

A Creative Spirit at Work in Our Association: Then and Now

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ABSTRACT

This keynote address was presented by Dr. Max Clayton to the 2011 Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association (ANZPA) Conference *To Be And To Create, That Is The Challenge* in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. Dr. Clayton discusses the value of the living encounter, being grounded in the present moment, doubling and role development, and then goes on to highlight some of the founding principles and activities of ANZPA. He expresses his deep appreciation of the commitment to the learning and fine practice of the psychodrama method in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand and the enlivening of the human spirit that has resulted, before turning to the matter of a vision that might carry the association and its members forward.

*Here we are right now you and I
We are here to meet one another
To create a living encounter
A meeting that will touch each one of us here
Touch hearts and minds in such a way that there is an opening
Enlarging of perceptions
Enlivening of vision
Refreshment of the soul*

The emphasis on a living encounter is by no means new. It was central to the first psychodrama workshop in New Zealand, a workshop organised by Lorna McLay in August 1974 through the University of Auckland, central to the first training in Perth in 1972, to Jacob Moreno's teaching, and to ancient teachings. You have often been taught the value of the encounter in the here and now, have no doubt enlarged your ability to create lively meetings with others. I trust you experience satisfaction through this. Yet there is more to discover, much more to

experience, and this will continue to be so as long as you and I continue to evolve. Please join with me in yet again warming up to the encounter, in realising afresh that every real encounter is a new event, that there is always more light.

This has always been emphasised in our work. It was highlighted in the Auckland workshop in 1974 through presenting the human being as spontaneous, and the spontaneity factor as central to human living. I affirmed that every human being is seething with spontaneity, that every person is born with some spontaneity, that recognition of this increases the interest in meeting anyone, increases the respect for the other person and furthers the warm up. I used the phrase 'seething with spontaneity', and I remember Deborah Pearson taking this phrase on board, laughingly saying out loud "seething with spontaneity". I wanted those in the workshop to feel youthful, to become like the pure clear water at the base of a waterfall, to live life to the fullest. The words of the poet Mitsuo Aida make sense to me.

*Faces of those who live life to the fullest are so beautiful
I want my face to be beautiful, too*

These words touch me, awaken me to the beauty of living life to the full, to the value of such beauty, the beauty of me living my life to the full and of you living your life to the full. To see the spontaneity of each other person, to take into oneself the beauty of that spontaneity is to experience a love of life, to be motivated to live. These are my opening remarks, a few hints about this keynote address. At the end of it I trust you will have generated an okay experience. My hope is that you will be aware of several experiences, a sense of being present, grounded in yourself in the here and now and conscious of what will enable you to be this way. I am hoping that you will be appreciating the foundations, the foundation values of our organisation and the actions taken to express those values. I am also hoping that you will be filled with a vision, a vision with respect to the next steps in your life.

Being Grounded in the Living Present

Being grounded in the living present! What is that? What does it mean? It means to be! It is associated with stillness. It is in the stillness that the senses speak to you and I. In the stillness the eyes see. They see the details, the small movements, the subtle shapes, the soft pastel shades. To be still, and in that stillness to receive the myriad of shapes and colours, is to pass through a door into the land of surprise. You may very well say to yourself such things as "Oh, Jackie seems different today! I wonder why I haven't noticed that before". Or "Will you come and live with me?" Or "Will you marry me?" Or "I feel accepted". Or "I am connecting with him and I remember what he said last time we met". Such surprising experiences arise when you are still. The other person stands out so much more clearly than before. The

sense of feeling is awakened, emotions are heightened. There is a greater sense of closeness, of connection and an experience of vulnerability. Can I continue to be here? And the things the other person does and says are remembered. Little things are etched into the memory and afterwards all kinds of things flood into your mind without there being any sense of a memory test.

There are so many senses that seem to come to life when you are still. There is the sense of life, that sense of life that you thought would never come back, life awakening in different parts of your body giving a sense of thankfulness for being alive, a sense of youthfulness, and wondering where did my playfulness go. There is the sense of movement, stimulated by connecting with the being of another person. You become aware of the movements of your own body, of small movements of this person you are with. You become aware of mutuality, of mutual acceptance in the relationship, of the strength of feeling in the relationship, and of the ebb and flow of the feeling. You also discover that you are affected by what is between the two of you. You come to know things about what is being born between you. You come to know that this in-between thing is real. But where has this in-between thing come from? It must have come from somewhere, but where? You do not know where it has come from. But you do know that something real has emerged. Something has come out of me. Something has come from this other. And the two have met. As you continue to be present there is the dawning of perception, as if the light of the sun has shone into your being. You discover the beating of your heart. You discover that the influence of old thought patterns is gone and you feel relief, a kind of a sense of freeing up. You begin to imagine new possibilities, what the two of you might do together, and what you might discuss. Yes indeed! You come to recognise the source of what is evolving between you. It is you! It is this other precious being!

Such a recognition does wonders for the psyche of a human being. A sense of self-esteem blossoms, the knowingness that I AM OKAY. Any sense that life is mundane or boring drops away. Life is poetry! Fresh images of oneself can now emerge, images that previously seemed far out, grandiose, ridiculous. Here is an image that may appeal to you. It is another image from Aida.

*You are the warmth of a pillow
That's been sitting for hours
Breathing the fresh illumination
Of the afternoon sun*

I like that! You are the warmth of a pillow. What about saying to yourself "I AM the warmth of a pillow?" This might be a good way to get yourself on the map, a good way to free yourself of some old worries such as "Will the other person like me?"

I am the warmth of a pillow

*That's been sitting for hours
Breathing the fresh illumination
Of the afternoon sun*

Why not accept this? Why not chew it over and take it into yourself? Make a meal out of it? Keep saying it over to yourself just as Eric Berne advised us to repeat "I'm okay!" Please realise what it means to be grounded in yourself in the here and now. Being there you brighten the space around you. Being there you warm the hearts of those who know you. Being there you bring peace of mind to others. For me the practice of being present lies at the foundation of human life.

Being Present, Doubling and Role Development

Being present is an aspect of every part of life. Today let us look at its connection with doubling and then its connection with role development. Let us start with doubling. What is it? What is the foundation of doubling? What attitudes, values and actions are required? And what do you as a double accomplish? Doubling means tuning in, attuning with a whole human being, with actions, feeling, emotions and values. And what is the foundation of doubling? The foundation is you. You, willing to be with this other person. You, warming up to a living encounter. You, becoming still so that your senses become alive. Tuning in as a double requires a great deal from you. A primary requirement is to approach a person fresh and new, making yourself completely naive so that everything is a surprise such that your experiences are first time experiences. Old experiences, evaluations, or opinions are dropped, dropped into the sea of forgetfulness. Your childlike simplicity rules.

Of course there is the first time you warm up to being a double, and later on numerous occasions when you fall short of the ideal. Your commitment to becoming a fine double is severely challenged and from time to time you may want to quit. You become aware of prejudice as old evaluations come to the fore conflicting with your lively expressiveness. Or you find yourself rejecting something about a person. The realisation dawns that you are involved in a lifetime work, that refining the sense of seeing and feeling does not have an end point. Yet as you continue to practise you know that your capacity to be is greater, that there are moments when you embrace the being of this person, when you become accepting without any conditions. All of this effort keeps you on the edge of your resources. You may well wonder if all the work you have done is necessary. Yet the life that emerges as a result of your effort is astounding. The enlivening experiences that have emerged in countless encounters, in work with individuals and groups in so many contexts give vitality and inspiration. I have witnessed this happening over and over again. I have discovered this for myself.

There have been countless occasions in personal development groups, in work with individuals and in training workshops when I have been overjoyed. I have

experienced such a sense of fun in response to the creative expression. Right now I am remembering something during one of the workshops at Orewa. I have warmed up the group to being a double and to being doubled. There are an odd number of people in the group and Rex Hunton has accepted me as his double. I walk alongside and slightly behind him as he goes outside the building. He jogs through the garden and I jog with him. He runs faster and I run faster. He runs fast across a pile of rubbish and my feet hurt since I have no shoes on. He runs faster, across the road, onto the beach and I keep up. He looks like he is enjoying himself. He makes some sounds. He expresses more as we run along the beach. He turns round and walks back to the venue. He continues to express himself and I express myself in tune with him. Afterwards he lets me know that at first he wanted to burn me off, to show that he was faster than I. And then he accepted me as an expression of him. I sure enjoyed this time with him. I enjoyed tuning in with his movement, his emotion, his sense of life, the sense of a two way connection and the subsequent sharing with him.

So what is being accomplished here? From my point of view we are getting to know one another much better. I know that at the beginning he wants to defeat me, that I am not accepted as a double. Then I know that he does accept me, that he tunes in with himself and begins to tune in with me as himself, that he gains a greater sense of himself and feels accepting of himself. He is okay and others are okay. In order to bring this off Rex and I achieved a good deal. We both experimented, explored, did something we had never done before and generated new experience. Did we touch something in ourselves that related to the non-verbal, that time before we had a conceptual language? Did we gain a greater sense of trust? Did our self-esteem increase? I know that all of these are true for me. I dare say that they are also true for Rex. In a similar manner trust and self-esteem have also come into being for many others through your immersion in their lives. Involving yourself in such a practice is a living reality, a reality that brings life both to the person being doubled and the double. Let us cease approaching it as a technique! It is a life-giving aspect of the psychodramatic method.

Now we shall turn to the business of role development. What is role development? What is its significance? What stimulates you to enlarge your functioning? What enables you to sustain new action? Role development is activity that catapults you into effective living. It is an activity that carries you forward such that at least some familiar actions fall away, some thought patterns drop into the background and your functioning takes on a new form, a form that stimulates a lively social system, one that is commensurate with your dreams. Any role development that adds to your lives I call progressive. I like this term because it conjures in me a sense of meaning, a sense of moving forward, an experience of being part of an evolutionary stream, of contributing something, however small that may be. Progressive role development occurs in a multitude of social contexts. It takes many forms since it is a response to a particular situation. It is a response to an unrepeatable moment, and the actions, feeling,

and emotions take on a unique form. The form is not conserved. It is vibrant and vital, adding much to human experience. One person is in their own home reflecting on their life, seeing that they have been rejecting aspects of themselves for a long time and at the same time realising that some of their ideas are okay. A decision is made to accept themselves. An experience of lightness comes about. Another person is in a coffee shop discussing their work with a friend. The friend listens sensitively showing great respect. Confidence emerges with respect to the work situation.

These are brief moments in which a person is taking seemingly small steps, yet they are significant steps leading to the emergence of new abilities. There are countless brief moments in which a person moves toward life, such as beginning to take a new attitude towards oneself or relaxing while driving on a busy road. Or not answering back so quickly. Or realising that other people are not enemies. Here are some other examples of folk working to get ahead: refining something that is already working well, spending less time working on a computer, spending more time organising one's day, resolving a conflict about taking time off. This is all progressive role development. Some folk demand large changes in the functioning of those near to them. They dismiss small changes as if they amount to nothing, adding to the distress of a loved one or a colleague and perhaps adding to a sense of inferiority or uselessness. If you happen to be like this please reconsider! Everything starts small. Big transformations involve much work. Nevertheless big changes do take place.

I have recently seen that inspiring movie *The King's Speech*, being privileged to witness King George VI working away, moving away from himself and his coach a number of times, but in the finality not giving up and becoming able to inspire his people. What a wonderful thing that so many people have crafted a significant role. Someone develops the functioning of a well-organised designer, another becomes a concert pianist, another a very effective negotiator. Such creations add to the quality of life, not only to the life of other people but also to the creator of the new role. I have in mind that all of you have added something very okay to other folk and have been possessed of a vision of human life being transformed. I would like to have a chat with you about what keeps you going, what stimulates you, what enlivens your spontaneity. The thing that enlivens me is remaining present with a person. When I am present I am aware of my surroundings. I take into myself new experience. I receive what is coming toward me. And then something comes to birth. It is interest, genuine interest. I experience a connection. My involvement grows. When you remain present you receive. You take into yourself all kinds of things to do with your surroundings, the larger environment and the person or people you are with. You discover that you are getting to know a person. You discover that the person you are with is different from you. Their attitudes, emotions, feeling, values and actions sit there on their own. And I hope you experience a shock. That experience of shock is so important. The sense of shock alerts you to the reality of the situation, that you

are indeed with a person who is very different from you. Yet you stay there with this person. You remain present. You are with this other being who is not you.

Of course there is the sense of meeting them. You know you are learning. Your mind will be disturbed, even offended. You are entering another world. Your own practices are no longer in charge and you may experience a sense of guilt. There are many things that distract you, testing your capacity to remain present. When you are able to sustain your presence the relationship comes alive and affects both of you. Your acceptance goes toward the other person and they are immediately affected. Their feeling goes out toward you and you receive a multitude of gifts. At the point when there is such a meeting, sustaining stillness is a key factor. When you are still there is no attempt to work out what everything means. You are there bringing about mutuality, being an auxiliary. You are putting yourself into new territory. You know it is impossible to work it all out, at least not yet! You are involved in a learning process, with what Kurt Lewin characterised as the first stage of learning. You are letting go of what you knew before. You have not yet comprehended this other reality. You are being turned upside down. Of course you experience confusion. It is too soon to resolve the confusion. You may very well be relating to a person who is warmed up to an early time, a time when there is no conceptual language. Your work is to tune in to that non-verbal time. It is not your work to identify the role or the roles, to attempt to put a name to a role, for that is both inappropriate and impossible. Your work is to be present. To be receptive. To experience. To be able to be there.

What I am presenting to you has implications for the teaching of role theory. In reviewing the teaching and learning that has already taken place, and being aware of the functioning of practitioners and trainers both here and in other countries, I see what looks to be the main challenge. In past years many actions have been taken to impart role theory. This has included coaching to identify roles and to create role names that are both accurate and enlivening. Looking back I see that the coaching has lacked something, namely insufficient emphasis of being with a person, on the experience of being there, of sensing who this person is for a long time, coming to know their motivation, longings and dreams. When you are with a person over a significant period of time impressions form. You create language for the impressions of a person's character, their overall lifestyle, their interests and achievements. You perceive adequacy, over-development and under-development, conflicted aspects, functioning that is against life and also absences.

What I am seeing here is similar to the teaching of Eric Berne. He emphasised being with a person for a good length of time and approaching the identification of games only after the creation of a working relationship and after repeated enactment of patterns of interaction. Perhaps the wish to quickly name a role has arisen to create safety. That certainly makes sense to me. To continue to be with a person without understanding them stimulates the mind to produce frightening fantasies and works to destabilise realistic thinking. An anxious mind

works to achieve safety. It goes against a principle of learning that a good length of time is required. Accepting the time required to identify a role reduces the frustration experienced in the learning of role theory and the sense of failure that has been expressed by quite a few. There are so many factors that have influenced you in your own practice. I have pointed to some influences that interfere with remaining present. These influences create the different skews in the warm up. These skews cut across being still and through this slow down the building of mutuality. Yet there is a reality that is always next to you, namely that you can take charge. Each one of you is able to review your own practice, be measured as you continue to refine your work, to know in yourself that your being present is valuable, that it creates mutuality and adds to creative living.

I have endeavoured so far to highlight important aspects of our work, to lend meaning to what you have learned, to your practice and to the commitment you have made to open up to life. I trust you will see value in what you have created, and continue to express the vital attitudes and actions that build a creative identity. The next part of my address deals with the foundations of our organisation.

The Foundations of Our Organisation

My idea is to highlight some of our activities and the foundation principles, the things on which our psychodrama association has been built. This, naturally, has involved a selection process. The selection is mine. Many valuable events are left out and so my hope is that memories will be stimulated and many subsequent conversations held. I hope that in your conversations during the conference you will open up many other events that I have not mentioned.

Commitment to the Learning and Fine Practice of the Psychodrama Method

There is something that stands out for me in our association. It is the commitment to learning and the fine practice of the psychodramatic method. Engagement with well-organised and lengthy training has been a core aspect in our psychodrama organisation. There is a conviction that an effective training process is required and that this applies not only to those working toward certification but also to practitioners and trainers. An experiential learning process has been considered the most effective and there has been a commitment to experiential learning. This has resulted in the awakening of spontaneity, significant role development and integration of theory and practice. In the course of experiential training workshops and training courses, working relationships have been built. Trainees have encountered one another, experienced acceptance, rejection and neutrality, felt intense emotion and have worked to resolve conflict. Likewise the relationship between trainees and trainers has evolved. Refinements in both teaching and learning styles have been made, ensuring easier relationships between trainees and trainers. The work done to bring about a fine professional standard has

borne fruit. We have witnessed significant social and cultural atom repair, life-giving work with individuals and groups in many contexts, evidence of adequate work in supervision sessions, in social and cultural atom assignments, written theses, lectures and presentations, planning and organising.

The realisation of the value of fine training and excellent work did not come about by chance. It has been influenced by so many great teachers and practitioners. Some of them taught Lynette Clayton. Some of them taught me, and a much larger number have inspired you. Let us be grateful! Jim Enneis, head of the Psychodrama Section at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital and other staff members taught Lynette during internships of two years, and after she accepted a staff position became her colleagues. She experienced the effectiveness of the method for herself and for a wide range of people. How important that is! Jacob Moreno and Zerka Moreno taught me the psychodramatic method between 1967 and 1973. I was fortunate to be able to put my learning into practice during weekly sessions at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital and in a counselling centre in Washington D.C. By the time we commenced work in California early in 1971 and later in Perth, we were committed to establishing standards of training and practice, initially adhering to the standards of the Moreno Institute and subsequently preparing a new set of standards for the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association.

The creation of standards that influences fine practice is significant. This has helped to build a strong identity, one that brings a sense of pride. It has resulted in the establishing of consistent training in the nine major training institutes, as well as in trainer workshops. *The ANZPA Training and Standards Manual* embraces a systems approach. The individual creates a system of roles in response to other individuals. Interactional role systems and networks of relationships are formed. The creation and maintenance of these standards has been a mighty task. We have received much from this dedicated work implemented by the members of the Board of Examiners. Quite apart from the formal standards enunciated in the training manual, there have been other factors influencing high standards. Trainees have thrown themselves into the work, sometimes to a surprising extent. I remember being actually thrown by a trainee. I was an auxiliary in his drama in Auckland. He warmed up to rejecting me. I flew through the air after he threw me over his head. This was in 1975. All the trainees really worked in the first training group in Auckland in 1974, involving themselves as protagonists in every session as well as in subsequent teaching and discussion. There are four people who were part of that 1974 workshop who are still very active in our association. I am sure they remember how involved they were. Let me tell you who they are! They are Dale Herron, Valerie Hunton, Chris Hosking and John Barton. Perhaps you could jog their memories and get to know something of their experience.

Similarly those who were part of the first training group in Perth in 1972 loved the method, involving themselves in the learning more and more. There have been so many events involving great commitment. The organising and

conducting of group sessions, completion of written assignments and practical assessments, developing an identity as a psychodrama practitioner, role trainer, sociometrist, and sociodramatist, functioning as a president of the association, as a member of the executive or board of examiners, or as journal editor. Many of you have done work to develop regional associations creating day long presentations of the method or evening presentations. This has added to our identity as an organisation. A work of great significance has been the creation of conferences. This began with the inaugural conference in Canberra in 1980 and continued with conferences in all of the regions. Conference committee members and other workers have contributed their considerable abilities in ensuring that each conference is unique. What generosity of spirit has overflowed! And what benefit we have received! Each conference committee has involved conflict between its members, sometimes taking them to the edge of their resources. Yet each conference has opened up well, the creativity displayed at the opening very moving. Many of the conflicts have been resolved and many relationships strengthened. You have served on the ethics committee and your work has resulted in refinement of our ethical standards and a clearer approach to possible breaches of our standards. All of the intelligence and effort that each of you has demonstrated is evidence of your commitment to learning and fine practice. I congratulate you.

The Enlivening of the Human Spirit

All of this work has come into being through enlivenment of the human spirit. This is the next foundation reality I want to highlight. I recall my first meeting with Moreno. He is greeting a group of us at his psychodrama theatre in New York. His obvious happiness immediately affected me. His expression of delight with the method he created and his characterisation of spontaneity brought to me the sense of having arrived. I knew what I was going to do. I would learn psychodrama. Later I imagined creating a psychodrama centre in Perth. This would involve community groups and training groups conducted in a psychodrama theatre and other areas. This lifted my spirits no end. And the centre actually came into being. The Wasley Centre began in 1975, and in 1976 the theatre was opened. I was convinced that eventually a centre would be established. There was no money, yet I knew the ability was there to conduct dynamic sessions and small steps were taken to build something. Lynette Clayton and I departed from the United States in 1971, commenced work in Perth in the Spring, founding the Psychodrama Institute of Western Australia at the end of the year. We commenced our first group work training course in February 1972 and a psychodrama training group shortly afterwards. These were small but very significant steps. There were prophets of doom who advised us that we would not succeed. There was significant opposition. I remember experiencing great fear as I drove to the printer with the copy of the first institute brochure. My fantasy was that I would be arrested and land up in court. Somehow I stood my ground.

The ability to stand our ground was a critical factor in establishing this work.

A very small number of people enrolled in our first psychodrama group, but our vision was clear, the sense of life, the enthusiasm, the sense of the value of awakening spontaneity sat there in the foreground and the concern about numbers fell away. There were moments when I did occupy myself with numbers, the numbers of people enrolling in an event and the income that would be generated. However, I was taught not to worry about numbers but to involve myself with whoever was there, to realise that this was realistic and that word would spread. The first educational sessions about human development attracted many people. Very encouraging! The psychodrama groups hardly attracted anybody. Yet we did okay conducting the sessions and continued to organise psychodrama groups. The number of people enrolling increased, and then it exploded! Was it the method? Was it the quality of the work? Was it the time we were living in? Whatever it was group members gained, their spontaneity increased, life was lived more fully.

I want to emphasise this matter of numbers. One influence is the experience of a number of people. Some of you have made efforts to form psychodrama groups, yet the number of people responding has been disappointing. Others of you have wanted to attract younger people, have worried about our association, its ageing membership and the paucity of youthful members. There is no place for worry. Anxiety must never be in the driver's seat! Worry does not give good guidance. Worry narrows down the psyche and as a result many abilities are curtailed or distorted. Worry interferes with imagination. The vision clouds, weakens the will, interferes with decisive action. We are living in the here and now, in the living present! When no-one enrolls in a group it is a choice time to re-evaluate your sociometric position, work out why you are not attracting people and do something about it. When you see our more elderly members, relate to them as best you can and then get on with your own life. Worrying about the future weakens an individual or an organisation. Coming to grips with whatever is real and truthful brings strength. Whatever is there in the present is real. The future has not happened yet and the truth is, you and I cannot control it. What we can and must do is continue to live, continue to express, continue to refine ourselves and learn to live with this.

So much for the foundations of our association. Now let us come to your vision. Let us come to the business of the next steps in your life!

A Vision That Carries You Forward

I must say that for me addressing the matter of a vision is a daunting task. Each one of you is unique. Each one of you wakes up to something that brings life to you, something carries you forward and it is different for each of you. What can I say about your unique vision? At the same time I know that I know something! I know that when I included in our training manual certain words, I felt alive, well motivated. The words are "Without a vision the people perish". I sure know

something about what that means. I have experienced life without a vision and also life with a vision. The experience is quite different. At this point in my life I am aware that there is something motivating me, and when I explore the motivations I get to know myself better. My awareness enlarges and there is a sense of knowing where I am going.

I have in mind that this is a vision. You here today do not know all of the content of my vision but you do know that I have a vision. Likewise I do not know all the detail of what makes up your vision but I do know that each of you has a vision. There are times when you may not be aware of its content and that the connection with your vision is weakened, yet it is still there. I know that there is something that carries you forward. You are here today. You are contributing much. This real thing in you sure touches me and I am thankful. I do not imagine that your vision is going to die away. I have in mind that it will continue to grow and carry you forward. So far as your future and the future of our association is concerned I do not know whether it will increase its effectiveness, or its prestige, or in size. However, I am confident about some things. My confidence is based on you, on your ability to be, to relate, to add to life. I am confident that the day will see you and I enlarge our warm up, encounter many spontaneity tests, increase our spontaneity, decide which sessions to attend, learn, make fun, and that this will continue in the conference and through the year.

Some Concluding Remarks

Speaking about myself there are many works planned for the year and I am sure looking forward to the unfolding of the plan. A number of people will be adding to my life and work. The main person is Chris Hosking, my friend, companion, fellow trainer and other things, those of you I work with, organisers, members of training events, friends, tourist guides and so on. And I am warmed up to you. I wish you well in your planning, in the execution of your plans, in your involvement with your friends and companions, your fellow workers, the people you counsel, teach, and coach, and everything else.

Please go well!



Dr. Max Clayton (Psychodramatist, TEP) is an honorary distinguished member of the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association (ANZPA). He has worked intensively in the psychodrama field for many years as a clinician, an individual and group supervisor, and a trainer on the teaching staff of the Australian College of Psychodrama.

He is the author of several books on psychodrama.