap to 'the wrong person is a bad person'. Labelling reduces the complex and rich tapestry that is an individual, leaving them with a one-dimensional self-image. When this happens we are using a person's behaviour to define them, dismissing not only their goodness but also the systemic influences. We know that roles are enacted within a context and events are located within a system. Family violence is systemic in nature and this is acknowledged by the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development (2012).

> *There is no single causal factor or theory that can adequately explain, in isolation, the presence or absence of all types and forms of family violence. Rather, many factors interacting in a complex way contribute to the occurrence of violence in families/whānau. Factors include: systemic and environmental variables, such as inequality, patriarchy, the impact of colonisation, and discrimination; and variables, such as power imbalances /differences and personal/psychological characteristics/traits/attributes.*

Sociodrama and Playback Theatre: Systemic Perspectives

Psychodrama, sociodrama and playback theatre involve systemic perspectives. Underlying their methodologies is a core belief in the creative genius of every person, their worth appreciated and strengthened. Auxiliary roles are enacted in present time to assist in social atom repair. The key is being deliberate regarding what we create in the world with those with whom we come into contact.

Sociodrama specifically explores social issues confronting communities. Sternberg and Garcia (1989:12) provide a clear definition.

> Sociodrama *. . . taps into the truth about humanity that we are more alike than we are different. Sociodrama helps people to clarify values, problem solve, make decisions, gain greater understanding . . . and become more spontaneous and playful.*

Through the ages, storytelling has enabled communities and individuals to process life events and come to know themselves. The ability to tell a life story is strongly linked to good mental health (Holmes, 2001). The more coherent the telling the more mastery of one's life is developed. As we tell our stories, the belief systems that shape our behaviours emerge and become accessible to change. Playback theatre is a form of community theatre based on this philosophy. Actors 'play back' audience members' unrehearsed stories, using improvisational theatre and music to portray depth and multiple layers. Used around the world to facilitate social change through the telling, hearing and playing back of stories, it can assist a community to address bullying in schools, heal the aftermath of a disaster or celebrate its history.

Given that family violence occurs within a wider social system, the invaluable systemic focus of sociodrama and playback theatre is well suited to its exploration and healing. These methods were therefore utilised by the Moving Forward Project to focus on some of the issues associated with domestic violence during the pilot programme's six sessions. The issues included the effects on a young child when parents and step-parents are at war with one another, the way that a family manages the absence of a father and the arrival of a 'new dad' and the determination of acceptable compromises when meeting another person who holds different values. Sociodrama and playback theatre assisted audience members to process family violence stories as victims, perpetrators and witnesses. Matiu's story was one of them.

Participants in the Moving Forward Project's Pilot Programme

Over the six sessions of the programme 34 people attended, 24 women and 10 men aged from 16 to 65 years with 20% identifying primarily as Māori. Nationally, Māori comprise 14.6% and in Dunedin 6.2% of the population (Statistics New Zealand 2006 Census). As well as reflecting our links with members of the Māori community in Dunedin, we took this to mean that the project was more than usually accessible to Māori. However, there were no Pacific Island attendees, indicative perhaps of our weak connections to that community. Approximately 13 of the 34 participants were currently experiencing violence in their lives, although only two openly acknowledged this. We knew that two of the women routinely experienced partner initiated verbal and physical abuse,

that some participants had never questioned their physical punishment of children and that one participant missed several sessions because of intimidation from her partner.

Those who did not disclose their experiences of violence may have felt ashamed. However, it is more likely that some were unwilling or unable to fully comprehend what constitutes a definition of violence, partly because this was such a common occurrence in their lives. There were many who witnessed violence in their extended families but did not see this as impacting on themselves. Sixteen participants identified as professional programme providers, counsellors, social workers, domestic violence workers, mental health workers or corrections staff and of these, six were currently experiencing violence in their own lives. Of the 18 identifying as non-professional, seven were currently experiencing family violence and seeking help from woman's refuges, domestic violence programmes or individual therapists.

There are strong cultural norms within the helping professions of valuing professional boundaries and avoiding dual relationships with clients. More often than not, the source of these norms is a lack of trust and sense of vulnerability arising from under resourcing or doubt as to a professional's ability to manage herself amidst the complexity of relationships. Despite this, we had been deliberate in inviting participants from the client group and the group of helping professionals to participate together. We saw value in challenging the idea that the client group was the only one struggling with the issues of domestic violence. The stigma of being the client and the privilege and protection afforded the professional helper serve to reinforce old stereotypes and keep a binary map of the world in place. The distances between these and other subgroups at the sessions were palpable. Social workers kept themselves apart from the offenders, Māori distanced themselves from Tauiwi (non-Māori), clients avoided the professional therapists and a number of women stayed distant from the men. Despite these significant challenges the sociodrama and playback sessions, where equal and personal participation was encouraged and expected, succeeded in creating a learning experience for everyone.

Evaluating the Moving Forward Project's Pilot Programme

The Moving Forward Project's pilot programme was assessed through qualitative research. Outcomes data, collected from questionnaires and interviews with a cross-section of participants, is organised here into nine themes with interview quotes presented first, followed by commentary and reflection.

Factors that Made Attendance Attractive

It was a break from the house and an opportunity to meet people.
I felt safe.

I wanted a place to go on a Friday night, not the pub, a place to make friends and aid my recovery.
I wanted help to deal with things.
I trusted the facilitators.
It was a level playing field. It was okay for everyone to speak.
I wanted to develop as a facilitator.
I wanted to be generous and contribute.
It was free.

Despite the challenging environment, the facilitators were able to create a safe and engaging group space that allowed everyone to participate in their own way. This is no small thing. We learnt over time to attend carefully to the warm up of the group and to deliberately build the sociometric links. Both facilitators were held in high regard in the community and this was critical to attracting the range of participants who attended. Our modelling of openly enjoying relationships with people across the different subgroups was particularly influential.

There is a hunger within the wider community for opportunities to learn and progress. After a rehabilitation programme for drug dependency or domestic violence, participants require a place to go where they can interact with like-minded people who are also pursuing a healthy life. The option of individual therapy is only available to those with an extra $80 plus per week in their budget. This effectively eliminates whole sectors of the community. Our cost free policy enabled many people to attend who would normally be excluded. The programme also offered community workers, group facilitators, probation officers, counsellors and students a rich opportunity to participate and to learn experientially about group process and family violence dynamics. An alcohol and drug free space was important to many participants. We provided an environment where people could talk honestly about a range of sensitive issues and be confident of being well responded to.

Factors that Acted as Barriers to Attendance

Lack of child care.
Problems with transport.
Complications of managing dual roles.
Feelings of insecurity in the open group.

We were well aware of the financial hardship that many participants experienced and though we worked to mitigate this, it could not be eliminated. Transport was arranged for some but the provision of childcare was outside our resources. The complication of managing dual roles meant that two people elected not to continue. In both these situations this was a good decision, indicating an

appreciation of the limits of possibility. Being in an open group with the potential for clients and their professional workers to meet was challenging for some. It is accepted practice that the primary relationship must be protected and that good professional boundaries be maintained. In many cases this can lead to rigidity that effectively excludes all contact with the client group outside of the professional setting. Moreno's (1978) teachings were based on the encounter, the development of spontaneity and the healing of community. Whilst complex, it is possible to be involved in a mixed group when one is able to hold relationship with authenticity and flexibility. However, the two participants who struggled with the open group had just begun recovery and required the safety of a closed group.

Personal Development

I had my voice in the first sociodrama. I was surprised, shocked and delighted.
I took my experiences to my therapy (the longing for an absent mother or father and the place of the neglected child were shared by many).
It stimulated me to look at more things in myself.
Got me to wonder what I had done to my children.
I learnt that children have to come first. I have a new respect for children.
I saw how children get used. They are an excuse to have a go.
I learnt there is a lot of power in being a victim. I've begun to surrender my victimhood.
I'm having pretty nice chats with my mother and keeping in more contact.
I needed to go back and feel the emotional pain. I have since gone back into therapy.

Following the playback and sociodrama sessions it was inevitable that participants would reflect on their own feelings and responses. It was only later, through the interviews, that we came to know of some of the profound reverberations this occasioned in their lives. Playing a family member, a child, an estranged parent or an abuser in a sociodrama caused people to look at their own behaviours, past and present. In playing the roles of children participants role reversed, sometimes for the first time and this had positive significance for the children in their lives and also for the child they had each been. This increased awareness of the needs of children in domestic violence systems had many outcomes. Overall, there was a new respect for children and a willingness to own one's own actions. Social atom repair occurred between parents and their children and between adults and their parents. A number of participants actively sought therapy as a result of the sessions, whilst those in therapy were re-stimulated. This heightened awareness of personal functioning occurred for the professionals in the group as much as it did for anyone else. With increased consciousness, these practitioners' clinical responses became more considered.

Development of Insights into Family Violence

Everyone's story is different.
Everyone plays a role. However, not everyone is a willing participant.
I understand how complex it is now.
It helped me to be softer with my own family when violence is being acted out.
Family violence gets generalised with assumptions that everyone's experience is the same.

Many myths exist regarding family violence. A typical question asked of a woman who remains in a violent relationship is, "Why does she stay?" This puts the onus on the woman to make the intervention, often further isolating her and leaving her with limited options. There are other naive assumptions that stereotype those impacted by family violence such as, only men perpetrate family violence, all perpetrators of violence are cruel bullies who don't care, perpetrators only do this to gain power and control over others in their family and only Māori practise family violence.

In the sociodrama and playback sessions individual stories emerged and were valued by the group. As well, the more subversive aspects of family violence were highlighted. Group members moved from a simplistic understanding to appreciating the complexities that are always present. They developed a greater ability to see the system as a whole, primarily reducing judgment and promoting the ability to role reverse. This outcome, which was evident across the client, practitioner and general public subgroups, was significant. From a relatively small input, participants integrated a deeper understanding of the nature of family violence and developed their abilities to think systemically.

Professional Development

I learnt about leaders being bold.
I have begun to move towards men. I don't say no to working with them anymore.
I learnt to go to the dark places.
I learnt about forming a relationship with each person in the group.
I saw the facilitator work in action and shift away from the interminable check in. The group was leader facilitated and not leader dominated.
We need to develop more fine tuning (as group workers) and to be alert to the changes in someone . . . not just focus on the dysfunctional.
I learnt to work with dual relationships and to not withdraw.
I'm learning to look at people without blame.

Overall, the professionals developed more capacity to enter into relationship with the client group. The old labels, which produce separation, loosened and there was more noticing of the health in each person. Despite there being some dual relationships in the group, individuals stretched themselves to be personally

present whilst still holding a professional identity. Flexibility and creativity were mobilised without sacrificing professionalism or responsiveness. Linear thinking dictates that the perpetrator of family violence is at fault and must change. At one level this is correct in that we must each take responsibility for our actions. However, this negates the larger context in which people live and the multiple factors contributing to any situation. Practitioners learnt that when working with a systemic understanding, judgment is likely to drop away and a new tolerance for the complexity and subtlety of all situations develops.

The ability to facilitate group work is commonly underestimated and consequently group leaders are often inadequately trained. Anxious practitioners reach for the manual and adopt a false authority that in the end cuts across relationships and the warm up of the group. Their observation of leaders working with ease and vitality in this group created another possibility. They saw that it was possible to 'get with' whatever was emerging in the group without any need to fix or help and thus began to envisage such ability for themselves. The idea that we must help someone can frequently turn into a burden. We stop 'being' with the person and become focused on 'doing' something for them, often simply imposing our version of what is needed. But when we double the person we are already assisting. The practitioner who "learnt to go to the dark places" learnt both to be unafraid of doubling and paradoxically that doubling was all that was needed.

Experiences of the Open Group

> *Though we were from different backgrounds everyone was the same.*
> *I wanted to support others so I put myself forward, a sense of we will do this together.*
> *I owed it to the group to be involved.*
> *I liked that there was no judgment.*
> *The form doesn't discriminate. It was inclusive and safe for everyone to be involved. The more experienced practitioners took risks as well.*
> *I couldn't trust people I didn't know. I feel safe with my own colour* (for this person especially the group felt unsafe).

Our intention was to encourage the participation of people from all walks of life, as it is clear that family violence does not discriminate. As people shared their stories, myths were broken and this reduced isolation. Group members thoughtfully took risks when sharing stories, a significant development given that this was an open group of both professional workers and clients. Everyone experienced some stretch, particularly practitioners who needed to be more thoughtful than other participants. Where there is a dual role it is critical the therapist stays clinically aware at all times. When this can be achieved, along with holding an authentic relational presence, the gifts are huge. It is a relief for the client to see the therapist as an ordinary member of the community, grappling with the complexity of families.

An outcome of maintaining an open mixed group was a collapse of the 'us and them' divide. Transference positions, the holding of fixed roles originating in the original social atom, were harder to maintain and this provided more opportunity for here and now relationships to develop. A positive regard for each group member was built. This continued outside the group when people encountered one another in everyday situations and took the time to say hello. A member of the client group was especially surprised when a social worker greeted her in the supermarket. Inclusion was modelled and worked to reduce the power disparity that frequently occurs when the professional is the authority in someone else's life. When envisaging the group as inclusive of all subgroups we noted that there were limited opportunities for people of such different demographics to meet on a level playing field. When we saw ex-prisoners having a cup of tea with psychologists and social workers at the close of sessions we knew that the way the world is ordered was beginning to change.

Impacts for Māori and Tauiwi (Non-Māori)

I didn't realise that this happened in Pakeha whānau (White families).
This is deep. It really gets you to the heart of the matter.
I can bring all of who I am here. It's safe.
I could see that all the Māori were on one side and we were all on the other. I didn't like that so I shifted over.
It warms my heart when I see my own people and Tauiwi finding common ground. That doesn't happen much.

There was a buzz in the air on the first night of the pilot programme and alertness especially evident when a group of Māori arrived. Tentatively they placed themselves in a tight group at the back of the room. They consisted of iwi (tribal) practitioners and whānau (family), both ngā tāne (men) and ngā wāhine (women) undertaking domestic violence programmes. Later, over a coffee, they noted the newness of moving into a Tauiwi (non-Māori) service and being able to identify with the themes of the group. One man expressed relief on hearing swearing during the sociodrama. He had known it as a child, thus at that moment the drama became real to him and he engaged in the session. Sociodrama and playback practitioners highly value the sacredness of a group of people, their customs and their stories. A range of Māori participated, from those steeped in Tikanga Māori (Māori custom and traditions) whose first language was Te Reo (the Māori language), to those on a journey of re-claiming their heritage. They brought to the sessions a typically Māori systemic overview of the world, a perspective where everything is inter-related. This was very much part of past cultural practices and continues to be taught by iwi (tribal) practitioners, kaumātua (male elders) and kuia (female elders).

Perspectives on Playback Theatre

It was good to be a witness. I could see more. I didn't have to get up and do something.
I got more from playback. It was more intimate. The release was amazing. I was walking free for a couple of days.
It reminded me of where I have come from.
I realise I only told half my story. I held back my part in it.
A lot of stuff came up afterwards and I needed someone to talk to.
For me it was laid back therapy.
The actors were great. They got the actual ferocity right.
Others' stories had a powerful impact on me.

Playback theatre offers a mirror to the storyteller, highlighting layers of experience not always considered during the telling. Each story reveals universal themes that others link to. This can be an enlivening yet edgy experience for both the teller and the audience. In the sessions, we offered an opportunity for personal responses to the sociodramatic story that unfolded first. Thus, if a catharsis of integration had not emerged then, it would later occur during playback theatre. Group members experienced a great deal of satisfaction when the full expression of their feelings was taken up by the playback actors. The actors themselves were well trained and confident to access and express a depth of feeling. They had spent significant time in rehearsal, processing their personal stories and responses to family violence. Playback makes it possible for people to stay in the witness position. This assists with the development of a reflective mind, which for some is very different to old patterns of reactivity. When family violence occurs, everyone in the system typically experiences isolation. Some participants noted a reduction in isolation and a commensurate development of community.

Perspectives on Sociodrama

It was more challenging. You are more involved.
I enjoyed playing innocence. I played the middle brother instead of always being the eldest.
I learnt there is a big system with more people involved than just the client.
I warmed up easily. I surprised myself.
It was like I was sitting there with my own family.
I learnt that the mum was probably lonely.

Sociodrama enabled the participants to clearly see the systemic nature of family violence, which led to a greater appreciation of the multiple factors at play in any given situation. The exploration of social and family dynamics at the typical level enabled full participation from group members, without fear of exposure. They entered enthusiastically into the sociodramas, creating typical scenarios

and adding important elements such as the family dog. Sometimes roles were enacted by groups, as when three participants took up the role of the abusing mother together. This offered multiple doubling and also addressed performance anxiety for a naïve auxiliary.

Participants took up both familiar and unfamiliar roles, indicating great willingness to stretch outside of comfort zones and experience the world of the other. When role reversal occurred throughout the system, a rich understanding from all perspectives emerged. This produced greater awareness and compassion and lessened judgment. Group members were frequently surprised by their involvement in the sessions. Despite initial caution, they easily warmed up and found themselves volunteering to take up roles. It was delightful to see those who usually think they have nothing to contribute making meaningful interventions. For example, during one sociodrama an audience member called out passionately to a participant playing a man who was hiding and feeling ashamed of his violent actions. With great feeling she said, "I can see you are not a bad man. I will stand with you". This was a moment of transformation.

Conclusion

The Moving Forward Project's pilot programme used the mediums of sociodrama and playback theatre to address family violence. Despite challenges and difficulties, the gains were rich and often unexpected. The qualitative research undertaken at the close of the six sessions highlighted a range of benefits, one of the most important being participants' deepening appreciation of the subtleties, complexities and systemic nature of family violence. Participants learnt that all relationships hold a potential for violence, whether this be overriding another's opinion or physical assault as an outlet for anger and frustration.

It is unusual for clients, professionals and others involved in this area to work collectively on a level playing field. Thus, the bringing together of the subgroups was another significant achievement in and of itself. Trusting relationships were developed with key participants in each subgroup so that they could confidently promote the project to their people. Barriers softened between subgroups as each developed the capacity to see beyond prejudice and first impressions. The ability to stand in one another's shoes matured and with that, came respect.

The project continues and has attracted funding from the Dunedin Collaboration against Family Violence and the Dunedin City Council. The Moving Forward Project won the 2011 Sonja Davies Peace Award.

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Cinnamon Boreham is an experienced facilitator for men's and women's Stopping Violence programmes. She completed training with Te Korowai Aroha O Aotearoa, an indigenous training organisation and is a Mauri Ora iwi practitioner. Cinnamon is currently a member of the National Domestic Violence Panel and author of domestic violence programmes for both Māori and mainstream. She is a member of the Dunedin Playback Theatre Company and a psychodrama trainee. She can be contacted at <cinnamon.boreham@gmail.com>.

Reflections of a First Time Producer

Jenny Postlethwaite

Synopsis
Anyone who has trained in the psychodrama method has experienced first time production. Many have a story or two to tell in this regard. In this short informal article, Jenny Postlethwaite tells her story of producing a psychodrama for the first time.

Introduction

As a first year student of psychodrama I have thus far participated in a number of skills training exercises focused on various aspects of production. Now, for me, a moment of truth arrives in the theatre of truth. I am about to produce a complete drama for the first time.

The Warm Up

You could say that my warm up to this moment has been quite protracted, some 18,413 days, each of which have in some greater or lesser way contributed to my presence, standing here, hand in hand with my protagonist, ready to begin. Or, you might put it at a much more modest 241 days, commencing with my very first exposure to classical psychodrama. But in the interests of brevity let's call it 113 days, my official tenure as a student of the psychodrama method.

In terms of learning, it has been a somewhat jam packed 113 days. Between training workshops, supervision, reading, writing and hours of personal reflection, I have swallowed, if not yet digested, a veritable smorgasbord of new language, contexts and concepts. Some of these I found I had already tasted on the menus of other cuisines, in a different professional context or labelled with an alternative set of terms. Nevertheless, there has been a lot to get comfortable with, a lot to remember. And mountains still to learn.

I have been wrestling with a lot of detail. Is that doubling? Or is it mirroring? What is the difference between the two? How do I know which one to use when? Remember the phases, warm up, enactment (don't forget the contract), sharing; the instruments, protagonist, producer, auxiliaries, audience, stage; the role theory,

adequate, underdeveloped, overdeveloped, absent, conflicted, coping, progressive, fragmented, somatic, social, psychodramatic (a veritable Cecil B. De Mille cast of thousands). And the scene setting universals, time, space, cosmos, reality; the levels of spontaneity, taking a role, playing a role, creating a role; the action cues; the housekeeping. Oh, and all that new material yesterday about the phases of a role training session. I am feeling a little exhausted simply thinking about it all. As for acting on it, we are about to put that to the test, the protagonist and I.

Prior to this point a few key things have fallen into place for me. At times, as an audience member or auxiliary I have been conscious of operating as little more than spectator to an engrossing drama, much the same as I might in a darkened cinema. Engrossed but simply along for the ride, whereas producing requires something much more. Where should I be looking? What should I be looking at? What should I be looking for? In discussion with my wise supervisor I learn that we all see different things. What is most important is that we actually do something with what we see. Okay.

I have also been mindful of the producer's duty of care to the protagonist. I am not concerned, but certainly aware of the responsibility and of not taking it on underprepared. Happily for me this has come up for discussion at an earlier training session, in relation to another first time producer, where I am reminded that our trainer will also be there to look after the protagonist and me. I slap my forehead. "Of course they will." My warm up shifts slightly, from 'producer' to 'trainee producer'. That is better. Okay.

I have had a brief discussion with my trainer about the support I think I would like from her when I do produce for the first time. "I need to know that you are right there. And I need you to give me enough space and time to have a go for myself." The discussion goes well. Okay.

In my last supervision session I explored the idea of drawing a big schema, in order to somehow put everything a producer needs to remember into context. It seemed like a good idea at the time, although I never did get around to doing it. And paradoxically our discussion generated a new list of things to remember, principles of the method.

Our supervision conversation finished with me saying, "Sooner or later I'll have to have a go. I won't learn sitting down". I have been creeping ever closer, without actually being fully warmed up to stepping up. Then, earlier today, I realise that I am now the last of the 'kindies', the new intake of trainees, who has yet to produce a drama. If I do not take the opportunity today it will be two months before another chance arises. I do not want to be sitting with that for two months.

The Enactment

So here I am. Here we are, me, my protagonist and our audience. And we begin.

Along the way I find I am conscious of various things. I am fully focused on

observing the protagonist and I move about to maintain my line of sight. She is my prime focus, at times to the exclusion of the auxiliaries, other than when we stand together observing the stage. I am pleased in the moment that I have not slipped into 'spectator' mode, although I am wondering whether I should be paying more attention to the auxiliaries as well. And I am not comfortable when I end up boxed in on some part of the stage. Even if I am not actually moving, I am more comfortable knowing that I can if I need to. I begin to get a feel for positioning myself in order to avoid being boxed in.

I can hear appreciative audience noises from time to time when I take some action. It is comforting to know I am on the right track. I see the protagonist caught in a stuck relationship, rocking gently up on her toes. It is something to work with. Yes, do something with it! I move beside her and double the action, maximising it a little by leaning forward. It is having an effect. She is responding to the doubling. Things begin to move. Whenever I say, "Reverse roles" I see it is my hands that do the moving, as I point each of my index fingers down and across each other like some aging disco queen. I am internally amused and intrigued by the reflexive way it keeps happening, without actually being distracted by it.

I invite the auxiliaries to mirror one of the protagonist's roles and one of them begins to model a new role instead of mirroring the existing one. I notice it and decide to let it play out, rather than interrupt the flow. It seems like the best choice in the moment. Later, an auxiliary is modelling a new response. The protagonist and I observe as she builds a structure on the stage with cushions. It seems to be taking forever. The protagonist is at first curious but then appears to lose her warm up. We have a conversation as the cushion construction continues. The protagonist says that she has tried this approach before, to no avail. The construction takes still more time and I am conscious of some rising impatience within me (an early pointer to later events as it happens). I am concerned about the protagonist's loss of warm up, but wait to see what happens. I direct the protagonist in a run of role reversals, conversing with a double. At one point I no sooner have her step into one role - she has not even spoken - than I instruct her to reverse roles again. Not surprisingly she looks confused, the audience members make odd noises and I let out an internal 'Doh!' I immediately shake my head and tell the protagonist to ignore me. It takes only a moment for us to get back into the groove.

The protagonist, now standing beside me observing the action on the stage, has become more spontaneous. She actively expresses her impatience with her stuck system, both verbally and by clicking her fingers. I double the finger clicking, maximise it and move forward toward the on-stage auxiliaries. Then I realise that I have left my protagonist behind. She is back behind me, looking a little uncomprehending. Another 'Doh!' moment! I realise, in the moment, that one of my own issues has been triggered, my impatience to get on with my own change. Whilst I was not experienced enough to catch myself before I acted, I am happy that I have realised what has happened and so am able to quickly step

back beside the protagonist and continue on with her, with no harm done.

The protagonist's spontaneity kicks in strongly at a certain point and the drama really takes off, as she develops a new, progressive approach to her situation. The drama finishes with everyone dancing with the protagonist as she laughs happily. Time has flown. It seems that we have no sooner begun than we are done.

The Sharing

We all share with the protagonist our personal connection with her drama. Not surprisingly, my sharing recounts my own impatience with aspects of my own development. I express the difficulty of needing to be patient, even though that means dealing with the discomfort and pain of things as they are. On hearing my story, the protagonist becomes quite teary. It is a point of connection between us.

The Processing

Following on from sharing with our protagonist, the group moves to provide me with some feedback on my production debut. "I really liked the way you got started. The protagonist didn't have a specific scene to work with. I would have struggled around that for ages but you just had her put her uncomfortable feeling out on the stage." "The way you got beside the protagonist and doubled her was great." "You're a natural." (Aside to Universe: "Hmmm. I am not owning that. But I am enjoying receiving it." So it makes it into this story.) "You were patient and kept working with the protagonist in her stuck system until something finally moved. So she was able to fully experience the forces holding her back. And then fully experience the new motivating forces as she became more spontaneous." (Aside to Universe: "Oh, is that what I was doing?") And, from the protagonist, "It was good having you with me. I knew you were always there for me".

As this very positive feedback flows I am glancing from time to time at our trainer, a woman who sees me very well and is adept at doubling me and telling me what I need to hear. She is nodding, looking happy enough, but she is not saying much. Un-naturally quiet. In fact, has she said anything? Finally she asks me a question. "How do you think you went?" Perfect. The question I mean, not what I said in reply. In this moment the most useful action is for me to reflect on and express, for myself, my experience as a producer.

I think I did well enough. Although a couple of times I got lost, I never felt I lost myself. I knew I could look over to my trainer at any moment for help. And I felt quite comfortable in the moments when I needed to do that. Given my inexperience I was really happy that, on the odd occasion when she proactively offered a suggestion I had already been thinking along the same or similar lines, albeit not quite as rapidly. I thought I did a good job of picking up on the protagonist's physical cues. When she started rocking up on her toes I doubled

the movement and it was a turning point in unlocking her spontaneity. I was also happy that when I did not quite get it 'right', my 'Doh!' moments, I did not let that disturb me. In fact I think I recovered reasonably well. Yes. Happy enough. Good enough.

Subsequent to the formal wrap up of the group, one of my colleagues had further conversation with me regarding the different perspectives of producer and auxiliary. "When I was on stage in auxiliary role", she said, "I had been wanting you to do something particular with the protagonist. But just now, when you were explaining to us what you had been thinking and doing I realised that, as an auxiliary I couldn't see everything you could see as the producer. It has reinforced for me that when I produce I should have confidence in my view of the whole drama and not allow myself to be disturbed by interjections from auxiliaries who may not be able to see the whole picture." As well as reflecting her own development as a producer, my colleague's comments had the effect on me of reinforcing the authority that sits with the producer and my own comfort in stepping into that authority.

So, the drama was done. The work was good ... enough. My protagonist was happy with the outcome and I was happy with my efforts. The day ended. We all went home.

But the dough had not quite finished rising. The following day, whilst out for my morning walk, I was recalling the drama and a new realisation came to me. As I had stood there, hand in hand with the protagonist ready to begin, there was nothing going through my mind. All the noise had abated. I was just there, in the moment, ready to go. And as the drama unfolded, that was the way I continued to be. I was, in a sense, operating on intuition. On the intuition of 18,413 days, of 241 days, of 113 days. Not consciously thinking, "Should I do this now? Should I do that now? What should I do now?" But rather, just doing what came to me based on what I was seeing. When every now and then nothing came to me, I naturally and unconcernedly could and did turn to my trainer for help.

I experience this inner quiet at times in my coaching and facilitating work. It is a very calm and uncomplicated place to inhabit. Uninhibited. Undefended. I like it. And I like that it came to me as I stood there, hand in hand with my protagonist, for the first time, ready to begin.....

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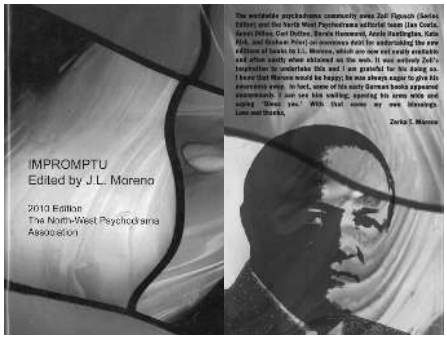

Impromptu (2010 Edition)
Edited by J.L. Moreno
The North-West Psychodrama
Association, UK
2010

ISBN 978-1-4457-7730-6
Available at <www.lulu.com>

Reviewed by Annette Fisher

In 1973 I 'became' a psychodrama trainee and ever since I have studied, practised and taught the psychodramatic method in my professional and personal life. I have a particular interest in its origins and history because the early seeds, the experiments and research conducted by Dr J.L. Moreno, constitute the foundational elements for those of us who practise psychodrama. As a caretaker of the psychodramatic method, I find *Impromptu* an enlightening archive of his original ideas. The numinous quality that the method offers, its capacity for transformation and Moreno's seminal concepts are found here, as in others of his original texts. These concepts include spontaneity, creativity and the creative genius, human qualities that he first captured in the notion of the 'impromptu state'.

This 2010 publication of *Impromptu*, produced by the UK's North-West Psychodrama Association, is one in a series of republished Moreno texts. In the preface the editorial team states the series' purpose: "To bring Moreno's 'truths' to you the reader thus ensuring his words are not forgotten..." (p.7). The two part structure of the book reflects its genesis as an amalgamation of two editions of the first volume of the magazine *Impromptu*, edited by J.L. Moreno. Part One contains *Impromptu* Volume 1, Number 1, published originally in January 1931, while Part Two consists of *Impromptu* Volume 1, Number 2, published April 1931. Together, the two parts provide an invaluable record of early thinking and experimental theatre as practised by Moreno in the 1930s. Of the many short papers authored by him and several commentators, I intend here to discuss those which I experienced as the most gratifying and enlivening.

Impromptu fully reveals Moreno as the passionate visionary and activist that he was. As I was reading and reviewing the book, I arrived at a deep appreciation of his ability to creatively combine philosophy, psychology and the theatre. Moreno offers impromptu as a method with the potential to increase consciousness and stimulate the development of new creative relationships, enlivened communities and a positive effect on the world. For example in the first article, Ave Creatore, he discusses the central ideas of God and creation. Humanity is strongly advised to stop admiring finished works of art and be wary of the tendency to reproduce and copy. He

suggests instead that creation is the period between a clumsy, bumpy beginning and successful mastery, with all the attempts, road blocks, failures and messiness as part of the creative process in between. Moreno builds on these ideas in a later paper titled The Creative Act, where he discusses five characteristics of such an act: the awakening when the unconscious rises up and becomes fixed in the conscious state; the surprise of the unexpected; the difference between impromptu enactment and living enactment; the difference between being a creature and a creator; and unconscious-conscious processes as embodied in mimetic effects. This fifth characteristic means that the creative act is not merely a set psychic condition from the unconscious-conscious processes. It is a flexible and evolving process that begins formless and moves through stages, before the creative act is born. I am deeply touched by this theory of creativity because to me, it gives great hope to humanity. Rather than relying on a 'perfect God' in the heavens, it is possible to rise above life's adversities and be spontaneous creators ourselves. Moreno reminds us that we have the capacity to be playful creators, adventurers and inventors and that imperfection is an element of being a creative human being.

In another article, The New Name, Moreno describes the way in which he draws his ideas from the arts, the writer, the artist and the painter. Each draft of a play or each stage of a painting is to be appreciated and celebrated because focusing on the finished work alone leads to rigidity. Play is thus an antidote to perfection and stultification. In the paper, Concerning Perfection, Moreno concludes that, "Our tendency is to depreciate the experience of adventure in lauding the product" (p.17). He expands on the importance of the artist/actor/poet warming up to situations and finding fluency from within (The Impromptu State). As a reader, I link impromptu to two of the core principles of psychodrama as we understand it today, spontaneity and creativity.

Commentator Robert Muller (The Impromptu Theatre in Vienna) notes that in the canon of early psychology theorists, J.L. Moreno's theory of creativity adds a fresh view of humanity and new possibilities in human development. In diverting from Freud's theories and the trend to focus on dysfunction and the curing of symptoms and trauma, Moreno envisages impromptu as a therapeutic device, an activistic reversal of psychoanalysis and a curative means to organise civilization. In her paper in Part One of *Impromptu* (Experiments in Impromptu Analysis), psychologist Helen Jennings discusses the application of psychodrama in psychoanalysis. She argues that impromptu assists the individual to detach from a single focus and learn to move between different foci. This kind of exploration allows for personality analysis and better opportunities in treatment. By the time she writes her contribution to Part Two (Psychoanalysis and Dr. Moreno), Helen Jennings comes to the conclusion that, "Psychoanalysis and Impromptu are as water is to fire" (p.65). Whereas impromptu taps the springs of productivity and releases the creative, psychoanalysis has an extinguishing effect.

In addition to presenting Moreno's notions of impromptu and creativity as psychological aspects of human functioning, the book provides a description of

the birth and emergence of the exploratory impromptu theatre itself. The first performance of an impromptu play on "the English-speaking stage" (p.51) was held on April 5th, 1931 at the Guild Theatre in New York (The Inauguration of Impromptu). In a piece titled The Poet in Impromptu, J.J. Robbins discusses his experience as a reviewer and member of the audience at one such production. As he describes the play, it becomes clear to me that the poet who performs without a script in current time is what we would call today the protagonist. He is active rather than passive, in the process of becoming. The players in the enactment are also script free and unrehearsed and respond to the poet from their own abilities and experiences. We know these actors as auxiliaries in today's psychodramatic production. The connections between impromptu theatre and contemporary playback theatre are also revealed in these descriptions.

My training as an artist has taught me that to be an artist one must stand on the shoulders of the artists who went before. A trained eye can see when the history of the predecessors is not imbedded within the artist's work. Much current psychotherapy denies its origins or disregards the influence and importance of founders and the historical stepping stones to present day practice. Without drawing from the masters and mistresses we are delivering a mere shadow of possibilities and our practice may lack depth and breadth. The noticeable links between Moreno's early experiments in impromptu, as revealed in this book and current psychodrama practice thus stands out for me. As a psychodramatist, it is satisfying to know that we have built well on our inspirational foundations. Moreno provided the concepts and a springboard that has resulted in psychodrama practitioners continuing to teach and train others in this philosophy and method. Furthermore, many of his ideas and practices have seeped into other therapies.

In reviewing this book I have been challenged, reading and re-reading the essays to gain deeper insights into the psychodrama method that I practise. I worry that I have not done justice to J.L., knowing that the next time I read these articles I will have a few more 'light bulb' moments. I will then say to myself, "I did not fully understand that when I wrote the review!" What I deeply appreciate about *Impromptu* is the way that it reveals Moreno's tenacity as he struggled to combine the creative arts with the practice of psychology. When I am producing a psychodrama session and the poet, producer and therapist are as one within me, the protagonist, the auxiliaries, the group members and the producer are uplifted and transformed. Unfortunately the wider world has seen a full swing towards the rational and the scientific. In light of this swing, my hope is that readers of *Impromptu* will be reminded of the fullness of J.L. Moreno's legacy and apply its richness to their professional practices and their lives.

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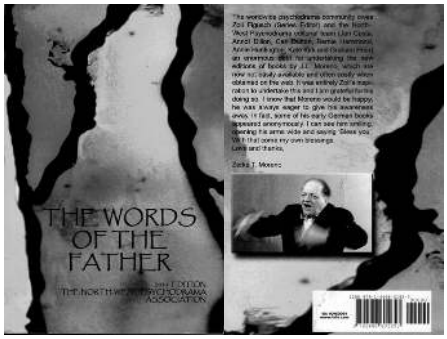

The Words of the Father
(2011 Edition)
By J.L. Moreno
The North-West Psychodrama Association, UK
2011
Original German *Das Testament Des Faters* published anonymously1923 by Gustav Kiepenheuer, Verlag, Vienna
Original English translation by J.L. Moreno published 1941 by Alliance Book Corporation, New York, followed by a second publication 1971 by Beacon House, New York

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The Words of the Father: A Response by Sara Crane

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I HAVE CREATED THE UNIVERSE
TO MEET YOU
HERE I AM
TO EMBRACE YOU

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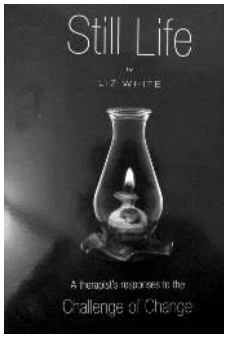

Still Life: A Therapist's Responses to the Challenge of Change
By Liz White
Liz White, Toronto, Canada
2011

ISBN13:978-0968989616
Available from <www.lizwhiteinaction.com>

Reviewed by John Farnsworth

Still Life. It is a title that intentionally resonates with multiple meanings. As the author, Liz White, looks back over forty years as a practitioner, her reflection brings an extra resonance to her title. Now it alternates between stillness and activity, now between contemplation and still *choosing* life. Both experiences are central to the tapestry of perspectives she presents in a book that is part reflection, part working manual.

Liz White may not be a familiar name in this part of the world but she is highly respected in her native Canada and the northern hemisphere. I know, from first-hand experience, how she has won this reputation. I saw her wonderful, imaginative doubling and her robust enactment of counter roles at an international psychodrama conference some years ago. Her acuity, vitality and sensitivity have long stayed with me. All these qualities are present in this, her latest book. Here, she gathers together insights from a lifetime's work, offering a wealth of approaches all infused with the spirit of psychodrama.

The book itself is solidly grounded in sociometry but also embraces a diversity of other perspectives. They range from references to David Wallin's (2007)

Attachment in Psychotherapy, to emotional intelligence, Buddhism, meditation and mindfulness, bibliodrama and even as far as a chocolate chip cookie recipe. The recipe emerged from a sociometry exercise, The View from Here, where the three circle layout reminded the author of a chocolate chip cookie. The movement between text, illustration and exercise typifies the book as a whole, constantly intertwining reflection, action and commentary.

Still Life: A Therapist's Responses to the Challenge of Change is designed to unfold as both an arc of change and a trajectory of growth, spread over five sections. It moves from Awakening to The Struggle with the Self, Holding On … Letting Go and The Courage to be Authentic and ends with an act of peace-making in And What of the World? Liz White brings these sections to life using an A4 format with large, clear diagrams that illuminate the central theme of a particular section. Befriending our Defences in Section Two is typical. Illustrated with a full-page diagram, it divides the circle of spontaneity into four quadrants, each one naming a strength and an associated defence. The Accommodator, for instance, is twinned with The Peacemaker and The Challenger with the Annihilator. Whilst psychodramatists might refer to these as coping or progressive roles, this is not the language the author draws on. Her language, however, hints at different approaches that have evolved in psychodrama from one part of the world to another.

The strength of this perspective is to concretise a role, or role cluster, and illustrate its use in action. In this case, it is achieved by clearly describing an extensive exercise and by using dialogue to bring it alive. This draws us into the action and then the exercise too. Similar practices appear throughout the book, often with imaginative and suggestive expansions. The Five Faces of Catharsis, for example, incorporates not just the familiar concepts of abreaction and integration but extends to three others, the catharses of inclusion, meaning and spirit. Each catharsis is illustrated by brief, effective vignettes.

Likewise, Belonging and Becoming provides a rich diagram that examines and enacts The Group as Matrix. In moving from the individual to the group, the chapter draws on the writer's earlier circle of spontaneity and her four defences, now integrating them with the slowly moving quadrants of the four seasons. Each of these is embraced as part of an evolving arc of group change. Group building gives way to group managing, then to confrontation and on to reflection as part of a cycle of the seasons. The cycle is renewed by a return to Spring, the fourth quadrant, linked here to inclusion and group building. The arc of change also facilitates constantly changing attention between the group and the individual, fitting for a practitioner who works both as therapist and group leader.

Change is a central theme in *Still Life*. Liz White describes how it was also central to the way the book was written. She discloses her own struggles with change (Over My Dead Body), particularly her experiences of empowerment and deepening identity through the collective feminism of the 1970s. She also

describes the way that writing this book has been an experience of change in its own right. "I had the idea that this would be the quiet reflection of an elder therapist's life work, kind of nostalgic, a bit dated, sometimes quite helpful" (p.101). It was not to be. The book took on a life of its own, with her editor in the role of encouraging auxiliary. She finally reflects that, "I am not the person I was when I started writing this book". Instead, all the currents of her life have mingled with the writing, "feeding into a realignment that has no name" (p.102). This reflective quality distinguishes the book from her earlier work, such as *The Action Manual* (2002). This was a stimulating, inventive and expansive group of exercises that offered practitioners a wealth of possibilities for training, investigation or enactment. *Still Life* does this as well. But, unlike *The Action Manual*, it is constantly infused with a spirit of reflection that invites the reader to engage with it and not simply put it into practice.

There is one last important note that echoes throughout the writing. It is articulated both in the group exercises, such as The Seasons of Mourning, and in the text. In both, there is recognition of personal endings, of loss and of the diminishing roles that Liz White confronts in herself at the outset. "It is challenging indeed to be writing about change at my age, seventy-eight at the time of writing" (p.3). The reader can hear her reach at this point for an accommodation, a "definitive final chapter that would wrap it for you readers". It is not whether she achieves this that counts but her bravery in acknowledging it with us. Little wonder the book is called *Still Life*. As she comments, it is "a journey towards my still life: to what is life-giving, and getting rid of what isn't" (p.3). The book stands as a living model of the author's description, an enactment and an ongoing engagement with us and with her own arc of change.

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