Foundations of
PSYCHODRAMA
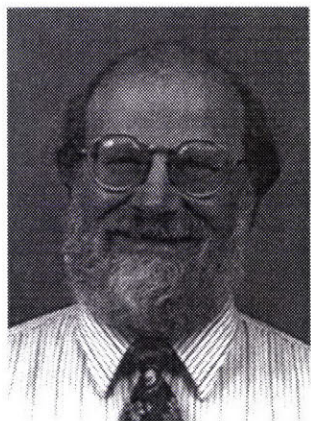### Fourth Edition

History, Theory, and Practice

Adam Blatner

Foundations of

PSYCHODRAMA

Fourth Edition

Adam Blatner, M.D. is the only psychiatrist in the United States who is also a certified Trainer, Practitioner and Educator of Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy (T.E.P.). He has over 35 years of clinical experience, is board certified in both adult and child psychiatry, and is a Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. Dr. Blatner is the author of some major books and numerous chapters and articles on psychodrama, and was recently honored with the J.L. Moreno Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Blatner received his B.A. (in Cultural Aspects of Religion) from the University of California at Berkeley in 1959 and his M.D. from the University of California Medical School in San Francisco. Specialty training included adult and child psychiatric residency at Stanford University Medical Center in Palo Alto, California and a Fellowship in Child and Family Psychiatry at the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. After serving as the director of child psychiatry at the regional U.S. Air Force hospital in England, he returned to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1972 and began a varied office, clinic, and hospital practice. From 1987 to 1994, Dr. Blatner was on the faculty of the University of Louisville School of Medicine where he attained the rank of Associate Professor. At present, he lives in central Texas where he writes and teaches about ways of integrating practical psychology into everyday life. His website address is: www.blatner.com/adam/

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PSYCHODRAMA

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Adam Blatner, MD

Printed in the United States of America
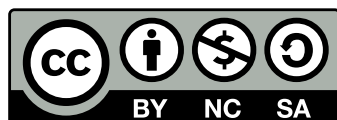
To Zerka Toeman Moreno
with gratitude and deep respect
for capturing the essence of psychodrama,
adding her own insights,
and communicating these to others

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Preface

Foundations of Psychodrama was first produced privately in two editions in the mid-1980s as an intellectual complement to my other widely used text, *Acting-In: Practical Applications of Psychodramatic Methods* (re-published in 1996 in its 3rd edition by Springer). Springer also published the 1988 3rd edition of *Foundations.* In keeping with Springer's policy of updating its texts, I've rewritten most of the book, adding much and taking out some, in the service of presenting a more specific rationale for the use of psychodramatic methods. Progressing from general perspectives toward specific implications, I've sought to construct a more logical sequence of ideas.

In the 12 years since the last edition, a number of other books on psychodrama have been written, along with chapters in textbooks and journal articles. Reflecting on my past work along with these other contributions, I've sought to contemplate, refine, re-arrange, and develop further and at a deeper level not only the theory—or, actually, many sub-theories—which comprise this body of knowledge but also the philosophy that underlies the theory. To this is also added the experiences I've gained in doing psychotherapy, teaching, and consultation as an adult and child psychiatrist in a wide range of settings over the last 35 years.

I have been blessed with a variety of teachers and helpers, including Marcia Karp, who initiated me; Irv Yalom, who supported my explorations; Adele von Rüst Deeths (later McCormick), my first sustained teacher; Lew Yablonsky; Leon Fine; Barbara Seabourne of St. Louis, who shared practical guidelines she had written; and Ursula Springer, for supporting my work and that of several colleagues, being the first publisher other than Moreno to spread the word about the value of this method. Certainly, I've continued to be inspired by Zerka Moreno, to whom this book has been dedicated, and blessed by the friendship and encouragement of many others in the field.

I want to acknowledge also that just the process of contemplating the ideas of spontaneity, imagination, and playfulness has been a powerful and unending source of inspiration. In doing psychodrama, something magical happens, and it spreads to infuse everyday life. Spontaneity and creativity even become aspects of spirituality. I've finally begun to sense what Moreno's religious vision was about. These ideas are also exciting because of their potential for healing in the world.

Just as Moreno wrote about Zerka as his muse, so my muse has been my wife, Allee, whose support in the writing of the earlier editions of this book was so great that her name was included in the last edition's title; however, in more recent years, although she continues to discuss ideas with me daily, she felt that her actual involvement in the writing of this edition was limited enough so that it would no longer be appropriate to have her name listed on the title page. Nevertheless, I want to proclaim that her continual inspiration and support has been integral to my own life story since 1975.

Adam Blatner, M.D.
Georgetown, Texas, 1999

Introduction: The Scope of Psychodrama

"A truly useful procedure should have as its objective nothing less than the whole of mankind."

These words began Moreno's first published book, *Who Shall Survive?* My rephrase would be: "A good tool can be used in many contexts and in the service of humanity." Psychodrama and its associated methods are psycho-social tools that have extensive applications. While psychodrama as a method is described in my book, *Acting-In,* this present volume explores its *intellectual foundation,* tying it to Moreno's related ideas about sociometry and applied role theory.

As a powerful tool, psychodrama is more than just a type of psychotherapy. Because of its associated principles, described in forthcoming chapters, psychodrama can be applied in education, business, religion, community building, the home, and many other contexts. Also, the general focus of the book goes beyond just psychodrama and includes a consideration of the philosophical, sociological, and psychological aspects of all of Moreno's methods.

Tools become associated with growing bodies of knowledge about how they may be used, and the resulting mixture of technique and underlying principles is then known as a "praxis" (Blatner, 1992). For psychodrama,

this involves a knowledge of psychology, related behavioral sciences, and appropriate ways of applying them in different settings, along with the more subtle qualities of art, creativity, personal sensitivity, and maturity.

Many of the concepts presented in the following pages, such as spontaneity, creativity, surplus reality, self-expression, skill-building, catharsis, nonverbal communication, applied role theory, and sociometry can also be of value to those who don't choose to use actual psychodramatic enactments as part of their work. Therapists using other approaches, non-clinical group leaders, and other "people helpers" of all sorts can benefit from these ideas.

THE IDEA OF A TOOL

Tools aren't just material things, like hammers or computers; they also can be the *way* a task is managed, the *techniques* used. In this sense, psychodrama is a complex of tools for thinking and communicating about feelings and relationships. Just as the telephone, television, and Internet added the dimensions of immediacy and visual connection to the technology of written letters sent by mail, so psychodrama adds the dimensions of space, action, and imagination to the more conventional "technology" of rational verbal discussion in therapy or education. These added dimensions allow for improvisation, thinking in terms of alternative scenarios, shifting roles and points of view, opportunities for replay, and other elements which offer new avenues to insight and self-reflection.

Psychodrama may be likened to the addition of electric power tools in carpentry: they can speed up the process and ease the work. Also, just as carpentry tools can be used to build a wide range of things, big and small, so too psycho-social tools may be used for a remarkably wide range of purposes. Powerful tools, however, must be applied cautiously, and psychodrama must also be used judiciously, with safety as an important consideration. In addition, tools cannot substitute for the good judgment of the craftsperson. There are many operations in both carpentry and working with people, such as planning the project, selection of the people, and organizing the procedures, in which technique is secondary.

NEW KINDS OF THINKING

Using tools changes the way people think. First, there is transfer of learning so that, the more one uses a certain tool, the readier one becomes to learn to use other related tools. Also, tools often allow for

achievements that can hardly be conceived of without them which, in turn, opens the entire culture to new horizons and ideas. The development of skill mastery related to a tool further builds confidence and an inclination to explore more refinements, applications, and inventions.

Knowledge, vocabulary, and the range of concepts are also expanded when a new tool becomes widely used. This process actually shifts the way people in a culture perceive and experience their world. For example, even if some people don't actually learn to read and write, if the culture has become literate, they know that it's possible—their consciousness has expanded. Jaynes (1976) suggested that modern "civilized" consciousness is the product of a gradual accumulation of language, metaphors built upon metaphors, concepts upon concepts, which cause the rational faculties associated with the left hemisphere of the brain to become relatively more dominant.

Full creativity, however, requires a more balanced interaction of imagination and intuition with rational and language processing, a balancing of the brain's right and left hemispheric functions. Psychodrama offers a tool for this more integrated process because its component techniques, such as role-taking, role reversal, role distancing (shifting from actor to self-observation), improvising, amplifying, exaggerating, replaying, and doubling (expressing deeper levels of self-disclosure), all express this more integrated creative process.

When people spend a fair amount of time doing drama, they begin to think more like actors, playwrights, directors, producers and audiences. Practice in shifting of perspective develops the capacity for self-reflection which is an important component in psychological maturation. The benefits of psychodrama, then, go beyond merely solving the problem at hand: they develop skills in mental flexibility and social interactivity (discussed further in chapter 11).

COMPLEXES OF TOOLS

When many different tools are brought together and used in concert, as in a workshop or laboratory, there is a tremendous expansion of the effects. Psychodrama is more than a single tool. It is a complex, applied with a systematic method, and thus may be thought of as being like a scientific laboratory filled with various chemicals, glassware, and electronic apparatus.

The analogy to a laboratory also suggests the activity of exploration and experimentation, trial and error in a controlled environment. In psychodrama, that control is provided by the special, "as-if" context of

play. In this setting, mistakes don't have the same meaning as they do in the "real world," and so people can try out alternative behavioral responses. An eminent physicist noted, "Science advances only by making all possible mistakes.... the main thing is to make the mistakes as fast as possible and to recognize them" (Wheeler, 1981, p. 26). Discovering which attitudes and behaviors work best in complex social situations also can be approached scientifically using psychodramatic methods. Those risking this kind of experiential learning are protected by psychodrama's special setting committed to support rather than rejection.

Because people have become familiar with many modes of drama in our media-saturated culture, they intuitively sense all this when introduced to the idea of drama or role playing. "The stage is enough"— simply imagining a situation as a kind of play evokes an interest in exploring life in new ways (Blatner & Blatner, 1997, xv), but, instead of drama being applied for mere entertainment, commercial, or political purposes, people may use it for working together to explore and work out a variety of their own problems.

APPLICATIONS

A good tool finds many applications beyond its original function. Writing was at first a tool simply for accounting; poetry came later. The computer was at first just for "number crunching" (calculation). A major breakthrough occurred when some executive reframed its potential for "information processing."

Psychotherapy also expanded its methods beyond the clinical context so that counseling became available for people who weren't in the sick role. Some of psychotherapy's concepts and techniques came to be used in business and other cultural institutions, popularized for the general reader, and spread in many other ways. Psychodrama first emerged as its own type of therapy and was then adapted for use by other therapies and with other non-classical settings—with couples, individuals, in consultation, etc.

Like other good tools, psychodrama soon became applied in many other areas: education, business, organizational development, management and personnel training, "in situ" interventions on the playground or on the streets, in religious retreats, as part of personal growth programs, community building, creating more meaningful celebrations or rituals, and even just for pure recreation.

Thus, the audience for this book is, certainly, psychotherapists and

anyone who wants to anyone who wants to really understand the basis for the use of these methods, the better to apply them with wisdom. Even those who don't want to use the techniques may still benefit from considering and integrating many of the principles discussed further on.

Anyone in business who wants to help people work together can benefit from using sociometric and psychodramatic principles for clarifying group dynamics.

Schools can begin to use role playing as the major vehicle for cultivating the kinds of skills of "emotional intelligence" described by Goleman (1995), skills which are fast becoming indispensable for coping with the stresses of a rapidly changing world.

Communities may begin to develop ways of working more effectively at the level of interpersonal and intergroup relations (Danielsson, 1997). (Indeed, the major precursor to the encounter group, sensitivity training, and most personal growth programs, the "T-Group," began as part of a community building project!)

Psychodramatic methods can complement and deepen many related approaches involving interactive theatre, drama therapy, experiential education, spiritual renewal, self-help groups, in-depth considerations of ethical or political problems (using sociodrama), people-skills training, empathy development, etc.

In other fields of study, psychodramatic methods can, like simulations for astronauts or "beta-testing" for computer software programs, be used to deepen explorations in communications studies, performance studies, history, child development, anthropology, linguistics, etc. And in turn, our field can and must be enriched by the continuing discoveries in those endeavors. A good tool becomes truly interdisciplinary, informed by other areas even as it, in turn, contributes to their goals.

A PATH OF "HEART"

A machine may be a tool, but a tool is not necessarily a machine. Machines don't have spontaneity, but the person who uses a tool will ideally do so with great creativity, art, and, regarding tools for promoting psychosocial development, with deep sensitivity and compassion.

An example of this is Moreno's concept of encounter which invites people to care enough to reverse roles, to do the work of imagining what it's really like to be the other person. This is empathy, and also nothing less than an operationalizing of the Golden Rule (Bischof, 1966, 15).

Another "heart-felt" dimension in psychodrama is the celebration of individuality, especially through the artistic modes, encouraging people to be even "more" than they are in ordinary life. Valuing creativity, psychodrama encourages this heightened dimension of vitality. The dimension of dramatic amplification further encourages a more lively self-expressiveness (as discussed in chapter 10). Again, this affirms our needs to be really seen and heard, and gives us an opportunity to give meaningful attention to others.

Psychodrama aims at going beyond mere acceptance to promote the *enjoyment* of the fullness of self and others. It values joy, enthusiasm, excitement, playfulness, vitality, deep feeling, sharing, and also the connecting of these emotions with the greater spiritual field. The art of psychotherapy and facilitating interpersonal explorations cannot be reduced to mere technique, but is more of an art and a spiritual vehicle for celebrations and adventures. It's "juicy," not sterile. So, as much as I may be discussing the psychological and social dynamics involved with psychodrama, remember that beyond all these is this "heart" spirit, this feeling for really wanting you to have more fun and more connectedness to each other and to the Greater Wholeness of Being.

SUMMARY

Moreno, near the end of his aforementioned *Who Shall Survive* (1934, 426), wrote:

> "If the future of mankind can be 'planned,' then conscious evolution through training of spontaneability opens a new vista for the development of human race."

What this means is that psychodrama, in combination with all the other psychological and social technologies being developed, can facilitate a new, potentially achievable goal: *the conscious, intentional transformation of consciousness itself.* With these considerations in place, let us proceed to an examination of some of the issues in greater detail.

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Basic Elements: An Overview

Psychodrama is a method for exploring psychological and social problems by having participants *enact* the relevant events in their lives instead of simply talking about them. As mentioned in the introduction, the scope of this approach transcends the clinical context of psychotherapy. Although it would be preferable that the reader be somewhat acquainted with the method, having read *Acting-In* or one of the other books on the subject mentioned in the bibliography at the end of this book, some general overview is indicated.

The problems or situations to be explored in action may involve the recent or distant past, the present, or the future. What should be brought out in the enactment is not only the external behavior, but also, and more important, the *psychological* aspects of those events, such as unspoken thoughts and feelings, encounters with those not present, portrayals of fantasies of what others might be feeling and thinking, envisioning future possibilities, and other ways of viewing the problem.

More important, the enactment should serve as an occasion for increased *self-reflection*. This differentiates psychodrama from more

theatrical types of drama. Psychodrama is meant to be a corrective or emancipatory approach. For example, using the mirror technique, the flow of action is interrupted, just like a director in making a movie may call "cut!" and the director draws the main player to the side to watch the scene being replayed by someone else who take's the main player's role. "What do you see going on?" the director might ask. "How else might you respond in this situation?"

CORRECTING MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Sometimes journalists call emotionally rich and complex events in movies, theatrical productions, novels or news events in real life "psychodramas." This is a misnomer because psychodrama is intrinsically a constructive process that requires a degree of reflection and an interest in revising old habits or reaction patterns. Psychodrama involves not just human tragedy or the "dramatic" presentation of foolishness compounding itself, but rather the way we can be more creative in how we conduct our lives.

Similarly, "role playing," has become confused as mere pretending, whether at a costume party or in a Dungeons-and-Dragons type of dice-and-board game or video and Internet games. Players sometimes take on the qualities of their fantasy characters, at least for the duration of the game. There have also been advertisements in some regional magazines that are obviously offering theme-oriented sexual fantasies to be played out. Having acknowledged that these and other uses of the term "role playing" have been used, the point here is that in this book we're talking mainly about the more problem-solving forms, the kind of role playing that derives mainly from psychodrama.

COMPONENT ELEMENTS AND TERMINOLOGY

As mentioned, psychodrama may be thought of as a kind of laboratory for the exploration of psychosocial problems, but instead of physical equipment, the devices of drama and the participants' own behavior are the vehicles for the experiments.

Moreno used dramaturgical terms because the people involved change positions and, as has been said, psychodrama isn't just psychotherapy. Thus, instead of patient, the person whose problem is the focus of an enactment is called the "protagonist." The person facilitating the enactment is the "director." Other people who help as supporting players

are "auxiliaries." Other people present who witness the action are lumped together as "the audience." And the locus for a psychodramatic exploration, at least during the action phase, is "the stage."

- *Protagonist* This is the term for *the role* of the individual who is seeking to work out a problem, gain insight, or develop an alternative response pattern. It is generally the principal role played in an enactment, and the person's experience that becomes the central focus of the group. Interestingly, during an enactment, a protagonist may reverse roles, playing the role of the other person with whom there is an encounter; take the double role, playing the hidden and ordinarily unexpressed thoughts and feelings; leave the scene (in the mirror technique) and become a kind of co-director and co-playwright; and in other ways shift positions in order to further the investigation.

  In the course of a longer group session, there may be more than one protagonist and more than one psychodrama. If issues come up that involve the group leader, even he or she may become a protagonist in working out the issues between himself or herself and one or several of the group members. In that case, a co-director or, if he or she has the ability to play the role, even one of the group may become the director for the clarification and resolution of that issue.

  There is an implied "systems theory" orientation here. Moreno considered everyone in a group to be an agent for the healing or helping of everyone else. He challenged traditional concepts of "patient" and "doctor." He also saw that interpersonal and group relationships could be dysfunctional with none of the parties involved having to be considered "neurotic" or in other ways pathologized.

  In a sociodrama, the protagonist may take on a more general role, representing not just himself but all those in that role, such as doctors and patients, policemen and minority community members, men and women in the dating scene, etc. (see chapter 20.) In such enactments, sometimes different group members may be the protagonist for just a few moments, moving in and out of the role fluidly.
- *Director* Psychodramas or role playing sessions are orchestrated by a person who knows how to use the method to facilitate the exploratory process. He or she takes on that role. Usually, the director is the group leader or the patient's therapist, but sometimes a visiting consultant directs while the therapist becomes

part of the audience. There may also be a co-director or an assistant director to help with the various component roles. The director's role is complex and involves many competencies. (Karp, 1996; Bradshaw-Tauvon, 1998).

- *Auxiliary* Protagonists often experience situations more vividly and interact more spontaneously if they can interact directly with other people, who may take the parts of others in the scene being enacted, or even the parts of themselves, such as the inner unexpressed feelings (the *double*) or an inanimate object. When the protagonist steps outside of the scene to review it in the mirror technique, an auxiliary might even play the role of the protagonist! (Holmes, 1998). In Moreno's writings, he uses the term *auxiliary ego,* but in recent years the term has been short-ened and simplified. Some directors just use the term "supporting player." Also, some psychodramatists use trained auxiliaries, pro-fessionals whose role in the group is that of helping the director in the production.

- *Audience* In psychodramas, those not on the stage as protago-nist, director, or auxiliaries are audience members. In general, psychodramas are conducted within a group, usually between six and 20 people, but occasionally smaller or larger. (Moreno used to hold open sessions with hundreds of people in the audience.) Beyond their function as witnesses, the audience participates afterwards in sharing (to be discussed below), as the source for auxiliaries, who are often picked out of the audience, and at times given actual roles to play, such as that of being like a Greek "chorus." Often people in the audience have been or will be protagonists or auxiliaries in other enactments before or after the one being conducted.

- *Stage* It's often helpful to set aside a special area in a room where enactments are conducted rather than just letting the realm of "as-if" be mixed up with the ongoing interactions in a group. Moreno actually designed a special type of low three-tiered cir-cular stage for psychodrama so that people can move up into action by just taking one or two steps—far more accessible than ordinary theatrical stages. The top was about 12 feet across—an example of architecture as applied to psychology (Enneis, 1952). If a given setting were to be the locus for frequent use of psychodrama, it would be desirable to construct such a stage, along with setting up special lighting and having some props available (Casson, 1998).

In fact, though, most psychodramatic enactments are held in

far less formal contexts—in group rooms, empty conference rooms (in which the tables and chairs can be moved out of the way), or large offices. Probably an area of at least 80 square feet is required. Simply clearing this area and noting its function can be an evocative warm-up: "The stage is enough." Thus, do not feel constrained by the lack of equipment or formal setting.

In addition to what Moreno considered as the five basic elements, I would add two more:

- *Psychodramatic techniques* About 10 are used with the greatest frequency, several scores of others are occasionally used, and variations and refinements double that number. Some of the more common techniques include:

role reversal	doubling	cutting the action
replay	asides	action sociometry (or "sculpting")
mirror	empty chair	multiple parts of self
soliloquy	role training	surplus reality scenes

These and other elements are described more in a compendium of terms and techniques near the end of this book (see chapter 22).

- *Phases* The beginning, middle, and ending of psychodrama have special associated activities:

  - *Warm-up* Warming-up involves a number of interwoven techniques or group dynamics aimed at developing group cohesion, spontaneity, trust in the director, interest and concern for the protagonist, safety in the group, and the emergence of a protagonist whose problem is of concern for the group (Blatner, 1996; Taylor, 1998).
  - *The action* Here the majority of psychodramatic methods are applied.
  - *Sharing* Following a psychodramatic enactment, group members are encouraged to tell the protagonist and the others in what ways the enactment reminded them of aspects of their own lives. People's thoughts about the protagonist's psychological dynamics (i.e., analysis) should not be allowed. The group member is told, "Tell us what

there is in your life that responds to the psychodrama
you've just witnessed." Those playing auxiliary roles may
share both how they felt playing the role as well as how
they felt after they de-roled, as their actual selves
(Ruscombe-King, 1998).

Depending on the group situation, these phases are flexible. Some-
times, a measure of analysis or "processing" is indicated following the
sharing. In training groups, this may also address a re-evaluation of
the way the director and auxiliaries played their parts (Jefferies, 1998).
Sharing may be brief or prolonged. In some groups, even a relatively
brief enactment will trigger extensive sharing, as if the process gave
permission for a far greater degree of self-disclosure. Therefore, ade-
quate time must be given for this phase. Also, other people may
become warmed up to wanting to do another enactment based on
what just happened, and some groups may have a series of psycho-
dramas with different protagonists playing variations on the first enact-
ment's theme.

TERMINOLOGY—THE CHOICE OF WORDS

For many people, the term "psychodrama" has negative semantic conno-
tations, suggesting madness, histrionic behavior, psychoanalyis, and ex-
cessive emotionality. Role playing is often used as a more neutral synonym
(see chapter 20). For some, however, even role playing is problematical,
implying an artificiality or frivolousness. For this reason, some of our
colleagues who use these approaches—especially those applying psycho-
dramatic methods beyond the clinical context, such as in business or
education—have chosen to use different terms, like "action methods,"
"structured experiences," "behavioral simulations," "enactment," etc.

Other terms have been used for the aforementioned basic elements
in order to simplify the language and reduce the sense of theatricality.
Thus, instead of "protagonist," some people use "main player" or
"main character." Instead of "auxiliary," some use "supporting player."
Instead of "audience," they say, simply, "the group." And instead of
"director," which is a little too close in sound to "dictator" and also
associated with movie-making or theater, some prefer the term "facil-
itator," "group leader," "conductor," "guide," or, if in a clinical context,
simply "therapist" or "counselor."

Finally, a shift from using the word "patient" to "client" or "group
member" will be evident in this book, reflecting the changed reality

that most psychotherapy is being practiced by non-psychiatrists and also that often psychodramatic methods are used in non-clinical contexts.

A TYPICAL ENACTMENT

A fuller appreciation of the nature of psychodrama can best be gathered by considering a variety of scenes that might be enacted in psychotherapy. The following vignette will supply some examples.

A person, call her Janet, takes on the role of protagonist in order to clarify in her own mind the meaning of a complex family interaction. She first sets up the physical scene, in this case, a dining room at her parents' home at breakfast following a holiday get-together. The director has Janet pick some of the group (the audience) to be auxiliaries and to play the other family members in the scene. Janet is then asked to briefly role reverse with each of the other family roles in order to demonstrate some of their behaviors in the situation—who's aggressive, who's placating, who tunes out, or other patterns.

As Janet enters the scene and re-enacts the events that led to the confusing conflict she felt, she is reminded to play it as if it were happening in the present. The director helps her to avoid narrating to the audience what "happened," but rather to "show us" the situation as if it were in the here-and-now. The point is to recapture the immediacy of the experience and the directness of the encounters between the people in the scene, thus evoking more effectively the underlying feelings.

One of the advantages of enactment is that the nonverbal behavior as well as the words spoken are demonstrated which adds a great deal more information than a lengthy and detailed narrative or inquiry. (The verbal mode alone tends to be either too vague or full of generalities or, if detailed, somewhat tiresome and boring, but enactment can make it all quite lively. There's a bit of additional curiosity generated as to how the director and the actors are going to make this improvised process work!)

The next level is that the various players are allowed to play out the scene which is then stopped and replayed, but with the addition of the use of doubles or asides. This is like adding "voice over" in a movie—there's a revelation of not only what is said, but also *that which is not openly spoken*! In this scene, it involves what Janet is thinking but not saying and what she fantasizes that the others might be thinking or feeling.

Periodically, the director may "cut" the action and draw the protagonist aside for a brief side-conference, a kind of "time out of time" in which the previous brief vignette could be re-considered. This activity of re-evaluation characterizes the essence of psychodrama, the marshaling of what in psychoanalysis is called "the observing ego," or in spiritual practice, "the witness." During these interludes, the contract is clarified as to which direction the protagonist wishes to pursue. Ideally, such decisions are made mutually—the point here is that the director should not presume to know how deeply and in which direction the protagonist wants to go. This is also a moment for re-grounding the alliance between protagonist, director, and group.

As the problem is clarified, further facets may then be investigated. Might the expectations, beliefs, or attitudes the protagonist brings to the problem be unrealistic or excessive? These might be identified, and, in pursuit of a more careful analysis, previous situations and scenes enacted in order to clarify how these attitudes became established.

There are as many possible directions a psychodramatic enactment can take as there are possible moves in a mid-game of chess. A scene that is set at some future time can explore subtle anticipations or unspoken goals. Scenes may be replayed with a view to deepening the understanding of motivations. Role reversal can bring out projections and develop more accurate perceptions about others' behavior. In bringing certain feelings that had been avoided into consciousness, a catharsis may accompany the process (see chapter 11).

Another common strategy involves the portrayal of the most positive outcome, which helps the protagonist discover and affirm her deeper yearnings. These "reparative" scenes may be in the distant past or the future and often involve the protagonist's clearly making positive affirmations, asserting herself, and asking for, or demanding, desired behaviors, or being shown nurturance, protection, or tactful or helpful comments. These actions then come to psychologically replace what might have been (in ordinary reality) cruel or abusive behavior.

Having become more aware of what she really wants, Janet, the protagonist, may then be led into a scene in which she can develop her capacity for more actively and maturely asserting her needs. This is "role training" and it involves the practice of directly requesting or negotiating. Sometimes it's helpful to practice a different role, also—that of "letting go" in which the protagonist is helped to accept that, sometimes, significant others just aren't willing or able to give the support or other desired reciprocal behavior and, from this, to find others who are capable of such support. In other words, insight alone

is rarely enough. Some degree of integration of new types of behavior should be included in the overall process.

Following this, the group is helped to share with Janet, not to make clever interpretations, however helpful they are "meant" to be, but rather to describe what in their own lives has occurred that was evoked by what was seen in the enactment.

Other examples of typical psychodramas may be found in *Acting-In* or many of the other books in the field.

OTHER KINDS OF ENACTMENTS

There are a rich menu of possible types of explorations in psychodrama:

- Enact dreams, having auxiliaries play both living and inanimate elements. New meanings may arise as the protagonist interacts or reverses roles with these figures.
- Rehearse or desensitize anticipated events.
- Use sociometric methods to find out where one stands in relationship to the group regarding a given concern (see chapter 19).
- Explore a moral or ethical dilemma, taking the roles of the different people who might be involved and considering their real predicaments, the feelings they might not easily admit.
- Encounter and dialogue with one's "higher power," embodied as a religious figure, ancestor, mythological entity, oneself as older and wiser, or in some other personal form.
- Work through a loss by staging a "surplus reality" meeting with someone who has died or in other ways become inaccessible (see chapter 9).
- Use psychodramatic methods along with creative arts approaches for self-expression (see chapter 10).
- Role train for greater self-assertion, increased expressiveness, or greater self-control.
- Develop other interpersonal and problem-solving skills (see chapter 12).

SUMMARY

Some of the basic elements and issues relating to psychodrama are here described, along with a general example of what goes on in a classic session. The component elements of psychodrama may also be

applied as needed as facilitating elements in ongoing group work of many kinds.

REFERENCES

Extensive discussions of several of these components are noted not only in my *Acting-In* but also in other books, such as:

Karp, Marcia, Holmes, Paul, & Bradshaw-Tauvon, Kate. (1998) and *Handbook of Psychodrama*. London & New York: Routledge. (abbreviated as HP) in the references below:

Bradshaw-Tauvon, Kate. (1998). The protagonist. (Chapter 6, HP)

Bannister, Anne. (1998). The group. (Chapter 7, HP)

Casson, John. (1998). The stage. (Chapter 5, HP)

Holmes, Paul. (1998). The auxiliary ego. (Chapter 8, HP)

Karp, Marcia. (1998). The director: Cognition in action. (Chapter 9, HP)

Karp, Marcia. (1996). An introduction to psychodrama. *The International Forum of Group Psychotherapy, 5*(2), 8–11.

Taylor, Susie. The warm-up. (1998). (Chapter 4, HP)

Ruscombe-King, Gillie. (1998). The sharing. (Chapter 10, HP)

Jefferies, Jinnie. (1998). The processing (Chapter 11, HP)
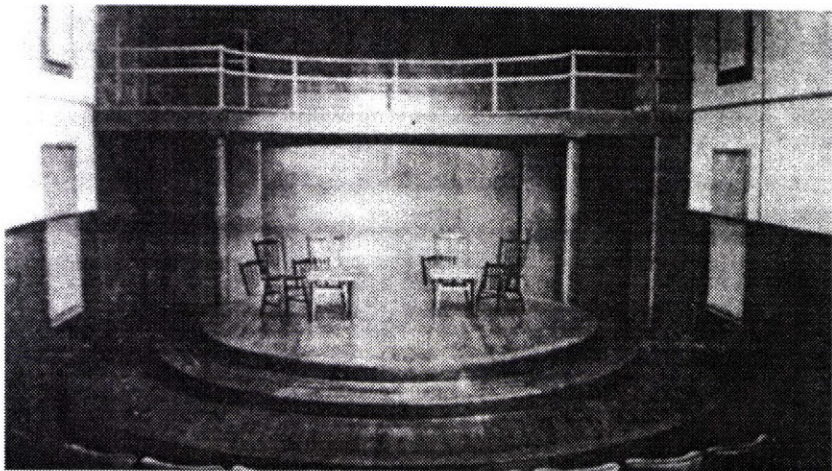
The original psychodrama stage at Beacon, New York, 1936.

J. L. Moreno, M.D., 1939.

2

History I: Moreno and His Precursors

Psychodrama was invented by Jacob Levi Moreno, M.D. (1889–1974). While he explored related methods of impromptu theatre since 1921 (and at times he said that was when psychodrama began), most of the techniques that are used in classical psychodrama gradually developed between 1936 through the early 1940s. (Among dramatists, "theatre" is the spelling commonly used for the activity while "theater" applies to the building.)

Although Moreno's own method was truly original—there is no evidence that he knew about earlier attempts at integrating theatre and therapy—the more general idea of using drama as an aid in healing is by no means new. Indigenous healers, shamans, and traditional rituals often had dramatic elements associated (Favazza & Faheem, 1983; Fryba, 1972; Harmeling, 1950).

Other physicians before Moreno also used theatre in the treatment of mental illness. For example, around the beginning of the 19th Century, two major pioneers in psychiatry in Europe, Johann Christian Reil and Philippe Pinel, separately wrote about using dramatic processes in healing (Mezurecky, 1974; Porter, 1998). Later, two Russian

psychiatrists also explored the synthesis of drama and psychotherapy: Vladimir Iljine who developed a "therapeutic theatre" in Kiev around 1908–1917 and Nikolai Evreinov who worked and wrote in St. Petersburg around 1915–1924 (Jones, 1996). These approaches, however, didn't get the same degree of sustained promotion and organization as did Moreno's methods.

THE SCOPE OF MORENO'S THOUGHT

Moreno was a remarkable man because, in addition to his creating the method of psychodrama, he also:

- began one of the first improvisational theater groups.
- coined the term "group psychotherapy" in 1932 and actively promoted many types of group psychotherapy over the following several decades.
- developed an important technique for applied social psychology called "sociometry".
- encouraged many other types of innovative approaches in psychotherapy.
- was one of the first to write about role theory, an approach that integrated both individual and social psychology.
- wrote about philosophical and even theological ideas.
- worked as a general physician and later, as a psychiatrist, organized his own sanitarium.
- wrote prolifically, published professional journals, organized professional societies, and taught internationally.

Unifying all of these seemingly diverse activities was an underlying complex of ideas about creativity, spontaneity, encounter, drama, imagination, and other themes that will be discussed in the following pages. For Moreno, theorizing wasn't enough—he was also committed to action, a development of scientific techniques for diagnosis and research as well as treatment.

Happily, since the publication of the previous edition, more comprehensive biographies have been published (Marineau, 1989; Hare & Hare, 1996; Moreno, 1989), so this chapter will serve only as an overview of some of the high points. Moreno's life might be divided into three phases: his origins and early work; the precursors to classical psychodrama; and the refinement and promulgation of his methods, each phase occupying about one-third of his lifetime of 85 years.

EARLY HISTORY

Jacob Levi was born on May 18, 1889 in Bucharest, Romania, the oldest of six children, three boys and three girls. (He began to integrate Moreno, an old family name, as his middle name in young adulthood and then, in 1925, he changed his name to Jacob Levi Moreno when he emigrated to the United States. To maintain continuity, I'll refer to him by the last name by which he is best known historically—i.e. "Moreno.") He was the son of a Sephardic Jewish family (the Sephardic Jews were those who emigrated to other parts of the Mediterranean area after being forced out of Spain at the end of the 15th Century). It should be noted that Moreno claimed in error in some of his writings that he was born in 1892 on a ship sailing in the Black Sea. The corrected date is based on the record of his birth in the city archives (Bratescu, 1975).

He was the pampered and idealized oldest son in the family and developed a narcissistic sense of self-confidence. He became interested in God in the course of his being taught by an important rabbi in the community and also from his witnessing the processions of the nearby Greek Orthodox church. This led to what Moreno claimed to be a defining event in his life. Around the age of 4½, Jacob was playing with some neighborhood children in the large basement of his home. His parents had gone out. Jacob suggested they play God and His angels, and he volunteered to play God. First, they proceeded to construct a heaven out of the chairs in the house, stacking them in a pyramid upon a large table, tying the chairs' legs together, and finally helping Jacob to the top seat near the ceiling. This accomplished, the other children began to circle the structure, flapping their arms as angel wings. One called out to Jacob to join in the make-believe flying and, in his absorption in the play, he jumped from his throne, fell, and broke his arm.

Instead of feeling defeated or shamed by his evident misjudgment, he coped by reaffirming his will. If reality cannot offer the opportunities for experiencing all that the mind can conceive of, then reality would have to bend to the heart's desire. I suspect he intuitively grasped the potential of the realm of imaginative play as a way to achieve this and, as an adult, through a process of healthy sublimation, created the concept of surplus reality (to be discussed in chapter 9) and the psychodrama as the vehicle for its fulfillment (Blatner, 1996).

When Moreno was 6, his family moved to Vienna, Austria. His languages had been Romanian and Ladino (a derivative of Spanish written in the Hebrew script, just as Yiddish is a derivative of German

written in the Hebrew script), but in Vienna he learned German (Johnson, 1959).

In his mid-adolescence, Moreno began intensive reading of philosophy, the Bible, and many various religious scriptures, both Christian and Jewish, including the mystical Jewish tradition called Kabbalah (Moreno, 1989, p.30). Kierkegaard's work had become more popular and impressed him, as did the writings of the mystic Swedenborg. The literature of Goethe, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and the American poet Walt Whitman were also influential for this youth.

While continuing in secondary school, he also became infatuated with the idea of his own religious mission and found some friends over the next few years with whom he created an informally organized "religion of encounter." They rented a house which they used as temporary housing for homeless people or refugees. This group shared no formal religious observances. Moreno's description of them states: "We all wore beards, we never stood still, walked, walked, walked, stopped everyone we encountered along the way, shook hands and talked to them. We were all poor but we shared whatever we had, our poverty" (Moreno, 1972, p. 208). Moreno felt he wanted to go a step beyond what he thought many of the writers he'd read had affirmed and put these ideas into action.

Another interest at that time, around 1908, was that of telling stories and playing games with children in the parks around Vienna and noting that their vitality and cleverness expanded as they were encouraged to improvise on the themes in the stories. Following this, Moreno also seems, for a time, to have set up a small theater of and for children (Marineau, 1989, p.39). Such experiences planted seeds for his later ideas about spontaneity and creativity.

Around 1910, Moreno began to formulate his philosophical ideas about God, the theatre, and related issues. These were expressed in some quasi-poetic, quasi-script-like pieces written "anonymously" (Meiers, 1945). His religious inspirations continued, and he wrote several small booklets, such as *Invitation to an Encounter*—one of the first uses of the term encounter—from which he often quoted this particular passage:

> "A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face.
> And when you are near I will tear your eyes out
> and place them instead of mine
> and you will tear my eyes out
> and will place them instead of yours,
> and I will look at you with your eyes
> and you will look at me with mine."

(Readers of this poem sometimes are put off by the grisly image evoked by his unfortunate choice of words, to "tear ... eyes out." I think it's easier to simply recognize that he was probably just being overly dramatic. The point, of course, was that what later came to be called "role reversal" might intensify the authenticity of an encounter.)

During this same period (1911–1917), Moreno was a medical student at the University of Vienna. Part of his duties involved assisting the psychiatric chief of staff but he disagreed with the approach. Likewise, he was aware of Freud's work but felt it did nothing to help patients create new aspirations and goals. Moreno saw this as the crucial challenge in treating mental illness. An example of his attitude and manner can be found in an anecdote he frequently related:

> I met Dr. Freud only on one occasion. It occurred in 1912 when, while working at the Psychiatric Clinic in Vienna University, I attended one of his lectures. Dr. Freud had just ended his analysis of a telepathic dream. As the students filed out he asked me what I was doing. "Well, Dr. Freud, I start where you leave off. You meet people in the artificial setting of your office, I meet them on the street and in their home, in their natural surroundings. You analyze their dreams. I try to give them the courage to dream again. I teach the people how to play God." Dr. Freud looked at me as if puzzled. (Moreno, 1946, pp. 5–6)

While in medical school, Moreno had two experiences with what might today be called social psychiatry. In 1913, he learned of the exploitation and government harassment of prostitutes in Vienna. He began to organize them into "self-help" groups. Two years later, he secured a job as physician in a refugee camp and, after a while, it occurred to him that some of the factionalism he discovered there might be alleviated if the people there could have more freedom in choosing those with whom they would live or work. In retrospect, he considered this to be the precursor of his later development of sociometry (Moreno, 1989, p.66).

Vienna was still one of the cultural capitals of the world. Moreno's medical training and refugee camp assignments were undemanding enough to leave time to attend the theater and mix with local intellectuals and artists. The writings about creativity by the philosopher Henri Bergson had become popular around this time, and Moreno mentioned him as an influence.

After graduating medical school in 1917, Moreno established a general medical practice in Bad Voslau, a Vienna suburb. He had no special interest in psychiatry at that time. This was a fertile and turbu-

lent time for Moreno. In early 1918, he helped found and edit a literary journal, *Daimon,* which included contributions from some of the best known writers in the area (Treadwell & Treadwell, 1972).

Then around 1919, he wrote his major theological exposition, in the poetic form of what he imagined God would say, speaking in the here-and-now. This was soon published in his renamed literary journal, and a little later as a book, and later translated from the German as *The Words of the Father* (Moreno, 1971b). He claimed to have written many of these poems in a state of almost fevered inspiration—he actually wrote them on the walls! He arranged to have them published anonymously at first; only much later did he allow them to appear under his own name. This book and his later commentary on it express many of his major theological ideas, to be discussed further in chapter 6.

Around this time Moreno, as an avocation, also formed perhaps the first improvisational dramatic troupe. He had been dismayed at what he felt was a sterility in traditional theatre, and that this arose from its being confined to scripts. he also felt that theatre should be more socially relevant. He called his approach *Das Stegreiftheater*, translated as the Theater of Spontaneity.

On April 1, 1921, Moreno held the first session in a small hall in Vienna. It addressed the problem of how the country should be run in the politically unstable situation following the Great War, and he invited the audience to participate. (Today this might be considered a type of sociodramatic interactive theatre.) It was a controversial activity and received mixed reviews. (Peter Lorre, who later became famous in American movies in the 1940s, was among the young actors in the troupe.) Moreno produced a variety of experimental impromptu shows, including "The Living Newspaper" in which his actors would portray the events in the daily news (Toeman, 1949).

In exploring the best way to produce a rejuvenated, socially inclusive and relevant theatrical form, Moreno also designed one of the first "theater in the round" stages. His emphasis on interactivity with the audience may well have exerted influences on later innovations in the theatre (Moreno, 1971a; Scheiffele, 1995). Interestingly, around 1924, he entered a legal struggle with Frederick Kreisler, a local theatrical producer, who also claimed to have invented a theater-in-the-round. This was one of the examples of what, for Moreno, might be called the "paternity syndrome," Moreno's tendency to argue over who might have been the true "father" or inventor of some method or approach (Held, 1982).

After a couple of years, Moreno began to see the process of improvisational drama as a potentially therapeutic vehicle for the performers as well as for the audience. The Theatre of Spontaneity continued to exper-

iment with a variety of interactive and improvisational approaches for another four years, until shortly before he emigrated to the United States. Moreno considered the period from 1911 to 1923 the first "axionormative" period, the time when the basic philosophical foundations were laid in the development of sociometric theory (Renouvier, 1958).

MID-PHASE: YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT

Post-war Austria was chaotic and could not support Moreno's experiments in applied social science and therapeutic theater. He thought of emigrating to either Russia, with its "great new experiment," or to the United States. He chose the latter because he realized that what he needed was freedom to pursue his theories. Moreno was able to go to America because he was, among other things, an inventor. He "co-invented"—though the other man was more of the actual engineer—a type of sound recorder which in spirit, was a precursor of today's tape recorder. A company in America was interested enough to help him emigrate from Austria in 1925, and he settled in New York City.

When Moreno, then age 36, arrived in the United States, he was surprised at the popularity of psychoanalysis; back in Vienna it was still on the fringe of respectability. Overcoming the difficulties of learning a new language and getting jobs and licensure, Moreno began a period of remarkably active and innovative work which can better be described in a chronological format:

1927–1930: Moreno continued to experiment with impromptu theatre, even arranging to offer some programs at Carnegie Hall. He also claimed to have demonstrated role playing at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City (and elsewhere).

1931: Moreno consulted as a psychiatrist at Sing Sing Prison in New York and began to write articles in English on his theatrical experiences and early experiments with interactive group therapy. Other innovators were independently exploring the possibilities of treatment in groups, such as L. Cody Marsh at a hospital in New York, whose approach involved giving inspirational lectures; Austin Riggs, who also lectured over loudspeakers to psychiatric patients in a Massachusetts hospital; and Louis Wender, a psychoanalyst.

1932: Moreno first coined the terms "group therapy" and "group psychotherapy" in his presentation at a conference of the American Psy-

chiatric Association in Philadelphia. Moreno's approach was clearly more interactional and group-centered rather than therapist-centered

1933: Moreno consulted at the New York State Training School for Girls in Hudson, New York in collaboration with Helen Hall Jennings; over the next several years he introduced role playing and worked out his sociometric system. On April 4, he exhibited some of his early charts at the New York Medical Society convention; he considered this the official start of the "sociometric movement."

1934: Moreno published *Who Shall Survive?—A New Approach to the Problem of Human Interrelations*. He also introduced psychodrama at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, DC which was one of the most dynamic psychiatric centers in the country at the time. He received a good deal of support from many of the leaders in the profession.

In the mid-1930s, some other pioneers in group therapy began their work. Paul Schilder used a modified psychoanalytic approach at Bellevue Hospital in New York. Samuel R. Slavson, an engineer volunteering with the Jewish Board of Guardians' Big Sister Program, began to do volunteer arts and crafts activities with groups of teenage girls in group homes. He later allied himself with the growing psychoanalytic movement, calling his own work "para-analytic," and later, "ego therapy." It involved a permissive type of play therapy and lectures with groups of latency age and finally even preschool children. Later, Slavson became a significant rival of Moreno (Scheidlinger, 1993).

1936: Moreno opened Beacon Hill Sanitarium, a private psychiatric hospital about 60 miles north of New York City on the Hudson River, and built an attached psychodrama theater and facilities for training professionals. (In this year he also became a naturalized citizen.)

1937: Moreno began the publication of his first professional journal, *Sociometry: A Journal of Interpersonal Relations*. In response to a lack of receptivity from established journals and book publishers, Moreno had established his own publishing operation, Beacon House, at his sanitarium and home in Beacon, New York (which should be differentiated from Boston's Beacon Press). In addition, he applied sociometric testing procedures to Public School 181 in Brooklyn. Moreno considered this year the beginning of the "second sociometric phase."

Around this time another parallel development arose: Kurt Lewin, Muzafer Sharif, and others in the nascent field of social psychology began important studies in group dynamics, although they were not oriented to therapy. Moreno claims to have met with Lewin and several of his students and influenced some of their ideas. Gardner Lindzey, a leader in the field of social psychology, noted that

"Moreno's book [*Who Shall Survive?*] changed the face of social psychology. There are few instances where a single individual has exerted so pervasive an influence on the evolution of a social science area."(Lindzey & Byrne, 1968, p. 454)

This was also the time in which self-help groups were being formed. Alcoholics Anonymous, started a few years earlier in Akron, Ohio, was beginning to be recognized. Dr. Abraham A. Low in Chicago used "will training" in his work with the mentally ill and later, in 1941, he organized Recovery, Inc., a self-help group program that used discussion and the reading of selected books by Low as an aftercare program.

Several family members contributed to Moreno's successful efforts. Among others, his first wife, Florence, was active in education and child development and helped with his work on spontaneity theory and psychodrama. (They had a daughter, Regina, born in 1939.) Moreno's younger brother, William, was a successful businessman who believed in and admired Jacob, and he gave Jacob substantial financial assistance during many of the middle years of his professional development.

1941: A second psychodrama theater was built and put into operation at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C. Moreno was active in writing some of his more seminal monographs on mental catharsis and psychodrama, and in these years, his articles on psychodrama were to be found in his sociometry journal along with other writings on role theory and articles by other major figures in social psychology.

During World War II, group therapy began to be used widely in military and veterans hospitals. In England, S. H. Foulkes and E. James Anthony organized the Group Analytic Society.

1942: Moreno organized the first professional association for group therapists, the American Society for Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama (ASGPP). He also opened the Sociometric Institute and Theater

of Psychodrama at 101 Park Avenue in New York City and began to offer open sessions, attracting many curious professionals from a variety of disciplines. This was the beginning of what he considered the "third phase of sociometric development" which was followed by the spread of group psychotherapy, sociometry, and psychodrama, nationally and internationally. (Moreno's open sessions continued on weekend nights until the early 1970s. In 1962, he moved this "storefront setting" to 236 West 78th Street.)

Interestingly, the same year, Slavson founded the American Group Psychotherapy Association which was oriented toward psychoanalytic practice, and began publishing *The International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*. Because of the growing hegemony of psychoanalysis, this group soon became the dominant organization in the field.

1945: Moreno began publication of his second journal, *Sociatry: A Journal of Group and Intergroup Therapy* which became the official professional organ of the ASGPP and, after two years, was renamed *Group Psychotherapy*. The next year he published *Psychodrama* (Volume 1) which became the seminal book on the subject. Many other books and articles followed, as noted in an extensive bibliography by Corsini & Putzey (1956).

1946: The method of the "T-Group" was developed (described more in chapter 18). This was one of the roots of what was later to become the encounter group movement and in turn, was influenced by Moreno (1970; Gottshalk & Pattison, 1969). After the rise and fall of the fashion of encounter groups in the 1960s and 1970s, many of these group methods became integrated into a wide range of self-help groups and programs for personal growth. These included structured and action experiences.

For the next few decades, Moreno functioned as an important ongoing catalyst for innovation and eclecticism in psychotherapy, especially during a time when alternative approaches were having difficulty gaining acceptance in the clinical professions, then under the domination of psychoanalysis. His writings and public demonstration sessions in New York influenced Fritz Perls who had recently arrived from South Africa (Shepard, 1975).

In the early 1940s, the method of psychodrama began to become more refined. Along with sociometry and group psychotherapy, Moreno's work began to be applied in a variety of settings such as

schools, recreation, rehabilitation programs for the developmentally disabled, the military, management, and the training of professionals from teachers to salespersons.

Historically, it is important to remember that, before the mid-1950s, the mainstream of psychoanalysis that dominated the field of psychotherapy at the time had not yet accepted the innovation of group psychotherapy. Moreno was as devoted to the development of group psychotherapy as he was to psychodrama. He wanted to emphasize the importance of psychodrama's more interactional approach; nevertheless, he initiated and helped organize a number of national and international conferences on group therapy that actively included psychoanalytically oriented leaders. These conferences offered a forum for interchange for new approaches, such as Joshua Bierer's "social clubs," Virginia Satir's family therapy, Maxwell Jones's therapeutic community, and George Vassilou's use of art therapy techniques in group psychotherapy.

Moreno encouraged the development of all kinds of innovations in psychotherapy, with a special emphasis on the use of creative arts as treatment modalities; for example, the pioneer of dance therapy, Marian Chace (1945), had one of her first articles published in Moreno's journal.

These middle years, when Moreno was in his 50s and 60s, were times of great productivity. He wrote prolifically. In New York City, his open sessions served as demonstration arenas where many professionals witnessed psychodynamic methods other than the traditional psychoanalytic approaches. A. H. Maslow (1968), Eric Berne (1970), and Will Schutz (1971) have all clearly acknowledged Moreno's role as a source of many of the most innovative techniques in modern eclectic psychotherapy!

LATER YEARS: EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATION

By 1950, Moreno was beginning to attract increasing numbers of students. Also, in 1941, Zerka had entered Moreno's life and began to aid him in writing, editing, and his many other endeavors. (Her role and those of his other associates will be discussed further in chapter 3.)

During the next 20 years, Dr. and Mrs. Moreno traveled widely, giving presentations and demonstrations at professional conferences, hospitals, and universities. His publishing continued. In 1956, *Sociometry* was given to the American Sociological Association, but, in the

late 1960s, Moreno again published another short-lived sociometry-oriented journal.

Treatment of patients continued at Beacon through the 1950s, but, by the mid-1960s, this ceased. The sanitarium changed into a training institute. Since Moreno was in his 70s, Zerka began to be the major trainer.

Moreno also traveled internationally, making contacts with various European psychiatrists. In 1954, he helped found the International Committee on Group Psychotherapy, which evolved with Moreno as primary founder, into the International Association of Group Psychotherapy. This organization, involving both analytic, psychodramatic, and other approaches, has grown and continues to flourish, with regional and world congresses around the globe every two or three years. In addition, Moreno also fostered the organization of a series of international psychodrama conferences in the 1960s.

At the age of 85, after a series of small strokes, Jacob L. Moreno died at his home in Beacon, New York on May 14, 1974. He had chosen to stop eating in the weeks before his passing and gradually declined. During that time, he welcomed old friends and visitors with openness and warmth (Sacks, 1977; Yablonsky, 1975). Moreno's epitaph was chosen by him in advance: "The man who brought joy and laughter into psychiatry."

SUMMARY

As a visionary and developer of profoundly insightful ideas, J. L. Moreno is, in my opinion, a great man. In other roles, as will be discussed in chapter 4, he was more flawed. Much of the material that follows may be viewed as a commentary—elaborating, refining, and extending Moreno's ideas.

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3

History II: Further Developments in Psychodrama

This chapter will discuss the work of some of Moreno's associates and the evolution of the field of psychodrama since his death. First, here is an abbreviated biography of the most well-known living exponent of psychodrama—Moreno's wife, Zerka.

ZERKA TOEMAN MORENO: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Zerka Toeman, the youngest of four children, was born in 1917 to a Jewish family living in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. In 1931, they moved to England, and Zerka attended high school and college in Willesden Green, a suburb of London. An older sister in her early 20s became psychotic and was diagnosed (then) as having a form of schizophrenia (in retrospect, this sister had a bipolar disorder that was finally controlled by lithium treatment). This event and her sister's continuing illness were later to prove instrumental in Zerka's meeting Moreno. In addition, there was an important transpersonal element to the bond that occurred between Zerka and "The Doctor." Zerka was

sensitive and receptive to voices that spoke from her inner, wiser self. For instance, when Zerka was 18 and living in England in 1935, a year before her sister's psychotic break, a voice told her to go to America. She didn't act on it then. Four years later, Zerka was walking in an elegant suburb on a quiet night, and again she had the impelling feeling that she had to go to America. The sense of a presence spoke to her: "Yes, you must go! There is something important—someone waiting for you." This time she did emigrate to New York and settled there.

In 1941, with Nazi policies threatening her older sister and her sister's family in Belgium, Zerka was able to negotiate the visas allowing them to emigrate to America. When they arrived, her sister, who had been in remission for a while, had relapsed again into psychosis. Dr. Emil Gutheil referred them to Moreno's sanitarium. Zerka, during the treatment of her sister, was fascinated by both the idea of psychodrama and the charisma of Moreno himself. Likewise, Dr. Moreno experienced a powerful sense of "tele" with this young woman, feeling as if he "recognized" her.

Because of her background in the theater, fine arts, and psychology, Zerka became involved with psychodrama and worked as a trained auxiliary in the care of her sister as well as other patients at Moreno's sanitarium. Her interest in Moreno and his work continued to grow as she began to share administrative and secretarial responsibilities of his diverse and complex enterprise. It became clear to her that Moreno was the "someone waiting for you," and in 1949 they were married. Jonathan, their only child, was born in 1952.

Zerka has taught this concept in a number of workshops: "In many ways we are all survivors." It is an insight that came to her during a grueling personal experience. In 1957, Zerka was diagnosed as having a chondrosarcoma—a type of cancer—in the bone of her right shoulder. This involved the amputation of her entire right arm just in time to save her life. Her handicap did not deter her from continuing to serve as Moreno's "right hand" (as she laughingly phrased it). Moreno told her near the end of his life that he had created the system and now it was up to her and the others to carry on the work. She has gone beyond teaching, however, and also added a great deal of refinement to the method and its theory. Following his death in 1974, she carried on with teaching and writing about psychodrama, group dynamics, and sociometry. She remains the foremost exponent of the method in the world today, traveling internationally, holding workshops, and teaching at major conferences. Their son, Jonathan Moreno is now a professor of philosophy and bioethics.

OTHER PIONEERS: THE "FIRST PHASE"

During the 1940s and 1950s, many professionals worked with Moreno in developing psychodrama, sociodrama, and sociometry in psychiatry, sociology, criminology, education, and other fields (Z. Moreno, 1966). Of these, a number continued to make significant contributions in writing and teaching for many years:

- Dean Elefthery (died 1979) and his wife Doreen, in Miami, pioneered the method in Europe.
- Eugene Eliasoph continues to offer training in New Haven, Connecticut.
- Jim Enneis (died 1989), in Washington, D.C., at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, beginning in 1949, developed one of the most vigorous psychodrama training and treatment programs in the United States. (Buchanan, 1981).
- Leon Fine (died 1994) in Portland, Oregon, continued to offer training until his death.
- Martin Haskell (died 1975) and his wife, Rochelle, in Long Beach, California, emphasized applications in social contexts.
- Richard Korn built bridges to the field of criminology and penology in Berkeley.
- Gretel Leutz has become one of the major pioneers of psychodrama in Europe, and has written some of the most widely used texts in German.
- Jim Sacks has written prolifically, organized bibliographies, trained extensively and also internationally, and worked actively in the ASGPP.
- Anne Ancelin Schützenberger has been one of the major pioneers of psychodrama in Europe. She has written influential books that have been translated into several languages.
- Hannah Weiner (died 1983) attracted many other professionals through the open sessions she conducted regularly in New York City.
- Lew Yablonsky, in the West Los Angeles area, has written about and adapted the method for use with various populations.

Other important figures in the field have included:

Max and Sylvia Ackerman	Gerald W. Lawlor
Doris Twitchell Allen	Helen Hall Jennings
Robert Boguslaw	Rosemary Lippitt

Edgar Borgatta
Eya Fechin Branham
Anna and Nah Brind
Anthony Brunse
Gertrude Harrow-Clemens
Raymond J. Corsini
Robert Drews
Ernest Fantel
Abel K. Fink
Robert Bartlett Haas
Margaret Hagan
Frances Herriott
Abraham Knepler

Joseph Mann
Joseph I. Meiers
Ellwood Murray
Walter E. O'Connell
Abel Ossorio
Barbara Seabourne
Nahum Shoobs
Bruno Solby
Adaline Starr
Berthold Stovkis
Israel E. Sturm
E. Paul Torrance

Internationally, other pioneers who began to teach before 1960 included: Ferdinand Knobloch (Czechoslovakia and then Canada); Heika Straub (Germany); E. A. Carp (Netherlands); Daisaku Sotobayashi and Kohei Matsumura (Japan); and Jose Bustamante and Frisso Potts (Cuba).

In France, in the late 1940s, Serge Lebovici, René Diatkine, Mireille Monod, and others saw the potential of adapting psychodrama to psychoanalysis, the resulting approach being quite different from classical psychodrama (Anzieu, 1960). Lebovici was very respected, later becoming president of the International Psychoanalytic Association. Their approach was first used with a team of trained auxiliaries and a single patient and was applied primarily in the treatment of children (Schützenberger, 1998). This approach and variations also spread to South America, Spain, Croatia, and other countries. Other leaders of psychoanalytic psychodrama included René Kaes, Evelyne Kestemberg, Daniel Widlocher, and others, some of whom evolved variations in their approach.

THE "SECOND PHASE"

Recognition is also due those leaders in psychodrama who became active as teachers from 1960 through the mid-1970s:

- Dale Richard Buchanan, at St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, D.C., carried on Enneis's tradition in maintaining one of the most active training programs and really the only actual paid "internship" in the field! He then took on an executive role in develop-

ing and maintaining the professional certification Board of Examiners which continues through the present.

- Sandra Garfield, in Los Angeles, has organized a network for integrating psychodrama and psychoanalysis.
- Elaine Goldman moved from Chicago to Phoenix and established an institute there in the early 1970s. Other trainers who developed ongoing centers operating before 1975 included:

  Elaine Sachnoff, in Chicago

  Ildri and (the late) Robert Ginn, in the Boston area

  Tobi Klein, in Montreal

  John Nolte, in the Midwest

  Peter Rowan, also in Boston, associated with Lesley College

  G. Douglas Warner, in Maryland

- Ann Hale wrote her seminal book on sociometry and served in many roles: maintaining, energizing, developing, and teaching.
- Carl Hollander served as a major training focus in Colorado. He has been a mentor for a number of third generation psychodramatists, and has exerted a leadership role in the ASGPP.
- Marcia Karp moved from the United States to England in the early 1970s and, though there were some precursors in terms of occasional workshops given by others, she established psychodrama there. She continues to train there and also travels to other European countries. She married the artist, Ken Sprague, and they have often conducted training as a team.
- David Kipper has served as a major force prmoting research, rethinking theory, fostering the ASGPP, networking with the international community, and editing the journal.
- Donnell Miller continues to write and teach in Southern California.
- Neville Murray presented symposia and courses on psychodrama at the annual meetings of the American Psychiatric Association until his death in the early 1980s. He also taught psychodrama in San Antonio. (Adam Blatner carried on the APA courses for another decade.)
- Dorothy Satten taught first in Los Angeles and later (with her husband, Mort Satten) expanded her teaching throughout the Western United States and overseas.
- Robert Siroka began in the early 1960s to help organize the conferences. In the 1970s, his group heroically maintained the many functions of the ASGPP, including organizing conferences, putting out the journal, and continuing one of the major training centers.

- Tom Treadwell developed the only graduate program in an academic setting with a focus on psychodrama. He has been a major editor of the journal and has helped the field get "on-line."

During the 1960s and early 1970s, there were a number of other psychodramatists in the United States who, though not establishing large training programs, nevertheless made significant contributions:

George Baaklini
Shirley Barclay
Alton Barbour
Adam Blatner
Sheila Blume
Peggy Cheatham
Don Clarkson
Claire Danielsson
Adele Deeths von Rüst-McCormick
Robert Flick
Jonathan Fox
Robert Fuhlrodt
Anath Garber
George Gazda
Meg Uprichard Givnish
Shirlee Gomer
Rivka Green
Ira Greenberg
Claude Guldner
Joe Hart
Paul Hurewitz

Eva Leveton
Jonathan Moreno
George W. Morris
Ray Naar
Anthony Del Nuovo
Jean Peterson
Joseph Power
Howard Seeman
Ellen Siroka
Diana Sucich
David Swink
Jane Taylor
Sharon Hollander Thomas
James VanderMay
Diana Villasenor
Jack Ward
Allan Wickersty
Steve Wilson
Jill Winer

Internationally, a number of pioneers became most active in teaching in the 1960s. Especially notable are:

- Jaime Rojas-Bermudez, who was one of the more active teachers in Argentina, Brazil, and later, Spain.
- Dalmiro Bustos, who also taught widely in Argentina, Spain, and elsewhere in South America and Europe, has been active in the International Association for Group Psychotherapy.
- Max and Lynette Clayton were the main teachers in the early years in Australia and New Zealand, and they continue to teach actively.

- Pierre Fontaine has helped to spread psychodrama in Belgium and later was one of the founders of FEPTO.
- Ella Mae Shearon, originally from the United States, has an institute in Cologne (Koln), Germany, and also teaches in the United States and elsewhere.

Major pioneers in Brazil included Pierre Weill, Alfredo Correia Soeiro, Iris Soares de Azevedo, Jose Manuel D'Alessandro, and Antonio Carlos Cesarino.

Others internationally who began to teach psychodrama before 1975 and deserve to be mentioned include:

Ferdinand Cuvelier, Belgium	Ferenc Merei, Hungary
Erich Franzke, Sweden	Hilarion Petzold, Germany
Hans Hoff, Vienna	Andreas Ploeger, Germany
Hajime Mashino, Japan	Monica Zuretti, Argentina
Joke Meillo, Holland	George Vasiliou, Greece

In the later 1970s and early 1980s a third phase of trainers emerged in this country and internationally, and many of these are the current leaders in the field. These and others, too numerous to mention, have made significant contributions to the field.

Training at Beacon, New York continued until around 1980 under the supervision of Zerka Moreno and various visiting directors. After this, it was kept active by the Horsham Clinic in Pennsylvania until the center was closed in 1984. The property was sold, and the original psychodrama stage has been moved to the Jonathan Steiner Hall at Boughton Place in Highland, New York. Psychodrama training workshops are still held there. In 1999, Zerka finally sold the last property, the original house, so she could live closer to her son and grandchildren in Virginia.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

In 1942, Moreno founded the first organization devoted to group psychotherapy, The American Society for Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama[1] (ASGPP). However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, he was too controlling and alienated many potential allies. After his death, Zerka encouraged a more democratic process and the ASGPP's executive council began to exert its proper authority. One of its first efforts was a move towards "professionalizing" practice in the

field, as was the general trend of many medical or psychotherapeutic specialties. The point was to differentiate between those who, with little actual training, nevertheless claimed to be "psychodramatists," and those who fulfilled a reasonable number of criteria and would properly be so considered by a consensus of trainers.

In this spirit, the American Board of Examiners in Psychodrama, Sociometry, and Group Psychotherapy[2] was established in 1975 as a body with the authority and responsibility to test and certify the categories of practitioners (C.P.) and trainers. The latter category is T.E.P. which stands for trainer, educator, and practitioner, one who qualifies not only as a competent director but also able to train other directors. (A list of certified trainers and information about requirements for certification and practitioners can be obtained by writing to the American Board of Examiners.)

From 1977 to around 1991, an organization named the Federation of Trainers and Training Programs in Psychodrama (FTTPP) was formed and perpetuated to standardize the curriculum in the various institutes and to offer more learning experiences for the trainers themselves (Nolte, 1991). This then became reabsorbed back into the ASGPP and the Board of Examiners.

The ASGPP continues to serve as the major organization for people interested in psychodrama and more innovative approaches to individual, family, and group psychotherapy. The ASGPP also national conferences annually and regional conferences that offer opportunities not only for networking but also for experiential workshops. Because of its underlying associations with spontaneity, play, and self-expression, these meetings often carry a level of energy not found at the meetings of other organizations that are devoted to more verbal modes of therapeutic and didactic discourse.

Increasing efforts have been made to hold the national meetings in various parts of the country. (New York was the main venue.) Southern California, Houston, San Francisco, Philadelphia, and the Washington, D.C. area have all been sites of annual conventions in the last decade.

In addition, there has been a growing involvement of psychodramatists and presentations on action methods at the conferences of many other professional organizations. Especially notable is that the American Group Psychotherapy Association, which had been far more psychoanalytic in the past, has gradually become more open to other approaches, and presentations on psychodrama have become more frequent at its conferences.

PUBLICATIONS

Since Moreno's death, an increasing number of books, chapters in books, and articles in the professional literature about psychodrama have been published—over a dozen books in th last twelve years alone. These may be found in the general, updated bibliography at the end of this book.

Moreno's main journal, *Group Psychotherapy,* has undergone several slight changes of title. In 1981, the ASGPP contracted with the HELDREF publishing company to manage the editing and production which brought the ASGPP into line with most other psychotherapy sub-specialties. From that time to 1997, the title was the *Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama, and Sociometry.* As the field evolved, the editors decided to rename it again to more accurately suggest its broadened scope: The *International Journal of Action Methods: Psychodrama, Skill Training and Role Playing.*

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Moreno promoted group psychotherapy and psychodrama around the world, and his name as "founder" is still kept on the letterheads of correspondence of the International Association for Group Psychotherapy,[3] even though a substantial part of its membership is more analytic than psychodramatic. Nevertheless, the IAGP has served as a vehicle for international contacts and presentations, and has periodically given high office to psychodramatists. In recent years, a specially identified section on psychodrama in this organization has been established.

Psychodrama has been growing as a therapeutic method in a number of countries, with especially large communities in Brazil, Argentina, Germany, Great Britain, and, of course, the United States, and substantial communities in:

Australia	Israel	Norway
Austria	Italy	Portugal
Belgium	Japan	Spain
Finland	Korea	Sweden
France	Netherlands	Switzerland
Hungary	New Zealand	

There are smaller, but still growing groups in:

Bolivia	Greece	Paraguay
Bulgaria	Ireland	Slovenia
Equador	Latvia	R.O.C. (Taiwan)
Estonia	Macedonia	Turkey

There have been a number of international psychodrama conferences held in the last decade, most notably in Italy, Jerusalem, Portugal, and Oxford, and also regional conferences. These are supplemented by the significant (though minority) attendees at the IAGP conferences. In Europe, a Federation of Training Institutes (FEPTO) has been organized.

In the last decade, some of the psychodrama associations of other countries have developed enough to be publishing their own journals—in Australia, Germany, Portugal, Japan, Italy, Brazil, and England. They are presenting a wealth of innovations and refinements in theory as well as practice.

Networking is becoming easier. Beginning in 1992, I compiled a directory of psychodramatists internationally and finally included it as an appendix in the British (1997) 3rd edition of of my *Acting-In*. As more people are coming on-line, more people are connecting via email on the Internet. Tom Treadwell deserves recognition for developing a "list service" called "Grouptalk" which allows for discussion of various issues in "cyberspace."

EXTENSIONS OF PSYCHODRAMA

There is no question that, by the end of the 1970s, many of Moreno's ideas and methods had been assimilated into the mainstream of psychotherapy and, to a significant extent, into education, management, and various types of training. Role playing, for example, is used in many settings, and yet its derivation from psychodrama is often unrecognized. As psychoanalysis is generally becoming less dominant in American psychiatry, a number of eclectic approaches are replacing its hegemony. Many of these methods can be traced, at least in part, to Moreno's contributions.

Chapter 20 discusses related methods—drama therapy, drama in education, interactive theatre, and other approaches—that have also developed which carry forward the Morenian vision for social as well as individual healing.

There has also been a growing convergence of the creative and expressive therapies, including psychodrama, art, music, dance, move-

ment, poetry, crafts, puppetry, and drama. All of these share some similar goals, namely, the liberation and use of spontaneity as part of the healing process. Politically, the ASGPP has a loose affiliation with the National Coalition of the Arts Therapies Associations (NCATA) in order to foster interchange and also to promote recognition for the professionalism of its practioners (Kleinman, 1997).

SUMMARY

The previous chapter noted some of Moreno's own influences, both as strengths and weaknesses. The style of directing, range of techniques used, and integrations with other approaches have all expanded and been refined since Moreno's passing. We are at a stage of seeking some consensus while, at the same time, wanting to remain open to innovation.

The words of Carl G. Jung (1948) are relevant in thinking about the evolution of psychodrama before and after Moreno's death:

> "The pioneer in a new field has the good fortune to be able to draw valid conclusions from his total experience. The efforts and exertions, the doubts and uncertainties of this voyage of discovery have penetrated his marrow too deeply to allow the perspective and clarity which are necessary for a comprehensive presentation. Those of the second generation, who base their work on his groping attempts, the chance hits, the circuitous approaches the half-truths and mistakes of the pioneer, are less burdened and can take more direct roads, envisage further goals. They are able to cast off many doubts and hesitations, concentrate on essentials, and in this way map out a simpler and clearer picture of the newly discovered territory. The simplification and clarification redound to the benefit of those of the third generation who are thus equipped from the onset with an over-all chart. With this chart they are enabled to formulate new problems and mark out the boundaries more sharply than ever before."

We are entering a fourth phase of exploration in the field of psychodrama as well as in the related methods that seek to utilize the creative potential in the human psyche.

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[1] American Society for Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama (ASGPP), 301 North Harrison St., Suite 508, Princeton, NJ 08540. email: asgpp@asgpp.org website: www.asgpp.org

[2] The American Board of Examiners in Psychodrama, Sociometry, and Group Psychotherapy, P.O. Box 15572. Washington, DC 20003–0572. Phone: (202) 965–4115. You may write to the American Board of Examiners and ask for a list of certified trainers or practitioners of psychodrama in your area. They will also supply information regarding the requirements for certification.

[3] The IAGP website: http://members.tripod.com/~portaroma/iagp_pd.htm

4

History III: Hindrances to Psychodrama's Acceptance

In spite of the power of psychodrama's methodology and richness of its theory, it is not very widely appreciated in the field of psychotherapy. There are many reasons for this.

COMPETITION WITH PSYCHONALYSIS

Psychodrama couldn't compete with psychoanalysis. When psychodrama emerged, it was, for quite a while, limited to Moreno's own work and demonstrations in the area near New York City. At that time, in the early 1940s through the 1950s, psychoanalysis was reaching its peak as a movement—and New York was its most active center. Psychoanalysis had a number of overwhelming advantages:

- There were local, national, and international organizations and institutes of training.
- It soon dominated the academic training of psychiatrists who, at the time, held the highest status in the field.
- It was a novelty interesting to many intellectuals in the humanities and arts.
- It was burnished with the aura of authority associated with Eu-

ropean professors, plus sympathy for their being the victims of Nazi anti-semitism.

- It carried the authoritative weight of thousands of books and articles in the professional literature.
- It ignored contributions from sources that didn't reinforce its own ideology.
- It was new and idealistic at the time, full of promise, appealing to young people, and challenging of the hopelessness or seemingly inhumane somatic treatments of that era.
- It became fashionable in urban centers among certain of the more educated classes (Dolnick, 1998; Hale, 1997).

In contrast, psychodrama had organizational weaknesses:

- Its organization was overly centralized (under Moreno's control) and, for the most part, localized (in New York City). Although there were scattered adherents nationally and internationally, those people generally didn't develop local organizations, and there was little networking in general.
- Articles on psychodrama rarely appeared in journals or monographs other than those published by Moreno himself through "Beacon House" which reduced their general availability.
- Moreno tended to contrast his approach to psychoanalysis rather than to accommodate to it which was seen as presumptuous, eccentric, and unprofessional.

While there are many non-psychiatric therapists today, at mid-century there were very few. Even today Moreno's work has been able to make little headway within mainstream psychiatry. In related fields, such as sociology or criminology, a few professionals emerged who could see the potential of Moreno's ideas, but their contributions remained peripheral.

Those dissatisfied with classic psychoanalysis in the 1940s and 50s were able to find avenues for their creative energies in the revisionist activities of the Neo-Freudians. Then, in the 1960s, as psychoanalysis was established and becoming more conservative, many other new approaches emerged—Family Therapy, Behavior Therapy, Cognitive Therapy, various types of group psychotherapy, Gestalt Therapy, Transactional Analysis, Reality therapy, and literally scores of others, and over 100 more in the following decade. There were new horizons in psychopharmacology, community psychiatry, dream research, and a host of other lively issues. American psychoanalysis itself was opening

to the growing interest in Object-Relations theory and, in the next decade, to Kohut's system of self-psychology—all of which served as vital competitors for psychodrama, and many of which incorporated some of Moreno's techniques or principles.

THE FEAR OF ACTION

It seemed radical enough just getting people to talk about their deeper feelings. The psychoanalytic method viewed action as diluting of the therapeutic enterprise. There was a common fear of overstimulating emotions, of losing control, of "acting-out." Actional expression, then, was viewed as exposing the patient too much and supportive of "hysterical traits" and "exhibitionism"—with a subtle association in the terms with perverse sexuality (Murray, 1976). (Other concerns about action are discussed in chapter 10.) Moreno's tendency to go *with* the patient's feelings was hardly acceptable. The fulfillment of act-hunger, even symbolically, seemed counter-intuitive to a culture that met force with force. Moreno's approach is more like the Oriental martial arts that work with the "opponent's" negative energies.

Psychotherapy was one-to-one, and the inclusion of others as auxiliaries in treatment went against the grain of the mainstream until the late 1950s when group therapy gradually won acceptance (Bromberg, 1957). Therapists felt too exposed in the role of the director. Most had been taught that they needed to play a more subdued, neutral role. Psychodrama requires far more disclosure of the therapist's personality. Activity was also viewed as interfering with the establishment of the transference, and those therapists inclined to be more outgoing were told that this might be alright for "supportive" therapy, but for deep explorations, wanting to speak up—much less orchestrate a scene—revealed what might be interpreted as the therapist's own "neurotic need to be helpful."

Directors needed to learn spontaneity, and there was little available in most training centers that supported such attitudes or behaviors. Directive approaches, involving advice, exhortation, and inspirational lectures had become unfashionable by the mid-1930s; they were associated with authoritarian behaviors practiced by people raised before the turn of the century. Cultural tastes were shifting away from family-centered, patriarchal educational and religious traditions. Refreshing alternatives were found in less judgmental "non-directive" approaches. Psychoanalysis advocated what was generally viewed as a non-directive, accepting approach. Also, in the 1940s, Carl Rogers advocated a similar, non-directive approach, although it differed in many other ways from psychoanalysis.

Unfortunately, principles can be oversimplified and viewed in terms of polar opposites. The idea that a therapy could be both directive and active in some ways and yet structured so as to be respectful of a client's self-system was difficult to understand. Psychodrama can be very client-centered in its essence (Blatner, 1996, p. 122) because direction, in terms of enactment, isn't the same as intrusiveness in telling people how to feel and what to think.

INCONVENIENCE

Moreno could only offer more concentrated training at his sanitarium in upstate New York. However, most potential students couldn't afford the money or the time, at least not for many return visits. So, it wasn't easy for people outside of the New York area to get training, especially those who hadn't yet become economically established. In contrast, most other approaches could be learned more readily, often at local colleges. Since a movement grows in proportion to the number of students who rise to teach and multiply the effects, and since this delegation of teaching authority was constrained, the field remained relatively limited in scope.

Psychodrama isn't as convenient as one-to-one, hour-long types of therapy, but rather requires more time for warm-up, action, and follow-up. Such activities are not always compatible with a middle-class, workaday world lifestyle, nor do longer sessions fit easily into most ward or clinic schedules. One-to-one, hour-long sessions are easier to bill, easier to schedule, and less complicated. It is also not that easy to assemble a group, and even harder to get the group to become open to the idea of enactment or role-playing. Psychodramatic methods, being somewhat more intense, also demand of the therapist and the group an increased access to follow-up for further processing.

The more difficult the client, the more there is a need for support from other professionals on the team, and that then involves all the work and cost of assembling and training a team. For example, in working directly on really sensitive scenes, such as in treating patients with post-traumatic disorders, co-therapists or trained auxiliaries are often needed (Hudgins & Drucker, 1998). In the late 1930s and through the 1950s, Moreno had assembled a staff and created a setting at Beacon that allowed for a type of intervention not easily replicated in other contexts. As a result, his approach was not seen as being particularly practical. Also, Moreno's writings for the most part—and for a number of years, the writings by colleagues in his journals—weren't

about the types of patients who were seen in an ordinary office-based practice. Nowadays, with more of an emphasis on community psychiatry, his work with a wider range of patients is somewhat more relevant.

DISTRUST OF THE THEATER

The mixture of the staid profession of psychotherapy and drama seemed implausible. The theater was mainly just for entertainment, and actors and others associated with the theatre (or movies) were commonly viewed as less than serious. It was hard for people to imagine that such a superficial endeavor could be turned into something healing.

Play acting, role play, pretend play, make-believe, and "playing games," all tended to suggest variations of phoniness rather than authenticity. Unless one becomes familiar with the process, it's hard to appreciate how psychodrama can actually promote greater authenticity (Blatner, 1968). Role-playing again is confused with play in its frivolous, superficial sense, or as pretense. So many haven't realized that play, like drama, can be turned to good use in healing and serious problem-exploration (J.D. Moreno, 1975).

IRRESPONSIBLE PSYCHODRAMA

Because psychodrama can look easy, relatively untrained practitioners can claim to be able to direct when they don't really know its pitfalls. Since most clients and many, if not most, professionals aren't really familiar with psychodrama either, they're not able to discriminate between a well-trained professional and an untrained dabbler. When the untrained directors caused casualties, the method itself was blamed as dangerous. (This is one of the reasons for the formation of the Board of Examiners, to accredit practitioners based on their having had a sufficient level of training.)

An example of this was the fashion of the encounter group, popular from the late 1960s and through the 1970s, and unfortunately also contaminated with a sub-fashion of "confrontation" which at times made the interactions at times overly intense. One group leader, a confrontation-oriented, self-styled "psychodramatist," was included as the leader of one of a number of groups as part of a classic study of encounter groups. Not surprisingly, this type of group had more casualties. The researchers involved didn't bother checking the credentials of the group leader, and I think this just reinforced the not-uncommon

feeling among cautious professionals that psychodrama was a danger-
ous modality. By the early 1980s, in reaction to this fashion, most
active approaches were condemned in many professional circles as
"touchy-feely."

In education and business, roleplaying was tried and often rejected.
It wasn't so much emotionally damaging as just clumsy, and people
didn't like it. The problem is that the group leader just assigned the
roles and failed to warm up the group and the players—and that skill
makes all the difference! Without it, participants feel pressured and
humiliated because the unspoken message was that they should be
spontaneous on command. So, again, the method was blamed instead
of the way it was applied.

A CHALLENGING ART

Psychodrama is a demanding art, requiring a level of self-disclosure far
beyond that needed by practitioners of more verbal, traditional ther-
apies. Psychodramatists must be spontaneous and resilient when deal-
ing with the awkwardness of their protagonists, the vicissitudes of
group dynamics, and the inevitability of mistakes. This all goes with
the nature of improvisation, and it is quite different from the more
protected role of the talk therapist.

Certainly in mid-century and still today, many if not most therapists
were inclined toward introversion and reticence, qualities more adapt-
ed to analytically oriented modes of work. More reticent people may
well be put off by more spontaneous and exuberant peers (Polonsky,
1971). Unless this interaction of different temperaments is discussed
clearly, it's easy to dismiss and devalue those who differ from the
group norm. Psychotherapy subtly supports this condemnation by
psychobabble, pathologizing more lively peers as hypomanic, support-
ing a "flight into health," or simply indulging in "acting-out." Unfortu-
nately, this method does attract a number of people who overdo it,
who may be flamboyant or abrupt. They rationalize this in emulation
of Moreno. To non-psychodramatists, though, these styles are often
viewed as unprofessional.

MORENO'S PERSONAL WEAKNESSES

Aside from the general professional problems intrinsic to psychodra-
ma, there was another source of difficulty: in many ways, Moreno was

his own worst enemy. He was industrious and really amazingly pro-ductive, but still often counter-productive. First of all, Moreno was extravagant in his manner. Some found this dramatic presentation rather charming and intriguing, a refreshing change from the stuffy professional style so often encountered in psychiatry. For those who expected a more "standard" mode, however, Moreno's behavior was off-putting (Berger, 1990).

Moreno, unfortunately, was often excessively egocentric and tact-less, so many who initially warmed up to him were later put off by his seeming capriciousness. He could be remarkably warm and welcom-ing one moment and later react impatiently and angrily. This could be hurtful to those who sought his approval. In giving lectures, while Moreno's manner might be vibrant and intriguing, the content often became rambling, drifting into narratives of personal history, com-menting on how other important figures stole his ideas, name-drop-ping, and diluting the delivery of factual information. Even for those favorably disposed toward his message, he could become boring, irrelevant, or "off-the-wall." For those who were on the fence, this mode of discourse turned them off.

In his relationships with associates and students, Moreno could be remarkably creative and inclusive. More in the 1950s, while running psychodrama sessions, these qualities communicated the aura of a true healer. At other times, he could be petty, arrogant, and overly control-ling. As a result, he influenced many but kept few close friends. Usually, people came into training, learned what they needed, and moved on. Even those who were loyal to him kept some degree of distance while they continued their own work. Moreno collaborated with several major figures in the field of psychiatry, but generally their experiences contained so many difficulties that they were not repeat-ed. It was easy to feel a genuine affection for him; with experience, however, one learned to stay somewhat wary.

An especially unfortunate event was that, early on, Moreno made an enemy of Sam Slavson who later became one of the major pioneers of psychoanalytic group psychotherapy. Within a year of Moreno's organizing his group psychotherapy and psychodrama organization (ASGPP), Slavson went on to organize a competing organization that allied itself with the far more influential psychoanalysts. Furthermore, Slavson's American Group Psychotherapy Association and its associated *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy* would have nothing to do with him or psychodrama, and this contributed mightily to the diminution and isolation of psychodrama as a sub-field. (Only in the last few decades has the AGPA made some rapprochement with psychodrama.)

In addition to overly centralizing his training, as mentioned, he failed to facilitate networking among his associates. It would have been better if he had shared names, addresses, and phone numbers. (I believe my earliest books in the late 1960s contained the first such lists.) Other organizational skills were also lacking, such as not always following up to correspondence or leading others to expect support that he was spread too thin to deliver. Subsequent interpersonal mishaps left supporters feeling snubbed, let down, or even betrayed.

THE PRINTED WORD

Moreno recognized the importance of the power of the printed word—which was the dominant medium of that time and still is today, although the Internet is catching up. As noted, he published journals and many books which had the advantage of getting the material into print. The disadvantage of being one's own publisher, however, is the problem of distribution. His writings had far less access to his professional colleagues than books published by more well-known publishing houses. Since almost all the books available about psychodrama until the mid-1960s were published by Moreno himself (the later ones co-written with his wife, Zerka), many people outside of major universities with extensive libraries had difficulty finding books on the subject.

Moreno's writing style was also problematic. It was often redundant, diffuse, turgid, and suffused with personal-historical reminiscences. Like his speaking, he wrote in a rambling fashion, mixing more factual observations with untested hypotheses and philosophical speculations, changing definitions and using terms in different senses. His books are hard to read and harder to understand—and, even for one who really studies them, still they remain elusive and irritating. He made up a number of his own terms which further increased the difficulty of learning about his system, and, even worse, he used these terms inconsistently. Perhaps some words needed to be coined—this is the fate of almost any new development. I could discern no effort, however, to try to adapt or re-frame his concepts in already familiar terms. This again was a kind of self-indulgence.

Another stumbling block was the relative lack of clear instructions as to how precisely to conduct a psychodrama! And, even worse, there was nothing in his writings and almost nothing in the literature through the 1960s about how to deal with difficulties as they arose. I was lucky to come upon Barbara Seabourne's unpublished papers, written in the early 1960s, for that information, although, of course,

my main instruction came from other psychodramatists. For those without such personal contacts, it would be hard to get started.

Moreno's writings were attractive because there were jewels of insight, fresh perspectives, and intrinsically brilliant ideas that showed through. Overall, however, their presentation was theoretically weak, unsystematic, underdeveloped, internally inconsistent, and unpersuasive. Had I not had some positive experiences with the method, I would have been turned off. I would have been embarrassed to show his writings to professional colleagues who weren't already favorably inclined to the process.

For all that Moreno complained about how his creative productions were taken by others without acknowledgment, it is clear that he also failed to acknowledge the positive contributions of others in the field. In the culture I was used to as a young psychiatrist, this was another mark of unprofessionalism. It would have helped matters if he had made some effort to build bridges to more established and familiar systems rather than to attempt to offer what seemed to be an entirely independent system.

Although he may have been justified in his complaints about other leaders in the field, such as Slavson or Kurt Lewin, and how he had influenced them early in their careers, how they used his ideas without crediting him, etc., Moreno should not have included this querulous concern in articles or books purportedly covering matter-of-fact material.

In criticizing psychoanalysis in particular, and also with other professionals and their systems, Moreno distracted the reader, implicitly demanding a shift of loyalty which was too much to expect. His criticisms were often aimed at obsolete practices and he failed to show an appreciation for current refinements.

In spite of the great deal of work he must have done in editing and publishing his various professional journals, the quality of most of the articles was nowhere near the standards of most other professional journals, and so the credibility of even the few more rigorously researched efforts suffered. Although he included papers on the early efforts of other pioneers, and his journals thus stood as a kind of *avante-garde* vehicle in the field (Treadwell & Treadwell, 1972), this thrust was diluted by the emergence of alternative journals in the late 1950s which then included other innovators' efforts. Moreno's publications lost many of their eminent contributors and became instruments of his more specialized interests. Thus, he frequently published anecdotal reports, abstracts of presentations at the annual meetings of the ASGPP, and students' papers, and he advertised his training programs a little too obviously—all of which lowered the journal's reputation.

THE OPEN SESSION

In spite of the professional norm of confidentiality, Moreno made the decision to offer psychodrama in open session. In the 1940s, he opened a studio on the Upper East Side of New York City where he worked with 30 to 100 or more people who attended on a weekend evening and paid a price equivalent to that of a movie. The audience became the source of the protagonists in the psychodramas and some-times served as the auxiliaries. Moreno's reason was that he believed in therapeutic theatre as an instrument of social change. He was familiar and comfortable with such contexts. Nevertheless, the whole idea was shocking to the mainstream of the profession which had plausible concerns about the enterprise. Although I haven't heard of any casualties, there may well have been some. Certainly it seemed to most psychiatrists to be a dubious practice, and a fair number of psychodramatists nowadays share this wariness. The open session was one way to attract students, at least those who were more fascinated than put off. Many colleagues did attend as well as people in the theatre. Some, like Fritz Perls, picked up some techniques and then moved on.

A related problem was Moreno's interdisciplinary orientation, his association with, and employment of, students and colleagues who didn't have all the required qualifications. He might include people from sociology, criminology, education, and other non-medical fields. In this, he was in line with Freud's assertion that psychoanalysis should not become the province of the medical profession (Bettel-heim, 1983), but the socio-political trends in America required medical certification for psychoanalysis and, by association, implied that non-psychiatrists could not be effective therapists. Here again, Moreno went against the group norm and thereby seemed unprofessional.

INVOLVING RELIGION

An even more outrageous affront to the norms of the professional sub-culture was Moreno's inclusion of religious themes in his writing and teaching. In the greater part of this century, religion and science were generally felt to be incompatible. More over, his theology wasn't even part of any particular denomination, and this tended to reinforce his being viewed as eccentric. Worse yet, Moreno wrote about the "I-God" concept—to be discussed in chapter 6—and at times spoke as if he identified with God. Worse than heresy, this smacked of outright

psychotic grandiosity (Power, 1975). Although there is some rationale for his stance, his poetic rhapsodizing and his making no effort to qualify his wording did little to disabuse his readers of the impression of megalomania. A corollary of this was the way Moreno wrote about "genius." Again, his idiosyncratic use of a term was misleading. For Moreno, anyone who opened to the fullness of the creative subconscious was a "genius" because, almost by definition, this source of spontaneity was far wiser than our ordinary ego-bound consciousness. Moreno claimed to be a genius and granted the same quality to any and all who would open their own minds to the fullness of their imaginations. Still, this interpretation could be discerned only with a careful reading of his words, and the general impression was again mere megalomania.

HISTORICAL DISTORTIONS

Reputation is also built by historians, and unfortunately most historians of psychiatry, group psychotherapy, or social psychology have done a poor job when it comes to psychodrama. Where Moreno has been mentioned at all, that description is often distorted. He has been called a disciple of Freud, and psychodrama has been called an offshoot of psychoanalysis. It seems it's a daunting challenge of getting a minor innovator adequately represented in the wider field. On the other hand, Moreno's status seems to have been overly idealized by many of his followers. Idealization is an erroneous overgeneralization involving the attribution of certain undemonstrated noble qualities to someone. For example, I have read some articles or chapters on psychodrama that describe Moreno's work as "popular," although it never achieved that status in almost any sense of the word. Moreno added to this by making false claims about his life or uttering half-truths. Dates are pushed back or forward and this further undermines credibility. He was a name-dropper and may have overestimated what others thought of him (Buber, 1958). He could make outrageous suggestions (Moreno, 1953, pp. 607–614) and behave in socially inappropriate ways.

All this leads to the proposition that Moreno be viewed through a relatively accurate lens of history, and history tends to reveal complexity, paradox, irony, or, as I'd put it simply, a normal mixture of strengths and weaknesses. Moreno had some brilliant ideas, truly visionary and essentially (in my mind) valid insights, on which I'll elaborate in the following chapters. We should also recognize, howev-

er, that not everything he said and did should be equally valued. We need to continue to distill out the best and to critique and revise, lest psychodramatists themselves fall prey to what Moreno warned against: relying on a cultural conserve.

SUMMARY

After considering the many difficulties involved, it is a tribute to Moreno's strengths of courage, persistence, and vision that his approach has survived as well as it has. A great deal of credit must go to his wife, Zerka, who moderated many of his faults and championed his work, both before and after his death. Without her, it is doubtful that he would have been as productive as he was or to what extent his ideas would have survived after their creator was gone. Anyone wishing to do more scholarly research on the history of Moreno or his ideas is directed to the medical library at Harvard University which is the repository for the entire Moreno archives.

The major reason Moreno's ideas continue to stimulate professionals in a number of fields is that they are basically valid, powerful, and relevant, now more than ever. In a time of pervasive dehumanization, his contributions to developing the value and individuality of each person through sociometric and spontaneity training principles are most timely.

For a system to be accepted, however, it is not enough for it to contain excellent ideas and powerful techniques. It must also be established as theoretically clear and coherent, professionally reputable, and scientifically effective. Otherwise, it will seem to be just a "gimmick." Because of the factors of historical unreadiness and Moreno's personal idiosyncrasies, his approach has not yet achieved the popular or professional recognition I think it deserves. This book is an effort to help remedy some of the confusion and to present Moreno's concepts in a more accessible format.

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Author's impressionistic sketch of Moreno, 1967.

5

General Philosophical and Theoretical Considerations

Moreno's theology (to be discussed in the next chapter) his philosophy of creativity, spontaneity and surplus reality, and his social psychology all rest on assumptions which are at variance with many of the conventional attitudes still prevalent in our culture. Therefore, an adequate understanding of these conceptual complexes must be first situated within a clear delineation of their underlying assumptions. Concepts such as "surplus reality," the place of play, and the deeper meanings of creativity don't mesh with ordinary ideas about objectivity and rationality. Nevertheless, in today's changing world, Moreno's ideas are relevant and heuristic—that is, they are both practical and generative of further useful ideas and methods.

The tension between what I interpret as Moreno's underlying philosophy—it must be noted that he never articulated these points—and the worldview of his own and our present era may be recognized as the present-day conflict between some of the essential ideas in postmodern thought and those within a Western culture dominated by "modern" attitudes. Several sub-realms of philosophy are involved:

- epistemology—what is knowable?
- ontology—what really exists?
- ethics—what is moral?
- metaphysics—how does the universe operate at its most funda-
  mental level, aside from any considerations of human nature?
  and even..
- theology—what is the nature of divinity?.

Psychological theories are based on philosophical assumptions, and cannot be considered in depth without first establishing these more basic understandings.

The shift from modern to postmodern thinking began during Moreno's youth with the emergence of existentialism, a philosophical trend that challenged idealism, turning away from those who claimed to be able to rationally deduce the truths of human nature. Existentialism affirmed the capacity of people to create new potentials—and of course, creativity is a key concept in this regard (Moreno, 1956). This was a precursor to more recent trends.

Another philosophical trend in the first quarter of the 20th Century was phenomenology. The intellectual culture of the previous 50 years had swung away from subjectivity and toward objectivity, to the extreme of positivism which declared that only that which could be measured was worthy of serious consideration as real. Subjective experience was then demoted to being an "epiphenomenon," a mere "side effect" of the mechanical-like physiology of the brain. The term, "phenomenon," however, addresses what actually occurs, which includes experience as well as observable, measurable activity. Phenomenology, therefore, was a counter to the positivist trend. It affirmed that subjective experience must be acknowledged as real. Of course, then, Moreno's emphasis on the nature of "psychological truth" would place him in this camp.

This tension reflects an ongoing dialectic about the nature of knowledge, truth, and reality. Before the Renaissance and Enlightenment—periods of intellectual change in Europe between the 15th and 19th Century—"truth" was divinely revealed or traditionally established, and study involved the acceptance of classical texts, sacred scriptures, and traditional beliefs (Smith, 1989). Modernity rebelled against this and substituted a contrary attitude, exemplified by rationalism and science. At first, science focused on the physical sciences while rationalism found its main impact in the political arena, dethroning the divine right of kings, abolishing slavery, and coming to think of itself as very

progressive. The scientific method, too, led to great technological breakthroughs.

Successful movements, however, tend to overshoot their proper scope, and scientific thinking, with its emphasis on reductionism (viewing complex systems as the product of their component parts), materialism (denying the operation of mind or Divinity in explanations), and positivism became dominant themes on the intellectual scene. The point is that there are a number of domains in which this modern worldview fails to enlighten, and this is because those domains involve a different type of complexity.

TWO KINDS OF COMPLEXITY

The microscope, telescope, cyclotron, and other windows into the mysteries of nature have revealed not only vast realms not previously known but also that these realms are incredibly complex. And plumbing the nature of what we can readily see, in language, behavior, culture, social life, child development, forests, etc., again we keep finding that it's all much more complicated. There are more subtle interacting and interpenetrating systems than had ever been imagined. Recently, mathematicians have come up with ways of contemplating complexity itself, in the theories about chaos and fractals. The growing awareness of the extent of complexity in the cosmos requires a corresponding adjustment of the nature of philosophy. This is especially true in regarding our understanding of the nature of mind and those behavioral sciences that must deal with this elusive realm. Mind offers an added dimension to the problem of complexity itself: meaning— and *meanings shift with frames of reference.*

However complex our physical sciences are, the investigations of those phenomena generally tend to focus on measuring various relationships. In the behavioral sciences, though, that added dimension of frames of reference imposes an elusiveness on the challenge of understanding that goes far beyond the problems in appreciating the physical sciences. However voluminous the research on the empirical dimensions of mind—neurophysiology, perception, and other matters more accessible to traditional research methods—many other questions don't lend themselves to such approaches: myth, play, fantasy, literature, salesmanship, rhetoric, economics, politics, art, music, humor, spirituality, law (the sense of fairness), many aspects of human relations, philosophy, etc. These are elusive because the frames of

reference people are bringing to a given situation often shift and, as a result, the meaning attributed to any situation correspondingly shifts.

Each frame of reference also has a different set of criteria for what is more or less "true" or "better"—to the point that the very concept of truth is thrown into disarray. The more commonly accepted criteria used to assess a theory in academic settings, such as logic, utility, or internal coherence, is, in the realm of contemplating human experience, expanded to include such mysterious dynamics as love, faith, responsibility, the yearning to be known, the fear of death, embarrassment, the desire to express oneself artistically, and the exploration of direct mystical intuitions. In such a setting, one must become capable of not only tolerating paradox but also actually requiring it. Such dynamics are not reducable to the kinds of research used in doing chemistry.

The point, then, is that the behavioral sciences and humanities require a different type of study, one that involves more *interpretation* and less mere reductionistic analysis and controlled experiment. (Notice that I'm not rejecting the scientific method—there is still a good deal of usefulness of this approach in the empirical sciences, and even in psychology. I'm just suggesting that it not be the *sole* standard; rather, we need to appreciate that other approaches to elucidating "truth" may be even more valid for certain types of situations.) Interpretation, in turn, involves a more phenomenological approach.

Our culture still invests a great deal of weight in academia which still invests a great deal of weight in the modern worldview, "hard science," and the great complex of allocations of promotions, grant monies, and judgments as to which articles are acceptable for publication in mainstream journals. We should not underestimate the economic advantages which reinforce the intellectual status quo. Psychodrama and other psychotherapies which are less amenable to requirements of positivistic and materialistic criteria for hard "scientific" evidence tend to be devalued as fuzzy-minded if not vaguely self-deluded by those who have substantial investments in the modern worldview.

ALTERNATIVE MODES OF KNOWLEDGE

To address this conundrum, several approaches have evolved, and these deserve to be briefly described because they all support the use of psychodrama.

- *Hermeneutics.* This is the art of interpretation. In anything created by people, such as myths, histories, poems, novels, or sacred

texts, since there are different frames of reference, it becomes an interesting challenge to develop better ways of elucidating the meanings involved. While claims to final authority become dissolved, still there are gradients of value as to how well an interpretation is crafted.

- *Constructivism.* The modern worldview, for the most part, is characterized by an underlying assumption in objectivism which means that truth exists objectively, "out there," apart from the consciousness of those who might or might not correctly apprehend it. In contrast, increasing numbers of intellectuals are opening to a viewpoint which asserts that what is taken to be reality is often actually the construction of people's own beliefs, language, and custom (Neimeyer, 1993, 1995; Watzlawick, 1984). This is not altogether new. Alfred Adler's theory of fictions was influenced by a philosopher who made this very point (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Vaihinger, 1935).

  In the empirical realms, objectivism is generally more useful, which is why science emerged triumphant over "superstition." In the realms of the humanities and behavioral sciences, however, objectivism is often misapplied, and it is better to consciously recognize the degree to which people think "that's just the way it is" as really just the product of an implicit agreement. In our time of increasing change, it helps to question many of our socioeconomic arrangements, role definitions, and other cultural norms.

- *Narrative.* So much of psychology has become quantified, as 'if knowledge existed only in terms of numbers. This, too, is a byproduct of psychology as a "science" of the human mind trying to operate along the same lines as a science of the physical realm. Increasingly, compelling arguments are made for looking at the complexities of human situations using the vehicle of "story." Narrative approaches in psychology and psychotherapy also resonate with the dramaturgical metaphor on which psychodrama is based (Sarbin, 1986; Parry & Doan, 1994).

POSTMODERNISM

Constructivism, hermeneutics, and narrative are part of a larger complex, an intellectual trend called postmodernism that has become increasingly prevalent in intellectual circles in the last few decades. Essentially, the postmodernist view challenges the domination of culture by objectivist thinking and the inappropriate application of con-

ventional scientific modes of evaluation in the humanities. It is a shift in basic epistemology (Anderson, 1990, 1995).

Modernity is characterized by objectivism and empirical science. Because modernity seems far more "enlightened" than the "superstitious" and "hide-bound" traditionalism of the pre-modern culture, moderns have often lapsed into self-righteousness and complacence. A number of problems, however, also seem to be associated with this materialistic, individualistic, objectivistic worldview, including colonialism, patriarchy and racism—especially over those who seem less technologically advanced (especially regarding weapons). The modern Western world marginalizes groups that can't economically compete, and, as mentioned, its pride of accomplishment supports deep denial about continued problems of ecology, social injustice, and other major challenges of our time.

In the inflation that comes with success, excessive authority is given to those icons that seem to be the cause of this success, namely, knowledge based on modern research methods. By attempting to apply the criteria of empirical science to problems in the fields of the behavioral sciences, however, there has been a trend towards "scient-ism." This term refers to the overextension of science to address issues, such as ethical problems, that cannot be properly discovered using its methods (Wilber, 1997, p.24).

The intellectual trend called postmodernism has as its common denominator the questioning of the modern worldview. This trend is many-faceted and by no means is there a fixed dogma—the very idea of a postmodernist creed is an oxymoron, a paradox, because knowledge is viewed as more relativistic. One of the problems of postmodernism is that, as is true with many political, artistic, or social movements, a significant percentage of its advocates take superficial, obscurantist, simplistic, or extreme positions, embarrassing those who want to clarify the more responsible and intellectually rigorous essential insights involved. Still, I think this overall approach has some useful implications for psychotherapy and education (Blatner, 1997).

A VISCERAL REACTION

To suggest that psychodrama is consonant with postmodernist ideas is tricky because many people who learn about this worldview really, viscerally "hate" it. Postmodernism is felt to attack not just their deepest beliefs but the very way they think. This is because a shift of worldview does require a basic re-orientation to the world, one which

requires a fundamentally different, more flexible and creative type of thinking.

Here's an analogy: Imagine that you were raised in a part of the world that was near-desert; there was enough water to drink and wash with, but never enough in one location to swim in. The very idea of swimming was inconceivable. Once someone fell into a well and drowned, so water in large quantities is known to be dangerous. Now, imagine that you are drafted into the armed services of this country, assigned to the Navy, taken to the distant costal region of your country, and, as part of your navy training, challenged to learn to swim.

Swimming is an activity that can confront your whole feelings about the proper way to relate to gravity. It's one thing to be exposed to swimming as a child, but to not even know that swimming was possible, and to have all your friends and relatives support this worldview, and then to be faced with getting in the water and learning behaviors that go completely against the habits accumulated well into your 20s is a kind of shift of a deeply felt nonverbal relationship—what Piaget called "accommodation"—that is profoundly disorienting.

Swimming or astronauts' learning to maneuver in space are physical activities that require a deep process of change in the way the body-mind relates to the world; becoming accommodated to the kinds of lively cognition associated with a postmodernist thought can be equally demanding. When one has learned to relate to truth as something out there, fixed, and one has become conditioned to thinking in conventional, rational ways in order to "be realistic," it can be difficult to be invited to think in terms of imagination, intuition, and creativity. If you've learned to obey, study, learn what's written, and above all, memorize, then it's hard to be asked to shift to creating new structures or ideas. The idea of "just making things up" feels vaguely horrifying, something that only little children are allowed to do—silly, foolish, indulgent, nonsense. Such terms are used for devaluing that which is merely unfamiliar.

The postmodernist-modernist tension will be discernible in later discussions on theology (chapter 6) and spontaneity versus robopathy (chapter 8). Within all religions there are tensions between those who want to revise doctrine to fit present knowledge and those who rely on what has been handed down by authorities. Even those in authority who are, in fact, *creating new interpretations* tend to deny this, preferring to believe that they are reading into the established texts what is really there.

The point here is that psychodrama requires a valuing and use of creative thinking which, although we give it lip service, actually goes

against the grain of much of our cultural conditioning. Psychodrama as a constructivist process requires some re-learning of fairly basic modes of thinking, a shift from tendencies to rely on what others have created to spontaneity, daring to create anew.

METATHEORY

Theory in psychology also needs re-evaluation because psychodrama operates within the broader theoretical frameworks of psychology, social psychology and other behavioral sciences. Yet, there too, questions and revisions are being proposed about the nature of theory-building itself, such discussions occurring at the meta-theoretical level (Kellermann, 1991). Do we need theory at all? Do we need a tight theory of psychology or can it be loose? What are the proper criteria for a good theory, and how have those criteria changed in light of changing circumstances? Is psychology a science?

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, there are different levels of theory-building, some more general, others more specific. It is quite possible to have a theory about, say, the dynamics of falling in love without it needing to be tied to a general theory that explains everything. This will have implications for how we consider psychodrama's various theories.

As discussed, certain kinds of questions may be approached in different ways, some via experiment and measurement, other via interpretation. Allport, a major pioneer of psychology, noted a difference between two types of investigations. One, called "nomothetic," involves the more familiar testing of a hypothesis on a significant number of people and noting general trends. The other, called "idiographic," is more of a case study approach, recognizing the complexities of individuality. Unfortunately, nomothetic research has become too dominant, almost eclipsing the use of idiographic methods. Both have value, and this recognition anticipated the issues addressed above.

WHY THEORIZE?

Many people are uncomfortable with theoretical discussion and tend to avoid it. Then they rationalize this avoidance by questioning even the need for theory. After all, techniques can be used without theory. In actually dealing with people's problems in the course of conducting psychodramas, however, subtle and complex situations arise which

require some careful reflection, checking, and adjusting sets of assumptions. It will not suffice to simply "trust the method"—a cliché that is, at times, useful and, at times, misleading. Atheoretical practice sometimes leads to the application of technique even if it may not be in the client's best interest. As one of the great humanistic psychologists, A. H. Maslow, observed that "those who only know how to use a hammer tend to treat everything as if it is a nail."

Conducting psychodrama goes beyond mere competence in the method and calls upon the true professionalism of the practitioner, the art, the wisdom that includes the greater field of psychology, to give to the client the respectful act of re-thinking a problem. All thought, however, operates within contexts. Theory is simply a more explicit and rationally coordinated set of assumptions.

Kurt Lewin, a noted social psychologist, said, "Nothing is as useful as a good theory." He was sophisticated enough to know that theories aren't the ultimate answers. They are just tools, but tools are what help us think. Writing is a tool. A map is a tool. Blueprints and scaffolds in building or painting are all physical expressions of underlying systematically articulated and developed mental schemas—theories. Theory is the intellectual map for the application of any rational practice. If psychodrama is to be used responsibly, it should be based on plausible reason. This doesn't mean that there is no room for intuition, imagination, and inspiration, nor is the exercise of showmanship, charisma, and "magic" excluded—these are also tools, and they can be woven into a narrative and postmodernist approach to healing, education, or consultation.

A LOOSE THEORY

Because psychodrama is a complex of methods that can be integrated with many other types of therapy or schools of thought, it transcends any particular theory, but requires instead a loose metatheory. For a time, as part of the aforementioned scientistic trend of the mid-20th Century, psychology tried to come up with a unified, tight theory. The metatheoretical assumption that psychology could be approached in this fashion subjects the vast realm of mind—social, playful, artistic, political, spiritual, etc.—to a "Procrustean bed," a limited framework that distorts the capacity to fully appreciate the richness that is there.

It been shown that a tight theory is all that useful. There might well be an expenditure of unnecessary time spent in trying to shore up the loose ends of such a theory when a loose theory could instead offer

a reasonable framework for creative innovation as well as effective application. Interestingly, Moreno's applied role theory (see chapters 15 and 16) offers a workable, general framework and language for this looser metatheoretical context. This point is developed in chapter 13 when I write about the integrations of psychodrama with other approaches to therapy. It's possible, to create an intellectually and professionally responsible loose, general theory that can allow for the development or use of many sub-theories, involving both common elements and special principles more relevant to the circumstances of each region of concern.

SUMMARY

"Psychodrama can be defined, therefore, as the science which explores "the truth" by dramatic methods" (Moreno, 1972, p. 12). Moreno's view of truth, however, differed from many other intellectuals in that it focused especially on psychological experience. To appreciate his other theoretical concepts, it's important to recognize intellectual framework in which psychological truth is given greater weight. Psychodrama is in part of the emerging worldview, the gradual paradigm shift of the postmodern in dialectical tension with the modern. Many professionals and behavioral scientists who are accustomed to the modern mode find postmodern, constructivistic approaches too free-wheeling and tend to dismiss it. These critiques should be recognized as arising from a fundamental difference in assumptions.

This is a political as well as intellectual challenge because changing fundamental beliefs doesn't come easy, and people will argue their old ways vigorously, if not entirely persuasively. Philosophy in a rapidly changing world isn't just an ivory-tower contemplation but a subtly present struggle among all kinds of groups, such as psychotherapists, very few of whom recognize that what they're arguing about is a conflict of basic worldviews.

Finally, let's even re-evaluate our views about the nature of the enterprise of helping others to cope with personal and interpersonal problems. Is it science? Is it art? Might it be something that's closer to a mixture of salesmanship, persuasion, rhetoric, hypnosis, suggestion, spiritual guidance, and individualized, dialogic contemplative practice? Science pretends to itself that it can be neutral and objective, but actually operates in self-deceptive denial of the degree to which it subtly imposes a host of assumptions on our very perceptions as well as of the subject matter to be examined. When that subject matter is

our own mind, the double-binding operation of a modern worldview can be oppressive. (A useful definition of oppression is when the power operations of one group, in this case, the intellectual establishment, is so persuasive and effective that those being oppressed can hardly become aware that there are other alternatives.)

Moreno's ideal of creativity is both liberating and profoundly subversive. It invites us to question, and that opens the door to questioning very basic assumptions. In this, he was 70 or more years ahead of his time. Those who would understand Moreno can benefit from knowing about contemporary trends which illuminate and support his ideas, postmodernism, constructivism, narrative, hermeneutics—big words, but expressing ideas that need to find words for their expression because they represent important themes that cry out for understanding, new ways of thinking in a world that needs those new perspectives.

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Zerka T. Moreno, circa 1951.

6

Moreno's Theology

It's not necessary to accept any of Moreno's ideas about theology in order to effectively apply most of his ideas and methods. Nevertheless, the potential of psychodrama is better appreciated by recognizing the metaphysical as well as psychological foundations of creativity and spontaneity.

Moreno saw creativity and spontaneity as underlying the unfolding of existence, innate in the very operation of the cosmos. (The term "cosmos" includes not only the material, physical universe, however vast, but also the far greater dimensions of mind, experience, imagination, and spirit.) And for Moreno, the cosmos was an expression of God's action and essential nature, and, theologically speaking, God, in turn, was deeply creative and spontaneous (Blatner & Blatner, 1988).

SPIRITUALITY, RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY

As mentioned in chapter 4, Moreno's inclusion of theology reduced his credibility as a scientist because those two fields weren't seen as

being compatible. In recent years, however, this compartmentalization is being increasingly challenged, and the psychology of religion and the religious dimensions of psychology are being addressed far more widely.

Certainly, Moreno did not compartmentalize these spheres of inquiry. For him there was a unity of vision regarding theology, philosophy, sociology, psychology, practical methods, and social action (Lindqvist, 1994). They were all different aspects of the same underlying idea: creativity as a core value, a Divine dynamic, pervading the Cosmos. Moreno, never really affiliated his theological ideas with any particular religion—his ideas, he felt, could be integrated into and inform all the different religions.

Moreno and others, however, such as Jung or William James used the term religion in a very broad sense. More recently, it has become useful to differentiate two aspects: spirituality and religion. Spirituality is the *activity of developing a relationship with the transcendent realm of being,* or the activity of deepening one's connectedness with God, the Cosmos, or the Greater Wholeness of Existence (Wuthnow, 1998). Religion, in contrast, is the *social organization* whose essential function is to promote spirituality, but which, historically, often obscures or forgets this function in the pursuit of numerous secondary goals. Social organizations often do this, whether they be governments or schools or hospitals or health "care" delivery systems. So, it is possible to be religious without being spiritual, or spiritual without being religious—that is, affiliating with any particular organized package of ideas and practices. It is possible to be both. Many people find their greatest spiritual fulfillment within the framework of their chosen religion. It is also possible—and even more common nowadays—to be neither spiritually inclined nor religious.

When Jung wrote about religion, he was addressing what I've called spirituality. His point was that just as people have a built-in tendency to bond to parents or children or family, so too there's a variable degree of a sense of connectedness with the Cosmos, personified in most cultures and given one of the names of God or Goddess. While Freud considered this tendency an illusion, simply a projection of the father image, Jung recognized a far more subtle and complex dynamic, one which noted that very mature, rational, and contemplative people report mystical experiences that cannot easily be accounted for by such reductionistic pronouncements.

Moreno didn't bother with a rational analysis of the problem. He was more of a natural mystic, filled with a sense of God's immanence and creativity, deeply intuiting the moral imperative of these forces in

the world (Moreno, 1971, 1972). Although creativity is given widespread lip service, there remain, in fact, many psychological and cultural hindrances to its operation, as will be discussed in chapter 7.

AN AESTHETIC BASIS

Ideas are best understood when viewed in terms of what other ideas they contradict. We live in a time of stagnant myth and meaning. Major philosophers and psychologists have noted this—a "cry for myth" (May, 1991), and "unheard cry for meaning" (Frankl, 1978). This condition of stagnant myth can even be discerned in popular beliefs about God. For example, one common belief is that the world is a testing place for obedience to God's rules. God is viewed above all as a moralist, apart from humanity. There may be a variable degree of compassion associated with this role, but its deeper function is that of rule-maker and judge.

Moreno's theology presents a contrasting version: God pursues more aesthetic than moralistic values. Aesthetic values include the pleasure of creativity, discovery, and celebration. In other words, instead of playing the role of judge, occasionally intervening on the side of His chosen "righteous" subjects, what if God is lively, curious, feels unfinished, endlessly open to creative possibilities? To think of God this way may not be traditional, but really doesn't dishonor God's glory— it's just a different type of glory. To return to the mental state of people who might enjoy such an image, there are, nowadays, many people whose lives are not characterized by unending and bitter struggle, but the opposite. Affluent and bored, the question for them is where and how they belong in a complex and changing world, and what is there meaningful for them to do.

Aesthetics addresses a question different from what is true on a logical, reasonable, or even practical level. It asks: what *feels* good, and what is the nature of good feeling? Examples of aesthetic judgments include:

awesome	important	meaningful	beautiful
sublime	bliss	excitement	interesting
alive	moving	profound	sweet

Such experiences cannot be adequately explained. Nevertheless, philosophy tries to interpose a measure of reasoned discourse, to attempt to think about feelings.

The idea of a continuously creating Divine Force (really, more of a Lure) contrasts with the more traditional view of God as unchanging, and therefore unaffected by human affairs. Greater interactivity seems to interfere with what most people understand as Divine omniscience and omnipotence. The underlying idea here is the idealization of stability and completeness which are projections of the mentality of the medieval period in Europe when life, for most people, was an unending and bitter struggle to survive, with civil war, famine, disease and death all around. Heaven was the relief from this struggle, a place primarily of peace, the outbreath of relaxation and security. In such a world, the greatest value is viewed as being in a state of rest rather than dynamic becoming. Perfection is viewed as being in a state of stability and completion. In Heaven, there were final answers and, of course, God had them. When you got there, then you were satisfied, finished—and this was the greatest good.

Admittedly, stability and peace are aesthetic values, but then again, so are excitement and adventure. What if God enjoys these qualities even more? What if an even more glorious vision of Divine nature celebrates the potential for further creation, now, here, every moment, in every part of the cosmos? Might this be a different but equally sublime view of God? It was indeed this view that Moreno intuited and tried to express in his mediocre and rhapsodically poetic fashion.

RESONANCE WITH OTHER PHILOSOPHERS

Moreno's ideas are by no means idiosyncratic. Others have come up with very similar ideas, perhaps not presented so poetically but, on the other hand, with much more intellectual rigor. Moreno noted some overlap of his ideas with the work of Henri Bergson and Charles Sanders Pierce who also noted the importance of creativity in thinking about the essential dynamics of existence.

This idea is also present in the writings of Alfred North Whitehead (who wrote mainly in the 1920s and 1930s) and Charles Hartshorne (whose writings span the 1950s through the 1980s). Their approach has become known as "process philosophy" because, instead of thinking about the world as a collection of things, it shifts the focus to the essential *eventfulness* (process) of all occasions. These events are viewed as interpenetrating and operating at every level of complexity (Blatner, 1985; Griffin et. al, 1993). Process thought includes the idea of God, but one who operates more like Moreno's vision. Instead of basing the image of God on Aristotle's concept of the "unmoved mover," both

Moreno and Process Philosophy suggest a far more interactional and interpenetrating Being that underlies the unfolding of everyone's becoming (Blatner, 1998). This philosophy also recognizes creativity as a core dynamic in every process.

Other philosophers and poets also carry forth this more dynamic view. The writer Nikos Kazantsakis (1960), in his poetic *Saviors of God*, expresses sentiments quite similar to Moreno's earlier *Words of the Father*, especially regarding God's need for us to co-create, to help the world be born. The Russian philosopher, Nikolai Berdyaev (1954) emphasized the moral imperative to be creative and to foster it in others.

These ideas contrast with trends throughout our culture to bind religion to tradition and to give authority to ordained clergy and theologians who assume authority as valid interpreters of the sacred conserves. Instead, Moreno, process philosophers, and many others suggest that people can find wisdom through the creative sources within.

IMMANENCE

Moreno intuited further that God acts in and through the creativity of every being in the world and not just from "on high." (In theology, this doctrine is called "immanence.") The idea that everyone you meet is an expression of God, in the baby's laugh and the homeless person's tears, is well-known in our culture. Less well-known is the idea, present in some theologies of the East and elsewhere, that all existence at its most essential level is God, just as all the cells in your body are an expression of your life force, even though the cells themselves may not realize or embody the totality of your spirit/soul/psyche/body. In contrast, the more pervasive belief is that God is predominantly, if not completely, transcendent, wholly beyond our being, and wholly "other." Some of this belief may be a projection of our childish mental attitudes and a residue of medieval doctrine.

Moreno spoke to the various views of transcendence and immanence as being expressions of historical phases. First God was viewed as a "He-God," out there (mainly transcendent); then God became a "Thou-God," closer, but still other. Now, Moreno said, it's time for the "I-God," (mainly immanent). It's a recognition of the "natural depth in man," the potential of mind to access and express transpersonal identification (Kraus, 1984).

I think, however, this is where Moreno overshot the mark. Most thoughtful modern theologians find that the God concept has a balance of both immanence and transcendence, and Moreno underestimated the latter. It is the height of *hubris* to think the human mind

can fully understand the universe. The idea of transcendence, the "otherness" of God, invites people to differentiate between their ego-selves and the source of wisdom, "higher power," or "the still small voice," and to open with receptivity and respect to these dimensions. Moreno's valid insights so inflated his ego that he lost perspective, lost the virtue of humility. His tendencies toward narcissism reinforced this. He may have had a little insight into this because he made it a point to grant the status of genius to anyone who allows creativity to flow through. (Nevertheless, he didn't really open much to the ideas of those with whom he was in actual relationship.) He was just too full of himself. Thus, his theology was informative, but not complete.

RESPONSIBILITY

The "I-God" concept was linked to the idea that we have a moral imperative to take a greater degree of responsibility as a co-creator of the world. This role is glorious and yet requires the assumption of a kind of mature burden. Again, this concept contrasts with a pervasive tendency in culture to avoid responsibility.

Many psychological and social problems have, as an integral element, this dynamic of avoidance of responsibility. People even misused psychoanalysis, blaming their "complexes" for their problems! To counter this, Schafer (1976) sought to change the way language was used in the analytic process, to help people more consciously take responsibility for their own thoughts and feelings. (The theme of avoiding responsibility is also discussed in chapter 8 about robopathy and spontaneity, its opposite, healthier dynamic.)

Even the popular vision of Heaven involves a relief from responsibility. Security has become overvalued. What if people could come to value and enjoy taking responsibility, experiencing the thrill and glory of courage, risk, adventure, and creativity? Might the idea of Heaven be correspondingly revised? Might this also have implications for how people view the purpose of life—to make money and then cop out, drop out, and goof off, or to use life's experiences in the service of social action (to be discussed further in the next chapter)?

INDIVIDUALITY

As we've learned more about the nature of the mind, of the varieties of temperament, ability, history, family and cultural background, and

other factors, the reality of individuality has become more vivid. Everyone can't learn the same way, nor can all serve in the same way. The metaphor of the assembly line and its replaceable parts continues to exert an unholy force in modern society, but it needs to be challenged.

Morality was similarly mechanistic. All that was required was an obedience to religious and civil rules, and if these were fulfilled, the often explicit message was that the "righteous" and their world would be rewarded (like good children) with bounteous harvests, good weather, triumph over one's enemies, and peace. There was little recognition of different levels of spiritual maturation, moral action, or the need for individual creativity (Fowler, 1981). In the post-modern world, however, with an effulgence of new technologies, it's as if we need all the creativity we can get. Spirituality and morality are also coming to be viewed as processes of continuous becoming and transformation.

The complexity and uniqueness of the individual serves as supporting evidence for Moreno's philosophy of creativity. In a world where creativity is a frill, what's the point of being unique? On the other hand, if creativity is central, a core purpose of the Cosmos, then people are invited to discover and contemplate the fullest implications of their own combinations of strengths, weaknesses, and inclinations, their own individuality, and to use that uniqueness in the service of creativity.

ENCOUNTER

In addition to becoming aware of one's own individuality, there are implications to recognizing individuality in others. There is value in fostering creativity in others as well as oneself. To learn about the other's uniqueness, to bring it forth, requires a deeper level of interpersonal engagement, what Moreno called "encounter."

The Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber, wrote about a similar dynamic in noting the difference between the way people relate to things ("I-It") and how they (should) relate to people ("I-Thou"). This latter relationship allows for the spontaneity of the other—which means that they can surprise you! They—others—sometimes do what you neither expect nor desire. They're not toys you can manipulate; they're not things.

Buber and Moreno both saw that, in fact, many people tend to relate to not only other people, but also even to God, in an I-It fashion, as if they could manipulate others. Placating, sacrificing (in

the old sense), and other actions were, for many people, simply acts of magic—if I do this, then automatically you will do that—but relationships between creative beings don't work that simply. It requires a shift toward a more mature way of thinking and relating to deal with that reality. This, of course, requires more responsibility, more alertness to the otherness of others, including God. The good news is that, in Moreno's (and Buber's) view, God's love for us is similarly open to our individuality and our spontaneity, and God's desire is for us to achieve our fullest potential.

In learning the art of encounter, one learns openness, caring, and enjoying the creativity of others. It is a lesser aesthetic value for the other to be just a mirror or a puppet. There is greater value in promoting spontaneity in both the I and the Thou. The downside is that you're out of control, you get no guarantees, you don't always get what the little ego-you wants in the moment. The upside is a truly growing, discovering, interacting relationship. Also, in a mutually spontaneous relationship, you are able to discover and enjoy the world through the other person's eyes and senses and thoughts. Your world is greater because the other not only plays with you but also shares his or her own experience. Again, the aesthetic of creativity wins over the aesthetic of mere security.

A practical implication of all this is the psychodramatic method of promoting spiritual dialogue, a mixture of axiodrama and the "empty chair" technique. Instead of just talking *to* God in prayer or "listening" in meditation, people are given the opportunity to encounter God (or some other image of a great, wise spiritual entity or higher power) to engage in a give-and-take conversation, asking questions, and role reversing so that, in the role of the higher power, one finds oneself spontaneously coming up with individualized and surprisingly meaningful answers to the questions posed. It's a powerful means of contemplation.

CREATIVE THEOLOGY

Moreno's theology implies its own revision because individuals need to construct meaning-systems consonant with their own temperament, culture, and personal background. The central value of creativity requires an ongoing process of deconstruction and reconstruction, and so, all concepts, even his own, and even about our images and thoughts regarding Divinity, are recognized as tentative and open to question and revision.

Just as Moreno dared to challenge the cultural conserves of mainstream religion and philosophy by coming up with his own ideas, so

everyone may be similarly empowered in working out their own mythologies. The practice of Bibliodrama discussed in chapter 20 notes an adaptation of sociodrama whereby people can imagine alternative scenarios based on the stories in sacred texts. Moreno might go further and remind us that, in his view, anyone, by opening to spontaneity, could open to inspiration, the entering of Divine spirit into mind. His idea was that God didn't just work through the prophets of the past but is working now through every being. Of course, imagination and inspiration need to be balanced by a measure of rational discrimination.

SUMMARY

Moreno's theology has much to offer contemporary trends in spirituality. As our world becomes more multicultural, the various religions are reforming and negotiating theological ideas. For most people, though, their concepts of God (including the worldviews of atheism) remain implicit, at the subconcious level, unless they're specifically addressed in therapy or at a religious retreat. That Moreno addressed these fundamental issues implies the validity of becoming more conscious about the underlying assumptions in our lives, the ones that imply ultimate meaning and belonging.

Moreno's image of the Divine as immanent, creative, and inviting the responsibility of co-creativity may help people honor each other more, to see the light of God in the struggles of neighbors and resist the many subtle temptations to retreat to the illusions of security through an overreliance on that which has already been created—what Moreno called the "cultural conserve." Understanding the subtle aesthetic shift that underlies Moreno's theology also reveals the source of his indefatigable energy. Taking on the role of co-creator can be most energizing and refreshing when one considers the nature of the task as a grand, wondrous, open-ended, sublime glory of helping God bring forth ever-new forms. It's like participating in a great construction, a great celebration, and knowing that what you're doing is appreciated as a meaningful part of the whole. There's a lot of inspiration in such a model of the cosmos.

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7

Creativity

In the last few hundred years, three new and related ideas have emerged in human consciousness: progress, evolution, and creativity. Prior to that, life happened in a more cyclical fashion. The word "creativity" was not even in many English dictionaries until about a hundred years ago. As technological innovation has accelerated, though, creativity and its associated ideas are becoming increasingly relevant.

For Moreno and some other philosophers, creativity was a metaphysical and even theological quality, as discussed in the previous chapter. In addition, creativity itself has become an identified subject of study, along with academic departments, organizations, journals, books, and conferences exploring its many aspects (Runco & Pritzker, 1999).

Psychodrama and its associated methods may be thought of as ways for fostering creativity in individuals and groups. There is a logical progression of related ideas here which may be useful in explaining how psychodrama works:

First, creativity is recognized as an important value. Many personal and collective problems are worsened because people either avoid

dealing with them or cling to outmoded solutions, and these behaviors are, in turn, at least partly due to a lack of skills in creative thinking.

Second, the best way to promote creativity is by promoting spontaneity—a psychological and social dynamic which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Third, spontaneity requires the courage and freedom to improvise which requires a context that is essentially playful—to be discussed in chapter 9.

Fourth, spontaneity and creativity are also enhanced when physical action, imaginativeness, and group interactions can be activated (chapter 10).

Fifth, improvised drama is the cultural vehicle that combines the aforementioned qualities. Moreno noted that drama wasn't just for entertainment, but that this powerfully evocative process may be modified and adapted for personal or collective healing, i.e., psychodrama.

Sixth, another group of action-like methods, sociometry (to be discussed in chapters 18 & 19), was designed to draw on spontaneous reactions of group members in order to promote more creativity in the social sphere.

Seventh, the language of drama, using the concept of role, may be modified and used as a practical language for effecting these creative changes (as discussed in chapters 15 to 17).

CONSIDERING CREATIVITY

Creativity is not mere novelty. It requires some shift toward a significantly positive value. In actuality, though, the situation is complex. Creativity is not always for the best. Sometimes a new idea lasts for a while, with many enthusiastic adherents, and then its unintended side effects emerge which may outweigh the initial benefits. Thus, it's not only the ancient or established that must be re-evaluated; sometimes it's even that which has just been created.

Creativity is often a collaborative process—people generating together new ideas, picking up clues, molding them, bouncing them off each other.

The subconscious mind is not merely a repository for repressed thoughts and feelings but also a source of deep inspiration, with wisdom, humor, and compassion also becoming available as one opens to what is really the fount of most creative breakthroughs. In a sense, we not only co-create with others, we also co-create with our Higher Selves.

Creating something new often involves the destruction of what went before. The process may be simple and generally agreed on, or

it may be one in which the change is resisted. There is often a great deal of creativity involved in developing new and better ways to help other creative ideas become more widely accepted. Creativity, however, often ends up being stifled.

THE CULTURAL CONSERVE

In spite of the way the concept of creativity has become almost fashionable, and in spite of its being given lip service, many social institutions and norms tend to ignore or even suppress this dynamic process. For much of history, the weight of conservativism and tradition inhibited creativity, and this inhibition continues in current common practices in child-rearing, schools, religion, and many other social and cultural institutions.

Moreno coined the term, "the cultural conserve," to refer to that category of things—including intangibles, like customs or social rules—for that which has already been created. The conserve is, for the most part, a good and necessary thing, the basis for technique, courtesy, good habits, and much of civilization. The cultural conserve, however, should be recognized not as a fixed reality but as an ongoing social and psychological construction (as discussed in chapter 5). Imagine it as a living organism. New growth is created here and, over there, other parts become old and die. Life requires a continuous dynamic process, and problems arise if there is resistance to either the new growth or the releasing of obsolete elements.

There needs to be a lively interplay, then, between creativity and that which has been created, never ceasing. Throughout culture, and prevalent in personal and family dysfunctions, however, what can be discerned is the operation of the tendency to irrationally cling to what has been created, to rely on traditional or established rules as if they had unquestioned authority, to lapse into fixed or rigid habits of belief and thought.

This dialectical tension is pervasive, and the emergence of creativity in a system must not be taken for granted. Moreno coined "cultural conserve" in order to help us differentiate the *product* of creativity from the *process* and to remind us to attend to the process. (Incidentally, individuals also have their "conserves" of fixed attitudes or established behavioral reaction patterns, and these, too, need to be subjected to the processes of re-evaluation and revision. Thus, the word "cultural" is not always used.)

To restate the point: The cultural conserve in itself is morally neutral. The problem comes from blindly relying on it as an authority or

excessively clinging to it out of inertia, mental laziness, or the fear of the unknown. We need to recognize the need for continuing to create, for re-evaluating what has already been created. (More about how to counter the tendency to rely on the cultural conserve will be addressed in the next chapter on spontaneity.)

RESPONSE-ABILITY

Building on the comments on responsibility in the last chapter, this shift in perspective to the feeling of need, the cry of God for co-creators, leads to a perception of our responsibility. Yet, this can feel like a burden unless we also sense our competence in responding to the call. In turn, this requires an infrastructure of knowledge and skills, a broad role repertoire, an awareness of alternatives. Psychodrama offers just this, a wealth of approaches, and when you know a variety of ways to address a problem, it begins to feel more like an attractive, creative challenge than an overwhelming block. The more people are thus empowered, the more they are inclined to engage life's challenges rather than avoid them. On the other hand, lacking skills in problem-solving, communications, self-awareness, and other components of creative ability, people will avoid the feelings of incompetence, ambiguity, helplessness, vulnerability and shame, and thus will also avoid even facing their problems.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Creativity isn't something just for artists or scientists or other inventors—it is a part of everyday life. Beginning to appreciate the value and enjoy the process can be transformative. For example, in family therapy, a common block involves the family members justifying themselves and blaming others. They are operating out of a belief that there is a simple "right" and "wrong" happening and wishing the therapist to act as judge and, of course, to take their side. The situation becomes brittle because any suggestion that one's own position might be softened or modified is perceived as a possible threat to the entire edifice. To be partly wrong means that one might be completely wrong and therefore the guilty party.

Instead, it helps to re-frame the situation as a creative challenge. This breaks out of the accusatory-defense pattern. Furthermore, the participants feel subtly flattered at being brought into the role of

problem-solvers, coached and encouraged to explore fresh alternatives. The idea of creativity thus transcends the conserve of mere argument and opens to the excitement of discovery.

Much of traditional psychotherapy hasn't emphasized the idea of promoting creativity. An exception was Otto Rank who was an artist before he joined the early psychoanalytic movement as a young man and who framed his approach to therapy more in terms of the metaphor of life as a work of art. His goal, then, was not merely interpretation, but encouraging his clients' capacity for creativity. More recently, constructivist approaches in psychotherapy have taken up a similar theme, helping people to, as it were, re-tell their inner narratives, their life stories, so that the underlying "script" becomes more life-affirming. (Moreno's work, in this sense, may also be recognized as a precursor to constructivism.)

SOCIATRY

Creativity also needs to be applied in revising our social and cultural norms. Moreno had a strong vision of the inseparability of individual and social psychology (See chapter 18). Therefore, efforts at healing need to be aimed not just at those in the "sick role" but equally to the cultural matrix which often revealed its own pathological features.

Psychiatry in mid-century had found a measure of social and economic security in addressing the problems of the individuals and leaving the critique of the culture to politicians and philosophers. The focus for most seemed to be "adjustment" rather than social activism. Wallach and Wallach (1983) explored tendencies in modern, dynamic psychology to overemphasize the individualistic aspects of experience, as did Cushman (1995), Jacoby (1983), and Hillman and Ventura (1992).

Moreno, though, had been involved in social activism from his youth. It was connected with his theology, philosophy of creativity, and psychosocial theories. So, playing on the term *psychiatry* (derived from the ancient Greek words, *psyche,* for mind/soul, and *iatros,* for healing), Moreno made up a corresponding term—*sociatry,* for efforts at healing the wider culture. He believed in this enough to give that name to his main clinical journal! (After two years, however, he changed it to *Group Psychotherapy.)*

Moreno hoped his early experiments with the theatre would have some general social benefits. Others more recently, such as Augusto Boal, have independently recognized this sociotherapeutic function of drama. Increasingly, sociodrama, mixed with sociometry, is being used

beyond the province of psychotherapy to help create more humanly responsive social organizations.

Thus, creativity needs to be applied not just at the personal level but also at the collective level—to work to make the world a better place. Moreno could not be satisfied merely writing *about* his philosophy—indeed, he criticized such ivory tower endeavors. He believed we should actively try to implement one's beliefs in social action, and the various methods of psychodrama, sociodrama and sociometry are designed to aid in this task.

A DEEPER CONTEMPLATION

Between the theological speculations of the last chapter and the move towards more psychological explanations and practical applications in the rest of the book, a subtle shift of perspective happens. Instead of thinking of the creativity of the phallic artist—putting out something, challenging the world—consider the gentler yet more compelling image of the mother responding to the cry of a baby. In this case, the cry is the world's, for help in growing and becoming more harmonious, stable, balanced, loving. Moreno (1971, pp. 18–19) imagines God crying to the cosmos, "Help Me!"

I think people need to be reminded, "The world needs you!" Young people especially, who need to feel some sense of belonging and direction, need to be told every few weeks and in different ways, "The world needs your imagination, your talents, whatever they be, your simple work and help, your love and compassion, your song, your light." After all, even though our generation has perhaps improved on that which has been given us by our ancestors, there is still much left to improve. I don't think we admit this enough to our youth.

Creativity pulses at the heart of psychodrama, calling out to the conscious self to serve its inspirational energy, calling out to society from the predicaments of the individual, and calling to the individual to help address the predicaments of society. Consider creativity, then, not only as an expression of fullness but also as a heartfelt response to need.

SUMMARY

In chapter 5, a philosophical problem arose: How can we take the best from the conserves of the past, the premodern traditions, the

spiritual traditions of non-industrialized cultures, etc., and also extract the best elements and insights from both modernity and the postmodernism? Perhaps this can be achieved by making creativity itself a core value and subjecting these cultural streams to the ongoing process of creative re-evaluation and invention. The dynamic then works with the conserves, releasing the less useful, developing the more useful.

Many of the concepts to be discussed in this book revolve around the idea that creativity is a value as well as a dynamic process. Surplus reality, self-expression, sociometry, play, encounter—these and other themes carry the theme of creativity within their essence. Happily, Moreno also offered some ideas about the best way to cultivate creativity: through spontaneity, to be discussed next.

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Moreno lecturing at his New York Institute (Zerka in back row).

8

Spontaneity

One of Moreno's most brilliant insights is that spontaneity is the physical, mental, and interpersonal process that most effectively leads to creativity. People often think of the creative person as thinking, planning, and reasoning carefully, but actually, the creative process usually involves a kind of tinkering, doodling, playfully improvising.

Let's consider some various expressions of spontaneity. Another way to understand an elusive concept is not through definitions so much as through vivid examples:

- The singing of a mockingbird, the play of kittens
- Unstructured, make-believe play of young children, also much of their drawing, painting, and exploratory behavior
- Improvisation in making music, such as Jazz
- Parents playing with their infants or young children
- A person trying out new ideas in cooking, on the spur of the moment
- *Tele* between two people, that sense of mutual attraction

- An animated conversation, the mutual discovery of two people falling in love
- The inspiration of a poet, the impromptu sermon of a preacher

Spontaneity need not be showy or dramatic; it can be subtle, gentle, and unassuming. It can be present in the way one thinks, walks, looks at nature, dances, or hums a tune softly in the shower.

RELATIONSHIP WITH CREATIVITY

Moreno described a "canon of creativity," a diagram, that showed this relationship. Beginning with what has already been created, the person (or group) can warm up to a state of spontaneity out of which new creativity flows. So, while creativity has somewhat more of an emphasis on the act of creating something, the *what,* spontaneity emphasizes the *how,* the combination of attitude, exploratory action, willingness to correct and adapt, and having creativity as an implicit if not explicit goal (Moreno, 1983, p.34).

Spontaneity, like creativity, tele, sociometry, and other ideas, has, for Moreno, both a more general and a more specific meaning. In its general sense, it is closer to its original Latin word root, *sua sponte,* moving by itself—in contrast to deterministic views of psychology or theology (Moreno, 1983, p. 127). Like creativity, Moreno saw spontaneity evident in nature, and he even viewed God as essentially spontaneous. This vision recognizes the pervasiveness of what Whitehead called "subjective aim" which implies a genuine freedom, an element of choice, the ability to respond in different possible ways.

Theologically, the image of God as Cosmic architect, using compass and ruler, calculating and building in a rational, methodical fashion, gives way to an improvising God, unfolding *through* the spontaneity within every entity, organic or inorganic. This *élan vital* (as Bergson called it) may be discerned in the activity of the volcano or the mating dance of the butterfly. Moreno saw in the processes of play, warming-up, and self-expression some of these deeper resonances with nature and God.

To help differentiate creativity and spontaneity, the former refers to the activity of creating, and the latter refers to the *readiness* to create, the state of mind involved which often involves a more energized bodily state and interpersonal or group involvements. People can be raised to a higher level of spontaneity with no significant creativity yet

appearing. On the other hand, it is also possible for people to be creative without their becoming spontaneous. By cool, rational planning, by chance trial and error, sometimes a creative breakthrough occurs. Moreno astutely observed, however, that creativity most often arises in situations in which the people involved are improvising, engaged, and in other ways warmed-up to greater states of spontaneity.

Moreno's mixing philosophy, sociology, and psychology makes it difficult to find consistent definitions (Aulicino, 1954). Even if one allows for a degree of "cosmic" vibrancy and freedom at the core of spontaneity, for practical purposes, it's best understood as *a state of mind,* a kind of readiness to think afresh.

ROBOPATHY

The significance of the concept of spontaneity is that, in spite of its pervasiveness in nature, many people don't recognize its value or know how to maximize it in themselves and others; indeed, they may even actively avoid it! Spontaneity is important because it is the corrective to the tendency mentioned in the previous chapter to rely on the cultural conserve. When people become actively attached to conserved modes, social and psychological, when they live according to fixations and habits, they act as if they are programmed like a machine—a condition called "robopathy." (Another term Moreno used was "zoomatrons," living automatons.)

One of Moreno's early associates, Lew Yablonsky, extended this idea in a book, *Robopaths* (1972), showing how, when people fail to exercise spontaneity and instead sink into the mental inertia of excessively relying on the conserve, it functions as a common denominator of many types of neurotic and personality disorders. Robopathy from this perspective may be seen operating in mindless bureacracy, rigid traditionalism, prejudice, fanaticism, addictions and quasi-addictions, and a variety of other individual and social pathologies.

At a deeper level, robopathy derives from an innate tendency to be mentally lazy, that part of the mind that "just wants to be left alone," wishes it could "go back to bed," or in other ways sustains a state of complacency or denial. It is essentially regressive, noted by Otto Rank as the unconscious desire to return to the womb-like state of existence. This frame of mind finds the prospect of actively engaging problems (i.e., being spontaneous) as "too hard." It's easier to regress to robopathic patterns of thought and behavior and to find others who will collude in sustaining the denial. Robopathy can also be violently

destructive when circumstances force it to engage reality. In order to retain the comfort of confirmation in its own fixed beliefs, the robopathic mind will find scapegoats on which to vent its fury. It was this dynamic that Freud called *thanatos* or the "death instinct."

THE PSYCHODYNAMICS OF SPONTANEITY

Now, let's quote Moreno (1953, p.42): "Spontaneity operates in the present, now and here; it propels an individual towards an adequate response to a new situation or a new response to an old situation." It's not necessary to believe these words in every detail, but rather consider what he was getting at.

First, it isn't enough that an act be simply novel. It must also be at least aimed at being adequate, effective. For example, spontaneous dancing involves a complex balancing of impulses and maneuvers that make them somewhat graceful. Just energetic shaking or writhing lacks the aesthetic that differentiates dance from mere activity. Children when they're excited, may jump and squirm. This is only a limited form of spontaneity. The essential idea is best reserved for when the children are actually moving towards some creative goal.

Moreno coined a term, "pathological spontaneity," for the kind of impulsivity that pretends to be free and authentic but is actually closer to an acting-out of some subconscious desire or denial of the actual needs of the circumstances. In fact, I suspect many of Moreno's own more outrageous and counter-productive behaviors were examples of pathological spontaneity. Under the illusion that he was just being spontaneous, Moreno would often be excessively insensitive, intrusive, or in other ways refuse to engage in the appropriate degree of reticence.

Spontaneity is also not the opposite of habit per se. There are many situations in life in which habits are adaptive, such as in driving a car. There's a difference, though, in using a habit as a mental tool and going so far as to allow a habit to use you. The ideal is that awakened attitude which expects and recognizes the likelihood of the occurrence of variations in the circumstances in which habit no longer suffices. Then, spontaneity is needed to cope creatively with the unexpected. Indeed, for many activities, especially in the performing arts or sports, the capacity for effective spontaneity rests on having mastered certain skills to the point of habit which then acts as the base for more creative variation when it's called for.

Spontaneity involves an inclination towards questioning, challenging, re-thinking, re-evaluating, taking a fresh look—it is a shift in

attitude. There are elements of courage, liveliness, engagement, and stretching of the mind, the opposites of the aforementioned robopath-ic tendencies. Most people live with a mixture of some spontaneity and some reliance on the cultural conserve. Moreno's point is that we need to emphasize far more of the former.

The knack or subtle skill in spontaneity is the development of *receptivity* to the nonrational, intuitive dimensions of the mind which are then integrated with the more rational and willed capacities. This is a balancing of what used to be considered the highest feminine and masculine functions. This receptivity, in turn, is cultivated by viewing the subconscious not just as the repository of the repressed, all those uncomfortable thoughts and feelings, but rather as the source of creativity, the "muse" or "daimon." (Obviously this is a more Jungian than Freudian model of the unconscious mind.)

Related to the vigor of the inner life, spontaneity also opens the mind's perceptions to the realities of the environment. Interpersonally, spontaneity suggests engagement rather than reticence, allowing the process to unfold and responding to whatever comes. One becomes alert to what's up with others, actively interested in their needs and reactions. It's not always required that we accommodate others' preferences, but it's an act of denial to ignore their existence.

If we do want to relate more authentically, opening the mind to their viewpoint, encountering through an act of mental role reversal—helps make this connection effective. A related component of this readiness for engagement is a relative willingness to disclose oneself perhaps a bit more openly. Spontaneity can be a social as well as individual phenomenon. If others reciprocate, *tele* is increased (See chapter 18), and tele is one subset of interpersonal spontaneity.

A variation of this is that spontaneity gives an extra measure of attention to the present moment. There is a place to use the past (as memories, written records, etc.) and the future (as goals, hopes, etc.), but many people tend to get caught in a kind of "living in the past," and sometimes "living in the future," dwelling in unrealistic fantasies of what is hoped for, expected, believed in. These fantasies can divert energy away from recognizing and dealing with the realities and problems of the present.

In other words, spontaneity sharply attends to "what's up." It opens to the future more in terms of deeper values, aspirations—not mere tendencies. Another part-present, part-future category is the sense of alternatives, options, imagining possibilities.

Spontaneity can be only slightly operational or quite active, and people's ability to activate their own spontaneity—to "warm them-

selves up"—similarly can vary. More importantly, it can be trained—mainly experientially, to be sure—practiced, and applied in an ever-widening sphere of activities.

Spontaneity varies according to the roles involved. An individual can be quite spontaneous in some roles and not at all in others. Similarly, it varies according to the situation, so that a role in which a person is ordinarily fairly spontaneous may be framed in a situation in which that spontaneity is markedly inhibited.

Too much structure, too many tight rules, and a sense of significant and fearful consequences should those rules be broken all inhibit spontaneity. On the other hand, too little structure and too much ambiguity also raise anxiety. There are just too few guidelines on which to build a plausible role construct. So, there's a "window," just a bit of structure, that creates an optimal circumstance.

There tends to be an element of surrender in spontaneity as well as innocence, and this results in an expansion of consciousness. To do this in the present moment involves relinquishing excessive censorship in the mind's functioning, and it requires a corresponding opening to the inner impulses, intuitions, and inspirations. For example, remember a time when you danced to some music with a sense of abandon. For the most part, you probably recall it as some of your better dancing. Singing with gusto and enthusiasm produces similar results. Indeed, a good deal of the modern training of artists in various fields consists of freeing their spirit within the boundaries of mastering their medium.

A NON-CONSERVABLE ENERGY

The metaphor of "energy" has been used in connection with spontaneity because people feel more "energized" when they are more spontaneous. The feel in "the flow" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), is more vital.

In many ways, however, spontaneity is not like the kind of energies noted by physicists. For one thing, as Moreno noted, it is not conservable—you can't store it up and then use it just by calling on it. This means two things. First, it isn't something you can just "will" like raising your hand. Spontaneity is very vulnerable to mood, context, mental inertia, etc. You have to warm up from the start. Admittedly, the more you have practiced developing your spontaneity, the easier it is, but still, this dynamic has the psychological and social limitations that aren't like physical energy. As a corollary, you can't give spontaneity to others or command that others "be spontaneous."

Second, it may not even be transferred by modeling spontaneous behavior. Sometimes, a little loosening up by one helps loosen up the other, but if one person is moderately spontaneous and another one is still somewhat inhibited, the first person's behavior may actually increase the other's inhibition. Further, the less spontaneous one may feel angry, intimidated, and find reasons to devalue the more spontaneous one. The gradient of spontaneity needs to be gentle to promote the optimal warm-up.

A STIMULANT TO CREATIVITY

Most (but not all) creativity arises from spontaneity. One of Moreno's most important and astute insights was that warming up to spontaneity is the best way to become creative. In general, one becomes creative not just by sitting and thinking, but rather by becoming gradually more involved with a given problem. Improvising, experimenting, talking, dialoguing, and especially physically moving about, all foster the flow of imagination, intuition, and the psychic mixing process that gives birth to insights and new ideas.

This is inconvenient, however, in some settings, such as modern school classrooms. Admittedly, sitting at one's desk fosters a certain mode of instruction, but it doesn't really optimally generate the flow of ideas needed for truly integrative and creative thinking. We need to cultivate educational procedures that integrate left-brain rational cognitions *with* more holistic right-brain processes of intuition, imagery, and kinesthetic (body-movement) functions (Neville, 1989). Although learning-by-doing is given lip service, it's utilized far less than it's needed.

The implications of Moreno's discovery haven't been fully appreciated. Certainly, it's one of the rationales for the use of physical enactment and many other techniques that get clients interacting, exploring, engaged—and action insights flow from these states of heightened spontaneity. Note, though, that there can also be a kind of spontaneity in the phases when time is taken to discuss the enactments, and that this is needed, too.

WARMING-UP

Warming-up is the activity of becoming gradually more spontaneous. It can involve a variety of elements, from increasing the focus and

clarification of the problem at hand to the development of a support-ive emotional environment, with trust, group cohesion, and a sense of safety which permits experimentation.

Knowing about warming-up is itself useful, and it cannot be fully described because it involves the getting of a "knack," meaning that the process must be worked through each person's own cognitive and emotional style, temperament, interests, imagery, and other elements of individuality. Warming-up to optimal sexuality gives a hint at all the personal issues involved, how it includes the many aspects of a rela-tionship and what is felt to be attractive, arousing, and lovable—which is quite variable in the population, and even more so between cul-tures.

Still, just knowing that this dynamic exists can help people get the knack of using it, just as knowing that writing and reading exists enables people to learn the technique. The implication here is that we should encourage improvisation, exploration, playfulness, and also include spontaneity training in our schooling and other activities.

Even though spontaneity doesn't always carry over from one role to another, in a general way, there is some increased capacity for a transfer of learning. Thus, the more a youngster learns that she can figure things out, the more she'll be inclined to take on new chal-lenges. On the other hand, the more a youngster is taught that the answers are (only) in the book, the more she'll rely on the cultural conserve.

Many phenomena may be viewed as types of warming-up. In the 1930s through the 1950s, when people used to have house parties, hosts often utilized "ice-breakers," various games for fostering togeth-erness. In psychodrama and other types of group therapy or personal growth groups, specific techniques were created as warm-ups. Some were adapted from theatre games, drama therapy, education, and recreation (Blatner, 1996, pp. 62–63).

SUMMARY

Spontaneity is, above all, an *attitude of mind,* a commitment to think-ing things afresh. It is that ideal "quality" alluded to by Pirsig (1974) in his classic *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance.* The point is to promote this readiness to engage in almost all human activities. For example, in the earlier forms of art therapy, the emphasis was on the analysis of that which was painted or drawn. Gradually, perhaps influenced in part by Moreno, some art therapists began to emphasize

more the liberation of spontaneity through art, the activity of becoming more expressive. The other creative arts therapies also increasingly integrated this focus, and it is to be hoped that this is generalizing to education and recreation (Blatner & Blatner, 1997).

In short, what we have here is a shift from content to process, from a need to perfect what will become the new conserve to a willingness to enjoy the creating itself, and to continue to revise whatever has been created. This applies equally to the theoretical foundations of psychodrama! Moreno's writings, or Zerka's teachings, must not become overidealized. The concept of spontaneity is aimed at empowering you, the reader, not just to "learn" about psychodrama, but to allow this idea, along with all the others, to *stimulate* your own courage in creating, making up new variations, discovering new facets, and building bridges to other fields of endeavor.

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9
Play, Imagination, Surplus Reality

Psychodrama utilizes and cultivates imagination, symbolic representation, and also the ability to shift back and forth between the realms of imagination and ordinary reality. Drama itself is a cultural sublimation of the pretend play of childhood; make-believe, in turn, is a natural part of normal development (Brown & Gottfried, 1985). It might be argued that play is an essential human quality. Ashley Montagu, a famous anthropologist and commentator on contemporary society, noted that the adult humans innately manifest certain qualities of youthfulness, and that one interpretation of this fact is that these qualities have evolutionary advantages. He then writes:

> "Hence, the implications of all this should be fully understood and recognized: the importance of the sociodramatic experiences in the life of the child continue into the life of the adult" (Montagu, 1981, p. 163).

Many people are wary about the use of imagination, fantasy, and playfulness, thinking of these dimensions as only for children or for mere entertainment. Cultural resistances to imaginative play, discussed

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at greater length elsewhere (Blatner & Blatner, 1997), are similar to the resistances to psychodrama. To counter these, two recent books by noted authors have advocated the cultivation of playfulness as an essential element of healthy living (Terr, 1999; Ackerman, 1999). Play therapy has long been recognized as healing, but there have only been a few efforts at applying some of these methods in working with adults. Psychodrama in some ways may be thought of as a kind of highly refined play therapy.

THE PSYCHODYNAMICS OF PLAYING

Play involves an interaction of two levels of awareness: the player and the monitor of the player. It is the latter role that makes the activity a game because there's a process of mentally dropping back, evaluating the progress of the play, and modifying it in order to be more effective or otherwise elaborate some other goal. For example, when children play, there's also a part of them that can step back and say, "King's X," "Time out," "Wait a minute, I gotta go to the bathroom," "You're pushing too hard," or "No, I want to be the mommy and *you* be the baby now."

In other words, people shift naturally between actor and director/playwright—but generally they don't do it consciously. Psychodrama works in part by making this shift more explicit and utilizing the monitor, the "meta-role," more systematically. (The meta-role is discussed more in chapter 15 on Applied Role Theory.) There's a special mode of thinking involved, called "metacognition" by cognitive psychologists, in which people think about the *way* they think, reconsider assumptions, look at the types of processes involved—thinking, feeling, intuiting, imagining, checking perceptions, etc. Psychodrama seeks to establish the skill of metacognition as an extra dimension of mental flexibility in adults.

In psychoanalysis, Donald W. Winnicott (1971), described the function of play as a "transitional space" that children create to bridge the sense of separation from the mother, and further noted the necessity of play as a socially joined mental construct for healing. Play also involves fantasy, and recognizing the pervasiveness of this inner dramatic activity adds to the point that here is a dimension that deserves serious attention (Pearson, 1995). Jung's technique of active imagination and others' use of inner dialogue all tap into the power of this natural capacity (Watkins, 1986).

In analysis or other types of therapy, of course, part of the healing function involves reflecting on what has been produced spontaneous-

ly in dreams, fantasy, or free associations. The "mirror" technique in psychodrama provides an even more explicit exercise of this reflective operation by having the protagonist shift into the roles of audience or co-director, watching while an auxiliary plays the role of the protagonist in the scene (Reekie, 1992). It's like a video playback session: "So that's how it looks from a bit of distance, or from the outside." From this viewpoint, the protagonist is able to consider alternative responses or explore further the assumptions that seemed to be operating behind a given reaction. Based on these intervening action reflections, a scene may be replayed with a new possible stance.

Another feature of the bimodal perception of play is that the player role is, in a sense, placed in a context of tentativeness by the monitoring or meta-role. This means that what is being played "doesn't count" in the way that it might if it were being performed in the ordinary, non-play world. (Here again is the function of the laboratory as a sublimated form of exploratory play.) This special "fail-safe" context is innate in human relationships and well-recognized even in the play of many animals, offering practice in hunting, fighting, or escaping without their drastic, actual consequences. Humans also need opportunities to learn skills. Rehearsals, practice exercises for astronauts, war games—all are forms of play. Psychodrama emphasizes the learning of more social skills, such as becoming more assertive or, perhaps, its opposite, less impulsively aggressive. Establishing a playful context offers "room to maneuver" and is thus more emotionally supportive.

EXCITEMENT

Why do people (and the higher animals) have emotions? Tomkins (1991) proposes that the function of emotion is to amplify and organize attention so the organism can react adaptively. He noted nine basic affects which operate at the level of instinct (Nathanson, 1992, pp. 74–6). While psychology has given a good deal of attention to the nature of the negative affects—fear, grief, shame, anger, and disgust—we need to consider more the positive affects, such as joy, interest or excitement. One of the functions of dramatic play—and psychodrama—is highlighting emotion, giving them social contexts so they have significance, and this itself is an interesting, even exciting challenge.

These positive emotions—especially interest-excitement—also motivate creativity and spontaneity. In turn, we can use psychodrama not

only for problem-solving but also to serve as a vehicle for this natural source of vitality. Imagination, playfulness, and improvisational drama all invite the utilization of the other dimensions of aesthetic expression: song, dance, poetry, music.

We need to give more attention and recognition to the importance of fun, interest, and excitement, as motivating elements in life. It has to do with an attitude and knack of turning work into a kind of playful challenge. Psychodrama cultivates this ability by emphasizing such elements as exaggeration, amplification, concrete representation, physical action, and imagination. Vitality may be further enhanced by role expansion so we can break out of character, or, better, build in a far more flexible and multifaceted character.

SURPLUS REALITY

Surplus reality is a concept that extends and focuses the capacity for imagination and play even more. It is, in a sense, a metaphysical concept, suggesting that the subjective be recognized as one of the categories of actual existence. This supports the idea of playing out fantasy, desire, and illusion. Moreno, in his desire to generate specific methods rather than simply write about abstract ideas, offered surplus reality as a type of applied phenomenology. (The assumptions underlying surplus reality are discussed in the earlier chapter on philosophy.)

The best definitions, however, are examples. Here are some typical surplus reality scenes:

- being at a hospital bedside, saying goodbye to a beloved relative, when in ordinary reality, it wasn't possible for that encounter to happen
- reviewing a relationship with someone important who has (magically) reformed somewhat, opened his or her consciousness
- being forgiven by someone, or forgiving someone when that couldn't "really" occur
- being able to apologize to and being forgiven by an aborted embryo
- an encounter with an unborn baby, perhaps yet to be conceived, to dare to imagine a wonderful future
- an encounter with a saint, Jesus, goddess, Buddha, or some other spiritual entity
- a reparative scene in which one is nourished, protected, or otherwise treated well when, historically, the opposite happened

- a scene in which one can undo or make amends for some act for which one feels guilty
- imagining being in heaven after one's own death, or some after-life, able to meet with significant others, review one's own life, be praised or judged
- playing a role of power, being recognized, or achieving something far beyond what may be actually realized
- experiencing the ability to fly or release one's burden or otherwise transcend the limitations of ordinary humanity
- making a circle with the group, holding hands, singing a song, giving an invocation, generating the illusion of alignment and unity

In the realm of mind, in conscious or subconscious fantasy, events transpire that have never happened and perhaps never could happen. From the phenomenological viewpoint, such occurrences are a type of "truth." Indeed, fantasy and related subjective processes—hopes, fears, regrets, yearnings, dreams, and for people suffering from mental illness, even hallucinations and delusions—often were more meaningful realities than objective perceptions or merely logical thoughts. It was for this reason that Moreno called psychodrama "The Theatre of Truth," not because what was enacted was factual truth—often it was the opposite!—but because it represented *psychological* truth, and that is what needed to be worked with in therapy. Moreno noted that the inner drama, enacted in surplus reality, has priority over objective reality.

IMPLICATIONS

Surplus reality varies in its boundaries. In its broadest sense, any role-playing or pretend play partakes of this dimension. A somewhat more specific meaning, however, refers to scenes which aren't just a re-portrayal of a historical event, such as re-playing an argument at home or the staging of an expected event. These have a certain amount of distortion due to memory and the dramatic process, but they are, for the most part, simple enactments. In surplus reality, though, the boundaries are stretched further. For example, using a future projection technique, the protagonist is encouraged to imagine not only some reasonably probable attainment but also to go further, to elaborate that culmination of long effort by imagining the presence of some extra-special ideal person, perhaps an international hero, who makes a

speech or presents the protagonist with a special award. Or, in enacting a past scene of shame, a new character is added, perhaps an idealized teacher or counselor who redeems the experience and perhaps even redefines the meaning of the event in a more constructive fashion.

Often what is needed in the staging of a surplus reality scene is a degree of exaggeration. What would be even more delicious? What would have felt even kinder? Through this approach, deeper desires are accessed.

Another implication of this concept is that directors, understanding of the healing power of this dimension, should give themselves permission to cultivate a measure of charisma, to act like a magician with a bit of flair and confidence, in order to induce a group and a protagonist to participate in fantasy.

Magic and fantasy often involves symbols, images or props, and what differentiates a symbol from a sign is that the former has an emotionally evocative power and can be interpreted in many ways. Premature explanation of such images should be avoided. Given the opportunity, such elements serve as channels of inspiration from the creative subconscious. In other words, it's alright to allow for associations, but be wary about reductionistic interpretations. Let those symbols retain a measure of mystery, spontaneity, a kind of life of their own.

A corollary of the recognition of the power of imagery and symbol is the willingness to entertain the integration of poetry, literature, music, and other dimensions of the arts as elaborations of the feelings and associations involved. For example, the death of a close parent or, even more, a child presents a situation in which what is called for is a coming to terms with what cannot be dealt with in terms of ordinary reason. In response, it often helps to simply generate a holding environment and invite the operation of the surplus reality and the arts to sublimate the deepest griefs (or joys) as shared rather than isolated experiences, and as part of the human condition.

A variation of this idea is to recognize that dramatic interactions often draw to themselves a measure of the universal. A particular interaction of, for example, father and son may remind the group of other kinds of father-son relationships and generalize to parent-child and even God-humanity relations. This existential resonance may be amplified or minimized, depending on the needs of the protagonist or group, but the point to be noted is that there are times when noting the mythic dimension adds to the effectiveness of the enactment.

Participation, drawing others in, making a ritual of it, re-connecting it with the protagonist's and group's story or life story—all these add to the resonance of an experience. Sometimes a problem just calls for

problem-solving. Sometimes it's not a problem that needs to be addressed but a mystery—something that the more one opens into, the more one discovers even more one cannot fathom.

MORENO'S *IDEÉ FIXE*

Another aspect of surplus reality is the idea that we can create, in play and drama, experiences that complement or remedy the stark realities of the ordinary world. This was Moreno's ongoing, inspiring idea or constructive obsession, the French phrase for which is *ideé fixe*. It:

> ". . . became my constant source of productivity; it proclaimed that there is a sort of primordial nature which is immortal and returns afresh with every generation, a first universe which contains all beings and in which all events are sacred. I liked that enchanting realm and did not plan to leave it, ever."

Thus, Moreno called on the power of imagination to serve in affirming that, even in the face of the dialectic between what Freud called the "reality principle" and the "pleasure principle," there is a creative synthesis: surplus reality (Blatner, 1996). We may not be able to "really" get what we want, but we can, through dramatic play, gratify these desires, if not completely, then to a surprisingly satisfying degree.

Surplus reality thus opens a setting between the extremes of subjectivity and objectivity. This effective reality is itself composed of an infinite variety of dynamic components, in a manner suggested by William James in his book, *A Pluralistic Universe*. A similar suggestion has been made by Pruyser (1982), who called it the "illusionistic world." (In a way, this is the point, speaking semantically. "Illusion" tends to be discounted, and it was for that reason that Moreno established an alternative term, calling it a type of reality, with the modifed term "surplus," suggesting that certain kinds of illusion be dealt with a good deal of seriousness.)

RE-ENCHANTMENT

Another application of the concept of surplus reality extends the idea of the psychodramatist as magician in adding a degree of sheer ornament, celebration, or enchantment to life. We can use our imaginations

to elaborate the beauty and sense of significance in our life just as people decorate their home or their bodies with clothes, jewelry, tatoos, hair styles, etc. There has been a good deal of writing about mythic characters, heroes and goddesses and spirits and dragons and elves, and this dimension of life can also be cultivated in a variety of ways.

Of course, people already do this to some slight extent, have a picture of some favorite mythic character or a doll around the house; I'm suggesting that such elements be given more expression, weaving them into dramas, telling stories about them—all as ways to elaborate a sense of personal mythology, to connect one's existence with a rich complex of associations. The best selling author, Thomas Moore (1996), encouraged such activities, as did the late existential psychologist, Rollo May (1991).

ABUNDANT LIVING

Psychodrama may also be applied not just for psychotherapy but as a form of recreation—in the full sense of re-creation. The goal is to create scenes, using surplus reality, in which people can play out experiences that involve more intense emotions. For most people, the constraints of ordinary social interchange require a degree of restraint, muting emotions. Especially regarding anger, and to some extent fear or shame, some restraint is usually a civilizing influence. On the other hand, excitement, attraction, exuberance, and spontaneity also tends to be toned down, often to the edge of grayness.

I would suggest that humans seek role expansion also in the dimension of intensity, yearning to feel more extravagantly in many directions. The desire to live more fully needs to be recognized as a distinct motivation, a variation of self-expression (See chapter 10). Psychodrama is a natural vehicle for dramatizing, exaggerating, amplifying, and enhancing our dreams, passions, and struggles. There is healing to have a group validate the experience of one's own full frustration, victimization, struggle, triumph, the excellence of one's talent, the excitement of one's self-expression, highs and lows, ins and outs (i.e., interiority and complexity and the affected style of an exaggerated persona), and other dualities of existence.

Our method, *The Art of Play,* was expressly designed to meet this need (See chapter 20). For example, a shy woman who wished she could play the role of a popular singer was helped to allow her vitality

to flow in song by facing away from the group (Blatner & Blatner, 1997, pp. 46–48).

A protagonist who feels he needs to stifle feelings at work may lose his life energy. Drews (1960) reported a case of a man who developed a hysterical clenched hand that threatened his livelihood. A cathartic session in which he was able to tell off his employer was curative. (This happened in a one-to-one therapy context. The therapist simply used a variation of the empty chair—except that the patient, a mild-mannered man, paced and warmed himself up, first by playing the role of the belittling employer, and then responding vigorously—pounding his distorted "writer's cramp" hand, breaking the doctor's glass table-top, and not noticing his hand's becoming loose, flexible, and alive again.)

There needs to be a recognition of a healthy type of angry expression and opportunities created for it to happen. It may be counter-productive to actually play it out in real life but, in the surplus reality realm on stage, the individual can fully experience his or her indignation or sense of betrayal.

For example, Zerka Moreno (1993) wrote about "ethical anger." Where can this be expressed? An axiodrama with God, a confrontation of the perpetrator of terrorism or "ethnic cleansing"—such enactments can offer a catharsis for the pent-up ambivalences and frustrations of helplessness generated in response to international news reports.

This goes beyond that aspect of therapy that involves the detection and correction of error in one's cognitions. It addresses the deeper hunger to feel and struggle and expand into the abundance of life that is opposed by an entire cultural worldview of restraint. Psychodrama suggests that being more can be done as an act of great maturity.

SUMMARY

The concept of surplus reality sets the philosophical stage, opens to the idea that drama is more than mere entertainment. When we apply imagination to our world, we enlarge our experience of that world. In the sense that mind is a category that is real, we change the reality within which we interpret our sensory experience. It is a call to go beyond mundane and prosaic living, that acts in the modern sensibility to interpret that which is given by our senses, and to dare to create new images and ideas—poetically, artistically—and to grant these the truth of their psychological potential.

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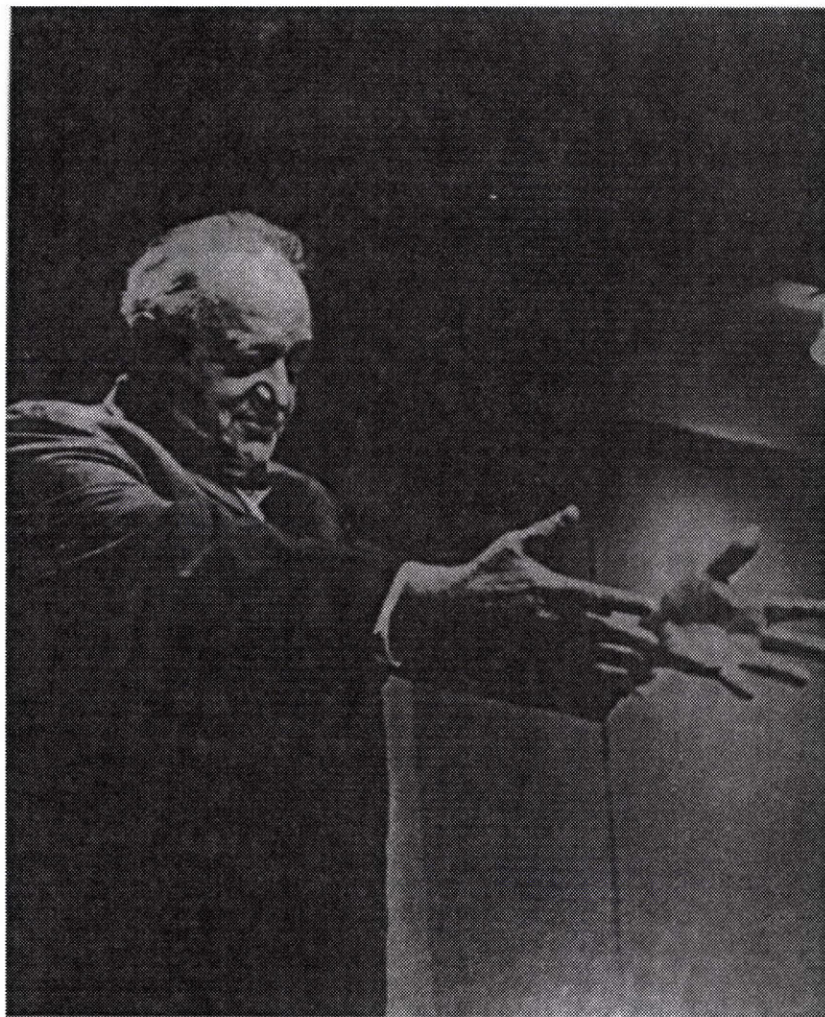
Moreno inviting people onto the stage, 1969.

10

EXPRESSION AND ACTION

Self-expression is as important as insight or problem-solving, and psychodrama is based on an appreciation of this need. Talking is better than not talking, but acting, moving, and adding other modalities make the experience even more fulfilling. Although psychodrama was among the first of the creative arts therapies, its rationale is supported by the writings in these related areas, especially regarding the benefits of self-expression.

The reason expression is valuable is that it both clarifies and validates feelings and ideas. If not expressed, these complexes are subject to a host of illusions, excuses, avoidances, doubts, and other maneuvers which blur the level of consciousness. Only through presentation to others are these cognitions brought into explicit consciousness, from backstage to center stage, into the figurative "spotlight" of awareness (Baars, 1997). Attempts to "think it through on one's own" are usually ineffective because of the mind's capacity for self-deception. On the other hand, sharing thoughts with others allows exposes them to possible criticism but also allows for self-evaluation. Since psycho-

therapy, problem-solving, and consultation involve the process of *clarification,* expression is needed to achieve this.

A second function of expression is that having one's thoughts or feelings heard by others validates them, makes them more real. One maneuver the mind uses is to deny the reality of various perceptions or feelings, made dream-like. Some people are more vulnerable, especially if they're in relationship with significant others who impose their own versions of reality. This can make them doubt their own preferences, feelings, and, ideas, and as a result, their very sense of self becomes shaky. Expressing their one's perceptions and reactions and having others listen and confirm that these are plausible is itself a powerful healing factor. It makes thoughts and feelings more real and adds to the sense of self as being worthy of serious consideration.

Verbal expression is good, but there's even more power in psychodrama's adding action, interaction, and the richness of nonverbal communications to the validating and supporting context of the group. The experience becomes more vivid and multi-dimensional (Blatner, 1999).

ACTING-OUT, ACTING-IN, AND ACTION INSIGHT

Adding action to verbal self-expression was inhibited by its confusion with unmodulated or non-reflective "acting-out" (Rexford, 1978). But psychotherapists who didn't know how to contain action would naturally be wary of it—like fire. Psychodrama is a vehicle designed to use these energies so that what happens isn't counter-therapeutic but rather in the service of insight, not acting-out but acting-in (Blatner, 1973, 2; Battegay, 1990). Action intentionally produced within a context of witnessing and re-evaluation allows group members to experience and see the deeper meanings in behavior, and from this, gain "action insight." Indeed, as Sacks (1981) has noted, therapeutic drama is specifically helpful for patients whose main problem is a tendency to "acting-out" behavior.

Another value of acting-in is that it can be more helpful for people whose capacity for verbalization is limited by temperament, education, or culture—and these factors are present in a large sector of the population.

In addition to their being carriers of emotional energy, physical expressiveness also offers a host of clues to the quality of the underlying attitudes. Moving, gesturing, and touching, not only communicate to others more vividly the fullness of experience, but these actions

also communicate to the self the strength of the feelings involved. In doing, the person bypasses the aforementioned avoidant defenses and discovers, "Wow, I had more feelings about that issue than I thought I did!"

Also, regarding the aforementioned validating function, protagonists experience a greater vividness of being by not just talking about what they want to say, but by hearing themselves say it, even if it's to an empty chair with the other person only imagined. "There, I said it!" gives a stamp of reality to a thought or idea, more than just having entertained it in the mind. Adding a gesture, a movement, pounding a table, pointing a finger, getting up and going face to face, looking directly in the other person's eyes—such actions correspondingly anchor that assertion or affirmation even more powerfully.

Physical immobility is a form of defense just like some mental maneuvers. It's as if the mind-body says to itself, "If I don't move, I won't feel"—which is somewhat true. As a result, people become literally "up-tight," contracting various muscle groups in order to numb themselves. In mobilizing people dramatically, psychodrama utilizes some of the same healing dynamics as other "body" therapies, such as Bioenergetic Analysis.

In spite of efforts at muting their feelings using "body armoring" defenses, people will express their thoughts and feelings in how they stand, move, position themselves, gesture, and other modes of nonverbal communications. Psychodrama amplifies this dimension, and sometimes protagonists will be helped to exaggerate their behavior so its full meaning can be better appreciated.

Nonverbal communications are aimed not only at others in the interpersonal field, but also at oneself. Voice tone, postures, facial expressions and the like are also inner cues, *reinforcing inner attitudes*. For example, when a depressed person hunches his shoulders, it symbolizes both inner fear mixed with protectiveness. Psychodramatists should become familiar with the types and variations of nonverbal communications so they can diagnose and intervene more effectively in working with this rich dimension of experience.

SUBLIMATION

Sublimation means cultivating the sublime expressions of life. Like acting-out, sublimation has been considered a defense, a way of avoiding insight by channeling the thoughts and impulses in a noble and socially constructive direction. This, too, was based on the mixing of

two modes—one in the service of avoidance of consciousness, the other quite compatible with an enhancement of consciousness.

The serenity prayer notes two categories of events, those which can be changed and those which cannot. For the latter, the prayer appeals for the strength of acceptance. This kind of existential situation often doesn't require insight, but another kind of emotional maneuver— sublimation. There are circumstances that talk cannot fully satisfy—the grief, or anxiety or confusion is too great. The feelings and associated images are better expressed as art, song, making music or drumming, dancing, moving, in poetry or clay sculpture, told as stories, acted as dramas, connected with myth. They are softened by being contained as part of the human condition. There is no why, nor anything to be done, but one can be soothed by opening to love and empathic presence.

Another aspect of self-expression as sublimation is that the simpler, more egocentric passions of getting and consuming can be trans-formed into more socially acceptable and truly enjoyable energies of being useful, helpful, and effective (Blatner & Blatner, 1997, pp. 2–4). The dialectical tension of pleasure principle and reality principle is resolved by sublimation in more inclusive activities. These can be enacted as celebrations, evoking expressions of joy, gratitude, and group cohesion.

ACT HUNGER

Moreno not only noted that action could be a vehicle for promoting insight, but also recognized an actual need for a fuller mode of expression, an "act hunger." Simply stated, words are not enough. In addition to people hearing themselves say their thoughts and feelings and to experience others as really hearing them too, they further benefit from experiencing those feelings in their bodies. Short of this, in psychodynamic terms, genuine emotional expression may be inhib-ited by the defense mechanism of isolation of affect. The concept of act hunger simply extends this idea by offering a more holistic process of self-expression.

Children live this way, enacting their feelings in pretend play. It is a self-deceptive conceit of our overly verbalized culture that we adults grow out of our need to *feel* our self-expressions at the level of the body, through movement, nonverbal communication, and speaking as if it were directly "to" the object of those feelings. Action is synergistic with verbalization.

The concept of act hunger goes even further: Physical action can accomplish many goals unreachable by simply thinking or even talking about a feeling or thought. Act hunger implies a recognition that there is, in the human psyche, a positive need for feeling oneself embodying the fullness of an act.

ACT FULFILLMENT

There is a deep sense of gratification in *doing* something, beyond just talking about it. Children show this in the physicality of their play, and artists need to see their images and intuitions produced in forms that can be appreciated by others. Until this happens, there's a tension, act hunger. Gestalt therapists have a similar concept related to the achievement of "closure" in Gestalt psychology—the need to make contact and complete "unfinished business."

Moreno had yet another insight in this regard: instead of suppressing or diverting the act hunger of people with major mental illnesses, might it not be helpful to actively facilitate their enactment of their delusions or hallucinations? Of course, such facilitative procedures would be slightly modified to prevent any significant damage to self or others, but beyond that, the idea was to give vent to whatever the behavioral inclination was and to perhaps learn more by observing and working with these expressions. Apparently Moreno did find this approach useful in promoting healing.

EXPANSION OF THE SENSE OF SELF

Another value of witnessed self-expression is that the process subtly expands the sense of self. People often, at some level, experience themselves as small and alone, weak and vulnerable. These feelings are countered through the process of identifying with others, symbolically "becoming" them to some degree. This is a normal dynamic, what the analyst Heinz Kohut called the "self-objecting" function. People shift from the isolated "I" sense to a stronger "we," and this represents one of the deeper motives towards developing and maintaining relationships with others.

When people can express themselves and feel seen, heard, and understood, they feel correspondingly bigger, partaking of the existence of their audience, whether that be a single other person or diffused and expanded in a group setting. We should also recognize

that in many ways our culture devalues expressiveness and promotes inhibition and restraint.

Because of this, many people have significant transferences about becoming protagonists. It's as if they fear that others in the group will judge them negatively for daring to go on stage, as if they were "getting too much attention." Sacks (1997) wrote about this and related transferences very commonly evoked in the course of doing psychodrama. The point here is that being expressive is an activity for which many people feel vulnerable.

WARMING UP PHYSICALLY

As part of both cultural and intrapsychic physical inhibition, people create thick patterns of muscular tension, "freezing" the flow of feelings as a psychosomatic correlate of repression. Wilhelm Reich, a radical psychoanalyst writing in the 1930s, described this process as "character armor." Reich was also one of the few other therapists who used vigorous physical activity to promote catharsis, and his student, Alexander Lowen, refined Reich's ideas and developed the approach called Bioenergetic Analysis.

Enactment in psychodrama arouses the flow of physical energy in the course of vigorous self-expression, and this process, in turn, evokes even more associations, adds to the spontaneity. This activation of "up tight" muscle complexes counters the somatic defenses and opens the mind-body to action insight.

Even just in the warm-up phase, the physical activity of having the protagonist and group getting out of their seats, walking around, moving the chairs, and perhaps participation in a lively sociometric experience begins to bring up feelings and images about relevant concerns.

MODES OF SELF-EXPRESSION

In addition to dramatic warm-ups, theatre games, and the like, other expressive media may also bring up issues, develop group cohesion, and enliven the situation, such as singing, improvising simple music or rhythms, playing with children's toys, doing various warm-up activities taken from art therapy, poetry therapy, movement therapy, etc. Some of these other media offer more distance, indirectness, which is helpful for clients that aren't ready to disclose to others or explore more sensitive issues in their own lives.

Some of these can be done in other settings, such as writing in a dream journal or painting a picture. These conserves may then be brought into group settings and shared. Excerpts from literature, poetry, drama, intriguing quotes, and amusing stories all may add to the richness of expressiveness—it's not as if people need to feel that they need to originate all the lines. In the near future, new modes of self-expression will be more recognized, such as the way people construct their websites on the Internet.

MAKING AND SHARING STORIES

People need to tell stories. Many don't even experience the unfolding story-lines in their lives, but rather just fragments of memories, events, feelings. The dramatic imagination may be brought to bear for weaving these elements into an tapestry of meaningful themes. (There have been a number of books on story-telling and therapy, reflecting the constructivist stream mentioned in chapter 5 on philosophical foundations.)

At another level, most people with psychological problems may be viewed as having subconsciously constructed stories that tend to be defeatist or counter-productive. Constructive therapies engage in the intriguing challenge of re-telling these stories, consciously designing them so as to achieve more positive outcomes. Psychodrama can use techniques such as future-projection to make this strategy even more vivid and effective.

Story-telling also serves to develop group cohesion and as a warm-up to more focused explorations. At the workshop in 1977 that led me to change my name, Zerka Moreno used the technique of inquiring about our names—where we got them, how we felt about them, our experiences with them. There were so many stories, variations. People can begin to tease out threads—it's not necessary to have the whole story in one package. There's an induction into the hero's journey myth just by considering such themes as:

- an embarassing event that still burns when you remember it
- a special moment of triumph
- how you hit bottom and began to turn it around
- what launched you on your spiritual journey
- someone who really helped, or misled and hurt along the way
- an especially delicious, relaxed or luxurious event
- a really funny happening
- one of the tragedies of your life

The fabric of such themes is more vividly woven when it can be shared, not just in a journal or diary but in a group with other people. People need to feel seen and heard. Don't assume that this is happening anywhere near enough; in fact, we live in a culture which, for many reasons and in many ways, has been increasingly undercutting this natural human need (Locke, 1998). Life gets filled with a wide range of activities which compete with the exchange of sociability, of telling and listening to each others' stories. Using psychodramatic-like methods, we can begin to reverse the cultural tendencies towards delegating our story-telling to specialists in the mass media, and then enjoying these vicariously. We need to become more involved—this is, in part, what Moreno felt about audience catharsis in the theatre—in a theatre that has been transformed into a socially relevant and healing endeavor.

A corollary of this is the establishment of a group norm that emphasizes participation and improvisation instead of polished performance. People are so afraid that they won't be "good enough," which misses the point of the activity. Our stories don't need to be as well-crafted or gripping as those told by experts. The director must set up a context in which intimacy includes a tolerance for awkwardness. The creative act of telling the stories becomes valued over a concern for a finished product.

People need to give voice in order to feel more authentically alive, and we need to construct contexts in which we are willing to listen, and to share our own stories. I envision psychodramatic methods facilitating this, and already a number of activities are being used, such as Playback Theatre (as discussed in chapter 20).

FULLER SELF-EXPRESSION

Self-expression's function should be recognized as not only for insight but also equally for the discovery of sheer vitality. There's a kind of catharsis of excitement that comes with the discovery that one can be more vigorous, louder, animated, "on stage," and energized than thought possible. In addition to conflicts among various specific complexes in the mind, there is also a tension due to the generalized repression of vitality, and whenever this can be released, there is a corresponding catharsis. Exuberance, silliness, triumph, raucous laughter, and exaggerated emotional behavior all carry with them a sense of risk-taking at daring to be "out there."

The hunger for the experience of full self-expression may be a factor in the desire for intoxication, getting high. However illusory,

drugs and alcohol generate a feeling of being "bigger than life." Another more wholesome avenue for the achievement of this goal is the social extension of children's imaginative play: drama. In getting on stage, people feel that intrapsychic and cultural force that says, "Don't seek attention!" In breaking through, past the questions, "Am I foolish in this situation? Is my cluelessness acceptable?" protagonists can achieve a catharsis of celebrating the more vital inner child.

Self-expression also applies to the act hunger seeking more abundant life, the sheer animal-joy of full-body experience—whooping in the water, becoming ecstatic in dancing, laughing at a funny turn of exciting music, shouting encouragement at an impassioned preacher, participating in the richness of the human potential.

SUMMARY

When an idea is expressed, it takes on more distinct form. Write it on paper, express it in diagrammatic form, and it becomes even clearer. Other creative arts modalities allow for the inclusion of nuances of emotion in ways that rational discourse cannot satisfy and psychodrama takes it even further. Much of history and even the psychosocial and intellectual development of the individual may be viewed as the growth of the capacity for self-expression, from the unarticulated toward the sublime.

Admittedly, there are inhibiting tendencies—anxiety, inertia, habit. But for the fullness of life's experience, these tendencies must be countered through the range of spontaneous forms of individual and collective expressiveness, creativity, the affirmation of the fullness of the human potential. Such extensions of self-expression are cathartic, and those dynamics will be discussed in the next chapter.

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J. L. Morno, circa 1951.

11
Catharsis

Moreno (1940) wrote about "mental catharsis" in one of his first papers on psychodrama, and an appreciation of its dynamics helps to understanding the method. Catharsis is, in a sense, an extension of the psychology of self-expression, discussed in the previous chapter, but there is more.

Catharsis was recognized by Freud as an interesting phenomenon, but because he wasn't able to produce lasting results by his early attempts to facilitate abreaction, he abandoned it, and the theme seems to have been largely neglected by most of psychoanalysis since then. Moreno, however, noted the cathartic process in audiences of drama, as had Aristotle over two thousand years earlier. Moreno intuited that actors in dramas, freed from the constraints of scripts and improvising on the real predicaments in their own lives, would experience an even more profound and healing catharsis.

Those who have experienced catharsis, whether as protagonists or as group members, generally say these emotions are part of something that feels good and healing. And in one of the best known textbooks

in group psychotherapy, Yalom (1995) notes that group therapy patients, when asked what has been most helpful for them, reply that catharsis is one of the more prominent healing factors. Several other therapies have used this dynamic, such as Bioenergetic Analysis, Gestalt therapy, marathon group therapy, "Primal" Therapy, and some other "body" therapies.

I think however, the actual dynamics of catharsis are generally misunderstood and merit clarification. My hypothesis is that the healing function arises not from the activation and expression of strong emotion but rather from *the reunification of parts of the psyche that had been separated*. The outward expression of emotion is just a reflection of an inner reintegrative process. The explanation follows.

DESCRIBING THE PHENOMENON

First, consider some examples of catharsis:

- After a separation from a dear friend, the reunion is marked by tears and laughter.
- After the drawn-out terror and wretchedness of clinging to survival after a traumatic event, a person weeps when he reaches safety.
- After the tensions of striving to win in a competition, the victor weeps on receiving the award.
- After struggling with a knotty problem and then discovering the solution, there's an exicted yelp, "Eureka!" or just a gentle but distinct sigh, "Ahhh!"
- In the midst of a psychodrama, an otherwise restrained protagonist bursts into a rageful scream and then sobs for several minutes.
- At birth, a baby cries.
- Discovering that he is accepted by the group, having shared his darkest guilty secret, a group cries, and some others cry with him.
- Caught up in a celebration, young people dance ecstatically and with great energy.
- On feeling spiritually reborn, a person weeps and laughs.

All these involve a period of internally experienced separation, the tension of opposites, or splitting, followed by a coming-together of what was apart.

UNDERLYING DYNAMICS

The mind often copes with painful experiences by separating certain thoughts and feelings from ordinary awareness and from each other—it's a kind of compartmentalization or "splitting" process. Most of what psychoanalysts call "defense mechanisms" use this basic self-deceptive maneuver. For example, *repression* is a separation of consciousness from inner experience, while *denial* splits it from outer experience, reality testing. Other defense mechanisms add illusory ideas to the splitting so that the separation is disguised and cognitive dissonance is reduced.

The mind on one level can be manipulated like this, but on another level, it is whole; as a result, the illusions of mental avoidance don't really work. At this deeper level, the mind knows it's fooling itself and the forbidden feelings, so to speak, "leak." This, in turn, requires a kind of inner vigilance and continued maneuvering, and it can get mentally tiring. This dynamic is the essence of what used to be called "neurosis," and it is, at least in small ways, operating in almost everyone.

When the mental balance shifts, sometimes by a natural resolution of the conflict, and sometimes through the intermediary of a healing procedure, it becomes permissible to re-unite two parts of the mind. The need to pretend that they are separate, the mental energy being expended, is relieved. Using the example of the reunion of old friends, the bottled-up feelings of yearning surge to the surface, and these feelings often contain a rich mixture of other emotions, such as shame for being so vulnerable, fear that the reunification might not happen, anger at the frustration, and relief. A similar complex process ensues when parts of the self are first separated and then, later, reunited.

The mind contains a deep tendency towards healing, integration—in Jungian terms, the archetype of *Eros*. In part, this is due to a deeply felt need to become free of the burdensome tensions that maintain those artificial inner splits. But it's even more due to a need for reclaiming some of the "healthy" elements that have been split off with the undesirable stuff. This is an important point. Most of the time, when a complex of thoughts and feelings is repressed or in other ways compartmentalized, there tend to be some useful qualities, elements of personal empowerment, authenticity, freedom, and the like that get mixed in. Mentally, when people cope by splitting, they figuratively "throw the baby out with the bathwater."

Stated more dramatically, people experiencing great threats—especially when young—will sacrifice or self-amputate parts of themselves

in order to regain some degree of stability. Some lose their sense of self in order to sustain their relationships. Some go the other way and sacrifice their social connectedness in order to sustain their sense of self as being okay—that results in sociopathy. These decisions depend on the particular interactions of temperament, family makeup, timing, and many other variables. The point, though, is that whatever is split off is missed and needed by the whole self.

When those imposed boundaries are dissolved, when the different aspects of the body mind are reunified, an emotional release occurs, and this is catharsis. Even a baby's birth cry, in Moreno's mind, was a catharsis of triumph, and research on the idea of birth trauma might support this—a profound relief at surviving a very stressful passage. Striving and finally achieving brings to the fore the feelings of worry that one might not make it and mixes them with the perception that one has indeed succeeded after all.

Interestingly, the reunification need not be in the form of actual life adjustments, which are often not possible. The experience, however, of bringing together the dissociated elements in the surplus reality of a psychodramatic enactment often satisfies the act hunger. Even more distanced modes of symbolic re-integration, such as art, dance, or poetry can fulfill this need for healing.

FOUR LEVELS OF CATHARSIS

The separations described may be thought of as operating at four levels of psychosocial integration:

1. Self-Concept: Is a given complex of feelings and ideas compatible with feelings of self-esteem?
2. Adaptation: Once such complexes are rediscovered, then how can they be positively utilized in one's life?
3. Social: Can one be liked or even accepted by others if they were to know about the problematic feelings and thoughts?
4. Spiritual: How can having these awkward and not generally socially valued qualities be reconciled with a sense of relationship with God or the world?

The point here is that when people split parts off from themselves, to some extent they remove the fullness of their being from the social and cosmic field, as if to say, "If you would know who I *really* am, you'd reject me." As a result, there are also levels of interpersonal and

spiritual separation, and these, too, add to the sense of burden and tension.

In healing these splits, there are four kinds of catharsis (Blatner, 1985):

1. The catharsis of *abreaction*. Becoming aware of the feelings broadens the self-concept. The self re-owns the previously dis-owned feelings and thoughts.
2. The catharsis of *integration*. The feelings and thoughts become reframed as useful or, at least, managed so that they can be lived with. This is often the point of creativity in therapy.
3. The catharsis of *inclusion*. The sense of isolation is dissolved as the protagonist finds that others can tolerate and even enjoy him or her even though they have discovered what had been thought of as unacceptable faults.
4. The catharsis of *spiritual re-connection*. The fullness of the in-dividual, with all weaknesses as well as strengths, finds its sense of belonging in the "Big Picture" and a sense of what may be constructively done in the world. This was what Moreno called a "Cosmic" catharsis, that re-establishes a relationship between the protagonist and God or the Greater Wholeness of Being.

WORKING-THROUGH

Abreaction is not enough. People need to carry forward the healing into the other levels. The reason Freud and others didn't get full benefits from catharsis is because they didn't appreciate this need and/or didn't have the methods for achieving the other types of integration. Moreno (1950) said that "Every catharsis of abreaction must be followed by a catharsis of integration." This means that it isn't enough for people to simply become aware of their own emotions. There was a reason they were repressed: Those emotions seemed overwhelming. Therefore, it's important to immediately "work through" the meaning of those feelings and ideas so they can be perceived as acceptable and even possibly capable of being sublimated in the service of constructive adaptation.

This is emotionally powerful, and promoting a catharsis that ad-dresses a significant neurotic complex is like doing surgery. And, using that analogy, the healing doesn't come from just the incision and removal of the appendix; it's necessary to sew the patient up again and offer rest and nutrition while the body (soul) heals (Z. Moreno,

1990). In psychiatry, just re-discovering buried emotions won't heal them. It's necessary to re-discover those emotions, but then they must be worked with in order to be constructively integrated. Even after the major abreactive catharsis, protagonists continue the experience during the sharing and discussion phases (Jefferies, 1998), and these further the deeper integrative processes.

Another analogy to surgery involves the idea of preparation. Often directors can anticipate that certain cathartic processes may well occur. Recognizing the dynamics involved, the director asks herself, "What is being avoided or repressed?" Sometimes this is apparent from previous work. Some scenes may be set up that do some integrative work, softening inner judgmentalness, for example, so that when the protagonist discovers certain previously unacceptable feelings, he or she is not overwhelmed with shame or guilt. Indeed, it may even be necessary to do this kind of preparatory work because otherwise the protagonist will subconsciously "resist" what is felt to be too big a step.

One way to prepare protagonists is to develop the supportive tone in the group. Another way is to orient the group toward a general confidence in the possibility of healing. A third way relates to an important principle of psychotherapy: *before putting a client in touch with his negative voices, first get him in touch with his positive voices.* Not hallucinatory voices, of course, but rather inner attitudes that take the form of subconscious self-devaluing or self-affirming self-talk. So, it's often useful to review the protagonist's aspirations, achievements, talents, positive qualities, and work toward generating an overall sense of a good person with some problems. Becoming grounded in more positive mental attitudes and relationships then forms the basis for the courage and stamina to face memories or experiences which might otherwise be too fraught with fear, guilt, shame, or otherwise excessive emotional elements.

If these principles are followed, then catharsis becomes part of a more integrative and holistic approach to therapy, the more intensive emotional outbursts being not a necessary element in every enactment but a point of breakthrough for those who have become ready for a certain kind of insight.

NOT JUST EVOKING EMOTION

One of the more common problems that arises from the misunderstanding of the dynamic of catharsis is that the healing is seen as the emotion whereas, in fact, the emotion simply—and to a variable de-

gree—reflects the inner integrative process. Another analogy would be the relationship between sweating and exercise: The purpose of vigorous exercise is to condition the cardiovascular system, and when it's working, the heart rate speeds up and, depending upon the ambient temperature, breeze, and other factors, sweating results. If it was the sweat that was the active ingredient, steam baths or saunas should be as effective as exercise, but they aren't. Similarly, it's possible to get folks riled up into anger without helping them to heal the issues that lead to anger between the parts of the self, or to confuse and frustrate them enough to weep. And yet, this doesn't touch the deeper integrations that are crying out to be released.

Activating emotion shouldn't be the goal. However, there are times in doing psychotherapy or psychodrama when setting up an emotionally loaded experience is just what's needed to catalyze an action insight. The need for followup is needed, though, so that integration is ensured.

VICARIOUS CATHARSIS

The catharsis of the auxiliaries and the audience (group) are also important elements. Even if the drama doesn't directly touch on a relevant conflict in the audience member's life, it may still evoke some powerful emotions. This is because, in a broader sense, all humans share the ongoing process of separation and re-integration, being lost in some way and then found.

These experiences also catalyze a release from a myriad of little tensions and bottled up feelings which don't get fully expressed in the restrained contexts of everyday "civilized" life. People don't get sufficient opportunities to "pull out the stops" with the different kinds of feelings that come up, from anger and grief through excitement and exuberance.

Related to the value of catharsis in group therapy, Yalom (1995) also listed the theme of "universalization." Psychodramas tend to present not only particular situations but also reflections of the human condition. The audience feels some connection with the larger stories and themes that give life meaning.

A WIDER PERSPECTIVE

Not all therapy requires cathartic methods or experiences. There are other times, however, when that is exactly what's indicated: a systematic procedure for re-integrating of what has been split off.

Also, catharses for the protagonist and audience may involve pleasant and exciting events—not just grief or anger. The power of Playback Theatre (discussed in chapter 20) is that it offers moments of poignancy regarding the full range of human experience, quite apart from any explicitly therapeutic contract. Similarly, directors in groups should include as a possible purpose of an enactment the need to share the really great things in life. Sometimes it's hard to find those who, with no envy or restraint, are willing to really root for you! This can be a valuable application of the method in training or personal growth as well as therapy groups.

The dynamic of catharsis is widespread in life, associated with many kinds of struggle, success, and defeat. It also happens vicariously, in witnessing meaningful and touching points in theatre or in participation in rituals. Alertness to the underlying dynamic helps people to recognize their emotions as flowing out of the deeper currents of reintegration.

SUMMARY

Moreno's intuition that catharsis could function as an important healing agent was a significant contribution, and the recognition that an integrated catharsis represents a more fundamental process than simply a purging of emotions has profound implications not only for psychotherapy but also for our more general thoughts about human development and vital health. These dynamics are closely related to the process of self-expression. Catharsis was neglected or misused because those deeper dynamics weren't fully appreciated. The key point was that every catharsis of abreaction needs to be followed by a catharsis of integration.

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12

Skill Learning

One of the most important values of psychodrama is that it can teach skills that go beyond the task of solving the problem being addressed at the moment. I've found that many psychosocial problems are due, in large part, to a simple lack of knowing the skills of communications, interpersonal problem-solving, self-awareness, and the like. At present, these skills aren't taught in most schools, although there have been calls to remedy this (Blatner, 1992, 1995; Goleman, 1995.) In the last few decades, direct skill-teaching has become a component of a number of therapies, abandoning the custom of attempting to remain non-directive.

Psychodrama offers a natural vehicle for the acquisition and practice of the aforementioned psychosocial skills. Role taking fosters an integration of imagination and other dimensions; role shifting exercises meta-cognition; role-creating encourages initiative; moving into the mirror and co-director role develops the capacity for self-observation and dis-identification. In all, the activity of role playing develops a type of cognition *beyond* what Piaget considered the adult mode, formal operational logic, because the activity of shifting frame of

reference opens the mind to a more holistic and integrative view (Wilber, 1998).

DEVELOPING THE META-ROLES

People play roles at several levels, as discussed in chapters 9 & 15, and the monitoring, modulating levels operate as governing roles, "meta-roles." Learning to shift between being relatively involved in a role and watching that role—what in drama and social psychology is called "role distance"—is perhaps *the* primary skill. When a protagonist is helped to pause, the scene is frozen, and, using the mirror technique, is brought out of the enactment to review the situation with the director. This is what really makes psychodrama therapeutic. When people have done this often enough, they begin to do it in their everyday lives. They stop and imagine the situation they're in as if it were a psychodrama, and they can then choose to mentally re-write the scene, to add something new and more constructive, instead of reacting in some old, habitual fashion.

DIS-IDENTIFICATION

Identification is the activity of associating the sense of self with something. One may identify with a role, a belief, a feeling, etc. Dis-identification involves a recognition that one is *not*—not one's body, nor one's role performance. A major element in maturation is the skill of dis-identifying from, say, whether or not the game one is playing is won or lost. Roberto Assagioli (1965, 112–120), the psychiatrist who invented the therapeutic method called Psychosynthesis, made the development of dis-identification a key element for healing or personal growth.

The sense of self needs to be attached somewhere, so it becomes redirected to the meta-level—one becomes not just the part being played, but the director and playwright, the co-creator of the scene who is free to re-think how it should go right there on the spot. (The psychospiritual disciplines of the East emphasize this skill and encourage the identification not only with the creative self, but also beyond that, with the soul-spirit source that inspires the self.)

Actors cultivate dis-identification by not becoming overly involved in their role performance, so as to keep a small observing function. This, in turn, modifies and refines the performance. It's as if the actor,

in part, identifies with the director. People who do a lot of psychodrama learn to be mentally flexible in this fashion also.

MAKING LEARNING EXPLICIT

Many forms of psychotherapy take clients through a process, but often the clients haven't gained specific skills that they can then use outside of the treatment setting. This can also happen with psychodrama. It is possible, however, to introduce the idea that the protagonist should pay attention to the methods being used. Even though attention is given to understanding the problem at hand, another measure of attention should be given to the broader challenge of learning how to use these tools to deal with other problems as they arise.

For example, during a psychodrama, during that aforementioned moment when the protagonist is drawn into the mirror position, standing back and reflecting on the scene she has been playing, the director might say, "This is an opportunity to learn how to do this so that, at other times in your life when you are in tight situations, you can imagine that you're in a psychodrama and mentally step back and re-think the situation the way we're doing now." Having made this general reminder of the broader potential of the process, the director and protagonist then can return to a consideration of the particulars of the problem being explored at the moment.

Of course, directors need to use their discretion as to when to weave such self-observation trainings into the enactment, but it doesn't necessarily need to be at the end. The classical progress from warm-up to emotional catharsis is often a process that goes too far and too deep for its effects to be fully integrated. Indeed, if the enactment is sufficiently emotionally activating, much of the learning may be lost because, at a certain level of warm-up, role distance is lost and the protagonist is in an altered state of consciousness.

Cutting the scene briefly and using the mirror technique also models the activity of becoming re-grounded. It reaffirms the therapeutic alliance and reminds the protagonist that the present consciousness is in control, and all this is being done in the service of something affirming and toward a constructive end. When dealing with emotionally loaded issues, such "grounding" activities not only are "in-cour-age-ing" but also model a way for people to give themselves room when they are in the heat of problems in the future. It builds skills of subtle distancing and reflecting which is neither withdrawl nor a compulsion to react.

ROLE REVERSAL AND EMPATHY

During my training as a psychiatrist I was exhorted to be sensitive and understanding, but I wasn't taught *how* to do it! It seemed that if I could only read enough on psychodynamics I could be empathic—but it didn't work. Thankfully, I discovered, through psychodrama, the skill of *role taking,* how to imagine what it might be like to be in some unfamiliar predicament.

There was some culturally instilled resistance to learning this skill. Role taking, thinking like an actor, involves making inferences, using intuition, and there's no guarantee of being accurate. It's a little risky, whereas believing that hard answers can be found in textbooks offers an illusion of security. One needs to learn to flow, become receptive to the nudges of spontaneity. It was a bit like learning to swim, involving a different orientation to knowing.

I also learned that some of the understandings would come in the course of the improvisation. As I warmed up to the role, as I played it, I discovered more of the feelings that went with it. So empathy can be developed as a result of doing a lot of psychodrama, and this can be made explicit: When people are involved in a psychodrama and they reverse roles, the director might say: "Every time you put yourself into the role of another, you're practicing the skill." This sets up a degree of self-awareness so that they can apply what they're doing with less warm-up by an outside director each time.

SELF-AWARENESS

Like empathy, self-awareness can be a vague concept. One way to make it workable is to use the tool of thinking of the mind as if it were a group of different roles, a family of sorts, or an organization or orchestra. These ideas will be discussed further in chapters 16 and 17. Begin to name the roles involved in any given situation, and then imagine that each role has its own position and script—imagine you can hear what they are saying.

In psychodrama, this skill is learned using the multiple ego technique as the protagonist is helped to play out different parts of the self and to have these parts dialogue with each other, negotiate, struggle, and work out compromises. Further component skills include the calling up of roles that have been neglected: "What does my 'inner child' have to say?" Then these can be broken down even further, recognizing that there might be a couple of different "inner child"

roles—the repertoire is different in each person. It's also important to name the parts of the mind that tend to censor and self-blame, perhaps calling it something like the "inner policeman."

One of the more powerful skills in self-awareness training is that of recognizing the various maneuvers these different parts engage in—in psychoanalysis these are called the "defense mechanisms," and they can be expressed as statements of the parts of the self:

"I don't want to know this"—suppression
"I don't know what you're talking about."—repression or denial.
"Those are just feelings, I don't know what they're about"—isolation of affect
"You're making me feel angry because you're angry at me!"—projection ... and so on

Interpersonally, the technique of asides allows people to practice the skill of becoming aware of undisclosed thoughts. Doubling teaches the skill of expressing more emotional and irrational ideas. And the aforementioned inner dialogue may help develop the skill of more authentic expression: "Well, part of me wants [this] ... but even as I say that, I hear another part of me answering, 'No! I want [that]!'"

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

The physical activity involved in psychodrama draws people's attention to the interaction of body and emotion. Another aspect of both interpersonal sensitivity and self-awareness is a heightened awareness of the meanings of the various types of nonverbal communications. People often react more to the way something is said than to what the actual words are. Yet most people haven't been taught how to recognize these patterns.

There is a maxim in learning medical diagnosis that the art of observation largely involves knowing what to look for. Therefore, in conducting a psychodrama, when a director sees a protagonist either sending a strong nonverbal message or reacting to the behavior of others in the scene, it sometimes pays to freeze the scene, shift to the mirror technique, and comment explicitly on what is going on. This also reinforces the idea of mentally observing one's own interactions and gives people an idea of what to watch for.

It's not easy at first to notice subtle nonverbal communications; it's a little like learning how to listen to classical music. In psychodrama,

awareness of this dimension can be facilitated by using the techniques of exaggeration as well as direct coaching so that alternative movements, positions, facial expressions, voice tones, and other variables may be experienced. Small differences become apparent in this type of experiential learning.

Nonverbal communications not only function to send messages to others but also serve as cues to the bodymind to reinforce certain inner states! (This is one of the links to some of the "body therapies.") Exploring how people express their attitudes not only fosters self-awareness, but, after this is achieved, greater self-control. People learn to notice their own bodies tensing in certain ways or their faces or voices moving into a certain mode of expression, and they can learn to interrupt automatic reactions and, by shifting their physical being, they can shift their emotional state.

These skills can then be used in everyday interpersonal relations. For example, one might say to a spouse, "Honey, it's hard to really open and hear you when your voice is so intense and high-pitched. I pick that up as an urgency that makes me anxious and I shut down a little. Please say that again in a more relaxed tone of voice." Or the spouse might say, "I need you to put down your newspaper and look at me in the eyes at this point."

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Most people don't have a strategy in their minds for working out interpersonal frictions and, fearing that conflicts will escalate, often try to avoid them. Sometimes this compounds the problem or even causes the escalation that's feared—but then the issue is obscured as there's also anger not about the problem but about the efforts to avoid dealing with the problem.

The strategy for conflict resolution is simple: combine the techniques of the double and role reversal. Manage the conflict by commenting on the process, playing the role of director as well as antagonist. What this means is first, bring out all the aspects of each party's point of view, and especially the feelings involved. Then, and this needs to be know to both parties at the outset, there is a process in which each party to the conflict reverses roles and seeks to express as compassionately as possible the position of the other while also being coached by the other. The role reversal is sequential, not simultaneous, so that, in reversing roles, each party can be helped to reach a level of accuracy in the portrayal.

This exercise breaks down some of the barriers of distrust by having both parties show they're willing to relinquish—even for just a brief period of time—their own egocentric position, and, in an act of true caring, enter the world of the other. This was Moreno's ideal encounter.

Of course this technique isn't always successful—but at least it's a strategy that can be used, and when everyone in a family or organization know that this process is available, it changes the dynamic from avoidance to engagement. There's a sense that the other people involved will extend themselves to "play the game" and play fairly.

In the course of a psychodrama, this process—as a skill which may be acquired and mastered—may be emphasized explicitly so that there's an element of role training mixed in with the general problem enactment.

SOCIOMETRIC SKILLS

Knowing about sociometry and *tele* (as discussed in chapters 18–19) also encourages new kinds of skill-building. People begin to think about social life not simply as a matter of whether one is "popular" or not, but rather how one can find the kinds of people with whom one might feel most at home. This is especially adaptive in a society that is becoming more multi-faceted and multicultural.

In setting up various arrangements, teachers, camp directors and others who organize groups may be able to create activities whereby people can become acquainted, and from this, begin to form into subgroups based on mutual attractions. This is more natural than simply assigning people to seats and cabins and work groups. When possible, allow people who *want* to work together to do so. More often than not this obvious principle tends to be ignored.

Another skill involves learning how to find more congenial role relationships when the initial connection may have left the parties feeling neutral or indifferent. Discussing different kinds of interests often brings to the surface some area of mutual enjoyment.

Becoming more aware of the subtle but ever-present activities of choosing and being chosen, people can begin to do this more consciously. Often people refuse to make choices and many have forgotten that they have the right to do so, at least mentally. Some people repress their preferences just as they repress other complexes.

Related to this is the skill of becoming more aware of the reasons for preferences, and this is one of the most fruitful avenues to self-awareness.

FOUR KINDS OF LEARNING

To better appreciate how the component skills of psychodrama can be used in other situations, consider that there are four types of learning:

1. *Information* is acquired from books, lectures, movies, informal exchanges of ideas.
2. *Competence* is developed through being shown how (i.e., modeling), actual physical practice, getting feedback, encouragement, gaining the "knack," and having sufficient opportunities for even more practice to refine the skill.
3. *Understanding* comes from becoming aware of the integrations of different aspects of the learning. Related to people, understanding may be acquired through imagining what it's like to be in other roles, a compassionate appreciation of different kinds of predicaments.
4. *Wisdom* involves the further integration of one's higher values and the capacity for self-discipline, noticing and correcting one's own faults, erroneous tendencies, and non-productive attitudes.

While most of education today emphasizes the first category, experiential modes of learning, such as psychodrama, are more focused on the last three types of learning. The goal is for the general population to gradually move towards what I call "psychological literacy" which will enable people to be more active in coping with the psychological and social strains of a rapidly changing world.

CREATING RITUALS AND CELEBRATIONS

Being involved with psychodrama tends to foster a sense of being a dramatic director and producer, and an intriguing spin-off may be the fostering of people becoming more active in modifying the rites of passage in their lives, bringing more creativity to weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies. Using role reversal to imagine how the various people might be feeling leads to setting up the situation so that the best responses are more likely. Using dramatic devices such as amplification, really projecting the voice, making invocations, creating stage areas, and the like, can all heighten the sense of significance in the activity (Blatner, 1985; Wall & Ferguson, 1998; Roberts, 1999).

Going even further, I'd like to suggest that this might be an appropriate role for experienced psychodramatists: Master of Ceremonies.

Using all the tools in a different context, we can help to make rituals and celebrations more meaningful and inclusive of those present.

SUMMARY

There's an old Chinese proverb: "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. If you teach a man to fish, you feed him for the rest of his life." I think one of the most important functions of psychodrama is that of introducing people to a new way of working with problems, integrating imaginativeness, spontaneity, and becoming confident in the use of a number of valuable techniques and conceptual tools (such as the role concept). After people become familiar with the process, these activities begin to filter into everyday life. Formal psychodrama isn't needed to use the skill of role reversal. Even just imagining these scenes can be helpful.

The more people learn that they can cope with problems with creativity and a variety of skills, the more they feel confident and become increasingly willing to take responsibility in directly engaging social as well as personal problems. This infrastructure of skills and concepts works as a form of ongoing therapy and applies to the challenges of community issues, spiritual development, recreation, celebration, politics, and other activities.

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13

Integrations With Other Therapies

As stated in the introduction, I consider psychodrama to be a tool that transcends any particular approach to therapy rather than a stand-alone therapy in itself. As such, it may be integrated with most other psychotherapeutic methods.

AN INTEGRATIVE META-THEORY

I believe that therapy can and should be eclectic, but this doesn't mean simply superficially, using bits of this and that from various approaches. For a number of years, professionals have been working toward an intellectually responsible, integrative theory of psychotherapy (Norcross & Goldfried, 1992; Arkowitz, 1997, Corey, 2000).

First, as discussed in chapter 5, the theory must be allowed to be looser and more general. This is because of the complexity of the phenomenon—psychology being at least as varied as the wide field of medical practice which must address hundreds of different causes of

disease operating at many different levels of organization (chemical, cellular, organs, systems, etc.). In medicine, theory is guided by a general framework of "physiology" which, although it has some principles of chemistry and physics as a common basis, nevertheless involves many levels in the workings of biological systems—including the influence of psychosocial (and recently, even spiritual) factors. Within this holistic matrix there are hundreds of sub-theories, each with its own sets of principles. So, too, in psychology, many different kinds of operations are occurring, and it's not necessary that they all be conceptually squeezed into a narrow theory (Ford & Urban, 1998, p.535). Furthermore, I think that such an integrative approach can utilize applied role theory as the basis of a practical common language in the behavioral sciences (see chapters 15 and 16) (Blatner, 1995).

Nor should Moreno's theories be the only ones serving as the foundation for the use of psychodrama! Kipper (1997) calls for a recognition that the use of psychodramatic methods need not be based solely on Moreno's own theory, but that other models may also be used, such as Kipper's (1982) own "simulation" theory or Verhofstadt-Denève's (1988, 1999) "Existential-Dialectical" model. Alternatively, Linnea Carlson-Sabelli and Hector Sabelli (1994) have developed a "process theory" (not related to the "Process Philosophy" of Whitehead mentioned in the chapter in Theology) which they feel can add to our understanding of the unfolding dynamics of psychodrama. Remer (1997) noted that recent discoveries in the realms of mathematics and science related to Chaos Theory, fractals, and "non-linear dynamics" illuminate a number of problems, not only in the physical sciences but also in the humanities—such as in history or anthropology-and even have potential applications in psychotherapy.

Models change. For a time, conditions such as schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, or autism were thought of as being psychological in nature and treated accordingly, but nowadays most psychiatrists consider these largely due to biological, neuro-physiological factors (Dolnick, 1998). And, indeed, they often respond remarkably well to new medicines. Still, these problems also involve many complex psychosocial adjustments and certain types of psychotherapy are often helpful. Interestingly, there still seem to be some professionals (including psychodramatists) who haven't kept up with recent scientific evidence and still cling to the psychodynamic conserve of a few decades ago, even about these conditions.

RAPPROCHEMENT WITH PSYCHOANALYSIS

Although psychoanalysis is declining in influence in the United States (Hale, 1996), it still is quite prominent in Europe and South America, and many psychodramatists there also work primarily within an analytic framework, while many psychoanalysts, in turn, use modified psychodramatic techniques. Moreno (1959, p. 97) suggested a possible rapprochement.

In practice, most psychodramatists (including myself) use a wide range psychodynamic concepts, although we're not committed only to that theory. Many psychodynamic insights are also relatively compatible with applied role theory, except in the latter the influences of the role demands in the present are given more weight. Nevertheless, the continuing influences of past experience are actively worked with.

Psychoanalysis itself has evolved, and many revisions and subschools exist—drive psychology, ego psychology, object relations theory, self psychology, and intersubjectivity being some of the more widely recognized. Beyond its fuzzy boundaries, other psychodynamic approaches—the ideas of Adler, Jung, Rank, Reich, etc.—use some analytic concepts and not others. Psychodramatic methods may be applied with many of these theoretical approaches. The only incompatibility I'm aware of is the classical requirement which restricts the analysand to the couch—but that is, in fact, used only by a small minority of practitioners.

As psychodynamic approaches (to use the broader umbrella term) expanded beyond the one-to-one setting to include groups and families, other psychodramatic techniques could be added, such as the use of co-therapists as auxiliaries (Aronson, 1990). Blanck and Blanck (1979) noted that the therapist should be a catalyst in the sense of being a necessary presence without participating in the action, and the use of auxiliaries facilitates this goal.

Unfortunately, Moreno's emphasis on his differences with psychoanalysis led to a neglect of certain areas of attention. Increasingly, psychodramatists have remedied this by, for example, more actively addressing transferences as they arise (Buckley, 1989; Hamer, 1990).

Psychodrama may be used to complement certain psychoanalytic ideas. For example, in the sub-school called "self psychology," an increased emphasis has been given to the analyst's becoming accurately empathic with the analysand. Techniques such as doubling can be modified so as to aid in this process. The primary motivation according to self psychology is the need to experience the self as coherent and valued. To this end then, physical activity on the part of the

patient, beyond mere talking, can add to the sense of self as "locus of control" or the creative agent in an interaction (Swink & Buchanan, 1984). This may then be reinforced by using actual role practice in working through various insights.

In the object relations school of thought, the primary motivation is thought to be the establishment of a sense of stability with the objects of desire—which is, in some ways, similar to Moreno's view of the nature of social embeddedness, as discussed in chapter 18. Moreno's concept of "social atom" could also be translated as the aggregate of an individual's object relations. Psychodramatists such as Holmes (1992), Olsson (1989), and Powell (1986) have specifically noted how psychodrama can be conducted based on object relations theory.

In this approach, other people—past and present—are experienced as images in the mind, continuously being re-created, like figures in a dream, or better, inner dramas. A noted psychoanalyst put it this way:

"Psychic life is now seen not as an apparatus of control over impersonal instinctual drives, but as a complex and highly personal drama throughout its inner nature. This personal drama of aspects of the ego and of objects in constant interaction constitutes the complex structure of the psychic individual" (Guntrip, 1957, p. 59).

Furthermore, the client or protagonist plays a part, interacting with others in these inner illusions. Part of therapy then, involves externalizing these fantasies, allowing the inner dialogues to be expressed— and by placing the full dramatic interaction on stage, psychodrama facilitates the process even further (Watkins, 1986, pp. 22–28).

Psychodrama is especially helpful in clarifying the dynamic interaction called "projective identification" which involves at least two parties. It's very similar to the kinds of "games" described by Eric Berne in his system of Transactional Analysis, or, in terms of applied role theory, it would be called "role reciprocity." In projective identification one person communicates an attitude or feeling and the other person unconsciously buys into it—or at least is sorely tempted to do so (Cashdan, 1988). Psychodrama can make these maneuvers more explicit and further work them out using various techniques such as role reversal or act-completion (i.e., having the auxiliary behave as a perfect complement to the implied attitude).

In the last decade, significant progress has been made at the organizational level towards re-integration of psychodrama and other psychodynamic and psychoanalytic approaches. Psychodramatists such as David Kipper, Sandra Garfield, Merri Goldberg and Jim Sacks have

presented at conferences of the AGPA—the main, psychoanalytically oriented group therapy organization—and articles have appeared in their journals. Garfield has further organized a special interest group within the ASGPP to explore this interface, and she and others have presented papers on aspects of psychoanalysis and psychodrama.

INTEGRATIONS WITH OTHER APPROACHES

Cognitive therapy invites people to more systematically and rationally evaluate their assumptions. Developed by Aaron Beck in the 1960s, this approach has gradually become well-known, in part because it can be explained in very rational terms (Beck & Weishaar, 1995). Also, a number of cognitive therapists use a range of techniques, including some role-playing.

Behavior therapy, emerging also in the 1960s in a number of forms, soon integrated the action techniques of rehearsal, modeling, and feedback as well as role playing as part of their basic repertoire (Wilson, 1995, p. 210). In turn, this approach offers further theoretical support for role training, coaching, and other psychodramatic maneuvers. Interestingly, cognitive therapy and behavior therapy have themselves been integrated as "cognitive behavior therapy" in the work of Donald Meichenbaum and others (Linehan, 1987).

Gestalt therapy. Fritz Perls emigrated from South Africa around 1947 and attended a number of Moreno's sessions, appropriating Moreno's role-taking techniques, especially the technique of the empty chair, with his own existential and psychodynamic ideas (Perls, 1973). Exchanges of techniques and principles continue, and the methods are quite compatible. (Incidentally, the contribution of Laura Perls in the early 1950s should not be overlooked.) Ironically, Gestalt therapy became so popular in the 1970s that books that alluded to action methods often called them "Gestalt techniques"—not recognizing their actual source in psychodrama.

Imagination therapies, such as those proposed by Leuner, Sheikh, Ahsen, Shorr, and others (Zahourek, 1998), all contain elements that complement psychodrama and, in turn, could be enriched by the inclusion of psychodramatic techniques such as asides, role portrayal, and role reversal. These approaches also make bridges between cognitive therapies, expressive therapies, and hypnotherapies (Shorr, 1994). The visualization processes associated with biofeedback training can also include psychodramatic devices such as the surplus reality techniques of future projection or redoing the past in a more congenial

fashion. In addition, some psychodramatists techniques are designed to evoke imagery and work with these as part of the process (Hug, 1997).

The creative arts in therapy are naturally allied with applications of psychodrama (McNiff, 1981). Art, music, dance and movement, poetry, and drama approaches have all been used with psychodramatic methods, as warm-ups or afterwards, for more complete integration (Barragar-Dunne, 1997; Blatner, 1987; Feder & Feder, 1981; Robbins, 1980; Peterson and Files, 1989). Writings in these fields further support the rationale for psychodrama.

Play therapy, although traditionally confined to childhood, has applications in modified form with teenagers and adults, especially for those who are less verbally articulate (Tooley, 1973). Psychodramatic methods can also enrich the repertoire of play therapists.

The body therapies have the potential of extending and complementing the physically active elements in psychodrama. Techniques derived from Bioenergetic Analysis can be modified and utilized to intensify abreaction and bring emotional complexes connected with bodily areas of tension into consciousness. Related approaches are also capable of integration (Marrone, 1990).

The Pesso-Boyden Movement Process was developed by teachers of dance in the 1960s and includes a "psychomotor" enactment process that has some resemblances to psychodrama and family sculpture (Pesso, 1969; Pesso & Crandall, 1991; Geller, 1978; Marrone, 1990). Its basis might well inform and, in turn, be informed by psychodrama.

Hypnotherapy was combined with psychodrama early in its development. Indeed, psychodramatic enactment often generates a mild to moderate level of trance in the protagonist and other participants. Some of the more recent techniques in the rapidly growing field of hypnotherapy [and its associated approach of neurolinguistic programming (NLP)] include psychodramatic principles, such as having parts of the self dialogue with each other and with a newly suggested synthesizing self.

Adlerian therapy (individual psychology) was felt by Rudolf Dreikurs to be a natural complement to psychodrama. He arranged for an associate, Adaline Starr (1973), to attend Moreno's academy and develop this line of collaboration. Since then, psychodrama has been a regular part of the curriculum at the Alfred Adler Institute in Chicago and has been adapted as a integrated form by Shoobs, O'Connell, and others.

Jungian therapy (analytical psychology) also offers opportunities for the integration of psychodramatic methods. Watkins (1986) describes a

rich usage of imaginal dialogue for working with archetypal images, and it is but a small step to acting them out. James Hillman's modification and extension of Jungian thought, which he calls archetypal psychology, is similarly a potential candidate for using actional techniques. Such techniques can function to increase the vividness of the imagination which Hillman (1983) considers the essence of soul-making and the true goal of his approach to psychotherapy.

Family therapy has utilized a variety of active and directive approaches. It is a natural context for applying psychodramatic techniques, especially those of the aside, behind-the-back, role reversal, and the double. (Blatner, 1994; Hayden-Seman, 1998; Perrott, 1986). In turn, work in family therapy has brought forward a number of ideas that can support psychodrama (Farmer, 1996). Family sculpture, a derivation of action sociometry, is an especially notable adaptation, discussed further in chapter 18.

Group therapy has been using action techniques more frequently in the last few decades, and other psychodramatic methods could be easily included (Nicholas, 1984; Cabral, 1987; Kottler, 1994, p.273; Corey & Corey, 2000). Indeed, Moreno saw the two methods as synergistic. Again, I want to emphasize the need for psychodramatists to learn from the general group psychotherapy literature, because there are many dynamics and strategies noted there that are not fully articulated in the literature on psychodrama. Also, of course, the theoretical foundations of group psychotherapy supports psychodrama's rationale.

Potentials for integration with psychodrama may be found in many other therapies also, such as: Eric Berne's Transactional Analysis (Jacobs, 1977); William Glasser's Reality Therapy (Greenberg & Bassin, 1976); etc. *Feminist therapy* is especially compatable with psychodrama (Worell & Remer, 1992). In Corsini's *Handbook of Innovative Psychotherapies* (in press), he mentions a number of approaches which have actional or role-playing elements.

OTHER DISCIPLINES

Psychodrama offers ideas that may be used by many fields apart from psychotherapy, and, in turn, its own theory is richly fertilized by research and development in those fields.

Child Development has made great progress, and psychodramatists should not base their understandings on Moreno's speculations. Nev-

ertheless, his ideas about spontaneity, role-taking, tele, and other psychosocial dynamics could enrich that field.

Communications Studies, Linguistics, Semantics, Nonverbal Communications, Semiotics, Social Psychology, Anthropology and related fields all have developed ideas of value to psychodramatists and other group leaders. *Cross-cultural Studies* have explored the nature of drama in healing, celebrations, and rituals, and these can, in turn, inform the emergence of revisions and refinements in psychodrama.

The interdisciplinary field of *Creativity Studies* deserves attention. It is related to theories of self-actualization, "flow," and a range of areas of enquiry. The nature of *play* has also become the subject of study by anthropologists, ethologists (studying comparative animal behavior), child development researchers, etc., and this, too, relates to why and how psychodrama is useful.

SUMMARY

A good tool can be used in many contexts, and the methods and concepts of psychodrama are remarkably flexible, being capable of adaptation to a wide range of therapies and models of psychology. It's not just a one-way street, though. Psychodrama, both theory and method, can itself be tremendously enriched and informed by all the aforementioned approaches.

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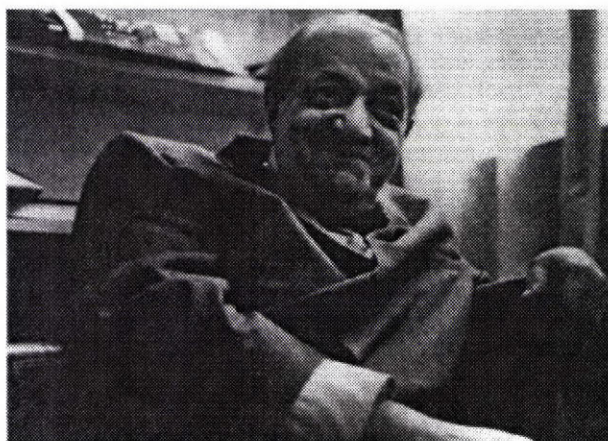
J. L. Moreno, circa 1971.

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Therapeutic Factors

Psychodrama works not only because of the therapeutic factors noted by Moreno and discussed in the previous chapters but also because it partakes of more general healing elements which can be described in psychodynamic terms. In this chapter, we will note how psychodramatic methods can be effective in three ways: (1) facilitating the different factors in group therapy; (2) promoting various dimensions of "ego strength"; and (3) aiding in the different phases of therapy. Many of these points also help to explain how psychodrama works even in non-clinical contexts.

THERAPEUTIC FACTORS IN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

Moreno was one of the pioneers of group psychotherapy and spent a good deal of his later career promoting all types of group treatment as well as psychodrama. Corsini and Rosenberg (1955) were among the first to try to identify the factors that accounted for healing in group therapy. Bloch and Crouch (1985) more recently summarized subse-

quent similar efforts. Kellermann (1984) applied this idea to psychodrama. Perhaps the best known listing of the therapeutic factors in group psychotherapy is in Yalom's (1975) classic textbook on group psychotherapy. These will be noted below, taken from Yalom's revised 4th edition (1995, pp. 1–105), along with some comments on how psychodramatic methods may be used as adjunctive catalysts:

- *Instillation of hope* is a theme that is fundamental to all modes of therapy (Ehrenwald, 1976). This can occur by being in contact with others who have been benefited by the process, by meeting a therapist who has faith in the potential of the method to generate creative transformation or positive change, and by holding the expectation of help.
- *Universality* refers to discovering that one's concerns are shared by others and is a powerful source of support. A significant factor in psychosocial "disease" is that of demoralization. Part of this is the person's feeling of alienation, the belief that one's weaknesses and problems are relatively unique and shameful. Psychodramatic methods can help group members discover the breadth of common feelings involved in the human condition, and this stimulates its effectiveness.
- *Altruism,* generating the attitude of and skills in caring about others, is an important element in healing because the aforementioned feeling of alienation also has roots in the tendency to become self-centered. In spite of some articles that have appeared in the last decade about how groups can be (mis)used to foster narcissism, the opposite is usually more accurate because people in group therapy are encouraged to go beyond their habits of egocentricity and to consider in depth the needs and feelings of others. Psychodrama uses role reversal as a focused method for achieving this goal. The approach is an operational method for developing what Alfred Adler felt to be *the* most important attitude, *Gemeinschaftsgefühl* (translated as "social interest" or "community feeling"). Adler thought this was the major alternative to the personal power strivings that he believed to be the basis of most psychopathology.
- *Imparting or sharing of information* remedies a common element in psychological dysfunction, the lack of knowing a number of facts about psychology and also knowing skills for dealing with problems (See chapter 12).
- *Corrective emotional experience* happens when expectations of being judged, blamed, or other attitudes and beliefs based on

past experience are not fulfilled; instead, group members receive more support which helps to "reprogram" their psychological set. Psychodrama and the use of sociometric techniques extend this process by making the unspoken elements of the interactions even more explicit and, as the early roles are reenacted by others, the reality of who they are in the group is enhanced. Perhaps the most powerful source of the corrective experience is the protagonist's being helped to imagine what would have been a more supportive response from someone in the past and then, using surplus reality, co-creating a scene in which he or she at a younger age "experiences" being treated in a more positive fashion. This both validates previously disowned feelings and empowers the protagonist to ask for what he or she wants.

- *Developing socializing techniques* happens over time in the course of conventional, verbal group therapy, but the addition of psychodramatic methods allows the richness of full experiential learning (chapter 12).
- *Modeling,* picking up on the healthier behaviors of others in the group, is an important element, an extension of the previous factor. Bandura (1971) emphasized this element in his approach to behavior therapy and, of course, role playing deepens the process.
- *Interpersonal learning* is another variation of many of the factors already named.
- *Group cohesiveness* is a powerful experience involving the feelings of being accepted and belonging. It's also healing for group members to discover that they can belong without feeling that they are being forced to suppress their own ideas or feelings in order to conform. Psychodrama's valuing of creativity allows unconventional thinking or behavior to be viewed more as a type of artistic expression, and thus fosters a greater integration of strivings toward individuality and the pressures of group norms.
- *Catharsis,* the emotional release that accompanies ego expansion and integration, is considered an important healing factor in group psychotherapy. Psychodrama is noted for its utilization of this method, discussed in detail in chapter 11.
- *Existential issues* are confronted in group therapy as certain, unchangeable realities of life are shared—it's unfairness, the inevitability of pain, and other dimensions which require a deeper shift towards acceptance (which is yet quite different from resignation) and responsibility. The aforementioned dynamic of building group cohesion can serve to soften the message by offering

the comfort of presence. Although, in the words of an old spiritual hymn: "You gotta walk that lonesome valley, you gotta walk it by yourself...," this is so in an existential sense; still, others can walk *with* you, at least for a while. Sharing can do much to reduce our sense of ultimate aloneness and contributes to the process of healing.

STRENGTHENING THE EGO

Another approach to appreciating the way psychodrama is effective is by noting how its various techniques can be used to strengthen the protagonist's ego. S. R. Slavson (1955) listed strengthening the ego as one of the dynamics he thought of as common to all psychotherapy (the other factors being relationship, catharsis, insight, reality testing, and sublimation). In an important and constructive critique of psychoanalysis, Yankelovich and Barrett (1970) noted that one area of weakness in the analytic approach is its lack of methods for directly strengthening the ego. A clue to the kind of strength needed was noted by Kubie (1958) who pointed out that an important indicator of mental health was a person's flexibility of mind, a quality similar to what Moreno meant by spontaneity. Finally, Marsha Linehan (1987) clearly notes the need to teach clients a variety of what might be best recognized as ego-strengthening skills as part of her method of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy.

Using Bellak's scales of 12 categories of ego functions (Bellak, Hurvich, & Gediman, 1973), we can review the ways psychodrama can help in strengthening these dimensions:

- *Reality testing* is augmented because, in the enactment, protagonists are required to check out their perceptions against the reality of the social consensus and the limitations of concrete portrayals. In spite of the freedom of the dramatic context, the concrete nature of physically portraying a scene counters the distortions introduced by the evasive maneuvers that tend to obscure verbal therapy. By shifting roles physically, inner and outer stimuli become explicitly distinguished. By allowing for a full expression of fantasy and dreams, they are thereby helped to become consciously differentiated.
- *Judgment* is exercised through playing out situations to their logical conclusions. This interferes with tendencies toward denial. Temptations to take risks can be symbolically tried out in a

relatively fail-safe context, thus helping to differentiate between those with major or minor consequences. Through role reversal, protagonists can be helped to recognize inappropriate social responses, learning to discriminate between intentions, however well-meant, and the impact of specific behaviors judged from another's point of view. Another theme is the differentiation between one's desires and realistic expectations. This can be practiced by being given the opportunity to satisfy the act hunger in fantasy and, following this, to address the limitations in the probable alternatives at hand.

- *Sense of reality,* the subjective feeling, serves as an indicator of some degree of personal ownership, will, and responsibility. It is the opposite of the state produced by subtle or significant defensive mechanisms of denial, depersonalization, and de-realization. Instead of allowing for the disconnection of experience, psychodrama is particularly effective in integrating it because the method involves physical action and imagination, sensation and intuition, emotion and reason, intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics, and so on. In choosing how to proceed in playing a scene, it becomes increasingly difficult to respond according to others' (supposed) expectations, so "as-if" tendencies are gradually replaced by more authentic and sustained components of identity. Again, through role reversal, protagonists are helped to differentiate between their own qualities, beliefs, and preferences and those of significant others.

- *Regulation and control of drives, affects, and impulse* can be enhanced through symbolic expression in the contained setting of drama. Immature forms of emotional discharge can then be followed by enactments of more mature reactions in a process of role training. A variety of channels of sublimation can be developed and exercised, and the opening of healthy modes of gratification makes it easier to relinquish old, less adaptive patterns of thought and behavior.

  Using a variety of scenes and situations, protagonists can be helped to encounter a broad range of emotions and behaviors in themselves; in the course of spontaneity training, these can be modified to include reality testing and choice making. Instead of habitual patterns of reacting either with excessive inhibitions or outbursts of emotion-filled behavior, the person becomes familiar with the enjoyable mastery of a range of coping strategies.

- *Object relations* are explored and skills developed in gradually more complex forms by using psychodramatic enactments. Aux-

iliaries play roles in scenes in which they evoke the protagonist's habitual reactions which may then be re-evaluated and refined. Using role reversal, protagonists can be helped to transcend their immature tendencies toward egocentricity and to recognize that others have their own points of view. Role reversal also promotes a shift from immature tendencies to "split" others into being experienced either as all-good or all-bad to a more mature capacity for "object constancy"—an awareness of how others can be a mixture of desirable and undesirable qualities, yet still available for relationship. Beyond that, in graduated steps, role reversal and coaching can finally culminate in a capacity for empathy.

The frustration of learning that others have needs that might conflict with one's own can be compensated for by discovering that others are also capable of forgiveness, inclusiveness, generosity of spirit, and other positive qualities. Role reversal leads to the development of a more realistic and mature kind of trusting, one that avoids the pitfalls of either idealization or devaluation. In addition, this skill becomes a valuable aid in discovering and revising transferential distortions (Kellermann, 1996).

- *Thought processes* are exercised in a dynamic setting in which a significant degree of concentration, memory, and attention is required, at least for more complex enactments. Psychodramatic methods can foster protagonists' thinking abilities through the exercise of shifting between abstract and concrete levels of meaning or between "play" and "serious" modes of action. Such activities help them to communicate more clearly and yet learn to use language in a more metaphoric fashion. Of course, techniques may be modified and simplified to adjust to the abilities of those who have undue difficulties in the area of cognitive functioning. Thus, while "classical" psychodrama may not be appropriate for developmentally disabled, demented, delirious, or floridly psychotic patients, structured, actional techniques often tend to be more useful than purely verbal and nondirective approaches (Yalom, 1983).

- *Adaptive regression in the service of the ego* (ARISE) is Bellak's term for the person's ability to use play, fantasy, intuition, humor, artistic imagery, and other components that arise out of the subconscious realm of "primary process" as vehicles for creative living (Bellak et al., 1973). Psychodrama actively employs this ego function, and, the more it is used, the more fluid and focused it can become. In spontaneity, as Moreno defines it,

intuitive impulses and inspirations are balanced with the powers of reason and aesthetic sensitivity, expressiveness is balanced with effectiveness, and primary process is balanced with secondary process.

- *Defensive functioning* is an area of ego development that can be systematically worked with, introducing and explicitly demonstrating the effectiveness of more mature defenses, such as sublimation, suppression, compensation, affirmation, and re-evaluation. Modeling of problem-solving by others fosters toleration of mild to moderate amounts of anxiety. The safety of the stage and group allows for clear and explicit demonstration of their dynamics. Reaction formation, undoing, counterphobic responses, isolation, displacement, projection, and other symbolic defenses may be enacted and neutralized by using doubling, concretization, and shifting aspects of scenes. Reframing defense mechanisms as habits of thinking facilitates replacing them with mature defenses and adaptations which, in turn, can then be practiced, encouraged, and reinforced.

- *Stimulus barriers* can be strengthened in psychodrama through exploration of a variety of distancing, buffering, and "soothing" techniques (Blanck & Blanck, 1979). Skills for "giving oneself room" by using warm-up techniques can be adapted to the individual's needs. Group members can learn ways to more consciously and mutually establish boundaries for themselves, assert themselves, allow themselves quiet time, and not let themselves feel pushed or overwhelmed.

- *Autonomous functions* are exercised through developing confidence in spontaneous behavior. The more patients improvise, the more they discover greater creativity in themselves than they thought they had. The group tends to support and validate the successful aspects of personal expressions, so patients tend to build skills and confidence in their own resources. Indeed, the subtle letting go of self-consciousness and self-control that is part of psychodramatic enactment, when supported by the relatively protected setting of the group, evokes increasing trust in the flow.

- *Synthetic-integrative* functioning is perhaps the primary dimension developed in a psychoeducational approach such as psychodrama. Use of the multiple ego technique, in particular, can help patients to experience and clarify the different parts of their personalities. By the fostering of a kind of internal encounter, a superordinate "choosing self" emerges, one that, in the role of

judge, big sister, spiritual guide, or another wise and helpful character, seeks compromises with new alternatives for the various internal conflicts.

- *Mastery-competence* is an important dimension that may be enhanced through the kinds of behavioral practice found in role playing and psychodrama. The situations can be devised so as to offer a hierarchy of difficulty and, through the reinforcements of group encouragement, patients begin to experience a series of successes.

In addition to the ego functions, Bellak and associates (1973) noted some aspects of superego and drive functioning, and these too may be worked with constructively in psychodrama. For example, superego distortions—that is, the oppression of an overly harsh, rigid, or lax conscience—may be addressed more readily when contrasts with a freely chosen ego ideal—that is, sets of aspirations and models—are drawn. The future projection technique allows goals to be clarified, and aspirations and values can be tested against at least a partial simulation of possible alternatives. Psychodramatic methods for evoking symbolic gratifications also help to modify excessive or over-inhibited libidinal (e.g., sexual) or aggressive drives. Allowing for a protected kind of self-expression can redirect the immature feelings and aims in more socially acceptable channels.

FACILITATING THE PHASES OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

Appreciating that other kinds of group work may have different details, it's worthwhile also to recognize that psychodramatic methods can catalyze a number of functions in therapy (Blatner, 1985). The process of psychotherapy has a kind of logical progress which, while not rigid, nevertheless offers some rational structure for the practitioner:

1. Entrance and support
2. Initial contract and history-taking
3. Focusing on a problem, going deeper, reviewing attitudes
4. Formulation & re-contracting
5. Deal with frictions in the helping relationship
6. Re-Integration

1. *Entrance* and *Support* The beginnings of therapy may be facilitated by using the principles of *warming-up*, shifting the sense many

patients have that their presentation needs to be neatly packaged. Warming-up offers room to approach the problem gradually. If the client feels intimidated, the technique of *role reversal* with the therapist or others may reduce the fantasies of being judged and can also counter tendencies towards entitlement or unrealistic and magical expectations. In being supportive during this vulnerable phase, a modified form of *doubling* (which I call "active empathy") lets the client know that the therapist is willing to look at the situation from the client's viewpoint, and more, be willing to be corrected if any impressions are mistaken.

2. *Initial Contract* and *History-Taking* may be aided by the use of the portrayal of small *vignettes*, mini-enactments just to make the descriptions clear. Initial complaints are often vague or overly abstract. I say, "I don't know what you mean until I can actually visualize the scene." This quasi-dramatic approach helps to move toward specificity, reveals the nonverbal elements that shape the meaning of the interaction presented, and helps the client feel that the therapist understands the predicament. History-taking is also aided by the use of the *social network diagram* (described in chapter 17).

3. *Focusing on a Problem, Going Deeper,* and *Reviewing Attitudes* take the therapy toward the "mid-game." Note that well into the process an ongoing diagnostic process is going on. Sometimes simply describing a behavior episode is not sufficient to reactivate all parts of the pattern. *Role playing* an episode may help the client become more fully aware of and understand all aspects of the experience (Ford & Urban, 1998, p. 651). As part of this exploration of the underlying meanings of the behaviors and attitudes that are brought to the surface, the techniques of *doubling, role reversal, concretization, mirror,* and *exaggeration* are often used. Using *surplus reality,* dreams or fantasies may be enacted, and *catharsis* sometimes accompanies this process.

As insights are gained, protagonists are helped to consider alternatives by being invited to *replay a scene differently,* and *role training* may be helpful for integrating new attitudes.

4. *Formulation and re-contracting* It's often helpful to demystify the therapeutic process and discuss the overall understanding of the problem. *Applied role theory* (as described in chapters 15 & 16) offers a relatively neutral language for this grounding of the treatment alliance (Blatner, 1993).

5. *Deal With Frictions in the Helping Relationship* These inevitably arise, and working what have also been called (misleadingly, I think) "resistances" and "transferences," can result in many insights. Tech-

niques like the *mirror* and *role reversal* are often helpful here. If there's a sense that the therapist made a mistake, the client can then *replay* the scene showing what a "good" therapist would think and do.

6. *Re-integration* may be facilitated by enacting a *corrective scene*, using the *reformed auxiliary* technique so that the protagonist can re-live a traumatic situation so that it "happens" (in *surplus reality*) in a more positive fashion. Another way to promote integration is to have the client replay the scene in a more empowered fashion, to feel herself become more self-assertive. *Role training* may be needed here, with actual *coaching*, perhaps some *modeling* by other group members, and encouraging and supporting more effective responses. Thus, the psychodrama serves as a laboratory for experimenting with alternative behaviors, a fail-safe place where clients can rehearse a wider range of reactions.

Problems are often complex, involving a number of inter-related issues. After dealing with one facet of life, another situation is often raised. Therefore, therapy may well involve a repeat of the above sequence, or several repeats. These may occur some months or years apart, with time away from therapy to consolidate skills. Issues of termination, follow-up, and other aspects of therapy must also be considered. The point here is that, given the complexity of the process, there are many opportunities for the effective application of psychodramatic methods.

SUMMARY

In summary, the healing factors in group therapy, the components of ego strength, and the phases of psychotherapy all may be promoted through the use of psychodramatic methods.

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15
Applied Role Theory-I
General Considerations

Psychodrama utilizes the language of the theatre, and that means speaking about situations in terms of the roles people play, how they perform these roles, what are the components or definitions of the roles, and scores of related considerations. Moreno was one of the pioneers of social role theory, and he gave it some depth so that it could be used for problem-solving—which is why I call his approach "applied role theory." I consider this to be a significant contribution to psychology even if it is used apart from any association with psychodramatic methods.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Social role theory is a uniquely American contribution to social psychology. It arose mainly during the 1930s through the 1950s, primarily out of the work of Ralph Linton (1936), Talcott Parsons (1937), Theodore M. Newcomb (1942), Theodore Sarbin (1943), and many others over the next few decades. Also important in the evolution of role

theory were the philosophical contributions of George Herbert Mead who taught at the University of Chicago in the second and third decades of this century, and especially the influence of his posthumous work, *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934).

Moreno had been thinking about the role concept since 1923. "The function of role consists, beginning with the social world, in penetrating the subconscious and bringing to it order and form," he wrote as part of his contemplations of the broader implications of a socially relevant theatre. This language then carried over in the 1930s into his thinking about sociometry, psychodrama, and his socially oriented psychology.

There are two major differences between sociological role theory and Moreno's approach. First, the former tends to be a more descriptive, academic exercise, while Moreno's emphasis was on practical applications, the activity of analysis being engaged in *with* the people involved and for the purposes of re-evaluating and improving their lives.

The second difference is that Moreno notes the potential of roles to be played in a more or less creative fashion which, as I shall explain, involves the implicit idea of what I've called "meta-roles" which can enable people to be more reflective and open to alternatives. This twist is really what makes his approach so very useful.

Sociological role theory has been addressed in a number of books, some of which are noted as additional resources following the references. Probably its best and most recent summary is Biddle's (1979). Well-known figures in social work and psychiatry have used the role concept as important elements in presenting a multidimensional and clinical approach to psychology (Pearlman, 1968; Ackerman, 1951; Spiegel, 1971). Moreno's own ideas have been developed by a number of professionals (Blatner, 1991; Clayton, 1994; Lawlor, 1947; Yablonsky, 1953). Other recent contributions to role theory have come from drama therapy, more specifically in the writings of one of the leaders in that field, Robert Landy (1990). Also, comments on role now may be found in anthropology, history, and the sociology of nursing, education, or police.

ROLES AND META-ROLES

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women in it merely players...," (Wm. Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act 2, Scene 7). Ah, but we don't have to be *merely* players! We can become the playwrights

and directors, too! Even professional actors cultivate a measure of "role distance," both playing the role wholeheartedly yet retaining a measure of self-observation, a capacity to "step back from" the performance so as to be better able to improve it (Landy, 1983). It's a form of double consciousness. Children also have this capacity—it's the essence of pretend play (Blatner & Blatner, 1997, pp. 11–15). Psychodrama focuses on the fostering of this capacity in applying self-reflection not just for art or entertainment, but for everyone to live a more effective life!

Although Moreno never made this distinction specifically, it is implicit in his approach. In addition to the roles we play, there is another level of role playing—the "meta-" level which describes the function of reflecting on, commenting on, consciously negotiating, and modifying the roles being played and their components (Bateson, 1980, pp. 128–130). In dramaturgical terms, our psychological theory needs to give attention to the role of author, director, audience, critic, and producer as well as actor (Wiener, 1999). Most social role theory focuses on the actor, but for every role being played, there are also a group of related questions:

- Which roles are to be played? (the author or playwright)
- How else might this role be played (the director)
- What else needs to be set up or managed for this role to be played most successfully? (the producer)
- How is this performance being perceived by others? (the audience)
- How effectively is this role being played, according to a variety of criteria? (critic)

These meta-roles are simply names for what in psychoanalysis or cognitive psychology are called "observing ego" or "meta-cognitive functions." The term "psychological mindedness" refers to a capacity for exercising a measure of self-observation, of shifting into the meta-role position. Role language simply makes these self-reflective processes more concrete, suggesting ways for exercising them more consciously. The point here is that psychotherapy, personal growth, and creative social change require an explicit process of re-evaluation, and this is promoted more effectively by a psychology that views people as change agents.

This present chapter is an attempt to better systematize and develop Moreno's ideas on role theory. (In the previous edition of this book and for an article in 1991, I used the term "role dynamics" but I've

thought better of it; to avoid the unnecessary addition of terminology, I simply call it applied role theory.)

A USER-FRIENDLY LANGUAGE

The most significant feature of applied role theory is that it works as a practical language for all kinds of psychosocial interventions, a *lingua franca* for discussing problems among many different disciplines—psychology, social work, psychiatry, nursing, anthropology, pastoral counseling, family therapy, organizational consulting, personal "coaching," etc. I envision applied role theory as a major component in the teaching of practical psychology in educational programs because of the relative familiarity of its terminology.

As discussed in the earlier chapters 5 and 13, I do not consider any single line of psychological or social theorizing to be entirely sufficient, nor do I think that we should even desire it. Thus, I'm not suggesting that applied role theory is a "theory of psychology" in the sense of claiming to provide a tight, comprehensive explanation. Rather, it's a loose, general framework within which many other component theories can be more effectively integrated.

Functioning as a general integrative framework, applied role theory offers a wealth of tools, among which is the capacity to translate and integrate many of the best insights which arise out of other theories (Blatner, 1989). I view it as being something like the breakthrough in computers when the need to use codes to accomplish any operation was replaced by the icon-based system (first by the Apple system, then by Windows) in which little pictures indicated more complex operations and a "point and click" maneuver could achieve what previously required a fair amount of code-writing by trained programmers. This simplifying technology made them "user-friendly" so that people—even young children!—could learn to work the machines. Similarly, a relatively simpler and familiar language for psychology can help empower a far wider range of people to think along with "experts," popularizing the endeavor and reducing the power gradients in consultations and therapies. Such a shift, in turn, promotes a more cooperative attitude.

Applied role theory offers a familiar language and approach. Most people almost instinctively understand these ideas. People know about roles being played by actors, they see dramatic productions in movies, television—and sometimes these stories are about show business itself. Movie scenes are shown in which directors are making movies, calling

"cut!" or arguing with movie stars. These movies show actors and producers making and performing dramas. Most people have even been involved at one point or another in producing and performing in small skits, holiday pageants, and school plays. As a result, people often readily accept the suggestions that interactions may be viewed as if they were scenes in a play or a television show.

Thus, the idea of role is a familiar one, as is the idea of a cast of characters and the differentiation between an actor and the part played. Also relatively familiar is the idea of analyzing interactions by looking at who the players are, defining their roles and the components of those roles, and considering how well or poorly those roles are being played.

A POWERFUL METAPHOR

In addition to its function as a language, with its capacity to translate and integrate many of the best insights which arise out of other theories, applied role theory offers a wealth of more specific concepts. Many of these are extensions or associations to the more basic idea that, in many ways, life is like a play, a statement which expresses a dramaturgical metaphor. Applied role theory and the role concept works with this metaphor as its frame of reference.

A metaphor is a more familiar word or phrase that is used to describe something that is more elusive—for example, the sun is a red ball, the moon's reflection is a lily on the lake, or life is just a bowl of cherries. Many processes, especially in the realm of mind—which includes art, spirituality, and sociocultural phenomena—use metaphors. In psychology, mind is sometimes treated like a machine that can be fixed, and at other times a complex social system that can, at best, be nudged this way or that. Life itself may be considered to be a struggle or a balancing act, a "tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing" or a school for the soul (LeGuin, 1985; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In the case of applied role theory, its basis is the "dramaturgical metaphor" as expressed by the aforementioned famous Shakespearean line, "All the world's a stage" (Berger, 1990; Hare, 1985).

Indeed, the word "role" comes from the drama. In the ancient theatre, actors read from their scripts in the form of rolled-up scrolls, "rotula," in Latin, which is also the source of words like "rotation." The meaning shifted from the physical piece of parchment to the idea of the part being played (Moreno, 1961).

The role concept is powerful because it is evocative, that is, because it calls to mind the panoply of elements involved in drama, play production, and the complex interactions therein. For example, in thinking about various psychosocial problems in terms of the roles being played, some of the following associations are brought to bear:

- Drama is generally considered one of the arts which, in our culture, means that playwrights and actors are expected to be creative. The actor is expected to bring some originality and flavor to the part being played. Otto Rank, an early psychoanalyst who before that was an artist, found the metaphor of life as a work of art particularly useful. Breaking with Freud, his approach was to not simply dig up and interpret the past (Freud many times used the metaphor of archeology for psychoanalysis.). Rank believed that life was a work of art in progress, and in actively fostering his clients' creativity. Thus, in applied role theory, if we are actors, let us become even more creative in our "profession."
- A corollary of this emphasis on creativity implicit in role theory's dramaturgical metaphor is that there's an expectation of a degree of surprise, novelty. Thus, the therapist can't "know" what's going to come next, which reduces the perceived power gradient between client and therapist, and shifts the therapist more into a coaching role. Clients really enjoy being perceived as creative beings—it expects the best and supports their aspirations.
- Actors are viewed as being more skilled if they can play many parts rather than being "type cast." This implies the value of having a broad role repertoire, and the more one expands one's range of roles that can be played, the more creative and skilled one comes to be.
- Drama is interactive, and thus, applied role theory brings to life the idea that much psychology is interpersonal rather than merely the product of the individual.
- Even the dynamics of the individual have begun to be viewed by psychoanalysts and others as an interactive drama among the living mental representations of inner roles, the memories and imagined responses of parents, lovers, "them" (the imagined audience or judging "others"), the "inner child," etc.
- A corollary is that applied role theory suggests a "pluralistic model of the mind" which means that it's often useful to think of the personality as being composed of many parts that are, in

varying ways, conflicting, reinforcing, separated or integrated (see next chapter).

- Dramas evolve mainly in the form of dialogue and action, helping to get past the intellectualization of mere narrative or discussion. Dialogue evokes a sense of immediacy and directness, a greater vividness. Also, one way to work with the aforementioned inner relationships is by enacting dialogues among the various parts of oneself.

- Roles also represent aspects of the more complex personality, which makes them more accessible for consideration. Also, in most interactions, usually only one or two roles dominate, perhaps colored by a few more. The point here is that, by analysis of one role interaction at a time, gradually a picture of the more complex whole can be built up.

- In dramas, roles evolve, and they may be re-negotiated. In the great 1960s Broadway musical play, *Fiddler on the Roof,* the protagonist, Tevya, modified his role of "the Papa" from one who commands to one who accepts as his daughters, in the changing world, demanded an increasing say in their choice of mates. A dramatic metaphor suggests that the rules we take for granted are a bit more flexible than we may have thought.

- The audience can identify with any of the roles, can shift identity. Actors can be assigned to play a hero in one play and a villain in the next. The idea is presented that anyone can theoretically take any role which prepares people for the challenge of role reversal, of relinquishing one's own egocentric viewpoint and imagining what it's like to be one of the other people in one's life, even one's antagonist. This is the beginning of empathy and emotional maturity.

- In dramas, situations are presented so that they can be seen by an audience. Abstract ideas are thus made somewhat concrete. In psychology, one of the more pervasive problems is the tendency to think in terms of abstractions, vague words, generalizations, which serve to disguise confusion. The challenge of describing a feeling or a complaint vividly enough so that the listener can really imagine specifically what's going on is often itself an important step in psychotherapy or consultation.

- Roles are socio-behavioral Gestalts, whole complexes of image and action, that may be entertained in the mind more readily than most abstract concepts, especially psychological diagnoses or dynamic formulations.

- Even abstract concepts such as democracy, loyalty, or perfection can be imagined in the form of a kind of person, like an editorial cartoon figure, who represents this quality. This mental operation, called personification, is a standard dramatic device. (Psychodramas that involve the exploration of attitudes towards some abstract idea or general phenomena are called axiodramas.)
- As the theatre, through the mass media, became an increasingly pervasive element in world culture, the idea of role broadened to refer to the idea of a part played in a system. For example, papers began to be written about the role of corn in the glue industry, the role of solar radiation on the formation of comets, or the role of agriculture in history. In psychology, we speak not only of the different roles in a family but also of a single person embodying many roles. In a group, one might wonder—who plays the role of scapegoat? . . . who is the peacemaker? . . . are people stuck in these roles? . . . and so forth.
- Dramas also suggest the realm of pretend and the invitation to use one's imagination. It is only a short step into engaging the imagination more seriously, to explore situations from points of view that might not be used in ordinary conversation. (This is discussed further in the chapter on "surplus reality.")
- Actors can play a role well or badly which suggests the idea of skillfulness and some attention to the *way* a position is presented. So many people tend to focus on *what* their concerns or needs are and don't realize how much they distort their relationships by *how* they make these feelings known. The dramaturgical metaphor thus invites some reflection on process as well as content, and on nonverbal communications as well as the choice of words.
- Dramas can address issues at and between many levels of human organization. The individual, the group, the culture—all operate interactively. Thus, applied role theory is uniquely powerful because it is can deal with matters of social psychology as well as family dynamics or the inner dramas in a single individual.
- Similarly, dramas can include many frames of reference—comedies, tragedies, sacred themes or profane, sex or war, intellectual ideas or political tensions.
- Roles may concern the future or present as well as the past, making this approach more comprehensive. Using role playing, the future may be considered, rehearsed, explored in imagination and action. The past can be remembered more vividly and, in some psychologically valid way, repaired, done over.

- So often in dramas characters present complexities and paradoxes that transcend simple labels—their roles aren't so easily reducible to "wicked," "sick," "jerk," "pitiful." Applied role theory offers a more neutral language that, compared to other psychological languages, is less likely to saddle people with emotionally loaded jargon. To talk about the roles being played in a problem tends to make it easier for people to maintain their self-esteem even as they consider that part of their role repertoire may be in need of revision.

- Nevertheless, I haven't found any themes in psychodynamic psychology that can't be more easily understood by being expressed in terms of applied role theory, as if the issues involved were roles interacting in a drama. Defense mechanisms, concepts like "self-object," "projective identification," and others, all may be translated into more accessible language. Certainly this makes for a greater capacity for professionals in different disciplines or from different theoretical backgrounds to communicate.

- Roles are complexes that can be analyzed in terms of their role components, and these, in turn, can often be further analyzed as to their sub-components. Thus, applied role theory allows for a careful process of intellectual re-evaluation in the spirit of psychodynamic psychotherapy.

- The analysis turns on how the component is defined, and that, in turn, suggests that it could be defined otherwise, which leaves it open for re-definition and re-negotiation. This aspect of applied role theory opens the reflective process to a political evaluation, in keeping with feminist or constructivist thought.

- Drama has often included the dimension of hidden thoughts, as expressed through asides or "voice over," devices that allow the audience to know a character's thoughts without the other roles apparently hearing them. This opens the idea of people considering how they themselves may share thoughts with some special people, such as the consultant or therapist, while they wouldn't admit them openly to most others.

- An associated idea is that dramas not infrequently turn on the theme of self-deception, of one of the characters having fooled themselves or overestimated or underestimated some situation. Drawing on the dramaturgical metaphor, clients may be encouraged to consider how this might be true in their own situations.

- As mentioned earlier, the differentiation between actor and the part played—role distance—and even further, the meta-roles of

inner director or playwright or critic all, along with the previous elements, foster an increased capacity for reflectiveness and "psychological mindedness," the ability to make good use of a therapeutic or managerial review process.

- An extension of role distance is the process of dis-identification that is part of many meditative processes. Assagioli, the developer of the psychotherapy called "psychosynthesis," suggests that people learn to say to themselves, "I have this thought, but I am not this thought." Such practices, in turn, lead to even greater self-awareness and role flexibility.
- While role theory can offer a useful language for consultations or psychotherapy without any recourse to the use of action methods, it is even more supportive of the use of role playing and psychodrama—there is a natural complementarity.
- Finally, the role concept has many associated terms: Balancing one's roles, learning them, relinquishing them. One can be a beginner, experienced, losing one's touch.

These, then, are some of the reasons why applied role theory, reflecting the dramaturgical metaphor, is especially evocative and heuristic—that is, generative of many hypotheses and associated ideas.

SOME DIFFICULTIES WITH ROLE THEORY

As I asked regarding psychodrama, if it's so great, how come everyone doesn't use it already? There are several reasons, none of which are particularly valid but they do reflect the way things are.

First, as long as the behavioral sciences seek to achieve the same status as the empirical sciences such as chemistry or physics, they subject themselves to criteria that are of questionable validity, such as the ideal of precision. Because of its capacity to be used in many contexts and at many levels of human organization, the role concept is elusive and resists precise definition (Neiman & Hughes, 1951). In actual practice, this is no problem, but in the academic world of research and grants, certain traditions of definability unfortunately and inappropriately continue. (These points are also discussed in chapter 5, on philosophical foundations.)

A second reason has to do with a pervasive cultural wariness about pretense, imagination, the respectibility of theatre, the fantasy that actors and acting are phony rather than authentic. Some of these

resistances apply also to the status of imaginative playfulness and are discussed extensively in chapters 10–12 in my book, *The Art of Play* (Blatner & Blatner, 1997).

Considering the value of applied role theory and the irrational prejudices underlying objections to it, I restate my proposal that professionals in the behavioral sciences, management, education, and other fields that need to describe and work with psychosocial phenomena use this wonderful tool as their common language.

DIMENSIONS OF ROLE ENACTMENT

Individuals generally play around 10 or 20 major roles, several score minor roles, and hundreds or more of transient roles. Moreno (1960) used a taxonomy with three main categories of roles:

- Psychosomatic roles—eating, sleeping, excreting, habitual posture or facial expression, territoriality, how to behave when feeling sick, dying—people in every culture learn their own norms in these basic functions.
- Social roles—most of the roles discussed in role theory texts may be considered here.
- Psychodramatic roles—those which utilize the dramatic or imaginative context, the roles in which a person's experience expands beyond the constraints of ordinary physical reality. (See chapter on "surplus reality.") (Since many of these roles exist in the mind, perhaps this category should better be called "psychological roles." Certainly they can be expressed using action techniques, but their actual dynamics occur apart from any therapeutic process.)

While I think Moreno's classification system should be considered only preliminary with much room for expansion and refinement, I appreciate the noting of the first and third categories, because many people forget how pervasive role is in life. He called attention to those complexes that either tend to be taken for granted, such as eating, or those that tend to be marginalized as excessively subjective, such as the fantasy role playing of childhood. Moreno's genius noted that both the seemingly mundane and the fantastic are profoundly important parts of human life.

Landy (1993) has a different classification system, along the lines of different plots in classical theatre. I suggested a rather lengthy extension of Moreno's system, adding some new categories (Blatner, 1985).

Interestingly, the multi-leveled nature of applied role theory—roles involving intrapsychic, interpersonal, small and large group, and sub-cultural and cultural dimensions—makes it difficult, if not impossible, to clearly define either roles or a taxonomy of roles. Furthermore, because the interface between the various levels and the combinations of various frames of reference (other role positions) differ with each situation, I question the need for, or value of, a *strict* taxonomy of roles. Rather, it's more useful to entertain a *loose* framework which serves as a reminder of the different aspects and kinds of roles which might be considered in the course of a role analysis.

The category of psychodramatic (psychological) roles also includes our memories and anticipations of the future, hopes and fears. The idea that there is a "true" past self is philosophically questionable because, for all practical purposes, we constantly re-tell our own autobiography in our minds, forget most experiences, select and re-select that which seems most relevant in light of present motivations and self-images. It's an ongoing process of construction. Indeed, one of the early Moreno-influenced role theorists, Theodore Sarbin, has written extensively about this, suggesting that the idea of story-telling—narrative—is a valuable approach to psychology (Sarbin, 1986.)

Moreno also noted that role playing could have different degrees of creativity. First, one just behaves according to the more superficial models given, imitating, following obvious rules. He called this "role taking." Then, with a greater familiarity or mastery, people begin to add elements of personal style, possibly some novelty and small degrees of innovation. They "play with" their roles, which Moreno called "role playing."

At a certain point, some people are established enough or secure enough or have mastered the role enough so that they can begin to introduce more radical innovations, perhaps even daring to re-define the role. Moreno called this "role creating."

Sarbin (1954) noted that role playing could have different degrees of involvement so that, at one extreme, a person can be fairly casual, almost uninvolved. The lack of involvement may be due to the role's relative unimportance or its superficial nature in the individual's mind. Sometimes this is found in those with spiritual disciplines, meditating and dis-identifying, playing life roles but yet experiencing these from a more role-distanced perspective.

At the other extreme are roles in which there is a kind of immersion in the given frame of reference. Voodoo death is given as an example, being so caught up in the group belief system that one's whole psychosomatic system is entrained, to the extent of shutting

down. A little less extreme but still showing over-involvement are those who "forget it's just a game" and play their roles with no capacity to back off and look at the bigger picture.

Most people are somewhere between the two extremes in most of their roles. Psychotherapy aims at fostering a greater degree of dis-identification, the better to reconsider how the roles are structured and performed.

SUMMARY

Role theory offers a general, user-friendly language for thinking about psychology at many levels and from many different frames of reference. I think it's the best tool we have so far for helping to integrate the best insights of the many different theories and methods within the fields of psychotherapy and beyond, applied sociology, management, and many other people-helping endeavors.

Yet it shouldn't be used as if no other theories were also useful. That's why I consider it a meta-theoretical language. We need to acknowledge and integrate, not compete with and discount, the discoveries and complexities of mind elucidated by those in other fields. A single theory cannot encompass and adequately describe it all. Applied role theory, however, can facilitate a greater degree of synthesis. Further principles of this theory will be discussed in the next chapter.

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16
Applied Role Theory-II: Dynamic Concepts

While applied role theory doesn't suffice as a stand-alone theory (rather, it serves to integrate and complement other theories), it also offers a number of valuable ideas which contribute to an overall understanding of intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics.

ROLE CIRCUMSTANCES VS. PSYCHIC DETERMINISM

The present predicament and anticipated future are often as important if not more important than any consideration of early childhood influences. In this sense, applied role theory offers a corrective to tendencies in dynamic psychology, especially deriving from psychoanalysis, to view most dysfunctional behavior as being caused primarily by reaction patterns developed in childhood. (In this way, role theory is also consistent with the aims of existential psychotherapy.)

Analysis of the present predicament involves a host of factors, emphasizing the environment and also including the individual's temperament, abilities, and interests. It offers a particularly useful and

flexible conceptual tool, as a good deal of information comes from examining problems in terms of role conflicts, strains, pressures, overload, incongruities, and the like. Some questions that might be asked in addressing a situation include:

- Have the people in the various roles really learned how to perform them adequately? Are there elements that should or could have been trained but weren't?
- Are there areas of competence that are needed but not recognized by the person in the role, the person hiring or supervising the role, or the other people who are frustrated by an inadequate role performance?
- Have expectations of what the role consists of changed without explicitly notifying or training those who continue in the role?
- Has there been a loss of morale, encouragement, significance, or other shifts which might affect attitude?
- What are the sometimes subconscious beliefs and expectations that determine how people define their roles—which may include not only residues of early childhood experiences but also pervasive religious, political, economic, and other dimensions of role definition? (Gillette, 1992)
- Role overload is a common problem—that insidious tendency to gradually add additional demands, to the point that anyone would become stretched too thin in role performance (Bellak, 1975; Swenson, 1998).

One test for weighing the relative influence of realistic role stresses in the present versus excessive predispositions or sensitivities arising out of past experiences is simply to imagine oneself in this person's predicament. Given the simple yet realistic pressures of the major roles, mentally ask, "Would I feel equally conflicted or upset?" If the person seems to be overreacting, before assuming that he or she is "neurotic," first seek to articulate the full range of issues involved in the situation.

If that diagnostic process doesn't suffice, then it's appropriate to consider the effects of attitudes and expectations which are being carried over from earlier experience. Certainly this occurs, and not infrequently. It's just better not to assume this earlier source of interference without first checking out the realistic issues in the here-and-now. It avoids pathologizing people, treating them as if there's something wrong with them, and maximizes the likelihood of a more positive alliance in the task of problem-solving.

THE DEPTH OF ROLES

In any given role, there are several levels of disclosure, what is admitted openly or explicitly. First, there are those kinds of things which may be said in general society. Second, there is the level of what may be admitted to close friends in confidence, or perhaps to a therapist, but not disclosed to most people. This second level involves discretion and secrets.

At the third "pre-conscious" level, people have thoughts that come into awareness—but they're somewhat uncomfortable and tend to be pushed away. Bringing such levels out into explicit consciousness, as discussed in chapter 10, allows them to be dealt with more constructively. This is the main focus of most psychotherapy and exploratory psychodrama.

At a still "deeper" level (to use a spatial metaphor) is the "unconscious," those feelings and ideas that cannot be admitted to oneself. Given sufficient support, encouragement, and subjected to a wide range of techniques, from psychoanalytic free association to bodily exercises which arouse direct affects, images and feelings can be brought forward from the unconscious, first into the preconscious level, and from there, to a point where these may be shared with trusted others.

Jung notes another category of potential cognitions—vague perceptions which haven't yet acquired enough form or energy to register in awareness in the first place. It's not that they were repressed or pushed away, but that the individual hadn't yet come to a recognition of any specificity or significance. For example, a client may say, "Sure I put up with that; I didn't know any different." Bateson says that information is "a difference that makes a difference" and, without some meaningful contrast, perceptions may not gel. In other words, dissatisfaction requires some awareness of a "better" alternative.

One last category to be noted involves those ideas that have never been considered, such as the idea a few hundred years ago of women participating in the political process. These alternative ideas have a function later in the change process, when the challenge becomes the opening to creative alternatives.

These categories are not distinct, and experiences may involve mixed or in-between states. The point of noting the different levels is that, in any role or sub-role being analyzed, it is worthwhile assessing some of the more essential attitudes that might be expressed at the second and third levels of expression—the confidential and pre-conscious. Doubling, inner dialogue, and related techniques are aimed at

this dynamic movement. It's almost always necessary to clarify feelings and thoughts at these levels in order to work out problems or conflicts.

OTHER DIMENSIONS OF ROLES

Roles are learned, and the learning can be contaminated by anxiety, intensified and distorted by unconscious motivations, and disguised by evasive manipulations. One example is the unspoken cultural norm of not admitting feelings of inadequacy which leads to widespread misperceptions.

Roles can be thrust upon one, taken on voluntarily (but still requiring more than one bargained for), stripped away, relinquished, lost, and processed in many other ways.

Most people are in role transition in some dimension or another—aging, the cycle of any skill from beginner to mastery to revising the game, into and out of relationships, etc. Some are coped with easily, others subject people to major stress. Trauma may be defined as role shifts that are profoundly and intensely disorienting and disturbing.

For milder role transitions, which may also be cultural, economic, and multifaceted, there are almost always ambiguous issues which generate psychosocial conflicts:

- Which role components need to be retained and which relinquished?
- What supports are needed for entering or developing a role?
- Is there a conscious awareness of the role shift or is the transition being resisted in a state of denial?

Imagine a couple getting married and beginning the negotiations involved regarding how to celebrate holidays, differences in the styles of religious practice, how to cope with in-laws, etc. With whom can they talk about such issues? What infrastructure of knowledge is required before they can even communicate meaningfully with each other? Many young people hardly know these problems exist because our culture romanticizes love and fosters an unspoken assumption that meaning well (good intentions) can magically ensure understanding and harmony on all issues. This example illustrates the principle that role shifts often require a number of supportive adjustments, and a conscious, purposeful, skilled review of the problem is needed—though it rarely happens.

A related problem, common in most organizations, is that people hired for a job may fulfill official requirements without really having competence in all the actual components of the role. Once a person is situated in that role, however, he or she tends to be granted competence when it hasn't been demonstrated. The semi-humorous "Peter's Principle" that people are promoted to the highest level of their incompetence, dramatized more recently by the comic strip, "Dilbert," expresses my observation that most organizations have many people operating at marginal competence, and there is a collective collusion to overlook lapses into incompetence.

In turn, many supervisors are not trained to diagnose and constructively address such problems. (Incidentally, role analysis, discussed in the next chapter, offers a particularly useful methodology in this regard.) Without this ongoing process of clarification, marginal (and often sub-marginal) competence causes widespread problems in organizations. Unchecked, these problems are frequently attributed to other causes or (as scapegoats) other people, thus generating significant levels of interpersonal or group conflict.

A PLURALISTIC MODEL OF THE MIND

"The individual has as many different social egos as there are different social groups and strata with which he is connected. These egos are as different from one another as the social groups ad strata from which they spring."—Sorokin (1947, p.345)

One of the chief benefits of applied role theory is that it offers a model of the mind that, on one hand, is integrated and, on the other hand, pluralistic. Both processes may be addressed more explicitly.

First, regarding the pluralistic nature of mind: A current popular writer, Robert Fulghum (1993, pp. 8–10), describes:

"the commitee in my head, including a wise old person, a mechanic, demons, a fool, a scientist, comedian, musician, dancer, athlete, magician, professor, a Romeo, censor, police officer, fire fighter..," with perhaps a "ventriloquist's dummy, as chairman," ... "the disunited states of myself ... and the town meeting is always in session."

From many quarters, the idea that the mind is really a multiplicity has become increasingly familiar to the general public, and also within the fields of psychotherapy (Beahrs, 1982; Samuels, 1989; Schwartz,

1995; Hardy, 1987; Rowan, 1990; Rowan & Cooper, 1999; Vargiu, 1974). Role theory makes this model more understandable and more accessible for therapeutic interventions: simply engage the different roles in personified form in dialogue. This may be written in journal form and, of course, it's far more powerful and effective if such dialogues are fully, physically enacted in psychodrama.

One of the advantages of a pluralistic model is that it encourages the development of a broad role repertoire. It challenges the residual cultural attitude that valued consistency and a unified identity. This popular image of the definite character inhibits the enjoyment of significant contrasting interests and modes of expression. Even in ancient Greece, the whole person was encouraged to balance the "hard" sensibilities of physical education with the "soft" increased sensitivity of musical education.

The archetypal psychology of James Hillman, a post-Jungian, suggests the value in respecting and, to some degree, seeking to help find expression for the often contrasting passions and instinctual flows in the psyche. Hillman warned against tendencies to overemphasize the archetype of the "Self"—that integrative function which, if carried too far, can mute the richness of the contrasting parts of the personality.

The dramatic metaphor again offers a solution: Coordination of characters need not interfere with their finding some balanced expression, so that even in his tragedies, Shakespeare often put in some ironic comedy by the jester. The self as work of art benefits from a rich variety of forms, and even moderation should not be carried to excess.

The pluralistic model of the mind, plus applied role theory, has a practical application in addressing the common complaint of confusion. The strategy involves reframing confusion as a conflict among two or more parts, but the parts are interrupting and disqualifying each other so much that the client can't hear what the issues are. By imposing a new role, mediator, who hushes first one part and then, after hearing from one side, hushes that and listens to the other side, the underlying conflicting roles can be identified. Role naming is followed by a process akin to doubling in helping each role express itself fully. The underlying roles are often not very articulate and need this gentle process of being drawn forth.

INTEGRATING THE MIND

The idea that the mind is pluralistic isn't new—Freud imagined three parts which were, in a sense, re-named by Eric Berne; it's just that the number of parts isn't limited by any single theory. In a sense, Jung's

concept of "archetype" is role-like in nature, although it's also more subtle and primal. Just thinking of the mind, however, as a confederation of parts has problems too because there's no suggestion of who's in charge. Since one of the essential elements of emotional health is the capacity to take responsibility, where is the "I?" (Frick, 1993).

Alfred Adler called his approach "Individual Psychology" in part to emphasize his focus on the individual—i.e., non-divided—function of the mind. Applied role theory includes both dimensions, the mind's pluralistic nature, in terms of the many roles it plays, and its integrative functions, as the meta-roles. This dual functioning was noted in the previous chapter. In dramatic terms, these meta-roles are the playwright, director, producer, and critic roles. If the mind were a large organization, the meta-roles would serve the managerial and executive functions.

Thus, in a sense, we are all "multiple" at some level, which doesn't mean everyone is a "multiple personality disorder." Rather, in playing with the words, I've suggested that what's going on is "multiple personality *order*," only the degree of order depends on the competence of the management functions (Blatner, 1991). In other words, the existence of different parts of the mind in itself causes no problem, but if the meta-roles fail in coordinating them, then various types of psychological dysfunctions ensue.

What was called multiple personality disorder (now renamed "dissociative identity disorder" by the DSM-4) might then represent not just mediocre management but total abdication of the effort to integrate the various aspects, which then develop their own autonomy. Thus, contemporary treatment for MPD involves a process of developing integrative skills, and I would suggest that the role concept and the idea of meta-roles could facilitate this goal. They could more vividly communicate the need of a healthy ego to balance the provision of a sense of security with a courageous expansion of new frontiers, foster discussion and negotiation among the various roles, and consciously work out effective compromises.

ROLE TAKING: A KEY SKILL

On one level, people naturally take on roles. Through simple imitation, quite young children begin to pick up these gestalts of attitude and behavior. Later, as anyone begins to embody a new role, the elements tend to be a little superficial at first. The words and actions generally fit cultural expectations.

Moreno differentiated between role taking and role playing, not in the sense of the exploratory method but just as a descriptive term. He wanted to emphasize that, as one becomes somewhat familiar with and/or secure in a role, there is a tendency to explore its boundaries, to play with it! Variations, adding personal style, some experimentations with its possibilities are all entertained. Also, the sociologist Ralph Turner (1962) noted that role enactment is a dynamic and continual process of creation, not just behavior conformity to preexisting expectations.

Moreno went even further, noting the potential in role taking for "role creativity" in which the role is modified, sometimes even challenging the general expectations or social norms. Women who began to affirm the right to be a mother *and* also have a career were redefining this role.

Two other types of role creativity should be noted. One involves more consciously playing a role in order to absorb some of its associated features, which is part of the therapeutic approach advocated by George Kelly's "Personal Construct" theory.

Another type of creative activity involves consciously taking another person's role in order to understand that person. In addition, one may exercise this to communicate empathy, for therapeutic or social purposes. Whereas ordinary role taking is somewhat superficial, empathic role taking requires a consciously cultivated skill (See chapter 12).

I've found that role taking offered the most effective guide for understanding my clients, and often for helping colleagues in consultation. Not only does it offer a useful tool for building this skill in the professional, but there's also considerable value in teaching clients to use it to better understand other people. A certain amount of psychological dysfunction derives from not knowing how to get past the habit of thinking that others should be like oneself. Learning the skill of becoming more imaginative, of extending oneself to consider the predicament of another person, serves to promote maturity and help overcome egocentricity. Also, clients can become more attuned to the emotional needs of their own "inner selves," learning to express these as if they were roles in a drama, which tends to bypass tendencies to explain or otherwise intellectualize their feelings.

ROLE AS "LENS"

A related advantage of applied role theory is that it allows for exercising the role taking process in a workable fashion. People are complex.

They may be thought of as consisting of scores of roles, and it is nigh-impossible to try to encompass the fullness of another's being in one's own mind. The idea, however, of imagining one role in another person is far more do-able. For example, if I asked you to tell me about your mother, it might be difficult for you to know where to begin. On the other hand, if I were to ask you to tell me about just one role aspect of your mother, say, her relationship to money or her attitudes to house cleaning, that might help you focus your memory and imagination. Thus, in seeking to understand another person, focus on one of the more specific role components at a time and gradually warm-up to imagining what that role might be like.

Additional cues may be used, such as considering how this person talks or acts in relationship to others. Picture the scene and allow the voices to be "heard"—don't consciously put in your own expectations, but be receptive to what "comes to you."

Furthermore, don't try to understand everything. Allow yourself to return to the implied question at hand, and wonder about the roles that seem most relevant to that question. This statement is in contrast to some tendencies in psychology to use general tests or interview schedules, what I call "fishing expeditions." These are occasionally productive, but even more often wasteful of time, misleading, and confusing to the client who wonders what the interviewer is getting at.

One of the disciplines of consultation, then, is to reground the investigation in the contracted problem, a process of checking the exploratory process. Would what is being sought make any difference in how either client or consultant would behave? This attitude recognizes the potential for information overload and "data smog." In the past, it was generally felt that extensive history-taking or simply free-association was useful because all information was beneficial. That fit with a time when long-term therapy was a norm—and also benefited the pocketbook of the therapist. This bias must be questioned as to its political motivations and intellectual assumptions. We need therapies and problem-solving methods that can re-focus.

I must caution that the skills I'm describing require practice. They cannot be mastered simply by reading about them, nor can words capture the nuances and dimensions of judgment that must be employed in exercising these activities. Nevertheless, this discussion is useful in noting that such skills are worth exercising and attaining as part of developing the role of "people-helper," whether one works in a clinic or a business.

MUTUALITY IN ROLE TAKING

George Bernard Shaw said, "*Don't* do unto others as you would have them do unto you—they may not have the same tastes." Despite Shaw's dictum, the activity of imaginative role taking, of wondering how you might feel if you were in that situation, is still relatively better than not exercising that skill at all. Shaw is right, though—you could be wrong! How then can you reduce the likelihood of imposing your mistaken ideas on others?

Mutuality involves the integration of humility in human relationships. One can be vulnerable with dignity, admitting from the beginning of the process that mistakes are inevitable as one person attempts to understand another. The trick is to build in an ongoing process of correction!

Here again, applied role theory helps provide a model. I say to my clients, "I want to understand where you're coming from. After listening for a while, I'm going to put myself in your shoes and speak as if I were you. I may be partly right, I may be partly wrong. Since my job is to get on your wave length, I need your feedback in helping me to gradually become more accurate."

This process, which I call "active empathy," is simply role taking mixed with an interactive mutuality so that the person being empathized with is free to correct the empathizer. This role taking is intrinsic to the double technique in psychodrama, with aspects of role reversal or auxiliary ego work, and in ordinary therapy, relates to what Carl Rogers called "working with the client's *self system*." The point is to use the kinds of words that the client would probably use rather than give in to the temptation of imposing psychobabble, professional jargon, or other intellectualized generalities.

This is very different from what so often occurs in therapy or groups: People "make interpretations" which is an intellectualized way of saying that one person presumes to pronounce opinions about how the other person is thinking or feeling. This is also disguised as well-meaning helpfulness, but it is generally experienced as intrusive, mildly assaultive, and intimidating.

The purpose is to help people stretch their imaginations and self-awareness just a small step beyond their ordinary mind-set—that's all anyone can handle, just a small step at a time. A more radical "interpretation" or "confrontation" tends to result in confusion or shutdown, however placating the external behavior may seem.

There is no loss of the therapist's authority in confidently using this technique. Instead, it is novel and refreshing enough to engage the

patient's curiosity. It stimulates the patient's interest and challenges the therapist to see if he or she can truly empathize with the patient, using words phrased so that the patient feels understood. This subtle, playful element can paradoxically communicate genuine compassion about the patient's distress while seeking to understand the dynamics and to formulate new strategies.

With clients who tend to be dependent, deferential, or overly placating I often need to have them learn and practice (repeatedly) the role of correcting an authority. I remind them that I'm like an actor and they're the playwright or director. I'm just trying to get the lines right, to express the character as they know it to be. This is a kind of "role training" process, but it has many powerful implications in reducing the intimidation of the conventional therapist-client relationship.

A slight digression here: A not-insignificant component of transference in psychotherapy has to do with clients having rarely, if ever, encountered helpers who would allow themselves to be guided and corrected by the helpee. This may never have consciously registered as a problem, but it results in a measure of interpersonal distrust and vulnerability in most helping relationships. Perhaps, after years of interpreting the transference in a classically psychoanalytic relationship, these dynamics may finally become explicit, but even then it doesn't answer the question of how to cope with the problem.

Worse, conventional interpretations about these transferential inhibitions or reactions often miss the point! If this view of the problem is correct, that it lies in part in the fact that many helping role relationships are problematical, then viewing these as distortions of early parent-child relations may actively mislead the client and not relieve the distrust.

The answer involves the helper being clearly willing to be corrected, to work mutually, and to actively initiate and guide this interactive process. All the insight in the world on the client's part cannot ensure this—it takes both parties to play in this new, healthy fashion, and it cuts through many artificial distortions and misinterpretations

I mentioned how accurate role taking is an interesting creative challenge for the therapist. In a mutual process of exploration, the client can also enjoy this construction of more meaningful understandings, participating by being empowered to give corrective feedback— the two become cooperative artists engaged in more fully expressing inner experience. This somewhat entertaining element also applies to group explorations with a playful tone, with the group leader also being open and tentative.

In the next chapter, other practical applications of role theory will be described.

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17
Applied Role Theory III—
Specific Techniques

In this chapter, several practical applications of Morenian role theory are presented: role naming, role analysis, role diagraming, and the social atom. Again, note that many of these may be useful even if not associated with psychodramatic enactment, although, of course, the approaches can be synergistic.

ROLE NAMING

> *"Finding a name for something is a way of conjuring its existence, of making it possible for people to see a pattern where they didn't see anything before." (Rheingold 1988: 3).*

Just naming the roles involved in a complicated situation is an important element in problem-solving. There's even a slight element of relief involved because naming begins to sort the senses of ambivalence or inner confusion into workable components. Roles can then be defined and analyzed. Australian and New Zealand psychodrama-

tists and sociometrists, following the lead of Max and Lynette Clayton (1982, 1993), have been especially active and innovative in developing role naming and role analysis and then working with these elements psychodramatically.

The names given to roles aren't the names of people, like "John" or "Mary" (unless the client suffers from dissociative disorder and actually experiences the different parts as separate individuals who have already formed actual people-names). In general, the part should be given the name of its function.

In addition to naming the roles, the Claytons further refined the technique by adding an adjective to each noun which thickens the role description. This involves a process of negotiating with the protagonist and involving the group. (The process shouldn't be rushed— it's most important.) The roles identified are often noted on a whiteboard or pad as part of the diagraming process (to be described shortly).

It's important that the naming process should involve a mutual interchange. Neither the director nor the group members should presume to know which words to use. The protagonist must be empowered to choose the names that seem to fit best. If the protagonist tends to be too deferential, the director should actively reminding him or her that no one else can know which words feel most useful. The names given to roles are loaded with emotional connotations—this is the whole point of the field of study called "semantics." For example, in helping a protagonist identify his playful side, there might be a subtle but real difference in the nuance given to the word "funny" instead of "silly," or whether he'd prefer "class clown," "joker," or even "mischievous." Sometimes, this process of helping people to feel into their own preferences regarding the naming of a role is already a healing of socially imposed breaches between "real self" and "false self." For some clients, there's great value in taking the time to encourage and allow for this re-opening of the fragile senses of intuition and personal desire—not just what they've been taught to think they "should" want.

Also, the adjectives appended to the named roles need some negotiation so they can be most evocative and specific. Over-generalizations can dilute the effectiveness of the process. For example, the role of "good father" may need to be broken down into role components to discover which ones account for the "goodness" of the description. These negotiations as to the choice of adjective often lead to fruitful discussions and sometimes even therapeutic breakthroughs. For example, what, in this changing world, is a "successful adult," a "spiritually

mature person," a "real man," or a "true artist?" The naming of the components and negotiations over their elements and standards of achievement make for a good deal of therapy or consciousness raising.

ROLE DIAGRAMING

As the protagonist's roles are named, they may be listed on a white-board or pad. Then, reflecting on the roles may be used as a way of grounding and refocusing the protagonist between scenes. As the psychodrama or therapeutic work continues, new diagrams may be constructed that reflect changing relationships among the roles.

Moreno first used role diagrams in the 1930s as a part of sociometry. The idea is simple: the perceived and intuitively felt dimensions of relationships may be represented in two-dimensional space, on paper, transparencies and projectors, blackboards, and now white-boards with markers. As roles are named and broken down into components, they may also be represented as diagrams, as circles or other shapes in relationship to each other. These diagrams may then be re-drawn as other dimensions of a relationship or life field are considered—past and future, feared and hoped-for, etc. In families or groups, each person may draw his or her own version, and then these may be compared.

Another way to represent different roles is by the use of objects. Williams (1995) uses refrigerator magnets of various types against a large white metal background. The choice of the figures to represent the various parts of self or people in a social network thus becomes a minor projective test, like the choice of figures in sand-tray therapy. Others with a similar intuition have suggested the use of chess pieces or coins, as these can evoke associations as to which person in a social field seems to take which role. (Of course, this resonates with the way children choose various puppets or toys to directly or indirectly represent various family members or peers at school.)

In family therapy, the "genogram" technique is used, portraying the formal kinship relationships. Derived earlier from medical genetics and anthropology, the genogram is helpful in bringing out issues which may remain otherwise hidden, including subtle and multi-generational family traditions (Ancelin-Schützenberger, 1998). Other diagrams may also be used, the point being that of more objectively representing psychological or relational states and dynamics.

ROLE ANALYSIS

Analysis means breaking something more complicated down into its component parts. Individuals may be analyzed in terms of the various roles they play, and those roles, as implied above, may be further defined and broken down into role components which can then be analyzed even further if necessary (Moreno, 1953, p. 293; Hale, 1975). The roles in marital couples or other dyadic relations, families, and groups may also be analyzed in this fashion.

Clients tend to find this process more relevant than most diagnostic procedures because it makes sense to take stock of their role reper- toire and their relationships with others. Also, it tends to address the really important issues while other diagnostic assessments may have more areas that are overlooked. The following questions are especially useful:

- Are some dimensions of the personality being suppressed? Is this causing problems?
- If some roles are expressing an excessive or distorted motivation, can the essential need be recognized?
- Might roles expressing one facet of the personality be overdevel- oped in part because others are being neglected?
- Are there any important dimensions of personal development that are being repressed or denied, and could other actions express efforts to compensate for or disguise these needs?

"How much" is as important an element to be defined as "what." "A dutiful daughter visits a sick parent," the woman may affirm. "This is a value I choose." "How often and for how long each visit" are the questions then asked. Such elements sharpen awareness, shift people from the tendency to rely on platitudes and generalities, and impose the mature reality of establishing specific standards for oneself. With- out those, doubts about vague expectations continue to crowd in.

Relationships may also be analyzed. It helps to actually diagram the various components and sub-components (Hale, 1975). For example, in a marriage, the role component of housekeeping may require some analysis regarding such issues as who does what chore, how the decisions regarding this role distribution are arrived at, and who main- tains the standards of adequacy in their accomplishment. Role analysis within families can reveal patterns of triangulation, such as in situa- tions where the parents are allied with each other in certain roles but compete in others, or if there are alliances with any of the children

against one of the parents. Such an analysis may explain difficulties in discipline and other dysfunctions.

Another benefit of role analysis is that it may reframe behavior as being limited to a certain role rather than as being representative of the entire personality. It helps to reduce tendencies to make global judgments, usually negative. For example, some youngsters act more depressed around their families and are in danger of being so diagnosed unless their behavior with peers away from the family can also be assessed. When with the parents, they may be excessively blamed, drawn into side-taking with parents, be caught up in a parent's sadness, or in other ways reacting to the family dynamics.

Role analysis may be applied therapeutically by finding certain areas of strengths and then using those as aids in working with other, weaker roles. For example, a teenager may be excessively shy with members of the opposite sex but more confident in certain avocational interests. Creatively reframing some of those more successful role components may help make the bridge to taking some risks and developing the more vulnerable roles. Since roles are continually shifting, being renegotiated, and redefined, role analysis may be useful at many points in the course of psychotherapy.

THE SOCIAL NETWORK DIAGRAM

Diagramming is also an element in sociometry, to be discussed in the following chapters. One type of diagram, often called the "social atom," is widely used (Moreno, 1947). The basic idea is for the clients to portray the significant people in their lives, placing themself at the center and drawing the others as small circles or other shapes at various distances. There are a number of refinements that can then enrich the diagram so produced (Buchanan, 1983; Edwards, 1996).

This technique—I prefer the term "social network diagram"—may be used diagnostically along with the aforementioned techniques of role naming, diagramming, and role analysis. In workshops or extended sessions, this exercise can serve as a good warm-up. People become more vividly aware of the matrix of relationships within which they exist. Issues such as friction with, ambivalence toward, or alienation from certain key figures in their lives become relevant topics for discussion.

A typical social network diagram might look like Figure 17–1. Several elements may be noted in this network, similar to that seen in a sociogram (see p. 204, in chapter 19). In addition:
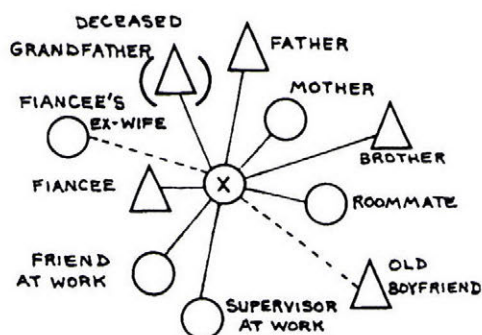
Figure 17-1. Social Network Diagram.

- Pets may be included, putting little ears on a figure, or deceased but still emotionally "present" figures may be permitted, noted in parentheses. Occasionally a small cluster of friends or other groups may be included.
- The distance shown between the central figure and the others often varies as perceived "closeness."
- In addition to indicating positive and negative feelings with a solid or dotted (or jagged) line, ambivalence may be represented as a very wavy line, indifference or neutrality with a lightly dotted line.
- In the lines drawn between the central figure (who constructs the diagram) and the various people in the social field, it's possible, in addition to showing the feelings the person has for the other, to also show on the far side of the line what the person *thinks* the other probably feels in return.
- There's usually room for variations depending on your purposes.

A social network diagram may be modified and adapted to address a variety of situations (Treadwell, Collins & Stein, 1992). Usually, people draw the significant people in their lives at the time, but other variations might include:

- In the future, who would be included that would make one's life "ideal?" One year, 10 years, other times may be specified.
- In the past, childhood, adolescence or other time.

- The collective network, showing the various groups, clubs, or organizations
- Surplus reality network: heroes, helpers, God, Jesus, other spiritual entities, angels, afflicting demons, ghosts, ancestors, guides, totem animals, etc.

As mentioned above in the section on role analysis, clients understand this approach. Sitting together over one of these diagrams, it is as if therapists or consultants and clients get a chance to review together a map of what are often the more obvious and important issues in the clients' lives. This tends to strengthen the treatment or working alliance rather than weaken it. Also, it's just more human and less mechanical to ask clients about the significant people in their lives, because caring about relationships suggests that the questioner will also be more attentive to maintaining a supportive working relationship for addressing the intuitively sensed vulnerabilities in the clients' lives.

Another value of the diagram is that, while some of the non-problematic role relationships may be ignored at first, at a later stage it may be helpful to note some of those areas of positivity, and discussions of these more supportive connections often help as a form of encouragement. Analysis of what accounts for success in those roles may lead to a transfer of some role components to help cope with the more problematic relationships.

The value of the term "social atom" itself is questionable. Sorokin (1958) pointed out that the comparisons with the physical atom were limited. Moreno's intent was to encourage our viewing people as embedded in social process. A similar sentiment was expressed by the child psychoanalyst Winnicott who was said to have noted that there's no such thing as a baby, meaning that we must remember that development occurs only within the matrix of relationships. I find also that it's better not to introduce idiosyncratic terminology as it just makes it more difficult to explain psychodrama to those not already familiar with and well disposed to its concepts—so I prefer "social network diagram."

CREATING ROLES

"An increase in imagination often results in an increase in courage, for we get stuck when we see no way out of the fear,

shame, or self-hatred that imprison us. Awakening the imagi-
nation awakens the heart and stretches it." (Fox, 1991).

In applied role theory, it's not a matter of working with one's given role repertoire. People are invited to consciously imagine and experiment with new role components or whole new roles. (There is some resonance here with George Kelly's "fixed role therapy.") This is in addition to re-framing certain roles or shifting the degrees to which we identify with this or that part of our personality (Moreno, 1934, p. 326).

Many roles can be created, named, and developed in order to provide cognitive orientation to the processes of therapy or personal development which helps to better establish whatever learning takes place. It's not as if people have to accept their present role repertoire. There is no loss in authenticity if the role assumption is being made explicitly and intentionally. Rather, creating roles makes a bridge between surplus reality and ordinary life.

The most important category of roles to develop are the meta-roles, those functions which modulate and coordinate the way the other roles are played. These meta-roles include components of good parent, chief executive officer, mediator, supportive friend, and creative problem-solver, among others. In therapy, perhaps the major working alliance the therapist needs to make is with this role, and making it explicit, pretending it is a leading member of the cast of characters, really helps.

On one hand, of course, this role is already present, but for many people it is hardly experienced. It's like a very *laissez-faire* character who hardly knows how to do his or her job. Therapy, in large part, involves the empowerment of the meta-roles. By naming them and treating them like people in themselves, these roles are brought into more vivid awareness.

Variations of the meta-role include audience and critic, or in a business, the quality-assurance program, the people who observe oneself-as-organization and evaluate the performance. A significant executive function that people need to learn involves taking stock of oneself, diagnosing what may not be working and why it's not working.

Another key role is not just managing and coordinating, but really leading, developing a dream, a set of realistic goals. Many people are just drifting, afraid to set goals. This role need not be rigid or totally dominating—there are times when drifting and "going with the flow"

is what's most adaptive. But, overall, some function of direction is optimally adaptive. It's a powerful point in therapy or personal coaching when this role is energized. In dramaturgical terms, it's the playwright. In spiritual terms, it's the best point of connection of manager and inspiration.

DeBono (1985) notes six different functions in problem-solving, as if one could wear different-colored hats, each asking a different question. Black hat: what are all the bad things that could happen? Yellow hat: what are all the good things? Red hat: what's my feeling about this? Blue hat: just the facts—dispassionate analysis. Green hat: what are some creative alternatives? White hat: how is the group process going? Is everyone being listened to? What's fair? These are six executive or leadership sub-roles, and the point is to bring them to the fore.

A fun role to develop is the enthusiastic audience, the fans. They aren't critical; they already love the performers! Imagine a rooting section, an entourage, give yourself a fan club. Other therapies speak of "affirmations," and the creation of this role allows clients to imagine others saying the most encouraging things. This role can also be cultivated because mere flattery tends to be ineffective. In creating an inner rooting section, working out the kinds of realistic and yet vigorously positive phrases makes for an interesting challenge.

Roles aren't just created, they need to be worked with, refined, developed, and, at times, radically revised. Also, the meta-role of director needs to be reviewing its own functions and those of the various other roles. Are some deficient and needing remediation? Are others overdeveloped? Imagining the ideal interplay among such functions suggests the virtue of balance more vividly.

In many cases, people discover that they suffer from the workings of an overly harsh superego, or self-critical conscience. People would like to get rid of this, but it can't be done. It's as if this complex was "hired on" around the ages of four to six to help discipline the unruly feelings, and it tends to behave like a mixture of the models one may have had in life and an exaggerated caricature of a tough policeman or drill sergeant. Because their minds operate in more simplistic dichotomies, kids will create these more polarized inner roles. Maturation involves the modulation of childish either-or, overgeneralized modes of cognition.

One way to cope with the inner policeman or inner prosecutor is to create is an inner "defense attorney" who can use all the lawyerly tricks and devices one reads about in books or sees in movies to challenge superego harshness and self-blame. (In Ellis' method of

Rational-Emotive Therapy, the therapist models this role, actively disputing the clients' belief systems.)

Another approach is to imagine that the inner prosecutor is at a management training school being exposed to the latest ideas about effectively helping people. People often say they wish they could just "get rid of" this source of negativity, but it doesn't work that way. If the ego-self could just will the subconscious, therapy wouldn't be needed. Inner roles can't just be "fired." They can, however, be worked with or "retrained," or new roles may be taken on, expanding the role repertoire. The wiser, new managing roles attempt to show how the older "bullying" inner role patterns aren't helpful, and instead, new, more balanced ways to impose self-discipline are developed.

An implicit role that may be called forward has become fairly well-known in the last few decades: "the inner child." It's often helpful to interweave an interview with this role with some discussions with more grown-up roles, just to acknowledge the presence of several perspectives. I also remind people that right next to the vulnerable, innocent, needy inner child is the insatiably demanding, entitled, selfish and spiteful "inner brat" (Wolinsky, 1993). This usually brings a laugh and opens the door to becoming more familiar with this less socially acceptable but universal facet of our personalities.

A significant role to create is, like the inner manager, implicit in the mind but benefits from being named and put to good use: the "higher self," or "soul." The development of this role is of the greatest use in psychotherapy, serving to ground the client in a source of inspiration, guidance, comfort, and belonging (or "connectedness") that is frequently lost or diluted in our culture. For some, this role is often connected with or even identified with some spiritual intermediary, such as Jesus, or directly associated with the client's own concept of God. Yet the role operates out of the potential of the creative dimension of the subconscious, and the technique involves simply becoming open and receptive to these intuitive and imaginal ideas as they emerge into awareness. It's not necessary to accept uncritically everything that pops into one's mind, but there's a way of balancing good judgment and a measure of surrendering of ego-control.

Creating as a role that mental capacity that connects more intimately with Spirit is one of the more exquisite constructions we may undertake. Doing this is neither superficial nor artificial, but rather a re-thinking, a re-perceiving of innate qualities that had otherwise just seemed to be dully present. It's like recognizing that a rock in your back yard was really a diamond.

All the created roles do not need to be serious or profound. Some

people need to develop dimensions of playfulness, art, social concern, etc. The idea is to know one can choose to have a truly diversified and satisfactorily balanced role repertoire.

SUMMARY

Applied role theory offers not only concepts but also tools for practical use in a wide range of settings. Naming, analyzing, diagramming, and creating roles are some of the operations that can implement this approach. Role theory is also associated with sociometry, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

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18

Sociometry I: General Considerations

Sociometry is both a general approach to certain aspects of group dynamics and a specific method for the assessment of the patterns of attraction and repulsion among the group members. Groups often have a formal structure involving designated leaders and assigned roles, perhaps even with chains of authority. In addition, groups have informal structures determined by personal preferences, what Moreno called *tele* (to be discussed below), and it is these patterns that are measured by sociometry (Moreno, 1933, p. 31).

Moreno believed that these informal micro-sociological dynamics were incredibly important in affecting the morale and effectiveness of larger social groups. Preferences were a psychosocial phenomenon that partook of spontaneity, and working out ways of honoring these telic preferences also served the greater vision of creating a healthier, more authentic, and more interpersonally spontaneous society.

Thus, sociometry was an important part of Moreno's philosophy and general social psychology. Moreno (1934, p. 10) at first distinguished overall theory from the specific method, calling the former

"socionomy" while the latter referred to actual mathematically oriented procedures. After a few years, however, the latter term came to be used to include both the greater and narrower sense. In this chapter, we'll discuss the general perspective, and the next chapter will include descriptions of sociometric methods.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Moreno (1953, p. lx) claimed to be the first to use the term "interpersonal relations" in psychiatry, antedating Harry Stack Sullivan's more widely known use of the term by several years. The term was in the subtitle of his first published professional journal, *Sociometry: A Journal of Interpersonal Relations,* and in one of his first articles (Moreno, 1937). Certainly, he thought in terms of what would now be called "systems" how individuals and groups interact within fields of mutual influence. Group dynamics weren't a matter of mere transferences projected by individuals but also reflected patterns at a more subtle and complex level. Some of the dimensions or factors affecting this realm include:

role distribution	preferences
role conflicts	reciprocal perceptions
parts of self	expectations
conflict resolution	temperamental differences
matching interests	nonverbal communications
obtaining access	sharing values
making boundaries	communications styles
degrees of commitment	competing commitments
verbal skillfulness	psychological mindedness
sexual hunger	perceived power gradients
money and security	established vocationally
political interest	cultural mix

Moreno's role theory, discussed in previous chapters, and his ideas about *tele*—to be addressed in greater detail below—are valuable contributions to our understanding of group dynamics, but they shouldn't be thought of as sufficient. A number of other dimensions have been written about by people in fields of social psychology, group psychotherapy, communications, organizational development, and the like, and psychodramatists should learn about these as well (Corey & Corey, 2000; Ettin, 1992.)

SOCIAL BEING-NESS

Moreno was particularly sensitive to the social dimension, viewing human nature as embedded in a dynamic field of relationships. It could fairly be said that, historically and conceptually, psychodrama emerged from Moreno's "sociometric" ideas. They go a step beyond interpersonal relations, noting that groups operate not merely as the sum of the individuals but have their own complex dynamics—a holistic rather than reductionistic view. In other words, in spite of our hyper-individualized culture in the West, people also have a potential for experiencing and operating at a collective level, for better or worse.

Humans are social beings, herd animals, and in addition to our tendencies towards egocentricity there are also potentials for community and, beyond that communion, the experience of "we-ness" replacing the sense of "self." Recognizing this, we need an approach that bridges individual and social psychology (or sociology)—such as applied role theory—and methods like sociometry, applied role theory, and psychodrama for developing greater degrees of group cohesion and co-creativity.

Groups are, in turn, embedded in a great number of cultural institutions—politics, economics, the arts, various fashions, recreation, language, etc.—which have even more complex dynamics emerging at their own levels. Thus, our systems of psychology need to be able to learn from and contribute to research and constructive activities in these related disciplines.

While it may be impossible to fully describe all the elements operating in a field, specific problems may nevertheless be addressed in ways that take into account phenomena and dynamics at whatever levels that seem relevant. For example, current family dynamics, in part, depend on broader social norms or changing expectations which are themselves controversial regarding discipline, day care, sex education, etc. In this sense, many psychodramas have elements which are also sociodramatic.

One implication of our social being-ness is to recognize, as the feminists and eco-psychologists have observed, that the personal is political. That is to say, what is engaged in collectively, or, unfortunately more frequently, what is avoided, have general consequences which then affect the individual. Therefore, psychodramas also have elements which could be sublimated as social action—that is, sociatry.

CO-UNCONSCIOUS DYNAMICS

This was an interesting concept proposed by Moreno and many others who have dealt with groups (Moreno, 1972, p. vii; Zuretti, 1994; Bannister, 1998). In psychodrama, a common phenomenon is that protagonists, when they're warmed up to states of high spontaneity, often choose others to play parts as auxiliaries who, in fact, share certain qualities, such as similar events in their own histories, yet this information had not been previously shared. Many other incidents of intuitive connections, uncanny "coincidences" (Jung called these "synchronicities"), and the like all support a respect for the possibility of a kind of ESP—extra-sensory perception or the dynamic of unconscious connections in group functioning.

Most notable is the the work of the British group analyst Wilfred Bion and his theories about the "group mind" or "group-as-a-whole" approach (Neri, 1998). This seems similar in spirit to Moreno's co-unconscious, although most people remain somewhat wary about what methods or conclusions can be based on this hypothesis.

TELE

Also intangible yet far more capable of being measured is the phenomenon of interpersonal preference, the attractions or repulsions that occur between people or among group members. Moreno considered this dynamic one of the most important and often overlooked factors in group dynamics.

Moreno's term for the category including both positive and negative preferences is *tele,* and it is this dynamic that is the focus of sociometric measurement (Barbour, 1994; Blatner, 1994). Tele is by no means excessively abstract: Think of those you prefer or like in certain ways: Those are people with whom you have positive tele. There are others who evoke a sense of discomfort or repulsion, and with them you have negative tele. Some people you know are relevant in your life, but there's not much of a preference either way. This would be called neutral tele. Others around you just don't seem relevant to your interests, and with them you are indifferent. Interestingly, more often than by chance these feelings are reciprocated. Everyone has these shifting sets of variable reactions to everyone else in their social field.

When examined carefully, however, tele is *role dependent.* People have different sets of preferences for others according to different

kinds of needs. An individual may like three people in a group, but one represents a more romantic interest, a second is preferred because the person feels the other could be helpful in practical ways, while the third seems like someone to whom one could tell his troubles.

Although tele is a complex human interaction, it is a natural extension of a dynamic found throughout nature—even primitive animals show preferences for certain others, either as a recognition of affinity for sexual purposes or perhaps because the other promises to "taste good." More complex creatures become organized in a wide variety of social forms. Still, while animals may have instincts, in humans these take on an overlay of emotions and imagery made possible by their more complex nervous systems. It is this combination of instinct and imagery that Jung meant by the term "archetype."

Moreno made a special point of differentiating tele from transference. While transference involves the carrying over into a present relationship expectations based on past experiences with others—therefore distorting the real relationship—tele, in contrast, involves interactions based mainly on the perceptions of actual qualities in the other person. Many, if not most relationships, though, contain a mixture of both transference and tele. The psychoanalysts Greenson & Wexler noted in 1969 that many reactions by analysands that their analysts had (mistakenly) thought were transference were, in fact, based on realistic readings of the therapist's verbal or nonverbal behavior (i.e., tele). And, in turn, what have been considered telic preferences are often contaminated by transferential and unrealistic fantasies. Sociometry shares with dynamic psychotherapy the goal of clarifying the actuality of interpersonal interactions, discriminating the realistic perceptions from projections, stereotypes, and other forms of irrational thinking.

As mentioned, preferences are based on conscious or unconscious criteria, and clarifying these can be one of the richest activities in psychotherapy or personal development. Consider some of the more common reasons for positive or negative choices:

temperamental similarities	
temperamental differences	cultural background
ability or experience	regional background
exotic differences	life-style, values
familiarity	smell, sound of voice
physical proximity	an easy "mark" or "win"
a worthy competitor	common interests
level of vitality	attractiveness:

role complementarity:
  leader/follower
  active/passive
  helper/helpee
  talker/listener

physical, sexual,
intellectual, social,
spiritual, playful,
emotional, artistic
and reciprocity

This last element, reciprocity, is important enough to merit further discussion later on. Clients generally find the exploration of why their preferences are the way they are as most relevant. Also, the applicability of these criteria shifts with role and context. Therefore, in sociometry, careful attention is given to the specifying of the criterion for choice. In any analysis of a given situation, the naming of the specific issues involved is necessary if we are to truly understand the interaction.

Two general categories of criteria for making choices may be discerned: *sociotelic*, referring to a shared goal or common interest, or *psychetelic*, referring to personal qualities or rapport that exist aside from any utilitarian reason. Sociotelic criteria might be more operative in a group in the community that meets because of a special shared area of concern. For example, the saying "politics makes strange bedfellows" refers to the fact that those we might select as allies in a cause may not be people we would pick for friends. Psychetelic criteria, in contrast, reflect that more intuitive and personal rapport and may be seen operating in the natural subgroupings or cliques that get together for coffee, invite each other to parties, or play outside at recess.

Knowing about *tele* has other practical applications. One is that people begin to attend more to subtleties that may have been previously ignored, noticing their own preferences and the nonverbal cues of others who seem to reciprocate those feelings. Not knowing about tele, on the other hand, leads to a common tendency to override or ignore these interpersonal currents, leading to a variety of interpersonal frictions which are then misattributed to other reasons, compounding the problem.

Another value of recognizing tele is that, since it is one type of a process that is largely intuitive in nature, the more people practice responding to it, the more interpersonally sensitive they become—it's a skill that can be developed.

A third benefit of the concept of tele is that, like temperament, nonverbal communications, and role analysis, among others, it is a general tool which makes it possible to discuss, negotiate, and find creative alternatives regarding areas of conflict. Sociometry brings some of these issues into awareness, and psychodrama helps to work them out.

One of those interpersonal frictions arises because of the tendency to generalize. If there is positive tele, people tend to idealize each other; if the tele is negative, people tend to excessively devalue each other. Idealization means qualities are attributed to another that have not been realistically demonstrated, while devaluing refers to the denial of any positive role capabilities just because certain others may not be perceived. Idealization leads to disappointment, and devaluing leads to excessively impermeable barriers being set up.

Knowing that tele is role-dependent, however, and becoming aware of the reasons for telic reactions helps to counter those overgeneralizations and, instead, supports the recognition that a person may be appreciated in some roles while not being particularly special in others. This also suggests that people should be free to renegotiate their roles in groups so that they are not subtly compelled to function in a way that is least likely for them to be enjoyed. Explorations of such themes could be useful in ongoing group therapy or within a therapeutic community.

It should be emphasized that just because the *tele* in a relationship is negative it doesn't mean that either party is wrong or bad or deserving of blame. People often feel a sense of shame and/or guilt when encountering negative tele. However, at times two otherwise fine people will not only not "click," they will "rub each other wrong." They should just accept this, not override this felt reaction and attempt to be actively friendly. When the "chemistry" is wrong, such efforts tend to compound the friction. Instead, they should limit their efforts to being reasonably kind and courteous. Perhaps at some future time another role dimension will arise where they may find more rapport, but it can't be forced.

RECIPROCITY

Reciprocity refers to the phenomenon in which a feeling is returned in kind. Sociometric research has demonstrated that both positive and negative tele tends to be reciprocal more often than by mere chance. Sometimes this intuitive "take" occurs even before much interaction has happened between the parties. Of course, when one person discloses a positive inclination, showing a sense of liking or interest, it tends to evoke similar feelings in return. Similarly, subtle behavioral cues indicating dislike are often reciprocated. There are also some interactions in which no reciprocity occurs, with X preferring Y but Y being indifferent to or even repelled by X. This is called "mixed tele,"

and such interactions may serve as useful sources for reexamination of the criteria for choice in the situation.

The theme of reciprocity is very useful in psychotherapy because it deals with the complexity of interpersonal relationships. Rather than being a one-way or even two-way process, interactions are viewed as involving an ongoing series of many communications and interpretations. Thus, interactions can become dysfunctional if either party:

- sends confusing messages, whether they include incongruent nonverbal signals or vague, circumstantial, or evasive verbal communications
- indicates insufficient response
- misinterprets the other's communications
- is unwilling to or does not know how to check out the validity of an interpretation
- signals that the process of communication is not an acceptable subject for comment
- communicates negative expectations
- is insensitive to nonverbal cues or even clear statements

A sense of *mutuality* is developed when the participants in a relationship can communicate an openness to offering or receiving attention, interest, respect, help, or support. Mutuality also increases as people can reciprocally indicate a willingness to exert an equal amount of effort toward a shared goal. Discussion of these themes in therapy and education offers foundations for building skills in more effective communications. When people have a greater sense of mastery through knowing a variety of mature techniques for getting attention or making boundaries, they are less likely to regress to the use of manipulations.

Another reason the concept of reciprocity is useful is that it offers a powerful tool for exploring the phenomena of transference, projection, and other distortions of the interpersonal field. By discussing the general ideas of tele, preferences, reciprocity, and the like, clients are given a general framework, a simple language, along with an expectation or norm of examining the accuracy and motivations in interpersonal relationships.

USING SOCIOMETRY

Since tele is such a pervasive and important dynamic in human relations, it makes sense to develop methods to convert these interactions

into workable information, the better to consciously structure groups and work constructively with the feelings of all involved. Moreno's attitude was consistent with the general trends in and beyond the fields of psychotherapy towards advocating more consciousness. He recognized that it's better to know and make decisions based on accurate information than to maintain illusions and avoidances. Of course, avoidances, whether in the realm of individual or group psychology, often offer some short-term relief from having to deal with uncomfortable truths but, in the long run, problems tend to be compounded.

In sociometry, though, as in therapy, sensitive issues are raised and must be dealt with carefully. It's necessary to first establish a holding environment of stable and mutually supporting relationships—in groups, what is called "group cohesion." This supportive context then allows for the courage to explore aspects of relationships which may be emotionally threatening. Often the preparation for and follow-up to a sociometric investigation may require far more skill, tact, and effort than the execution of the actual procedure—and this point will be discussed in greater detail further on.

In fact, the generation and maintenance of a group norm that is motivated to know its own dynamics is really more fundamental than the method itself. The actual classical technique of sociometry is just a feedback technique, like the function of a scale in weight control. The actual change agent is the broader sociometric procedure, involving the development of a general commitment to self-disclosure and clear feedback, followed by an exercise of skills in improving interpersonal relations and group cohesion. In other words, sociometry includes not only the gathering and organizing of information about the telic patterns in a group but also the work with the group to constructively anticipate and then deal with that information.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

The roots of sociometry began in Moreno's experiences around the second decade of this century, as discussed in chapter 2. In the early 1930s, he developed the method further while acting as a consultant at the Hudson School for Girls in New York (Hare, 1992), and these experiments became the basis for Moreno's most elaborate book, *Who Shall Survive* (1934, 1953b).

As a relatively early, practical approach to social psychology, so-

ciometry became more recognized in the 1940s and 1950s. Moreno's journals included encouraging statements by many eminent social scientists. It's especially important to acknowledge the seminal work on sociometry by Helen Hall Jennings (1950, 1959). In the 1950s and 1960s, the method was utilized primarily in the educational system (Evans, 1962; Gronlund, 1959; Northway, 1967), and other applications were noted in the books and journals Moreno published on the subject (see Bibliography).

Sociometry and its related approaches of psychodrama and group therapy require a commitment to greater levels of honesty, and attention is given to the actual relationships in the here-and-now. These themes are also found in the methodologies of the T-Group, one of the precursors of the encounter group.

In 1946, leadership training programs aimed at dealing with community issues, such as interracial tensions, were held at a retreat center in Bethel, Maine, staffed by students of the group dynamics research group of Kurt Lewin who had also been influenced by Moreno. The staff at these retreats soon discovered that their programs, which included role playing, began to stimulate feedback sessions which "processed" the events in previous meetings which, in turn, led to an ongoing self-reflective group dynamic, the T-Group, which functioned a little like group therapy for healthy people.

Several founders of the T-group, such as Ronald Lippitt and Leland Bradford, as noted, were familiar with Moreno's methods (Moreno, 1953a). In fact, some of their seminal papers, around the time of the organization of the first T-groups in 1946 and 1947, were published in Moreno's journals (Lippitt, Bradford, & Benne, 1947)! A few years later, the T-Group was modified and applied in education and community organizational development, becoming known as sensitivity training; a decade later, this approach fused with the emerging field of humanistic psychology to become the encounter group.

In the fields of academic sociology and social psychology, sociometry was mainly used as a research instrument in the 1950s and 1960s, and even then its popularity was only modest. In 1956, Moreno gave his journal, *Sociometry,* to the American Sociological Association which, for many years, continued to publish it but with almost no inclusion of the writings of Moreno or his more immediate followers. At the time of this writing, sociometry is hardly mentioned in the indexes of most textbooks on sociology or social psychology.

In spite of sociometry's being one of the first scientific methods to be used in sociology, it was most widely used for research, with little

effort given to implementing the findings with the groups so studied. This was directly counter to Moreno's intention which was for the emergence of what might be called today an applied behavioral science, one that directly helped the people who were being tested (Mendelson, 1977). He saw the sociometrist as being a participant in the process—it was an ethical imperative and an extension of his existential philosophy. Sociometry was a tool people could use to monitor the state of their own collective functioning, and with this information they could make informed decisions about changing group norms, procedures, and roles. Beyond describing the phenomena of group dynamics, it is important to identify, create, and work out the technical problems involved in attempting to correct "group illnesses."

Of course, sociometry required more than what was part of the repertoire of skills of the average academician. Few professors of sociology or social psychology are equally trained in group therapy, and such a synthesis of disciplines was necessary for the emergence of what Moreno called sociotherapists or sociatrists. Moreno hoped this new field of professionals would have a socially recognized role in diagnosing and treating conflicts within and between groups, neighborhoods, organizations, and even nations, like that of a psychotherapist treating an individual or a family. Certainly, there is room for such a role, because larger collectives exhibit even more dangerous forms of psychopathology and self-deception. The rudimentary state of our knowledge and the presence of collective resistances should not deter us from envisioning and building toward recognition of the validity and methods in such a role.

PRESENT STATUS

The most significant fact about the status of sociometry in the behavioral sciences is that most people not involved with psychodrama have hardly heard of it! Since the 1960s, sociometry has become a rather obscure and only occasionally used technique in social psychology. Furthermore, when it is used by academics, the subject matter is most often the relatively easily controlled contexts of elementary or preschool playgrounds and classes, addressing the phenomena of popularity, social skills, and clique formation in these age groups (Bukowski & Cillessen, 1998). In those academic settings, almost nothing has been done to actually use the method as Moreno intended, to help

people be placed so they can work or play with those with whom they feel the most rapport or to work out the frictions within groups that interfere with group cohesion.

On the other hand, sociometry is being very constructively used by some psychodramatists in Australia and in other countries, especially those who are consulting to businesses and other organizations.

The problem is that sociometry is ideally a profoundly helpful tool for people who are not too defensive and genuinely interested in learning about their own group interactions. This requires a degree of psychological sophistication and emotional resilience that is as yet still rare. In other words, for most situations, sociometry is a method that is not yet ready for popular usage. The same might be said, however, for many other group methods. Still, sometimes other technologies mature and make possible new integrations that hadn't been previously possible.

Even in the teaching of psychodrama, many trainers hardly mention it during the early phases of training. Before the Board of Examiners established their certification procedures and questions on sociometry came to occupy a significant place in the written testing, it wasn't even taught much in the middle phases of training! Now it's become a significant element in the knowledge base of a growing majority of psychodramatists, which leads to some interesting secondary problems.

I think that sociometry needs to be recognized as a separate method from psychodrama in applied social psychology, sociology, or group work. It is quite possible to apply each approach without recourse to the other. Furthermore, in spite of several historical and philosophical areas of overlap, psychodrama theory on the whole has only a modest degree of overlap with sociometric theory. One could well argue that sociometry has an equal amount of relevance to non-psychodramatic group work. This position is admittedly controversial, and in 1999 on the Internet-based listservice, "Grouptalk," some people agreed and others vigorously disagreed (Forte & Propper, 1999).

Of those who claimed that the two methods are inextricable, one argument was that it's valuable to know and keep in mind an awareness of sociometric dynamics when working with groups and doing psychodrama. The same could be said, however, for it being desirable to also keep in mind an awareness of many other types of dynamics. It's not that I don't appreciate sociometry—I do! I believe it represents a complex of ideas that are not sufficiently addressed in most other facets of psychology or sociology. It's just that I recognize that it can

stand on its own as a form of applied social psychology, although it is still a very young field. There's so much yet to be learned.

Moreno wrote about sociometry at length, propounding various "laws" of sociodynamics, although, really, they should better be called "hypotheses" because either they haven't been well tested or their practical implications are unclear. Some are relatively obvious, on the order of the old cliché, "them what has, gets"—applied to friends as well as money. However, in spite of the sheer volume of his writing and the many papers by others, there is still a need for the development of more specific guidelines for helping groups examine themselves and constructively work out their problems. Some of these omre specific approaches wil be addressed next.

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19

SOCIOMETRY II: METHODS

Since Moreno developed sociometry, both the classical method and some variations have been refined significantly. Rather than attempt to fully describe the technicalities of this approach, I will offer a very brief review and some commentary on a number of the more commonly used techniques. The reader is encouraged to study other sources for particulars (Hale, 1985; Carlson-Sabelli, 1992; Treadwell, Kumar, Stein & Prosnick, 1998).

In classical sociometry, people in a group or community are invited to respond to relevant questions about their preferences to be with certain others in various roles and/or specific situations. Generally, this is a paper-and-pencil test and sometimes prepared forms may be used to facilitate the process. The questions asked are ideally based on realistic choices, ones that could potentially be fulfilled: With whom would you like to be on a work team? With whom would you like to sit at meals? With whom would you like to share a dormitory room? These preferences might be ranked: Who would be your first choice? Your second choice? Your third? Also, sometimes the questioning in-
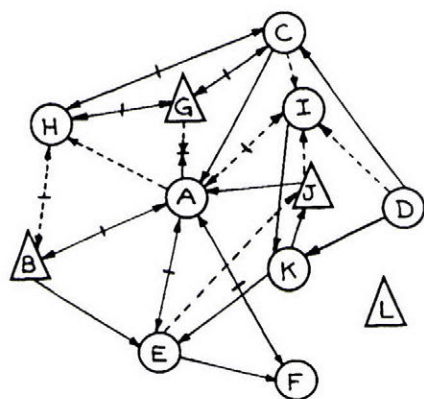
Figure 19-1.

cludes, "With whom would you *least* like to be paired for (such and such a role)?" Who would be your second least preferred partner?

The responses are then tabulated and the results shared back with the community, sometimes in the form of a sociogram (see Figure 19.1). Based on these responses, the group is then helped to agree on assignments that accord as much as possible with the preferences indicated, especially where they are reciprocated. Equally important, the group is helped to discuss their findings and deal with the issues that inevitably arise when this level of interpersonal disclosure is made.

Unfortunately, as mentioned in the previous chapter, and contrary to Moreno's express desire, sociometry was far more often used as a research tool with little real sharing of the results with the subjects.

RESISTANCES TO SOCIOMETRY

One of the problems of using the method as Moreno intended is that the sociometrist would have to be remarkably skilled in working out the issues that are raised in the course of using sociometry. The challenge of expressing explicit preferences is frankly scary, bringing up a number of anxieties. Some typical fears that people have commonly expressed might include: "I'm afraid that. . ."

- if you find out I like you more than you like me, you may laugh at me or take advantage of me.
- if you find out that I prefer someone else to you, you will resent and possibly hurt me in retaliation, or I will hurt your feelings and then I'll feel guilty.
- if they like me more than you, you may be hurt, or worse, jealous or envious, and from that, spitefully hurt me.
- if I don't prefer the people who are popular, they won't like me, so, even though I like you, I'm afraid to show it.
- although I prefer you, I also prefer that person a bit more, but if he doesn't prefer me, I don't want you to be mad that you weren't my first choice, and then I won't get either of my preferred choices.
- you'll find out I don't prefer you at all, as a matter of fact, I'm repelled by you, but: (a) I am afraid to tell you why; (b) I don't know why, it's not clear to me; (c) I am afraid to get involved in exploring the basis for my antipathy—a fear of hurt and resentful feelings all around.

Sociometry, then, brings to the surface a host of very vivid intrapsychic and interpersonal issues, and just as there are resistances to exploring the depth of the intrapsychic realm in psychoanalysis, so also are there individual and collective resistances to exploring the interpersonal field. In some ways, it's worse. People nowadays are more familiar with ordinary psychology and many will admit to having feelings and complexes that might have been shocking 50 or 70 years ago. But interpersonal themes are still taboo, and the challenge of revealing preferences evokes a layer of sensitivity that is sharper than the ordinary level of defensiveness in group therapy or personal growth groups.

Another layer deeper and again quite sensitive is the related sociometric procedure of revealing the *reasons* for the choices. People sense the inevitability of this component and it is frequently quite uncomfortable. It's as if they subconsciously think, "Uh-oh, if I engage in this process, I'll have to look at why I like and/or dislike the different people here in the group, and I can sense that the reasons for these preferences involve feelings which I'd be ashamed to admit—even to myself!"

The criteria by which people prefer or don't prefer others are often deeply meaningful and sensed as emotionally vulnerable. If dreams are the "royal road to the unconscious," as Freud said, then sociometry is a candidate for the "jet stream" to the unconscious. The bases for

preferences regarding work, church, mate, hobby, and style of clothes have many connections to the unconscious life, and furthermore these connections take on more significance than dreams because they are so obviously determining factors in living. Thus, people sense that pursuing these issues could rapidly lead them into levels of self-examination that many would rather avoid.

Another resistance to sociometry is the feeling, "Why bring up interpersonal problems if there's no apparent way to work them out?" If people haven't learned the infrastructure of a number of conflict-resolution skills, they feel that it's better to leave well enough alone. This is entirely rational. If you can't do surgery without possibly killing the patient, don't do it. Surgery required a host of other technologies—antiseptic procedures, anaesthetics, muscle relaxants, safe blood replacements, etc.—in order to become an effective and accepted part of medicine. Similarly, to do sociometry, which exposes remarkably sensitive issues, requires a knowledge of a number of reparative measures as well as believing that the group leader and other group members also know about these measures.

Add to this the dynamic of collective resistance: Group members tend to collude consciously and unconsciously in denying the actual reasons for various group tensions or subtle acting-out behaviors, or denying even the presence of significant tension. Instead, they entertain the illusion that problems will magically go away. Also denied is the truth that avoided problems tend to be compounded if not addressed explicitly.

This mixture of the prevalence of the use of denial and the lack of knowledge of interpersonal skills, I think, is a major contributor to our present, unhealthy level of social alienation. Psychodramatic and sociometric methods such as role reversal, doubling, and role analysis can be used constructively to address this problem. As people learn to use the skills of group and interpersonal awareness as tools, they may become ready to face knowing who in the group is isolated or rejected and for what reasons, whose perceptions about being liked or disliked are mistaken, which subgroups exist, and what the different roles or criteria are by which one can be recognized. Our present culture is characterized by a number of social changes that require a heightened level of psychological flexibility and creative coping skills. These can be developed through educational group experiences that utilize sociometry and psychodramatic methods.

Until the infrastructure of attitudes and psychosocial skills is developed, groups and organizations will resist the use of sociometry. Therefore, preparation for the process, the warming-up of the group,

may require days or weeks of instruction, less threatening experiential exercises, the building of group cohesion, and the raising of motivation so that knowing seems to have more of a payoff than avoiding.

As part of this warm-up, or as an alternative, there are a number of less threatening, sociometric-like techniques which can also help a group deal with its own dynamics. For example, Remer (1995, p.82) suggests the use of presenting an anonymous sociogram, based on the group's choices, and having the various group members imagine (and enact) what it might be like to be in the various positions shown—the star, the isolate, etc. Another variation mentioned is the projective sociogram in which group members guess where they are positioned, imagining how they are chosen by the others. It is important to allow sufficient time for the thorough processing and working-through of the feedback, which may involve follow-up sessions.

Here, I suspect that Moreno's narcissism and boldness blinded him to the levels of interpersonal anxiety that most people are burdened with; yet, in this regard, his weakness paradoxically may have been his strength. He was allowed to envision people encountering each other with levels of spontaneity and freedom that few others could even imagine, and it may yet come to pass. It was an idea that caught on—others glimpsed it too! It was this vision that fueled the encounter group movement! And in the years to come, if it should pass that economic pressures force people to live in communities, this technology may well be part of the lubrication that allows them to work through the frictions that inevitably arise.

OTHER SOCIOMETRIC METHODS

The most commonly used sociometric techniques are moderately different from classical sociometry in a number of ways. Some involve the process of consciously choosing and allowing oneself to be chosen (or not), but without any systematic diagraming and discussing of the choice process. Other methods such as role analysis and the social network diagram involve representing clearly relational dynamics which only incidentally include telic dynamics, and these were discussed in chapter 17.

CHOOSING PARTNERS

One of the major principles of sociometry is that people tend to work better with those with whom they feel positive tele, and even more so

if that is reciprocated. In most cases, this principle is ignored or overridden. In many schools, organizations, and other programs, people are assigned as partners based on some arbitrary criterion used for the convenience of the administrators, such as height or the alphabetical order of the last name.

As a result, many people numb their own sensitivity towards choice-making. It is useful in workshops and other group settings, especially where some introspection and learning of group dynamics is a goal, to cultivate this sensitivity. This is done simply through practicing the activity, having structured experiences in which one has the opportunity to choose, and then discussing with the person chosen why that choice was made.

For example, in a workshop designed to build role-taking skills, I use a series of dyadic exercises, each one having one of the pair interviewing the other in a new role. Between exercises, I have the group members look around to choose a partner for the next dyadic experience. Then, after this next choice interaction, I suggest that the new pairs so chosen take time to talk with each other about why they chose each other and how they felt about choosing and being chosen (or not).

This warm-up fulfills several functions. First, it builds group cohesion by helping people to find a number of "allies" with whom one has shared a small experience. Second, the choice-making exercises the intuitive telic function. Third, group members become slightly desensitized to the fear of not being chosen or of hurting others by choosing someone else. Fourth, people begin to notice and think about their choosing or avoiding-choosing style. Finally, the technique warms the group up to the very rich and evocative theme of feeling preferred or rejected in family or social contexts.

In discussing the choice with the new partner, more feedback is accessed. Some people have trouble finding those who reciprocate their choice, and that's food for thought, too. The group needs to be reminded that clarifying the reasons for a choice may not involve actual reason, per se. The reasons may have to do with thoroughly irrational factors, subtle reminders, something about a hairdo, or some fragment that was said. Some of these are remarkably perceptive and accurate, and other reasons are really inaccurate, more projections. Either way, if it's structured in a lighthearted fashion, the individual begins to feel more comfortable talking about it even if the choice making can't be based on logical or objective elements.

CHOOSING A PROTAGONIST AND/OR AUXILIARIES

However protagonists are chosen, whether by the director or by the group, tele is operating to some degree. It pays to notice and think about this process in order to become more aware of the dynamics in the group and one's habitual reaction pattern. Group members may choose a protagonist for many reasons, from being sexually or intellectually attracted by another and wanting to learn more about them to simply feeling drawn toward those who seem to "really want to work." There are a number of aspects of protagonist choice, which is further discussed by Bradshaw-Tauvon (1998) and Blatner (1996). Here are some additional near-sociometric techniques.

Directors often invite those who might want to be a protagonist to let the group know, perhaps by stepping forward from the circle of group members. (It's better if everyone is standing—being seated requires a greater degree of warm-up to dare to put oneself forward.) Then those who have indicated their interest are asked to say a bit about what they want to work on. Finally, the group members are asked to get up or step forward and stand behind (and perhaps put one of their hands on the shoulder of) the potential protagonist whose issue seems most relevant to each of their lives. Whoever gets a majority of group members supporting their theme then becomes the protagonist for the enactment which then proceeds. This honors the group's overall concerns and also makes the choice less a matter of personal rejection.

In ongoing groups, however, a number of other dynamics may emerge—certain people putting themselves forward as protagonists more often and with some feeling, others perhaps too reticent. As patterns are discerned, they need to be addressed explicitly which is part of the group processing that complements the use of action methods.

Then, when the protagonist is selected and the problem is beginning to be explored, the auxiliaries are chosen—most often by the protagonist. The director asks who else is present in a given situation and, as these figures are named, the director asks the protagonist to pick someone in the group who could play that role. The details of selecting auxiliaries are discussed elsewhere in the literature (Blatner, 1996; Holmes, et al., 1998). The significant point to be made here is that the subtle cues that occur in the choice are often significant examples of the "co-unconscious" at work (See discussion of this quasi-telepathic phenomenon on pg. 191.).

ACTION SOCIOMETRY AND "SCULPTURE"

These techniques involves the concretization and portrayal of the perceived relationships in a group (Seabourne, 1963). In a way, it is a physical representation of a social network diagram (discussed in chapter 17), the different roles being represented by group members as auxiliaries taking positions in the stage area as if they were sculptured figures in a diorama. The distances from the protagonist and each other, their posture, their gestures, and the like all represent vividly how the protagonist perceives this relational network.

Applied to families, action sociometry has been called *family sculpture* (or just "sculpture") and also "statue building." This method for working with family dynamics was developed independently in the late 1960s by David Kantor who had learned some psychodrama from Paul Corynetz, one of Moreno's students, in the 1940s (Duhl, 1983). Apparently Virginia Satir also developed the method in the late 1960s, perhaps influenced by the multimodal approaches being used in encounter groups by Will Schutz.

Since then a number of elaborations on action sociometry have been published (Duhl, Kantor, & Duhl, 1973; Constantine, 1978; Sherman & Fredman, 1986; Wegscheider-Cruse et al., 1994; Duhl, 1999). It can be applied not only in various types of group work but also in the teaching of group dynamics (Duffy, 1997). For example, several group members in turn might set up their own sculptures and then discuss it. Sometimes the figures are also given imagined typical lines to speak, which adds another dimension; then, the protagonist might enter the scene and have the opportunity to respond to the various roles.

In group work, action sociometry may be used to assess the hidden linkages in a group. The director invites the group members to get up and put a hand on the shoulder of someone they know from before, or perhaps someone they feel they want to get to know better. They may even be invited to use both hands to connect to two people, which generates some giggling as subgroups are dragged around, the result revealing clusters, mutual pairs, and chains.

THE SPECTROGRAM

This "linear" form of action sociometry is among the most useful techniques for addressing a wide range of issues that come up in a group (Kole, 1967). Many themes don't yield to a simple vote of being

for or against something, but rather the reactions, feelings, or situation may be better represented by having the group members stand and place themselves somewhere along an imaginary line, with one end being one side of a question and the other end of the line the opposite. This concretizes the multiple, subtle reactions. Some examples of questions that might be represented by a spectrogram might include:

How much experience have you had with psychodrama? Most on one side, least on the other.
How comfortable are you with the group process?
How successful was your social experience in your high-school years? In your college years?
How frequently do you argue with your significant other?
How strongly are you for "choice" or "against abortion?"

There are many variations. The director may have the group talk with each other, negotiating where they stand, comparing their responses. "I think I'm more this way than you, because . . ." "No, I think *I'm* more, because ... " Or, the group may be asked to respond without any talking. After the line forms, those on the ends may dialogue and even try changing parts. To bring out the issues of ambivalence, those standing at the ends leave the line and those in the middle are then drawn out using a modified criterion.

Sometimes a group member suggests a variation on the question, so that the group redistributes itself. Or another type of question may be asked and then another spectrogram is drawn perpendicular to the first, so that people place themselves in one of four quadrants.

The common denominator in all these techniques is that sociometric principle of helping a group to give itself feedback about where people stand in relation to others regarding feelings of closeness, attraction, or common interest. This feedback comes through the cooperative process of deciding on meaningful questions and expressing the responses in diagrams or some physical fashion.

FOCUSED QUESTIONING

Finally, sociometry depends to a large extent on the construction of the questions, focusing the attention on which dimension of the role is being considered. Not only questions of direct preference may be asked, but also "perceptual sociometry," exploring what people per-

ceive or intuit or wish or fear that others might feel towards them. Family systems work has added "circular" questioning: "Who do you think X will pick to be the leader?" (Williams, 1998)

SUMMARY

Sociometry is a rich field and these two chapters note only some of the high points, emphasizing those elements that I think need to be considered and are not always presented elsewhere.

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J. L. Moreno, 1972.

20
Related Approaches

Some dramatic approaches are largely derived from Moreno's work and some have arisen independently. This chapter will discuss those forms aimed at emancipating consciousness. Their common roots may be found in the dramatic elements in healing and religious rituals rooted in the mists of prehistory (Snow, 1996; J. Moreno, 1988; McNiff, 1988). To be discussed are:

Role Playing	Drama Therapy
Role Training	Drama in Education
Action Methods	Interactive Theatre
Sociodrama	Playback Theatre
Bibliodrama	The Art of Play

The boundaries among these related approaches are often blurred. Also, writings by non-psychodramatists in many of these areas offer significant support for the rationale underlying psychodrama.

ROLE PLAYING AND ROLE TRAINING

This is one of the most widespread offshoots of psychodrama, and indeed this term is often used synonymously (Corsini, 1966; Etcheverry, Siporin & Toseland, 1986; Kipper, 1982). Among psychodramatists, however, *role playing* more often refers to the method's application in non-therapeutic contexts in which the challenge is not so much that of clarifying the individual's deepest feelings, but rather exploring the less personal dimensions of a given problem and trying out a variety of responses (Swink, 1993).

If the target behavior is known, this is known as *role training*. It has also been called "behavioral rehearsal." Once a problem has been clarified and some insight and attitudinal shift has been achieved, the challenge is then the development of a more effective behavioral repertoire. The key technique in role training is replay, with a chance to re-evaluate the response between each "re-take" until it is felt to be satisfactory. The protagonist might reverse roles and experience how that behavior would be received. Sometimes other group members model how they'd act, or the mirror technique would be used to view the interaction from the outside. Role training also combines group feedback and support and attention to nonverbal communications.

Role training is applicable for many types of skill-building, such as in groups organized for assertion training, anger management, or resisting peer pressures for drugs or sex; developing social and self-care skills for those who have been chronically institutionalized; preparing for job interviews; learning to give constructive criticism; or effective disciplining for parents. Instead of just talking about these situations, sufficient time is given so that people can practice to the point of skill mastery.

Simulations involve more complex forms of role playing, often involving elaborate procedures and technologies. Airplane pilots, astronauts, deep-sea divers, and large-scale military exercises ("war games") all use this principle of role playing to try out strategies, new techniques, new devices, to get the "knack" of a routine or a new maneuver, etc. Rehearsals are needed because, in highly complex systems, there are inevitably unanticipated variables.

ACTION METHODS

Action methods are psychodramatic or other structured techniques which are applied separately—not just as a part of the full psychodra-

matic procedure—as part of therapy, consultation to business, or even in everyday life. Other terms used have been *experiential approaches, structured experiences,* or other similar combinations. In the long run, I think this broader usage will have the greatest overall impact of psychodrama in the world.

Many of these techniques derive not only from psychodrama but also from theatre games, creative drama exercises, guided fantasy, drama therapy, and other active therapy methods. They may be modified as needed, integrated with other approaches, and used for a wide range of purposes, including:

general spontaneity training	building group cohesion
warm-ups for further explorations	bringing out a group concern
evoking greater self-awareness	resolving a specific problem

SOCIODRAMA

This approach addresses the dynamics of groups or subgroups relating to each other (Kellermann, 1998). Some examples of sociodramas might include:

- a workshop on relationships between mothers and daughters
- dealing with interracial tensions or other types of prejudice
- an encounter among peoples seeking understanding in the face of their nationalities being or having been enemies
- a meeting of police and community members
- exploration of a common social or ethical problem
- problem-solving of a slow-down of production in a business
- exploring a historical or socio-political problem in classrooms, international agencies, or community gatherings

Individuals may be thought of as aggregates of *particular* roles, while groups in relation to each other do so regarding just a few *general* role relations. Still, there is a great deal of richness in even relatively simple roles. Any given role has its own implicit predicament, certain features associated with it, and advantages and disadvantages, which give it depth. For example, the predicament of a woman facing the prospect of an unwanted or highly conflicted pregnancy involves both personal and social issues.

Sociodramas may vary regarding how the issues are raised, which roles are chosen for exploration, and how those roles are assigned to

various individuals (Minkin, 1999). For example, in a classroom history discussion, both the issues and the roles to be played are usually determined by the teacher ahead of time (Zeleny, 1956). On the other hand, in a group experiencing a sense of inner tension, the identification of the issues which represent the subgroup tensions and the individuals who will serve as spokespersons may emerge spontaneously from the group, the process merely being catalyzed by the director.

In a group exploring parent-teenager relations, for example, the director may allow the group to determine an issue, such as allowance policy, and then the director takes a more or less active role in naming the roles involved. Usually group members volunteer, but in some situations they are assigned. Having the group identify the relevant roles and role components is often an important step in the process.

The theme chosen is sometimes pre-determined, part of a curriculum demand, or the general reason for hiring a sociodramatist and calling the meeting, such as a business using this method to re-affirm policies against sexual harrassment and wanting the issues dealt with experientially rather than merely didactically. Alternatively, in a therapy group, it was an issue that was brought up at a previous meeting and everyone wanted to continue the exploration in depth. At other times, the challenge involves the group's identifying its own concerns and discovering the underlying issues.

In many sociodramas, there are group members who may be experiencing the issue being addressed as something true in their personal lives. Similarly, in most psychodramas, group members may feel a resonance in terms of more general role or intergroup issues, such as a woman's dealing with her own feelings of rejection in a particular relationship, triggering feelings about contemporary norms in dating relationships. Depending on the setting, a sociodrama may be used as a warm-up to a psychodrama, or a psychodrama may be the lead-in for a sociodrama. In many contexts, however, the mixing of the two modes is contraindicated!

If people have come for a more general discussion, focusing on individuals and requiring personal revelation breaks the unspoken contract and puts people "on the spot." Even if they seem willing at the time, it may be a product of the warming-up and later they'll feel they've been overly exposed and betrayed. This caution applies especially in business, school, and church groups (Stein, Ingersoll & Treadwell, 1995).

Even in therapeutic settings, it's wise to make explicit shifts between sociodramas and psychodramas, identifying the differences in

focus and the significance of the roles played. In sociodramas, group members take various roles with the clear understanding that the role then being played does *not* represent the actual stance of the player. (Later, if the players choose to acknowledge certain elements in the roles they played being true for their own lives, that's their option.) In psychodrama, in contrast, there's more of a sense that what the protagonist is playing is largely "true," if only at a psychological level.

Sociodramatic work, like the aforementioned use of action methods, may have a far greater impact societally than classical therapeutic psychodrama. It has been used by Minkin in developing an "intergenerational" (senior adults and teenagers) theatre program in Philadelphia for use in business—really, more in the form of role playing and simulations (Torrance, 1975; Mickey, 1995; Wiener, 1997) and in other ways (Sternberg & Garcia, 1987).

BIBLIODRAMA

This modification of sociodrama addresses the text of the Bible or some other religious scripture (Miller, 1998) and is used generally to deepen spiritual understandings in religious education classes, at retreats, or in other settings. Other cultural myths and legends might be similarly explored, but it's better if group members are somewhat familiar with the stories involved, and also important to spend time warming the group members up to the vividness of the predicaments of the characters in a given story.

A detailed description of the Bibliodramatic method has been recently published by Pitzele (1998) who also gave examples of its use in a more personal contemplation of the stories in Genesis (Pitzele, 1995). The process calls for the aforementioned warming-up to the text chosen and then setting up and enacting a scene implied in the story. Psychodramatic techniques are added to these dramatic explorations.

DRAMA THERAPY

This is a field that emerged, at first, apart from psychodrama, from actors and directors putting on plays in hospitals and other clinical settings. In the 1970s, Morenian ideas gradually became more accepted, and for many now in the that field psychodrama is an integral component (Emunah, 1997). Beginning around the 1950s, a number of

pioneers experimented with different forms of Drama Therapy, primarily in the United States and England. (In the U.K. they call it dramatherapy—one word.) The field emerged more cohesively in the 1970s, and in the United States in 1979, the National Association for Drama Therapy was organized (Landy, 1997).[1]

There are a number of different ways of doing drama therapy. Some groups play parts from a regular scripted drama and then explore their reactions in role. Some write and produce plays based on their own life stories or create a composite piece. David Read Johnson employs a process he calls "Transformations" in which an ongoing improvisation of shifting roles plays off of both client(s) and the group leader. Renée Emunah (1994) describes a process that moves from general spontaneity activities to role playing of more distanced characters to actual psychodrama. Others add variations and make integrations with other methods that will be discussed further on.

Other creative arts approaches are also integrated—poetry, art, making collages, constructions, costumes, models, creative writing, and dance-movement mixed with staging and acting. Each allows for a savoring of depth. While there is something to be said for Morenian directness and spontaneity, there are people who benefit more from these more traditional activities which have different therapeutic functions. Those groups which go on to create a performance—either a collection of individual performance pieces or a collective production—are able to use the preparation phase as an opportunity to experience for sustained commitment, collaboration, self-discipline and focus.

At present, most drama therapy training programs include psychodrama in their curricula. In turn, psychodramatists could learn a good deal from drama therapists—not only techniques, but a rich theoretical body of writings and other approaches which invite further creative syntheses (Johnson, 1984). Happily, professionals in the two fields are increasingly presenting at each others' conferences, and occasionally even joint conferences are held.

Which clients would respond better to which approach? The key issue seems to be a variable need for role-distance. Psychodrama invites the protagonist to acknowledge that a problem exists for him (or her) and even this is too much for many people (Fox, 1996). It requires a minimal degree of psychological mindedness. For those who tend to need to see everyone else as having the problem, or to in other ways deny the existence of a problem, being able to explore issues at a distance may serve as a better first step. For example, when children play with toys or puppets, the implicit message is that "this

isn't *my* family, just *a* family." Yet, of course, at a deeper level, the enactment carries the projections of the puppeteer as playwright.

Distancing may be achieved by taking on a role in a scripted or even partly improvised drama which allows that role to serve as a buffer between the sense of excessive self-disclosure—even to one-self. Instead of recognizing, "this is me in my life," clients can express less directly, "Here's how I see the king (or the villain or some other role) playing the scene." Again, the implicit message is, "This is just fooling around and doesn't count—it's not about me." Of course, even if that's true, still certain themes or emotional resonances are evoked.

Drama therapy is also rich in warm-up exercises, some of which have come from psychodrama and some of which would be excellent for psychodramatists to learn to use! (Emunah, 1994.) It further suggests another process that would add to many psychodramas, a more symbolic integrative or closing ritual. The whole idea of using rituals thus informs and expands the potential of psychodrama beyond its own classical methodology. The reader may well infer that I see value in a continued interchange and rapprochement between the two methods (Blatner, 1994). Drama therapy continues to grow, and the professional books and articles in this field often articulate concepts that add to the theoretical foundations of psychodrama (Jennings, 1998; Langley, 1995; Casson, 1996).

DRAMA IN EDUCATION

Begun in the United States by Winifred Ward in the 1920s and in England by Peter Slade in the 1940s, the field has grown significantly, blending into theatre departments in schools, but also as separate trends within education for a more experiential way to learn about literature, social studies, and even science and math. Role playing became integrated with this field, and the various threads have mixed significantly (Shaftel, 1982).

In England and Canada, another line of writers and teachers arose, including Peter Slade, Gavin Bolton, Richard Courtney, Dorothy Heathcote, Veronica Sherborne, and Brian Way. For some, drama in education and drama therapy overlapped. These approaches, emphasizing a variable degree of spontaneity and improvisation, tend to focus on the experience of the students themselves rather than an outside audience. This is called "process-orientation," in contrast to "product orientation." (Martin-Smith, 1996). Courtney's writings (1990, 1995)

are especially rich in concepts which also justify the use of psycho-drama.

Perhaps one of the more important implications for psychodrama is that it can be modified for use in promoting a variety of skills that are needed in coping with the social and emotional challenges of a changing world. Particularly needed are skills in communications, problem-solving, and self-awareness (Pearson-Davis, 1989; Blatner, 1995). At a deeper level, as mentioned in the chapter on skill-learning, there's also the idea of developing spontaneity and initiative (Neville, 1989). Related to this is the general field of "creative drama" which promises to further develop these skills (Sternberg, 1998; Clifford & Herrmann, 1999). Further references on the uses of drama-like modes are in the notes for the chapter on "Applications in Education" in our book, *The Art of Play* (Blatner & Blatner, 1997).

INTERACTIVE THEATRE

Moreno invented his own form of improvisational theatre around 1920, and saw it as a kind of therapy for the society in the broadest sense of healing and promoting consciousness. Arising independently, many others discovered a similar idea. One of the most notable of these has been Augusto Boal (1995) who developed a "Theatre of the Oppressed" in Brazil. More recently, Boal has come to address the problems of the burgeoisie whose milder neurotic issues might be reframed as inner oppression (Feldhendler, 1994). There is a growing number of theatre artists pursuing this new form, and a subtype of this approach called "Forum Theatre."

Interactive theatre has many other forms with purposes ranging from pure entertainment to demonstrating some political position to involving the audience in a give-and-take in thinking about various social issues. For example, a number of "mental health players" groups have arisen that seek to present instructive vignettes for the purposes of raising consciousness. The makeup of these groups range from amateurs to professionals.

Other groups use interactivity not so much for a focus on relevant social issues, but just to promote involvement and a certain amount of spontaneity (Wirth, 1995). Wiener (1994) teaches improvisational techniques to expand people's role repertoires, and others have written about acting as a life-expanding skill. (Cossa et al, 1996.)

PLAYBACK THEATRE

This has been an intermediate form—a type of "non-scripted" theatre—which has become increasingly popular. In Playback Theatre, the stories from members of the audience are elicited and briefly enacted by a small troupe of trained performers. It's improvised, and there are very few props—some constructed boxes, various fabrics, and if possible, someone who uses different simple instruments to highlight the enactment with musical accompaniment.

Begun around 1973 by Jonathan Fox who has had experience in various other dramatic forms as well as in psychodrama, this approach was influenced by Moreno's vision in the more general, "sociatric" sense. Nevertheless, it is not psychodrama, and the two approaches should be clearly distinguished. Its goal is far more aesthetic, and there's no implicit contract to "work through" any sensitive issues that are brought up. While the audience often does share, again, this is closer to an interactive social process rather than specific forms of psychotherapy. Other distinctions may be drawn that go beyond the scope of the present discussion (Fox, 1992, 1994; Salas, 1994).

Playback has found a ready audience and is expanding in size, with many troupes forming internationally. Many psychodramatists and drama therapists use the Playback Theatre (PT) format for specific objectives within the framework of training and therapy (Fox & Dauber, 1999).

THE ART OF PLAY

Another method, a type of small-group sociodramatic play with characters from the individual's imagination, was developed by me and my wife, Allee in the early 1980s and described in our book, *The Art of Play* in 1988—revised and re-published in 1997. It's really just a form of creative drama for adults—though older teenagers could also enjoy it. Small groups of people, often only four are needed, put on 10- to 15-minute enactments of scenes which emerge around the character or role imagined by one of the group. Each person takes turns as protagonist, director, or supporting player. Alternatively, a more trained director may stay in that role while others in a slightly larger group, ideally not more than about 10 members, explore the possibilities inherent in a given character-image.

The goal here is to promote the processes of spontaneity and imagination, also as recreation—just for fun—which, in turn, promotes a de-

gree of closeness to one's playmates. Thus, it also builds a bit of community or social integration. There are many other benefits to the method which is more fully described in our book (Blatner & Blatner, 1997).

MISCELLANEOUS APPROACHES

A variety of dramatic approaches draw together different blends of elements. Sara Schreiber's "Empatheatre" in Michigan mixes activities that are a bit like Playback Theatre, some psychodrama, and elements of interactive theatre. A number of "mental health" players put on skits about socially relevant issues and then the players and audience discuss the feelings aroused. Some downplay the drama and drift more into fostering the story-telling process, empowering people to share their stories in groups.

Drawing on activities similar to "family sculpture," workshops on "family reconstruction" weave in dramatic elements (Nerin, 1986). There is likely a range of competencies in all this and also a continuing potential for refinement. Some of these experiments may not be that successful in their early formats, and their underlying elements will then be clarified and re-worked.

SUMMARY

The theoretical foundations of psychodrama can be informed by the writings in related fields. Attempts to draw clear boundaries between these endeavors may be misguided, as increasing interdisciplinary activities, collaborations, and syntheses occur. Historically, psychodrama evolved out of experiments in socially relevant and improvisatory theatre, group therapy, and experiments in applied microsociology (sociometry); in mid-century, psychodrama identified primarily with the flourishing of psychotherapy. In an era in which therapy per se is subject to increasing constraints, the earlier arenas, beyond the medical model, once more become major areas for that original, sociatric vision, the broader transformation of society.

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21
Principles of Using Psychodramatic Techniques

Psychodrama in its broadest application is aimed at the liberation of creativity in individuals, groups, and organizations (Ortman, 1966). To this end, almost any of the methods may be considered as long as they are constructive and the welfare of the group or individual is maintained. The principles presented in this book help to guide the practitioner in choosing appropriate techniques. Some of the essential themes that underlie the many variations include the following (and these can be combined):

- Use physical action, rather than narrative (i.e., showing a situation rather than talking about it) (Z. Moreno, 1959).
- Promote authentic encounters whenever possible. Protagonist and auxiliaries should speak directly to each other rather than explaining to the director or audience.
- Encourage the spontaneity and activity of auxiliaries in order to evoke more spontaneity in the protagonist.
- Make abstract situations more concrete, working with specific scenes.

- Encourage participants to make affirmative statements about desires, fears, and intentions, using sentences beginning with "I."
- Deal with situations in the past or future as if they were happening in the present moment, the here-and-now.
- Value the potential for redecisions, renegotiations, and experiences in the present.
- Include attention to paraverbal and nonverbal communications (e.g., voice tone, inflection, intensity, pacing of speech; position, gesture, expression).
- Have participants directly exercise empathic skills through role reversal.
- Work toward increasing levels of self-disclosure and honesty, especially about feelings.
- Respect and implement interpersonal preferences (*tele*) in the course of working with group dynamics.
- Methodically assess and help the group give themselves feedback regarding their collective preferences—i.e., sociometry—in order to build cohesion and work through conflicts.
- When appropriate, weave in a measure of playfulness.
- Shift the protagonist into other roles, using the mirror, role reversal, and becoming one's own double, in order to reduce overinvolvement and to stimulate the sense of alternative possibilities.
- Utilize symbols and metaphors, making them concrete, or giving them a voice, as if they had a person-like spirit.
- Amplify the action by including other artistic principles and vehicles, such as movement, staging, costuming, poetry, art, music or sound, lighting.
- Exaggerate behavior to explore a wider range of responses, not only more expressive, but also sometimes even extremely constricted or withdrawn.
- Recognize and utilize the nature and value of the warming-up process as a precursor to creative behavior.
- Address and enhance the processes of excitement, enthusiasm, and vitality.
- Actively utilize and cultivate sublimation as a channel for creative energies, thus offering alternatives for "neurotic" and characterological dynamics.
- Utilize the therapeutic factors of group therapy.
- Integrate psychodrama with other psychotherapeutic approaches, behavioristic, guided fantasy, hypnosis, Gestalt therapy, bioenergetic analysis, and the other creative arts or recreational therapies (Corsini, 1967; Shapiro, 1978).

CATEGORIES OF TECHNIQUES

The techniques of psychodrama may be classified into four general categories: Basic, Different Scenes, Conflict Resolution, and Warm-ups. A short sampling of specific approaches is noted under each.

Basic techniques used for facilitating most processes:

enactment	doubling	amplification
autodrama	soliloquy	concretization
replay	multiple ego	role reversal
asides	mirror	use of the auxiliary

Different scenes used for warm-ups and action work:

crib scene	death scene	future projection
magic shop	dream work	behind the back

Conflict resolution techniques:

role playing	role training	structured negotiation
breaking in	spectrogram	coming together nonverbally

Warm-up techniques:

auxiliary chair	shared secrets	action sociometry

General spontaneity training methods:

art, collage	theater games	sensory awakening
guided fantasy	poetry	structured experiences
movement	dance	music, rhythm

These and other techniques, developed by Moreno and various psychodramatists over the last 50 years, can be applied not only in classical psychodramas but also, in modified form, in less formal contexts. It will be obvious that many of the following techniques require a group for support, but consider the possibility of modifying or adapting these ideas in working with individuals or couples. The essential principle is that of utilizing the power of imagination in a more focused fashion.

PURPOSES OF PSYCHODRAMATIC TECHNIQUES

Psychodramatic techniques can be applied in a variety of ways. For clarifying the protagonist's attitudes and feelings, some useful ones include the double, the multiple ego, multiple doubling, asides, and the soliloquy. For clarifying interpersonal interactions, use replay or reenactment, role reversal, the mirror, or behind-the-back.

Past events may be explored as if they were in the present, and protagonists can experience such themes as co-creating the scene that would most ideally fulfill their desires. Of course, this challenges them to explicitly express these desires, which then explicitly acknowledges them as their own—a process that is often central to the progress of psychotherapy. This technique is called act completion. If the protagonist wants to change the enactment, use the technique of replay, using alternative variables of an issue or scene. There are times when it is important for protagonists to really understand the probable motivations and attitudes of someone from their past, and the technique of role reversal can be invaluable in working through these complexes (Carlson-Sabelli & Sabelli, 1984).

Speaking of the challenge of clarifying goals, this essential component of personal growth is frequently clouded by ambiguities and unconsciously motivated vagueness. Simple discussion of issues too easily gets trapped by such forms of self-deception. The future projection technique generates a concrete example, and the issues involved can be identified and tested as to their realistic values. The magic shop is another technique that can catalyze discussion about goals and the price that must be paid for their achievement.

The role of metaphor as a valuable element in therapy is being recognized more widely in hypnosis, family therapy, and other contemporary approaches. Psychodramatic techniques may be utilized for exercising the protagonist's capacity for working within metaphorical images. Concretization allows protagonists to experience physically what had been experienced psychologically, and the marshaling of the multilevel resources of the body can serve as a vehicle for spontaneity and insight. Re-enacting fantasies, hallucinations, and dreams utilizes the psychodramatic category of surplus reality to bring forth the unspoken feelings and attitudes that accompany the protagonist's fantasies.

Various warm-up techniques are appropriate to use for developing a sense of safety, a working alliance, and some increasing involvement with the issues at hand (Blatner, 1996, Sachnoff, 1996). For example, use of structured experiences as simple as having group members pair

up in order to get to know each other and then introducing each other in a group creates group cohesion. In family therapy this can be used by having one member simply tell the therapist about the other person in a non-complaining fashion. Other introductory techniques can bring up material in an indirect fashion. Art therapy experiences, brief role playing of related (but not too emotionally loaded) situations, theater games, use of guided imagery, sensory awakening exercises, and approaches that challenge the group members' spontaneity can break the ice and give the participants a shared experience that then serves as the focus for discussion. I find that structured warm-ups can lead to even more fruitful material and move rapidly to the group members' concerns.

Yalom (1995, pp. 442–448) affirmed the use of structured experiences when used in moderation. He cautioned against an overreliance on these approaches, and I agree that there needs to be time for interaction and for a number of non-actional discussions for a more complete group process. For this reason, I question the idea that psychodrama should be the name given to a type of group; rather, it might be better to simply say that the ideal group procedure uses a variety of methods. I also think that Yalom may have underestimated the different ways psychodramatic techniques can be applied as aids to group dynamics and personal development or therapy.

In working through various issues, a variety of techniques can help to sharpen discriminations. For example, using the technique of exaggeration allows for an exploration of the range of responses, from the restrained to the outrageously overexpressive. A part of a scene can be intensified by having the protagonist and/or the supporting players portray their roles in the most emotional, idealized, crude, ridiculous, silly, or tragic fashions. The style is chosen to open and widen the protagonist's sense of the range of alternatives, however implausible they may seem at first.

All of these techniques are ways of utilizing the resources of imagination, playfulness, and creativity in the human mind. It is more than a matter of simple understanding or insight; some constructive activity is also needed. A comparison of Freud's and Moreno's approaches might be illustrated by the following analogy: If Freud could be thought of as an explorer of the new territory of the mind (he, at one point, even likened himself to a Columbus), then Moreno might be thought of as one who developed technologies for building roads, cultivating the land, and the like. His challenge was to utilize the untapped resources of the mind and the social system. These approaches can be applied in the superficial arenas of ordinary consciousness—in educa-

tion, recreation, and community work—or they can be applied in more in-depth psychological dimensions—in dynamic psychotherapy. I see psychodrama as a facilitating agent to other therapies, analogous to the impact of power tools in carpentry. The therapist's judgment is still the key factor, and the methodology cannot be effective in untrained hands.

BALANCING TALK AND ACTION

Some groups benefit from a preponderance of action methods. Those who are less articulate tend to have little tolerance for ordinary verbal group therapy. Others with more sociopathic tendencies (such as incarcerated offenders) tend to use verbal exchanges more defensively than constructively. Other groups, however, can really use the time to reflect and discuss issues as they come up. It's important for directors not to feel that they must keep the action happening in all groups at all times.

These reflections may bring to the surface various transferences among the group members and even with the group leader. Shaffer (1995) and Garfield (1999) note clearly how a variety of transferential dynamics can interfere with the course of a psychodramatic group session. One of the more recently noted patterns is the dynamic called "projective identification" which involves not only the tendency of an individual to project certain attitudes in a role but also the corresponding tendency of others to buy into that interaction. Knowing about and even exaggerating these interactions in psychodramatic scenes makes their underlying components more explicit—the nonverbal messages, the subtle binds, etc. Using role reversal or the mirror technique may address the dynamics more effectively.

The point, then, is to allow adequate time for processing and even focus on themes that need to be discussed when it's indicated. Psychodramatic action techniques are not to be overvalued and used as the sole modality.

SUMMARY

The range of psychodramatic techniques is potentially endless. As you read about and try out the various approaches, feel free to modify the techniques of others—refine them, experiment with them, create new ones. Depending on the context and population, adapt techniques

from the fields of: improvisational theatre (Spolin, 1963); creative drama (McCaslin, 1984; Polsky, 1980); drama therapy (Emunah, 1994); structured experiences in organizational development or therapy (Morris & Cinnamon, 1974,1975; Pfeiffer & Jones, 1969–1974,1972–1975; Saretsky, 1977; Timmins, 1971); play therapy; and the other creative arts therapies (Costonis, 1978; Espenak, 1981). Many other references are noted in my third edition of *Acting-In* (Blatner, 1996, pp. 60–63). Integrate these approaches with other methods of therapy and explore applications with a variety of populations and in a variety of contexts. When you discover or create some techniques you find helpful, please write them up and share them with others in the professional journals! Broadening the resources of the therapist, group facilitator, or educator is one of the best ways we can contribute to finding more effective approaches to increasing personal and social harmony.

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Appendix

A Compendium of Psychodramatic Terms and Techniques

I compiled the first extensive listing of the various psychodrama techniques in 1970 and revised it in each of the earlier editions of *Foundations*. New techniques, refinements, and variations of psychodramatic techniques are continuously being created. Here are the better-known ones. (If you know of one that hasn't been published, write it up and submit it to one of our professional journals, so the rest of us can learn from your creativity!) Some of the terms or techniques are described in the previous chapters and may be located by looking in the index.) (Note: I try to avoid the use of gendered pronouns, but occasionally I do to describe shifts of position in an enactment.)

Act fulfillment or **act completion** This validates protagonists' emotional experiences and sense of active choice by enabling them to experience psychodramatically the fulfillment of a wish, the positive resolution of a dream or conflict, or the recreation of a successful culmination of a previously frustrated or inhibited plan. For example, a traumatic or disappointing scene from childhood might be replayed with the elements changed: A co-therapist or another group member

takes the role of a "perfect" parent or teacher. This technique offers a more direct mode for what Franz Alexander called the "corrective emotional experience" without having the therapist get involved directly in gratifying the patient's needs. (See chapter 10.)

Action sociometry (See chapter 19)

Advice giving The protagonist gives advice to an imagined significant other (e.g., a deceased parent, a child who is leaving home) played by an auxiliary or in an "empty chair" or, taking the role of another, gives advice to himself (e.g., from what he knows now to his younger self or from himself as imagined some years in the future to himself now).

Amplification The protagonist's softly spoken words are repeated loudly by a double or by the director; this is especially helpful in a moderately large group setting (Ossorio & Fine, 1957). Alternatively, the protagonist is encouraged to repeat with greater intensity any words softly spoken, and/or to say more about a given idea or feeling. Sometimes the double helps in this process.

Asides In the course of an interaction the protagonist makes comments directed at the audience and, using direction of head or holding up a hand, indicates that the other person in the interaction ordinarily would not be privy to these disclosures. Thus, hidden thoughts and feelings may be expressed in parallel to overtly expressed thoughts.

Audience Those present at a psychodrama who are not on stage. Sometimes, however, the audience plays a collective role. (See *Chorus.*) The size of the group depends on the setting. (See chapter 1.)

Audience analyst One of the group members takes the role of attending to the dynamics going on in the audience (i.e., the rest of the group) while an enactment is progressing. His function is to act as an observer and to report his feelings to the group regarding the audience's reaction to the psychodrama (Weiner & Sacks, 1969).

Autodrama As with monodrama, protagonist plays both protagonist and auxiliaries, but in autodrama the protagonist also directs the process! A variation allows for auxiliaries as aids.

Auxiliary chair (See Empty chair.)

Auxiliary (ego) (See chapter 1.) The supporting players in an enactment.

Auxiliary person A group member takes a potential role, walking back and forth on stage. The director says, "Here is a person in your life; it could be either sex or any age. Go up and interact in whatever way occurs to you." This is a warm-up, similar to the use of the empty chair; the auxiliary, however, is used immediately, allowing for more dynamic interaction. For example, in one enactment, the person became a brother who died in Vietnam, which was then followed by a psychodramatic grief work process (Eye Fechin Branham, 1975, personal communication).

Auxiliary world The group and even the actual milieu is structured to recreate the protagonist's phenomenological experience. For example, Zerka Moreno wrote about a patient who had a delusion that he was Jesus Christ, so he was assigned a number of auxiliaries, played by co-therapists or staff members, who enacted the roles of disciples and similar figures. He played out various rituals until he was able to begin to let go of the need to always stay in role.

Axiodrama Issues of ethics, cosmic relationships, or values are explored. For instance, protagonists can review their relationships with God, a tempter, Satan, a guiding spirit, death, the future (personified), or perfection. (See Judgment scene.)

Behind the back The protagonist goes to a corner of the room and turns away from the group. The group proceeds to discuss him as if he was not there. Another variation involves the protagonist's presenting a scene or situation; then the group discusses the issues rather than the person. In a third variation, the group is instructed to turn away from the protagonist and to make no response, no matter how provoked, while the protagonist is allowed to talk about his feelings toward each of them (Corsini, 1953).

Breaking in (also called "plunging in circle") Protagonists portray their efforts to cope with feelings of isolation or to engage their inner feelings by trying forcibly (but not violently) to enter a circle of six to eight group members who are facing inward and holding together (Weiner & Sacks, 1981).

Breaking out (also called "pressure circle") For a protagonist who

feels trapped, the group encircles him, grasps each other's arms, and presses the protagonist in the middle, trying to keep him there, not letting him escape. He then tries to break out of the circle by any method he sees fit (short of violence). The protagonist may name his particular pressures as he experiences them in life or they may be described simply as a general sense of pressure. If the individual finds this kind of interaction difficult with people, chairs may be used to symbolize the same pressure circle, and he gets rid of them. The group should be no larger than six to eight people (Weiner & Sacks, 1981).

Chorus The audience or a subgroup of auxiliaries is instructed to repeat certain phrases as if they were the modern psychological equiv- alent of the ancient Greek chorus. Repeating the haunting reproaches, doubts, or other anxiety-provoking words or lines can deepen the protagonist's experience. Supportive statements may be used when the process is moving toward a healthier integration.

Closure Following the action and *Sharing* (q.v.), a variety of elements may be reviewed. Make sure participants have *De-roled* (q.v.), that people feel that what needs to be said has been clearly expressed, and that the protagonist feels finished and has adequate support for follow-up.

Coaching In the course of an enactment, the director may function as a coach, suggesting to the protagonist or the auxiliaries variations in approach, body posture, pacing of voice, or role definition. Perhaps one of the group members may be assigned this role of coach for the protagonist. In a role-playing setting, the main actor becomes the agent (or auxiliary) for the group, playing a scene not as he might feel it should be done but according to the directions of the group. One person at a time or the entire group may then coach the players as they enact the situation.

Concretization Psychodrama works, in part, by helping protagonists to convert their abstract statements into something more concrete because vagueness is a major way of avoiding dealing with issues directly. The first way to do this is to have general issues such as "conflict with authorities" be transformed into a specific scene, a sit- uation with a boss or parent or teacher in the protagonist's life. Another way of concretizing issues is to convert metaphors into actu- alities. Thus, "I wish they'd get off my back" can be enacted by having

an auxiliary gently hang onto the protagonist's back. Feelings of isolation can be enhanced by having the audience withdraw some distance, turning down the lights, or perhaps using the technique of Breaking in.

Crib Scene The entire group (ideally, fewer than 12 people) is allowed to have an experience as if the group members are infants being soothingly comforted and rocked to sleep after a satisfying meal. They lie down on a soft, carpeted floor or on mats in a comfortable position, perhaps with blankets over them. The director and perhaps one or two assistants go around and gently pat and stroke the "sleeping" group members as they hypnotically say things like "The mother loves the baby, takes care of the baby, such a wonderful baby...." This goes on for at least 10 minutes, and then the group is aroused very gently in role: "So the baby begins to wake up, begins to move a little, stretches a little...." Finally, the participants are deroled and brought back to themselves. It is a form of hypnosis, and similar rules apply. Suggestions should be made clearly, supportively, and at a leisurely pace (Twitchell-Allen, 1969).

Cutting the action The process of an enactment may be stopped if the participants fall hopelessly out of role, block and are unable to continue, whenever the episode comes to a conclusion, or whenever the director sees the opportunity to stimulate thinking to a higher level of creativity by using a different episode or technique. (The phrase is derived from the old movie cliche of the director calling "Cut!") The new direction is made, and the enactment continues. A similar command, "Freeze," may indicate that a very minor adjustment is needed. The actors are expected to hold the momentum of their physical and emotional positions and then resume their behavior (except for the minor adjustment) as if nothing had interrupted them. One application of this technique is in situations where the director thinks a protagonist is becoming too angry and in danger of losing control. Another indication is a scene becoming confusing and muddled. It suggests the possibility of using a brief Mirror technique (q.v.), i.e., leaving an interaction, standing "outside," in a sense, and reflecting on alternative strategies.

Dance and Movement The protagonist may be encouraged or permitted to move nonverbally in a scene in order to express emotion more fully or to warm up to a scene. Incidentally, in the 1940s and 1950s, Marian Chace's pioneering work in dance therapy was done in

coordination with the psychodrama program at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C. (see Music, Singing, and Rhythm) (Levy, 1995).

Death scene The protagonist speaks to a significant other (played by an auxiliary) who is dying or has died and is in a casket or, alternatively, the protagonist plays the dead person and is spoken to by the group members. This is a powerful technique and generally requires that the protagonist be fully warmed up (Siroka & Schloss, 1968).

De-Roling (also spelled deroling) Auxiliaries or protagonists who are finishing an enactment often need to engage in an explicit act of dis-identifying themselves from the role being played. Sometimes this is done physically by standing up and brushing oneself off, turning around, or making some other dramatic gesture. This may also be accompanied by a statement, such as, "I am not John's mother, I'm me, Mary." Some people, on the other hand, may wish to note that they'd like to hold on to certain aspects of the role which was just played. The point here is that the process of shifting from the role in the enactment to the role in the group can become a temporary focus of attention and active exploration (Rabson, 1979, pp. 35–37).

Directed dialogue Emunah (1983) suggests an evocative technique in which group members experiment with a variety of ways of using specific phrases. After pairing up as dyads, each person is given one or two phrases that may be said repeatedly but with a free variation of voice tone, expression, or gesture. Evocative phrases might include "I have to go" versus "I want you to stay"; "I want it" versus "You can't have it"; or "There's something I have to tell you" versus "I don't want to hear it."

Director The facilitator of an enactment. (See chapter 1.)

Double The protagonist is joined by an auxiliary, either a trained co-leader or a group member, whose role is to function as a support in presenting the protagonist's position or feelings. In the drama, they act somewhat like a "voice over" in movies. Doubles should first work toward establishing an empathic bond with the protagonist. In general, they stand to the side of and at a slight angle to the protagonist so that they can replicate the nonverbal communications and present a kind of "united front." The double is one of the most important and basic techniques in psychodrama (Leveton, 1992, Lousada, 1998).

Double protagonist session (see Multiple protagonists.) Relationships can be explored with both parties present and involved, such as a married couple, a patient and a nurse, a parent and a child, and so on.

Dream presentation These may be enacted as if they were happening in the present moment. Auxiliaries portray other figures, both animate and inanimate. Unfinished dreams may be completed in order to clarify fears and to introduce an affirmation of a positive chosen resolution (Moreno, 1958). Psychodrama is a good vehicle for this process of extending both dreams and guided fantasies to enhance the inner experience. James Hillman has invited us all to "dream the dream onward" (1979), and Moreno declared, "I teach them to dream again." (Leutz, 1986).

Ego building An honest discussion of the protagonist is carried on by the group while the protagonist quietly faces the group and listens. The group focuses on only the positive qualities. The director stops the discussion once the group has run dry and ascertains how the recipient feels (as well as how the group feels, having said what they did). Any members of the group who desire this experience should be given the same opportunity (Feinberg, 1959).

Empty chair (also known as "auxiliary chair") Instead of another person (an auxiliary) playing the complementary figure in a protagonist's enactment, an empty chair represents that position. Sometimes this allows for a more spontaneous expression of aggressive or tender feelings, depending on the makeup of the group or the embarrassment of the protagonist in working with another person (Lippitt, 1958). This is an invaluable technique in a one-to-one therapeutic context and has been incorporated as an integral part of Gestalt therapy.

Family psychodrama The therapist or director works with immediate family members or even an extended family group, using role reversal, future projection, and any other appropriate psychodramatic techniques. The family members learn to serve as auxiliaries for each other. This approach includes teaching the family the skills of role reversal as a way of building interpersonal empathic concern, and it has major benefits for the participants. Psychodramatic methods can be powerful diagnostic, therapeutic, and educational tools, significantly increasing the effectiveness of family therapy (Blatner, 1994; Remer,

1986; Williams, 1998). Psychodrama is also very useful in multiple family group therapy.

Final empty chair During the sharing portion of a psychodrama, audience members may have reactions to people in their own lives who are similar to the main roles in the preceding enactment. In order to complete their "spectator catharsis," they engage in a mini-enactment, encountering the figures in the original protagonist's drama and/or the figures in their own lives. The presentation may be angry, sad, or reconciling; it may or may not include role reversals with the person represented by the empty chair (Speros, 1972).

Fishbowl The group divides in two. Half sit in a circle facing the inside of the "fishbowl" and engage in some task or discussion; the other half sit outside and observe the dynamics. (The two halves may then change positions as a second part of the exercise.) Outside people may also be asked to function as doubles for the ones on the inside.

Freeze See Cutting the action.

Future projection A specific scene in the future is elaborated and may include subscenes such as the most hoped-for outcome, the most feared event, an exaggerated reaction, a realistic expectation, or just an exploration of some of the dimensions of a forthcoming situation. In role training, this technique becomes an opportunity for rehearsal and behavioral practice (Yablonsky, 1954).

Gibberish To facilitate self-observation and the group's observation of the nonverbal elements in an interpersonal interaction, have the major parties involved (or just the protagonist and the auxiliary) replay a scene or continue an enactment using nonsense syllables instead of real words. They could use complex syllables that sound like a foreign language or simply say "blah blah blah" or "yakkety yak yak" or "da da da da da." The point is that they repeat the expression of emotion in the interaction with the same facial expressions, intonations, and gestures but are free of the distraction of the content of the words.

Goodbye scenes These are used to complete unfinished business and as an important part of grief work (Blatner, 1985a pp.61–72). (See also Death scene.)

Guided fantasy The protagonist or group is relaxed and talked through a general fantasy, such as going on a journey through the sea, through one's own body, or exploring a strange, large building. The general themes act as frameworks for the operation of the subconscious in creating specific images which often have symbolic significance when reflected on afterward. It can be a useful warm-up or closing technique. (Samuels & Samuels, 1975, pp. 181–207). As noted near the end of chapter 13, psychodramatic techniques may be modified and applied to help the protagonist interact more meaningfully with the images as they arise.

Hallucinatory psychodrama Patients portray the phenomena of their hallucinations or delusions, just as is done with dream work. The different sources of voices become personalized and elaborated, and alternative outcomes are explored (Moreno, 1958). The use of this technique requires good clinical judgment.

High chair The protagonist or the auxiliary is placed on a platform or in a tall chair. If the protagonist is elevated, he may have the courage to make assertions himself in a more confident manner. If the auxiliary is elevated, the protagonist may experience addressing an authority figure. This technique is similar to the use of a balcony if it is available.

Hypnodrama A psychodrama is enacted after first inducing a mild state of trance in the protagonist and perhaps even the group. A therapist who uses this method should have adequate training in hypnotherapy (Greenberg, 1977, pp. 231–303).

Idealizations A protagonist may portray his ideal self in a scene, and this role may also be used for dialogue with other parts of his identity. The ideal other, as parent, child, or mate, may be created by using surplus reality, usually in order to engage in a scene of act completion. For example, a protagonist may become his ideal parent in an act of reparenting or may experience an ideal mother or father in a scene where he is reparented. The prop of a rocking chair is often useful for such scenes.

Identity A protagonist chooses two auxiliaries, one to represent himself and the other to represent his "negative identity," that is, a person he hates, despises, or just dislikes. (Alternatively, he can compare his own

present sense of himself with his ideal self.) Then, as the protagonist lists essential differences, the two auxiliaries, starting back to back in the center of the room, take a step apart. If the protagonist mentions a similarity rather than a difference, the auxiliaries retrace a step.

An alternative technique may be used to clarify and reduce transference phenomena. If the protagonist is treating his wife like his mother, his therapist like his minister, himself like his father, or any other two figures in his life, have him do a similar technique starting with the two auxiliaries standing several feet apart. With each stated similarity they take one step together, and with each stated difference they take one step apart (Miller, 1972).

In situ Moreno wrote of applying psychodrama in the very situation in which the problem arises, whether in the home, in the schoolyard, at work, or on the street. It's also called *unplanned psychodrama*. This is especially effective in such settings as camps or day treatment centers or psychiatric hospitals that use the method of therapeutic community.

Instant sociometry In a large group, after some general action warm-ups, have the people mill around looking for a "family." The directions are to constitute yourself into a family grouping. What that ends up consisting of becomes a source for further discussion and enactment.

Intensification Goldman and Morrison (1984) note that feelings can be made more intense and explicit by using a variety of techniques, such as echoing or repeating the main message of a situation or a verbalized expression of a feeling, having protagonists put their bodies in the shape of their feeling, or locating the feeling in their bodies. I sometimes intensify an action sociogram by having the various people in the protagonist's social atom surround him and converge on him slowly, each speaking his particular message. A protagonist who feels caught in the middle or torn apart can experience this form of concretization by having the auxiliaries pull, pick, or press on them, saying the lines ever more insistently and loudly until the protagonist feels overwhelmed and has a catharsis of emotion that prepares him for further work toward integration.

Judgment scene The protagonist presents a conflict in terms of a courtroom scene. The roles of prosecutor, defendant, judge, defense attorney, jury, and others may have symbolic significance. This technique can be varied so that the judgment is in the afterlife, perhaps

with the prospect of damnation or forgiveness. The scene can involve other people or simply clearly identified parts of oneself (Sacks, 1967).

Letter The protagonist writes an imaginary letter to or reads one from a significant other. This is useful as a warm-up, allowing a little distance before moving on to an actual psychodramatic encounter. As a closure, it can carry the feeling of resolution: The protagonist puts into the context of letter writing some advice or acknowledgment to the other person in a relationship, or he reads the kind of letter he secretly wishes he might receive (Sacks, 1974).

Lighting If they can be set up, colored lights and dimmers can enhance the effectiveness of many enactments. Certain scenes are made more vivid when enacted primarily under red light (e.g., hell, anger); amber light (e.g., a tawdry or sleazy event); blue light (e.g., introspective, heaven, dreamlike, depressed); relative darkness (e.g., shameful, intimate, isolated); green light (e.g., envious, deceitful), and so on. Protagonists may participate in requesting the kind of lighting they wish. Time of day and locale may also be factors in determining the lighting. (However useful they may be, if available, theatrical props are not necessary for doing psychodrama nor, as described in Stage (q.v.), is a formal stage absolutely required.)

Magic shop One at a time, group members bargain with a "shopkeeper" who can grant their fondest desire. Often, a little playful elaboration of the mysterious setting and the potential magical qualities of the shopkeeper sets the mood. Group members in the audience can be enlisted to help ensure that the bargains or exchanges have some degree of poetic justice (Barbour, 1992; Blatner, 1996, pp. 48–49).

Masks These may be used to provide even more role distance and facilitate the sense that it is the role rather than the person that is active in a situation—thus, it facilitates sociodrama. On a personal level, Landy (1985) describes a technique in which the protagonist prepares by ritually constructing four masks of gauze-impregnated plaster of parts based on the configuration of his own face, then molds or decorates them so that they come to represent self, both parents, and one sibling. These become vehicles for a modified action sociogram encounter. Each figure is "interviewed," the protagonist playing their parts, and then the protagonist engages them in an enacted encounter. The idea of using masks should be considered more often as a synthesis of art and psychodrama.

Mirror The protagonist stands back and watches while the role he had just been portraying is replayed by an auxiliary, serving a function like videotape playback but without any equipment. It can be a powerful confrontational technique and must be used with discretion. The protagonist must not be caricaturized (Torrance, 1978).

Monodrama The protagonist plays all of the parts of the enactment. The advantage here is the access gained to the protagonist's viewpoint. It also requires no auxiliaries and may be part of individual therapy. A third advantage is that it guides the protagonist into broadening his perspective through role reversal. It is often used with the empty chair technique, and the protagonist physically moves into another seat when taking a different role. A disadvantage is the absence of the stimulation that can come from an auxiliary's behavior. Fritz Perls' technique of Gestalt therapy used an adaptation of this technique. (See "psychodrama a deux".)

Moving feelings If protagonists are blocked in their emotions, the director helps them notice where they are feeling tension. If it is in a part of the body that cannot be put into action, a suggestion is made that the feelings move to another part of the body that can be more expressive. For example, anger in the stomach may be moved to anger in the fists, or tears in the heart can move to tears in the eyes (Goldman & Morrison, 1984).

Multiple double The protagonist is given two or more doubles who help express different parts of the self. These can represent various aspects, such as the self in the future, present, and past; "good" and "bad" selves; Eric Berne's description of the Parent, Adult, and Child; or Fritz Perls' Topdog and Underdog (Z. Moreno, 1959).

Multiple ego The protagonist uses empty chairs or positions on the stage to represent different parts of the self, such as conscience and temptation. Then, playing the various roles that are now separated in space with or without the help of auxiliaries, the protagonist has the parts present their positions and encounter each other. This is quite useful in concretizing internal conflicts (Blatner, 1985b, pp. 29–42).

Multiple protagonists (See Family psychodrama, Double protagonist.) Psychodrama may be used to catalyze more authentic encounters and to generate creative problem-solving among several people, such as members of a family or a small group. In this sense, Moreno

was doing "conjoint therapy" (a prelude to family therapy) in the 1930s. Active systems-oriented family therapy skills are closely related to those used in leading psychodrama groups.

Music, Singing, and Rhythm There are numerous activities and techniques that can be used as warm-ups or for closure. (See Dance).

Nonverbal techniques During a psychodrama, dance, music, pantomime, touch, and other ways of using the dimension of nonverbal communications can offer powerful vehicles for helping to bypass habitual verbal patterns of defense and constriction. (See Dance, Music, and Touch.)

Nonverbally coming together Two persons who need to become acquainted in a new way or to work out some mild conflict go to opposite sides of the room. They remove their glasses and shoes and then walk toward each other. When they come together, they may interact in any way they wish, responding spontaneously in the moment, but no words are to be spoken. Nonviolence is maintained, and they stop when they sense they are finished. Afterward, the two parties and the group may discuss their perceptions of and feelings about doing or seeing the event (Schutz, 1971).

Nonviolence A fundamental precept of psychodrama is the contractual agreement of the group to do no bodily harm to one another. Psychodrama is an active modality at times and involves verbal and physical expressions of feeling, including fantasies of violence. The directors and group members take responsibility for channeling these feelings into activities that symbolically express the feelings, such as having mattresses, pillows, or foam-rubber bats (batacas) to pound with or on. The director has the participants pause and remove glasses, shoes, and jewelry which communicates a clear, comfortable sense that no harm is to occur to anyone. Techniques such as acting in *Slow motion* have been devised, which reflect the willingness to sustain a protagonist's intensity while still protecting everyone from harm.

Personification Things or even abstract concepts or qualities may be portrayed as roles, as if they were alive and had feelings and thoughts. A protagonist's writing desk might have something to say about how much or in what way it was feeling utilized. This is a variation of the idea, "if only the walls could speak." Whether the role involves a protagonist's family living room couch or his pet, these items carry the

projections of the protagonist's mind. Also, a headache, a sore arm, a tumor, and other parts of the body may be imagined to have intentions or feelings as well. Another role that's interesting is that of the "generalized other," that is, what "they" think, all those who are imagined as evaluating or judging one.

Photograph warm-up The director invites the group members to remember a photograph of some aspect of their past life that seemed significant. This is a kind of projective test, and one of the group, as protagonist, may portray his imagined photo scene as a kind of "sculpture" or action sociogram. Like a dream, the various people or things in the scene are given imagined voices, which may then lead into a more extended exploration of some of the issues raised.

Planned psychodrama There are several levels of planning. Simply arranging for a psychodrama session, or scheduling them at regular intervals, is the most common form. Another level involves the actual planning of certain elements in a forthcoming psychodrama. For example, the therapist might agree to work with a patient on a particular issue in the next psychodrama session, with the consent of both the group or the patient. Further, and this is especially needed in addressing trauma, it's helpful to clarify how the patient will be protected and not re-traumatized. An even more specific form of planning can happen; for example, the patient, therapist, and director may decide certain details ahead of time, such as the setting of an opening scene or the choice of certain trusted auxiliaries. Even though some elements are planned, there is still much room for spontaneous development in the course of the enactment. With more vulnerable patients, it's often helpful to also plan follow-up procedures, to make sure supportive others will be available and capable of dealing with the continuing feelings, the "fallout" of an intense or cathartic experience.

Props Psychodrama sessions can be facilitated by a few props, such as some lightweight chairs, a small table, some pads, blankets, pillows, foam-rubber bats ("encounter bats," or batacas), a rocking chair, a soft fiber rope (which can represent "the tie that binds" in an enmeshed relationship), something sturdy to stand on, and so on. Props can help maintain nonviolence, enhance enactment, and facilitate a protagonist's warm-up. These are not required, however. (See also: Telephone, Puppets, Lighting, etc.)

Protagonist (See chapter 1)

Psychodrama à deux (also known as monodrama) Psychodramatic methods may be applied in one-to-one therapy, with the therapist playing the roles of director, double, and other auxiliary roles. (Some Gestalt therapists do this also.)(Vander May, 1981; Casson, 1997).

Psychodramatic shock The protagonist is presented with an emotionally loaded situation without warning. This should be done, however, when the group is fully warmed up. The director introduces this technique when it is helpful to have the protagonist deal with a painful situation, such as a wartime trauma, an announcement of a demand for a divorce, news of a death, or resurrection of a psychotic experience (i.e., a hallucination or a delusion). Of course, this technique requires a high level of skill and judgment as well as sufficient time for working through and achieving an integration. This technique is a kind of "implosive therapy" and deconditioning, replaying a traumatic scene until it loses its negative power. For example, in a drama of a woman who became very angry at the dinner table and told her father to drop dead—and he did!—the scene was reenacted repeatedly to allow her to integrate it into her life (Z. Moreno, 1966).

Puppets These can be used as aids in warming up the group. A protagonist may work with hand puppets as a way of presenting some of the elements of a situation.

Reformed auxiliary ego After exploring a protagonist's situation and evoking the catharsis associated with discovering the pain of an unfulfilled need, it is sometimes useful to offer a corrective emotional experience. The auxiliary, who may be playing a harsh or depressed parent, for example, is instructed to portray the role in a more nurturing, validating, empathic, or supportive manner. Having the protagonist identify what behaviors might fulfill the unmet needs adds to the overall experience of insight (Sacks, 1970).

Rehearsed psychodrama Occasionally, protagonists with a creative flair might want to present a scene or series of scenes based on or related to their own lives. They adapt a piece of literature or a segment of a play, or they write, direct, rehearse, and act in a play (or skit, for it might be quite brief) of their own, with the help of trained facilitators. These can then be worked with or further explored using psychodramatic methods. Although rehearsal and planning was done a bit by Moreno during the 1940s, in general, there's an emphasis on improvisation. Drama therapists, however, sometimes utilize a kind of

personal performance art as a vehicle for healing, and there may be room for creative syntheses between these approaches.

Remote Control The director gives the protagonist an invisible (or actual) remote device as a prop to push a button and call out commands such as "mute," "pause," "rewind," "fast forward," or "volume,," corresponding in this compendium to a variation of gibberish, cutting the action, replay, future projection, and amplification (Combs, 1993).

Replay Scenes may be reenacted with changes in order to experience more ventilation, a happier ending, a more effective interpersonal strategy, a desensitized response to a frightening situation, or similar outcome. The setting, the participants, the protagonist's behavior, or another person's behavior may be varied. It is best, though, to change only one variable at a time.

Role naming Simply giving a role a name can be helpful. (See chapter 17.)

Role playing (See chapter 20.)

Role presentation The protagonist may present any role including that of an inanimate object, as if it could say what it felt. Thus, a desk at home could talk to its owner about how it has been neglected, or a couch could talk to a couple about its perceptions of the couple's early courting behavior. Similarly, pets, figures in dreams, children who were never conceived or born, heavenly judges, and others can all be psychologically real in psychodrama.

Role reversal The major participants in an interaction change roles. When a protagonist in a psychodrama role reverses, it is a way of transcending the habitual limitations of egocentricity. Role reversal is indicated when it is appropriate for the protagonist to empathize with the other person's viewpoint. Also, role reversal is used during the setting up of a scene and the warming up of an auxiliary. The protagonist reverses roles and demonstrates how the other person in the scene behaves, thus giving nonverbal cues to the auxiliary so that the scene is played relatively close to the protagonist's experience. (This is also called changing parts or switching roles.) (Carlson-Sabelli, 1989).

Role taking The act of embodying a particular role, usually one that is not part of one's ordinary life, can be done with a narrow or broad

definition of how the role may be portrayed. When a person brings a fair amount of spontaneity to the role taking process, it may be called role creativity. (In social psychology, however, this term tends to refer to something more like role reversal.)

Role training (See chapter 20.)

Sculpture. This is a type of action sociogram. (See chapter 19.)

Self-presentation A protagonist presents his home, workplace, or other essential locus for a description of the situation, along with a brief portrayal of all of the relevant people in that area of his social atom. He shows how people behave and what is said and not said and, using various basic dramatic techniques, he portrays his own phenomenological and psychodramatic world.

Self-realization A protagonist enacts a general view of his life, including elements of the past and present, but especially showing a possible, desired, or probable future chain of events. This is an abbreviated scenario of high and low points.

Shared secrets Each group member writes a secret on a piece of paper and puts it into a container mixed with those of everyone else. Then the secrets are picked out (each being sure not to pick out his own secret). Each person then reads the secret and elaborates on it for one or two minutes as if it were indeed his own secret. This technique is best for a group no larger than about nine people. It is useful as a warm-up, to build group cohesion, and as a method for developing empathy (Yalom, 1995, pp.6–7, footnote).

Sharing The phase following the major enactment. (See chapter 1.)

Silent auxiliary Activities are suggested by gesture rather than speech, similar to pantomime. A variant is the silent double. At times, this role may be the ideal support for a protagonist. It can also allow a group member who is not able to think of anything to say to participate.

Situation tests A given situation is presented, and members of the group are invited to show how they would deal with it. Alternatively, one person is sent out, the others are helped to set up the scene, and then the person reenters and takes on the role of protagonist in the situation.

Slow motion Actions may be enhanced, cooled down, or made more available for experience, observation or development by having the participants go through a movement very slowly, as if they were moving under water or in gelatin. On the other hand, certain other events may be portrayed as happening in a speeded up or edited fashion.

Sociodrama (See chapter 20.)

Sociometric Audience Each group member is asked to identify with a role in a broader sociocultural sphere that, though outside the enactment being portrayed, nevertheless exercises an implicit force in the field. For an interaction between an employee and a supervisor, audience members might imagine what it would like to be company lawyer, a union representative, a co-worker, a customer, etc. (Torrance, 1987).

Sociometry Moreno's method of evaluating certain aspects of the interpersonal relationships in a group. (See chapters 18 & 19.)

Soliloquy The protagonist shares with the audience the feelings and thoughts that would normally be kept hidden or suppressed, the equivalent to the cinematic or video technique of the "voice over." The protagonist enacts a scene in which—while engaging in a solitary activity, such as walking home, winding down after an eventful day, or getting ready for an event in the near future—his inner stream of consciousness is verbally expressed. It might involve giving himself advice, words to bolster courage, a reminiscence, reviewing a resentment, or reproachful self-criticism. Variations include having the protagonist soliloquize with a *double* as the two of them walk around, having the protagonist talk to an auxiliary in the role of pet, or converting the inner dialogue into an encounter with an empty chair or auxiliary playing a wiser, future self (Z. Moreno, 1959).

Spectrogram (See chapter 18.)

Stage (See chapter 1.)

Status Nascendi This is Moreno's term for that aspect of a situation in which the dynamic elements are still coming together, when the key decisions are being made and the crucial events are occurring. The point is to move toward these critical events because they are the

scenes that have the greatest potential for creative revision. Thus, a useful direction in a psychodrama is "show us a time when things were different," before certain key changes or decisions had been made. This scene often occurs in the course of a psychodrama as the third or fourth scene in a series.

Substitute role Protagonists who are unwilling to portray themselves may be willing to enact a role of someone else that is, in actuality, related to their own situation. For example, a middle-aged woman with an agitated depression consented to play her mother, who had run a boarding house many years before. In this role she was at ease and seemed to enjoy being on stage. During the third session, in which she continued to play her mother, the patient brought up the fact that one of the boarding house roomers was promiscuous. This story was also her own story. As a young woman, her actual illegitimate pregnancy was followed by an abortion. Now, as she approached middle age, she worried about this incident and felt sure her present family would find out and no longer love her. When this all came out in a psychodrama, she could see, with the help of role reversal and audience feedback, that she was actually secure in the love of her family (Parrish, 1953).

Surplus reality (See chapter 9.)

Symbolic distance The protagonist enacts a role that is somewhat or even very different from his real-life role, and then he is gradually led back toward playing the real role. This technique, using storybook characters, is particularly valuable when working with children. For instance, an unrelated boy and girl in treatment were both anxious about forthcoming discharges. They enacted an improvised variation of Hansel and Gretel, brother and sister facing the world. From this, they were able to generate more realistic future-projection scenes (Parrish, 1953).

Symbolic realization Symbolic situations are enacted. For example, if the protagonist feels weighed down by problems, suggest that an auxiliary or two gently hang over his back. If the protagonist feels isolated or trapped, have him do the breaking-in or breaking-out exercise, having to relate to a group of auxiliaries in a small circle.

Telephone This prop can evoke a good deal of interaction, especially with teenagers. The fact that it is, in actuality, disconnected allows for

all kinds of calls to be placed or received without repercussions. Simply bringing one or two telephones out and then, after a pause, playing a hidden cassette tape of a bell ringing can bring the action to life (Emunah, 1985).

Touching Many psychodramatic enactments involve a variable degree of body contact—an arm on a shoulder, the quality of a handshake, a push or pull. These nonverbal modes of communication can be powerfully evocative and may be consciously and judiciously employed and even exaggerated.

Unplanned psychodrama (See In situ.)

Videotaped psychodrama The videotaped psychodramatic experience includes being involved in an enactment, viewing the videotape of the enactment, and then replaying parts of the psychodrama that need to be worked out further. (In the past, Moreno also used audiotape recordings and cinema to help patients hear or see themselves and use that experience as a warm-up to further exploration.) (Heilveil, 1983; Lee, 1981.)

Voluntary double Members of the audience are encouraged or permitted to signal the director and enter as doubles (if permitted) whenever they believe they are identifying deeply with the protagonist and can facilitate the creative process. The voluntary double may remain in the action until he is dismissed by the director, or he may fade out as soon as a contribution is made (Torrance, 1978; Sachnoff, 1991).

Warm-up A wide variety of techniques can be used to develop group cohesion, focus a group on its task, or create a special atmosphere, orientation, or theme in a group. Individuals can also be helped to enter an area of psychological or emotional exploration, whether their own or someone else's, using techniques mentioned throughout this section (Weiner & Sacks, 1969, Blatner, 1996, pp. 62–63).

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Moreno doubling for himself, 1960. photo by Eva Korn.

General Bibliography

The following references are meant to complement the references in the text. Books on specific themes, such as Fox's books on Playback Theatre, will be found in chapters about those subjects. In the last few decades, an extensive professional literature has appeared. Both in my *Acting-In* and the previous editions of this book I have endeavored to offer updated references. This effort, however, has also required a degree of editing, dropping some older articles and out-of-print materials. Note especially the reference to Dr. James Sacks. In 1995, building on work he and others did earlier, and updated since, he created the most comprehensive bibliography. I have also included a number of books on drama therapy (or "dramatherapy" as it is called in England) because, in spite of some areas of difference, there is enough similarity so that readers can enhance their appreciation of the many dimensions of the underlying theory of psychodrama.

AMERICAN JOURNALS

Most of the articles in the psychodrama literature are to be found in the journals that Moreno started, but some of these have changed their name several times.

Sociometry: A Journal of Interpersonal Relations (Vols. 1–18, 1937–1956) The early volumes of contain some of Moreno's basic ideas and include articles on activities related to psychodrama, the expressive arts in therapy, family therapy, and other areas aside from just sociometry. In 1956, however, this journal was turned over to the American Sociological Association and became a more academic and formal social science journal.

Moreno continued to publish on sociometric and other topics, though, and intermittently produced the *International Journal of Sociometry* (Vols. 1–5, 1956–1968) and the *Handbook of International Sociometry* (Vols. 6–8, 1971–1973).

His second major journal (after *Sociometry*) eventually became the major, ongoing professional vehicle for psychodrama. Its first title was *Sociatry* (subtitled: *A Journal of Group and Intergroup Therapy*). Volumes 1–3 were published from 1947–1950. Later titles were *Group Psychotherapy* (Vols. 4–22, 1951–1970) and *Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama* (Vols. 23–28, 1970–1975). Following Moreno's death in 1974, the journal was edited by a committee of leaders in the field of psychodrama and renamed *Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama, and Sociometry* (Vols. 29–33, 1976–1980). Then, in 1981, under the professional publication services of the Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation (HELDREF), the name became the *Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama, & Sociometry* (Vols. 34+, 1981 through 1996.) The editors, in order to expand the scope of this work beyond purely clinical contexts, changed the name again to *The International Journal of Action Methods: Psychodrama, Skill Training, and Role Playing* (Vols 50, 1997 to the present) which may be abbreviated as simply IJAM.

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Also other books:

Generic Psychodramas for Students & Teachers. (112 pg.)

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Moreno, J. L. (Jacob Levi). The originator of psychodrama was a prolific writer, publishing scores of articles and monographs on the subject, only a few of which we need mention here. A complete listing of his works has been noted by Hare (1986) (q.v.). Moreno also wrote numerous articles on group psychotherapy, sociometry and related subjects. His books and articles have been translated into many languages. You will notice that most of his books were published by Beacon House, which was Moreno's own publishing house, named in honor of his home and sanitarium in Beacon, New York. Until his death, he also supervised the publication of the major journals devoted to psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy. Some of his better known and more substantial writings are listed here.

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