

given to drink several herbal infusions by the Machi and two other older women of the community. By this time the patient was wide awake and seemed to be feeling much better than when we had seen him originally the day before.

The following day we returned to Rosa's house. She assured me that she had clearly seen the *Witralthue* depart from the patient's body and that his sickness would no longer return; she seemed quite confident about this. I never had the opportunity to return and visit this particular patient and therefore do not know what has become of him. I also do not have a clear idea of what his original symptoms were. For me it was now back to the cows for the next five days, after which I was returning to the city. I came back to see Rosa two months later and spent three weeks with her in which I actually learned several of the mud massage techniques from her and was able to experience for myself being in a drum induced state of trance.

The material for this article was collected during fieldwork carried out by the author in the areas of Puerto Saavedra and Huillio in Southern Chile during the years 1974 and 1975.

Nick Owen

Drama Therapy -

A paper read at AHP drama therapy day Feb. 28th 1976 -

What is drama therapy? I've been asked this by quite a number of people recently who have not been involved with any form of therapy and who had no experience of drama outside a theatre setting. I've also been asked the same question by people who practice drama therapy and who have been involved with it for some time. It's not the sort of question one can give an easy answer to. I am not going to give one, but I hope to explain why not, and at least differentiate it from what it is not. I am anxious not to impose boundaries that are likely to be misplaced and misleading. Instead I shall talk a little of its origins and background and then contrast its orientation and emphases with other related methods of therapy.

The twin roots of drama, as I know them, are in the work of J.L. Moreno, the American psychologist who has given us the word 'psychodrama', and the Russian theatre director Stanislavski. Both these men were working out their ideas in the first two decades of this century, giving drama as a therapeutic tool a longer pedigree than might have been thought. It was Aristotle who brought to our attention the therapeutic value of drama for an audience through a purging of the emotions; what Freud called catharsis. But it was Moreno who turned this around, investigating catharsis in the ordinary people of the audience through an acting through of their own life problem situations. Here I should like to quote from a paper by Moreno called '*Mental Catharsis and Psychodrama*' printed in Ira Greenbergs' anthology of writing called simply '*Psychodrama, Theory and Therapy.*'

'Psychodrama is a form of the drama in which the plots, situations and roles - whether real or symbolic - reflect the actual problems of the persons acting and are not the work of a playwright. It has been found that psychodramatic procedure is accompanied by profound forms of mental catharsis . . . The psychodrama developed out of impromptu play . . . I assisted children in putting together a plot which they were to act out, spontaneously, with the expectation that this impromptu play would, in itself, produce in its participants a mental catharsis. With adults the suggestion they were playing a game was abandoned, the word 'drama' seemed much closer to factual experiences. But the word 'drama' still seemed to imply a poetic, fictional product and therefore the qualifying prefix 'psycho' was added.'

Moreno's drama therapy became psychodrama. Stanislavsky by contrast was working in the opposite direction. Instead of bringing drama to life through the audience's enactment of its own dramas, he brought life experience into the work of the actor as the creative force. His methods have now become accepted by most professional drama training institutions, but at this time his ideas were revolutionary. The basic principle was to take a character which was to be enacted and bring it to life in the person of the particular actor. The detachment from the part which underlies Aristotle's experience of the Greek stage, makes a completely different approach to acting (it's still followed on the continent of Europe in places), where the structure of a character and the mimetic and gestural elements are emphasised. In this classical style of acting the soul of the actor lies hidden behind the mask or 'persona' of his act. In Stanislavski's method, which in contrast one could call romantic, the soul of the actor is exposed to the audience, his whole life experience in relation to the character he is acting is brought into the part where he is acting it out. However, Stanislavski was a man of the theatre not a man of the consulting room. His goal was the theatrical production not the therapeutic gain of his actors.

Moreno and Stanislavski have in common an orientation towards theatre over and above their concern for drama. The two can and must be distinguished. The distinction I want to emphasise is one of the means and ends. In theatre there are two elements, the actors and the audience. For the actors what counts is the performance, and that performance is measurable in terms of the response of that audience. The value lies above all in the expression of a drama for evaluation by an audience. In drama per se there is no goal beyond the thing in itself. Drama is not simply a vehicle for the expression of something else, it is that very thing. This leads me to criticisms both of Moreno and the Stanislavski method. The Stanislavski actor is expected to achieve a detachment from his role which enables him to be responsive and responsible to his audience. I have no quarrel with this in regard to theatre. But the drama techniques developed by Stanislavski and his followers, when used for the purpose of theatre, and without consideration of therapy can be damaging and dangerous to drama students. This I can state from my own experience. An acting role may take over and even destroy a person's life where such training methods are used without reference to the personal well being of the student, where the nature of performance is put before the nature of the life each of us must live outside the theatre. We borrow the techniques from Stanislavski, but not the objectives.

Moreno is a psychiatrist and his concern has been with therapy. His psychodrama was born out of play and found its function in dramas by way of the stage. His goal is drama rather than theatre. So it seems strange that he should remain fascinated, held by the medium of the stage, the splitting of performers and audience. Perhaps this is because . . . and I quote from Greenbergs' book again *'The doctor's personality combines the verve and flamboyance of a master showman, which indeed he is, with the roguish charm of a Viennese bon vivant which he once was, and again 'The concept of drama as therapy evolved from a theatrical experiment. Moreno Launched in Vienna after world war I, while practicing both general medicine and psychiatry. He called it the Theatre of Spontaneity, and he intended it to be simply a new form of entertainment'*. Perhaps this showmanship, the need to perform and entertain has led Moreno to keep with the stage and even to build special psychodrama theatres, while the study of drama has moved away from the stage into the studio, where it is no longer necessary to subordinate the drama to a need to project out into an auditorium.

Ultimately it may possibly be true that each human drama exists only in relation to a possible audience. But in drama therapy the aim is to reach what flows spontaneously from within, without reference to the expectations of the external culture. I do not claim that this is a different aim from Morenos' adherence to a cultural conserve, the theatre setting with its differentiation of stage and auditorium, actors and observers, seemsto me at least, a paradox.

I will not go into detail, either to describe drama training school techniques, or to give an account of Moreno's personality theory. They have their place in drama therapy but they are not essential to it. Instead I should like to compare and contrast drama therapy with some other forms of therapy.

If I were to visit the clinical psychology department of some hospitals I might expect to find group work going on that appears to an outsider like some form of drama based on opposed theories. The behavioural psychologist's 'behaviour modification techniques' may involve clients in very similar exercises to those a drama therapist might employ. Both are concerned with self assertion, activity, a wide range of behaviours, social interaction, increasing social skills and sensitivities. To this extent drama therapy is behaviour therapy. The differences arise over what is involved in *therapy*. The Behaviourist considers himself as a controller of human behaviour. He aims to condition or recondition, to shape and mould more appropriate responses to sets of social stimuli in his clients. The clients are viewed as being socially inadequate in some respects. They have learned inappropriate sets of responses or have failed to learn adequate ones. The therapist's role is that of trainer. His model of man is one of passive responsiveness. The drama therapist on the other hand has a model of man as active, potentially spontaneously creative. He will not prejudge clients in terms of their intelligence ratings and other test variables. He will regard labels as part of socially repressive forces inhibiting spontaneous and creative activity. As therapist he will hope to play the neutral if not passive role of providing an alternative social matrix, a different bird of social environment in which creative learning may develop naturally in the clients. While the behaviourist seeks to adjust the individual to fit in to his society, the drama therapist hopes to provide an alternative social nexuss within which the individual can freely experiment and discover his own potentials in safely.

I would like to mention two organisations here. First of all Playspace, a charitable trust set up to provide in service training to professionals who work with people. Playspace group workers hope to get people in touch with the natural playfulness that is repressed by the expectations of adult society. Going further than this it is hoped to free blocked up channels of self expression in people which prevent them functioning fully as people and as members of a society. Jerome Liss in his book 'Free to Feel' writes about this unblocking process in his survey of the growth movement. He does not talk about drama therapy specifically, but I feel that Playspace drama work is especially relevant to this process of reaching blocked and damned up emotions which restrict and constrict our lives when we prevent ourselves from experiencing them and working them through fully. I do not want to discuss Encounter Groups here, but I would add that many enabling and facilitating exercises used by Esalen type Encounter Group Leaders are the stuff of drama therapy.

Secondly I must mention Sesame, an organisation running drama therapy projects, especially in the hospital setting. Sesame workers have been involved both with the physically and mentally disabled and also chronic schizophrenics. Their work is helping to show that there is intelligence, and creativity in people of whom nothing of the kind is expected. In most cases the clients will have had no belief in themselves and their abilities. Sesame workers seek to restore these people's faith in themselves and the faith of the people who have been entrusted with their care. Not only can the ordinary person discover the great excitement of creative relationships with others, but also the handicapped person can discover capacities in himself which make a limited life more rewarding.

It is the discovery and exploration of new and creative ways of relating to others and expressing ourselves that makes drama therapy the most exciting and rewarding of the new therapies I have encountered. It is essentially a group activity taking place at the interpersonal level rather than the individual ultra-personal level, but its repercussions for the individual are very wide ranging. While Gestalt therapy for instance has been called individual therapy in a group, drama therapy lies in the interaction of group members. The group leader does not so much play the therapist, as create the situations in which interpersonal relations become therapeutic. This form of therapy loses its value where the individual is robbed of his responsibility for his own learning and development. This is what can happen where the therapist presumes to control and shape behaviours. The most pitiful example of this I know was reported in the Sunday Times review some time ago. A young man who had trained and worked as a professional actor was very unhappy about being homosexual. He went to a psychologists special unit to be retrained in new behaviours, among which was learning to speak in a Basso Profundo voice rather than an appropriate tone. I cannot understand how this can have had any therapeutic value in terms of drama therapy. With an actor's training, it could hardly be lack of social skill the man suffered from. What he was receiving was reinforcement in different behaviours. It may have resulted in successful adjustment. It may have made him less unhappy. I do not know. In my view it is the opposite of drama therapy.

I next want to contrast drama therapy with purely verbal group therapies, where participants remain chair bound as in Rogerian Encounter Groups and Group Analytic

groups. Here I want to stress two major points. First a negative comment about verbal groups. These will tend to be restricted to the educated and more articulate sections of society, which are arguably less in need of help. Analytic group work is done with children, but the children described in Fonkes and Anthony's book on group work, for instance, have very little in common with the children from any of the North London schools I have taught in. A different approach is much more appropriate if not totally necessary. Secondly, drama therapy offers many more channels of communication than verbal psychotherapy. It is claimed that non verbal contact is of the utmost importance in all group work, but it remains a matter of speculation in a verbal groups. In drama therapy all communication media are explored; music, movement, body contact, all the senses and creative arts have their place. These can be the focus of action and exploration and not merely discussion. In this way I would describe drama therapy as essentially active, things are brought about, while verbal therapy is passive, things simply happen.

I do not wish to suggest drama therapy is more valid or more valuable than these verbal groups therapies. I believe they all have their place and their value. There is considerable overlap, but for some purposes and individuals one form is preferable and not for others.

To conclude I would like to give you some idea of the scope of drama therapy, its breadth as well as its depth. First let me give some idea of its depth. I mean by depth some idea of how deep one may go into the human psyche. For example it is possible in a group to experiment with a completely different set of roles from those adopted previously in every day life, and adopt these in preference. It is also possible to explore those primal life dramas which are the foundation of psychoanalysis. Simon Myerson's 'Regression' groups are fundamentally a form of drama therapy in which participants rediscover and re-act the boy parental dramas of childhood. (it is interesting to note that Myerson is now thinking of his group work in terms of human creativity and also stage performance, as indicated by his coming Edinburgh Festival groups). Psychoanalytic theory is the foundation of Myerson's work, but it is possible to discover deep insights much faster through this active dramatic method than in the orthodox passive psychoanalytic reflection.

One can go very deep through dramas that characterise our individual histories. This is the drama of bringing the past, present or future to life. But one can also bring drama to life by working on fictional material. A group may simply be given a possible situation, or a possible set of characters to improvise with. As soon as we accept that these fictions we create are also a genuine expression of what we are, there begin the process of drama therapy. This is not the same thing as being self conscious. It may well be advisable to try to lose yourself in the act of imagination. One must pay attention to where the creativity is blocked, the parts into which one's energy flows smoothly and effectively, and those for which there is considerable resistance. After the action one can analyse and reflect.

It is more difficult to specify the extent, the breadth of scope of this form of therapy. In drama is the crucible for examination of all possible human relationships. But drama begins with nothing more than a concentration on our senses. It is possible to

focus an entire system of education around drama. (If you want to read about this I recommend Brian Ways' book 'Development through drama'). A simple but valuable exercise is to discover the meaning of blindness by exploring the environment without using our eyes. This exercise and a hundred similar ones help us to go further on the path of self development. They help us to outgrow the limited and habitual ways we have learned to experience the world. A boring environment can come alive, become exciting, exhilarating, simply by adopting a different focus of our awareness. This, I believe makes a drama group an energy yielding experience. Some types of group experience can drain participants' energy from them. I always come away from a drama group with more energy than I had at the start. I hope that this will also be true for all of you in our workshop today.

John Rowan

Conflict and Integration

This is an extract from ORDINARY ECSTASY by John Rowan to be published in Spring 1976 by Routledge and Kegan Paul.

One of the things which humanistic psychology has understood very well is conflict. It has a particular view of conflict which is unlike most of the received wisdom on the subject. It sets a very high value on conflict, and regards the serious pursuit of conflict as an important road to wisdom. This is clearest in some of the industrial applications, where people like Beckhard (1), Blake (2) et al, and Lawrence & Lorsch (3) have spelt out in some detail how they actually encourage conflict to be developed and fully expressed, between departments of the same firm, between management and trades unions, and between functional groups in the same organization. All these people take it for granted that groups have different and perhaps opposed interests, and are not all of one mind.

What do we do, then, faced with two parties who want apparently incompatible things? There are really only three possibilities:

Domination: one side wins and the other loses. This often leads to the losing side trying to build up its forces so that it can win next time round. It perpetuates or sets in motion a win-lose relationship of low synergy.

Compromise: each side gives up a part of what it wants for the sake of peace. This is always unsatisfying to some degree, and each side may try to get its missing bit in some overt or covert way. It tends to diminish integrity.

Integration: both sides get what they really wanted. This may need quite a bit of work to see what it is that each side *did* really want. Another way of