

Natalia d'Arbeloff

REHEARSALS FOR PEACE or: PEACE GAMES

Everyone knows that military exercises or 'war games' are taking place all the time at all military defence headquarters in the West and undoubtedly behind the Iron Curtain as well. These are intended to simulate, with utmost seriousness and precise detail, a state of war (nuclear war, presumably) and to **anticipate** the moves, tactics, strategies, etc. which 'We' (or 'They') would be likely to make if such a state became reality rather than simulation.

In contrast to this 'BE PREPARED FOR WAR' attitude, I would like to propose a serious and precise alternative, i.e. a **BE PREPARED FOR PEACE** programme, to be started immediately by every person reading these words and thence disseminated as quickly and efficiently as possible (photoconies etc) as far and wide as possible.

The start and the heart of the matter of this peace-rehearsal is a personal inner dialogue to be carried out alone or with a friend. It must not be treated as a joke (although the results could, of course, be funny). All of the imagination's resources can be called upon to make the rehearsal as real as possible; in fact, if the peace-rehearsal doesn't **feel** real then one can be sure that there is something lacking in one's commitment.

Here is a suggested procedure, on which there could be innumerable variations:

1. Make a list of all the possible ways in which someone you are (or have been) in deep conflict with could: hurt you, humiliate you, bully you, lie about you, deceive you, attack you, steal from you, etc. etc. And all the ways **you** can act similarly to your 'enemy'.
2. Don't invent but use such instances as have actually happened to you and which, if given the chance, could easily happen again. Visualise each instance clearly and in as much detail as possible.
3. Now act out a mini-drama, a confrontation between you and your 'Enemy'. Play both roles yourself (or assign one of the roles to a friend, after having explained the character he/she

is to play). When playing (or directing) the Enemy, be as realistic as you can in bringing out those attitudes and words which, in the past, have had a negative or devastating effect on you. You should, if you are playing the part convincingly, feel the same emotions as you did then, when the 'Enemy' facing you was real.

Take up the peace-stance in response to any and every provocation that your Enemy can think up. If, in the past, you were unable to cope with the situation, make NOW a tremendous effort of imagination to come up with new solutions, as if your life depends upon it. Make the rehearsal as elaborate as you wish, use props, scenery, whatever.

If the results of your rehearsal have given you new insights or awareness into the PEACE-MAKING PROCESS, publish them immediately in some quickly distributed form such as photocopies etc. Do not consider this as an egocentric or self-publicizing action but as the disseminating of **vital information**, just as the publication of scientific research papers is of service to science. We are trying to create a SCIENCE OF PEACE and this cannot exist without field workers willing to be guinea pigs by submitting their own inner-outer peace research to scrutiny.

5. Having satisfactorily enacted your own personal war-and-peace scenario, cast your imagination farther out, on the global stage. Imagine, for example, the U.S. versus Soviet Union confrontation. Play both roles convincingly; imagine every possible provocation from either side.
7. Now use your peace-insights to act out what **might be** feasible peacemaking solutions in such a situation. Remember that this is **your own** personal insight and contribution so you don't have to be a military/political/economic expert (unless this happens to be your expertise) to come up with solutions.
3. **WHATEVER** your personal slant on the peacemaking issue, be it religious, humanistic, etc., make the imaginative effort to step into your opponents' shoes, to **anticipate** whatever they might throw at you and to be prepared with effective peace-answers.

As well as the above practice of inner-outer peace dialogue, it could be effective to have PEACE REHEARSAL DAYS: a day on which a whole city (or neighbourhood, or parish, whatever) could just **practice peace**, in whatever ways they wished. Imagine all the possibilities! Just one day a month, for example, on which everyone could come up with an idea and a demonstration of peace-making, on a personal or a global scale.

I believe that the peace movement is strong and growing stronger. But I feel that the reason we are still a minority is because we need to become more skilful, efficient and imaginative at countering and counter-balancing our opponents' arguments and tactics. We are full of good will and excellent motives but (as usual throughout history) the Devil gets all the laughs, and all the votes! So our task is a double-edged one: not only must we offer feasible, realistic and **peaceful** solutions to world conflicts, but we must also be prepared to respond effectively and peacefully to all of the opposition's arguments and attacks. In my view, the best way to learn how to do this is to look at the conflicts encountered in one's own life, and one's own behaviour and that of others towards us, as a microcosm of what is happening out there on the stage of world events, which will decide the fate of our planet, for better or for worse.

If you feel these notes are helpful in furthering the cause of peace, I would be grateful if you would pass them on, make copies, etc. It is up to you to create a peace stance which applies to this particular conflict. Only you can discover what this is in the process of the re-enactment. This discovery of a new attitude is the heart of the whole exercise.

*Natalia d'Arbeloff, the international artist, is a reader of **Self and Society** and has worked with Quaesitor and other groups interested in the therapeutic role of art. She was born in Paris of a French milliner and Russian Prince-in-exile, who used to live with the composer, Prokofieff. She is still close to her parents, who now live in England, teaching art to her mother, and co-operating with her father, under his English pseudonym, A.B. Christopher, in illustrating and printing his book, **The Word Accomplished**. Like her father, who is a filmmaker, author and philosopher concerned with peace, Natalia has always sought to relate her various art skills to the personal quest for peace, more recently becoming deeply involved in the CND. Yvonne Craig met her on the Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's Peace Pentecost demonstration at the US Upper Heyford Base when she gave her the enclosed article 'for passing around to those you care about'. So she thought of **Self and Society** and its readers!*
