

Acts of Integration:
Psychodrama Practice Viewed through Daniel J. Siegel's Nine Domains of Integration

Abstract

Integration of life events through the life span impacts the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of individuals. This paper briefly describes the nine domains of integration presented by psychiatrist and interpersonal neurobiologist Daniel J. Siegel, MD. These descriptions are followed by how each domain of integration is addressed by actions taken during phases of a personal psychodrama. Throughout the paper the reader is referred to one case example.

Keywords

Integration; interpersonal neurobiology; Daniel J. Siegel; psychodrama; interpersonal relations.

Acts of Integration:¹
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Researchers studying aspects of mental life - from social psychology to the neurosciences - have used the term "integration" to refer to the collaborative, linking function that coordinates various levels of processes within the mind and between people. Siegel (1999, p.301)

The developing field of interpersonal neurobiology since its emergence in the early 1990s provides further refinement and grounding for the scientific basis of the psychodramatic approach to healing--- personal healing, and in the larger sense of healing society.

Psychodrama is a method of discovery, and recovery. It is a method of focused interpersonal dramatic action which invites supporting and challenging dialogue. It is a method which can take place within a related and receptive community as we share time, space, reality, energy, resources and abilities. We are learning more everyday about how well-being occurs and the ways we integrate the experiences which contribute to who we have been and who we are becoming. Through a variety of action methods psychodramatists are able to concretize an experience in ways to heighten the knowing necessary for a coherent inner dialogue and identity: this is my cognitive, emotional, expressive, somatic and soul self. As a field of psychodramatists we are also able through our work to contribute to the formation of a coherent inner dialogue about our interpersonal and citizen identity: this is my self with all others. Siegel (1999, p. 319) writes: "Integration is about how the mind creates a coherent self-assembly of information and energy flow across time and context. Integration creates the subjective experience of self."

This paper is organized to present the nine domains of integration identified and defined by Daniel J. Siegel (2008). I have summarized his very articulate presentation of these domains

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identified in his books, lectures, and taped presentations. Following each domain title is a discussion of the intent and structural aspects of psychodrama enactment which address integration occurring within the person whose story is being enacted. As I refer to the case example in Appendix I throughout, it may be helpful to first read the example.

Daniel J. Siegel's nine domains of integration² are:

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|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1) Integration of consciousness | 6) State integration |
| 2) Vertical integration | 7) Interpersonal integration |
| 3) Horizontal integration | 8) Temporal integration |
| 4) Integration of memory | 9) Transpirational integration |
| 5) Narrative integration | |

1. Integration of Consciousness (Siegel, 2007)

Mindful awareness at its core is what integration of consciousness is all about. The neural pathways that assist the flow of energy and information from what the body is experiencing in the moment, which Siegel refers to as “bottom up” meets the “top down” constraints of patterns from the past which have been stored in the “cortical architecture”. Being mindful requires us to intentionally notice and then choose to face the prior learning and stored responses in a new way, “with beginner’s eyes”. By doing so we can choose to integrate what is happening in the moment into our personal view of relationships and the accompanying narrative of our life. Siegel (2006, p.4) clarifies: “Mindfulness is defined as paying attention, in the present moment, on purpose, without grasping onto judgments.” This example of self-rebuke: “What! I am still avoiding, still

² In some earlier listings bilateral integration, and interpersonal integration and the mirror neuron, were titles of domains. This listing is from Siegel's *Neurobiology of We* (2008) CD 6 and 7.

afraid, after all the personal work I have done!” might shift to this statement when there is integration of consciousness: “Okay. I know this. And here is another chance for me to respond in a new way.”

Integration of Consciousness and Psychodrama Practice

The sequence of events in psychodrama is determined by the issue explored and the intricate sorting of rapport with a group and leaders, an experience of readiness and safety, and the structure inherent in the story being enacted. Many psychodramas involve doing, un-doing and re-doing events that were experienced in the past. The initial approach may be that a person has a desire to move forward but keeps tripping over unresolved issues and old patterns. The psychodramatic action is anchored in the immediate reality of (1) the interpersonal relationships of the group members who take part in the action, embodying roles of persons or elements significant to the story; and, (2) anchored in the boundaries of the remembered story brought to consciousness through experiencing in their body feelings and sensations connected to the story. In psychodrama integration of consciousness is occurring as we allow a certain rightness to enter the field of exploration. John Nolte (2008, p.100) writes about a woman, exploring a history of believing she never should have been born, who takes the role of her Mother for the first time and experiences how much she is loved and wanted: “Phenomenologically, she is correcting or updating her history.” The psychodrama literature (Blomqvist and Rutzel, 1994, p. 235-257) refers to this as “surplus reality”, the re-ordering of life events to include the reality denied through life’s circumstances. In the case example Manuel faces the ordeal he remembered from his past, releases hurt feelings from their imprisoned states and no longer has to face uncertainty on his own. His

more informed and courageous self is able to shift his autobiography of being “the vulnerable new guy” and is able to experience belonging in a new way. This transformation is accompanied by new awareness, a shift in confidence, and an integrated experience which may more coherently guide future choices and connections with others.

2. Vertical Integration (Siegel, 2006)

Whether you are standing or prone vertical integration is about circuitry and the information that the body has stored in the organs and tissue being available to the brain and nervous system. Siegel (2006, p. 5) writes that “vertical integration includes our somatic reality, our awareness of the body, its functioning, its complexity, and the entire limbic circuitry which governs the affective states, motivational drives, attachment, and appraisal and laying down of memory”. Siegel emphasizes that even before birth and as infants, the body is the primary communicator of what it needs. Vertical integration also involves our ability to become attuned to our body, to tune in to the body of another person, to have sufficient available circuitry to empathize with others, and have personal and interpersonal insights and intuition.

Vertical Integration and Psychodrama Practice

Psychodrama is able to go from the more or less stationary internal rumination to the active processes of externalization (showing and telling), concretization (anchoring in a scene in the stage area) and maximization (expanding the action with safeguards in place.) Many therapeutic approaches, for example sand tray and art therapy, have realized the benefit of projecting outward onto props, spaces and willing therapeutic assistants, that which is internal. The

unraveling of all this material (the story or personal narrative) from the intertwined and charged fibers of our neural circuitry allows the protagonist to interact with fragments of a story in ways which unlock and release what was originally experienced, linked haphazardly, and incompletely integrated.

Psychodrama begins with the warm-up phase, presenting before the group the moment or series of moments when the concern or sensation first surfaced. In the example of Manuel, a scene is set based on his rumination, “Why am I not reading these books?” Beginning in this way allows those present to join the existing state of warm-up and become part of the action. Setting the scene stimulates the capacities of all present to project onto the space, enlivening the description and elements of the scene, *as if* it is happening now. This concretization of a real life event places the body once again in touch with the reality recorded in the body. Manuel is handed a book he hasn’t read. By holding it, he is able to warm-up more fully, to recall the sensation when he first encountered the book. All his intentions, the wanting of it, his curiosity about its contents, are called to the surface in the here and now.

Manuel’s feeling surface as he is unpacking the aspect of the story involving a game of hide and seek. The director invites Manuel to be wholly in his body and to fully express all his feelings. Many psychodramatists receive additional training in (1) bodywork (Ginn and Meakin, 2001; Aaron, 2003), facilitation of catharsis, (Bemax, 1996; Kellermann, 1996; Nolte, 2008); (2) safety in the ventilation and expression of emotion (Moreno, 1973; Hudgins, et.al., 1998; Aaron, 2003); and, (3) a number of processes for letting go what is toxic and taking in a new experience of the somatic self (Kellermann, 2001; Knottenbelt, 2001). This training is necessary in order

that the director and group members will have immediate and effective intervention choices to match the intensity of the emotional release indicated within a framework of safety. Insight into one's emotions is not enough. The volatility of some emotional states, once aroused, requires skillful ventilation strategies in the therapeutic setting in order to prevent haphazard release of intense emotions upon unsuspecting members of the group or the public at a later time. The understanding of the warming up process includes de-escalation through extended periods of talking, and interjection of calming and grounding which further extends the integration taking place. A period of sharing from group members assists the closure following catharsis.

Enactments that have emotional release as a primary feature are soon followed by scenes which include "insight in action". The person may examine their choices, alter directions and identify structures which incorporate the desired changes made more possible now. John Nolte (2008, p. 10) makes this observation: "Today catharsis as described by Freud, and abreaction are considered controversial techniques. Moreno extended the term to cover not only the abreactive aspect of catharsis but a catharsis of integrative as well." While an enactment involving deep release of emotion is progressing the director takes note for consideration later, the out-pouring of personal narrative which has accompanied the catharsis. Each burst of information may identify potential scenes for re-ordering personal history in the present. Siegel (2007, p. 2291) refers to this as "snagging the brain". The action portion concludes with focus on restoration of emotional equilibrium, final statements to key figures in the psychodrama, return to autonomy, and rejoining the reality of the group and their ongoing daily life. The closure phase is also for the group members who release through verbal or non-verbal means information and sensations from their own body's reverberations during the action. In psychodrama we engage in de-roling

which is an effort to bring to consciousness what each member is holding onto from the action: what has been projected onto oneself or onto the stage in their presence. Sharing personal story helps to facilitate this process, as well as a mindfulness practice of scanning the body and returning to self.

3. Horizontal Integration (Siegel, 2007)

Siegel states (2007, p. 301-303): “Our two hemispheres cannot speak to one another easily. The “L’s” of the left —linear, logical, linguistic, literal thinking—cannot take in or connect directly to the holistic, imagery-based, nonverbal, emotional/social processing of the right. The personal history which we have stored, particularly our parental attachment can be seen to prevent bilateral integration and leave one hemisphere dominant over the other...Horizontal integration includes the linkages of the two sides of the nervous system and connecting circuits at similar vertical levels of organization within the same hemisphere. In the bilateral dimension of this domain, for example, we link the logical, linguistic, linear, and literal output of the left side with the visuospatial imagery, nonverbal, holistic, emotional/visceral representations of the right. What emerges with this horizontal form of integration is a new way of knowing, a bilateral consciousness.”

Psychodrama Practice and Horizontal Integration

J. L. Moreno (1889 -1974) originator of psychodrama which first appeared as the Theater of Spontaneity, conceived of the method as an adjunct, the action portion of a new branch of the social sciences focused on interpersonal relations, which he named *sociometry*. In his professional life he was a medical doctor, psychiatrist, social psychologist, a philosopher, a

writer and an innovator. His approach to healing was focused on spontaneity, creativity and the way the cultural conserves can be utilized creatively or hamper growth and well-being. This cornerstone of his life's work is referred to as the Canon of Creativity: Spontaneity - Creativity and the Cultural Conserve (1934), Figure 1. This process orientation relates many of his later theories, one of which is role theory. The cultural conserve is the repository of what we have learned and experienced whatever the level of integration. Our perception of a role, the ways it is to be enacted, is learned first through observation, and is embodied through role taking. Once a person wishes to make his/her own definition of what it means to be in a particular role, something different is imagined, and a new warm-up begins. The person moves out of the confines of the taking of roles and begins to play. Role playing may cycle through the cultural conserve for feedback and internal review. Once confidence in a process of creating oneself enters the body wholeheartedly, the person takes off, and the momentum generated through the release of old scripts, leads to the creative act--- role creation. The role creator next introduces the new creation by weaving its story into the fabric of the existing cultural conserve. It is a cyclical and spiraling process.

What does this have to do with horizontal integration? The cultural conserve is a repository--- like the left hemisphere of the brain which opens itself to receive information about experiences, and provides the literal and logical definitions about how to be. If it isn't updated from time to time it becomes prescriptive, even robot-like. In times of stress or threat, we fall back on conserves believing in safety, deciding not to stand out or draw attention to one self. When the confines of the conserved state become unbearable, the body which wants to move, to investigate, to play, to follow their imagination into action, prompts the right hemisphere of the

brain to take over, to access greater and greater degrees of spontaneity, to warm up to the possibilities and create oneself.

In Manuel's story it started with books. A book is a cultural conserve. Reading it can spark our attention and fire us up to create ideas and responses in our own life--- but first, while sitting on the shelf the spontaneity and creativity which went into its creation is in its conserved. state. Manuel is not reading the books. Could it be that he wants something else feeding the hunger which prompted their purchase? If you remember he has recently joined a psychodrama training group, which has its own conserved and professionally - oriented role repertoire. The training also places a high value on role creating, engagement, attunement, play, valuing the unknown, trusting the body, exploring the truth, and spontaneity in our interpersonal relationships. The left hemisphere and the right hemisphere were both activated when Manuel named his story "Hide or Seek" — linguistic play as an act of integration.

Horizontal integration in psychodrama is about having the process in the open, having the spontaneity state present, and integrating as we go, both the embodied story and with mindfulness, the impact of the changes of what we do on who is present, spilling over to those with whom we come into contact in ongoing daily life.

4. Integration of Memory (Siegel, 2006)

An experience is recorded in the body through the firing of neurons in the nervous system. The primary facets of memory of past experiences are the implicit (the behavioral, emotional and perceptual elements associated with an event, including body sensation or body memory) and

explicit memory (remembrance of the self and of time in a factual, episodic and focused fashion). What develops over time is an autobiographical whole which a person calls upon to explain things to him/herself or to identify the themes and patterns which form one's idea of *my life*.

Memory of traumatic events is described by Siegel (2006, p. 10-11): "One proposal about traumatic memory is that it may transiently block the integrative function of the hippocampus in memory integration. With massive stress hormone secretion or amygdala discharge in response to an overwhelming event, the hippocampus may be temporarily shut down. In addition to this direct effect of trauma of hippocampal function, some people may attempt to adapt to trauma by dividing their conscious attention, placing it only on non-traumatic elements of the environment at that time. The resultant configuration of blocked hippocampal processing, when reactivated, can present itself as free-floating, unassembled elements of perception, bodily sensation, emotion, and behavioral response without the internal sense that something is coming from the past. Beliefs and altered states of mind may also enter consciousness as the implicit mental models and priming becomes activated in response to environmental or internal triggers resembling components of the original experience. This "implicit-only" form of memory can be one explanation for the flashbacks and symptomatic profile of post-traumatic stress disorder.

The key to memory integration is the neural reality that focal attention allows the puzzle pieces of implicit memory to enter the spotlight of attention and then be assembled into the framed pictures of semantic and self-memories. With each reflective focus, what was once a memory configuration capable of intrusion on a person's life can move into a form of knowing that involves both deep thoughts and deep sensations of the reality of the past."

Psychodrama Practice and the Integration of Memory

The remembered events of protagonists become the story which is enacted on stage, one scene following another from periphery to the center. While the psychodrama has the appearance at times of being “directed”, the drama itself is scripted neuronally in layered and entwined memory which the director “follows” to the surface. A source scene is sought, one in which repeated events helped to shape the protagonist’s mental model of what to do in circumstances “like this.” In our example, Manuel is searching to make sense of his puzzling stack of unread books. The sing-song-y voice he used in his three-sentence story “I know something you don’t know.” is ripe with clues: a child is involved indicating possible age regression to a scene from childhood; there is an element of taunting, so we can expect this dynamic to show up; and, this is followed by disappearance of the singer who knows the answer.

When the director asks “Tell me where you are going.” the conspirator whispers and is gleeful. Manuel retrieves the memory he needs when he embodied *a playful and tormenting child dressed as a book which grew out of his own imagination and spontaneity state*. Moving quickly from this embodiment, Manuel’s memory supplies the source scene of the hide and seek game he experienced in the new neighborhood. It is a source scene which mirrors the here and now interpersonal reality of having joined a new group. By exploring this scene and resolving the issues related to it, the memory may then be integrated and available to help him see “with new eyes” the real life situation of being a member of the training group, and afterwards, each time he joins an activity or new group for the first time.

5. Narrative Integration (Siegel, 2006)

Siegel: (2006, p.11) “As we continue to grow throughout the first five years of life, explicit autobiographical recollection becomes even further integrated into narrative memory which involves the detection and creation of thematic elements of our lives. The brain appears to be able to have a narrative function that can detect themes of our life story and to draw heavily on prefrontal functions as they continue to integrate neural maps that form the underlying architecture of our episodic and autobiographical memory systems. With narrative reflection, one can choose, with consciousness, to detect and then possibly change old maladaptive patterns. This finding (from attachment research) suggests that parents who’ve made sense of their lives, as revealed in their coherent life narratives, will be those that offer their children patterns of communication that promote well-being.”

Psychodrama Practice and Narrative Integration

We move through life as if what we are doing makes sense. Then along comes a moment when a spotlight of attention provides a dramatic pause. Right now, it deeply matters to know exactly what is going on. The autobiographical narrative appears to be incomplete. Psychodrama is an *exploration of the truth* and also may include the masking of truth, or incomplete truth. An excellent body indicator of this is the “I don’t know. Don’t ask me.” shrug. With Manuel there was other evidence: the stack of books most likely maximizing his desire to know.

Manuel was left alone to sort out the cruelty of the neighbor kids. His reading of his parents, described as occupied with their own transition uncertainties and problems, paralleled the “don’t know, don’t ask” internalized and anticipated parental response. Manuel did not expect help from them, and he did not want to bother them. His personal narrative for things like this was to

keep his problems to himself. His answer to his Mother's question, "Why so sad, Manuel?" was "Oh, the kids had to go home."

Another feature of Manuel's narrative is to downplay the importance of his feelings. If your Father teaches "stiff upper lip" your personal narrative will be about "sucking it up" and "taking it like a man." When the psychodrama encouraged and accepted his full feelings in the scene, and Manuel invested in the risk of showing them before new peers, space opened in his consciousness for an alternative to the previous narrative which excluded help from parents. The surplus reality scene offered the opportunity for him to push past his earlier internalized perceptions of his parents' availability, and to tell them the truth. Despite the evidence of their usual and expected response, he asked for their help. This, accompanied with his feelings in evidence, called forth from the parents their own immediate difficulties, and from Father, a memory which matched his son's present difficulty. The Father's narrative had a coherent offering: make a connection with one buddy and then you won't be so alone when things get difficult. The father gives his son a workable and integrated narrative for facing difficulties "fitting in".

6. State Integration (Siegel, 1999)

A person over time assembles a state of mind, a particular organization of patterns, choices, and preference, when collected form an organizing principle one might call, personality. When a person wants to do a "reality check" during decision making they call upon state integration: "Does this choice I am about to make fit with who I am?" "Do these emotions, this energetic state belong to this situation?" Siegel (1999, p. 210): "A state of mind clusters the activity of

specific systems of processing. The degree to which this clustering is effective and useful determines the state's cohesiveness. What coordinates such a clustering process? We can propose here that part of the answer is emotion. The regulation of emotion directs the flow of energy through the changing states of activation in the brain...mediated by the limbic region of the brain, with its structural interconnections and functional capacity to coordinate a wide range of brain activity.”

Psychodramatic Practice and State Integration

What immediately comes to mind for a psychodramatist considering state integration are the concepts of warming up, the spontaneity state and sociostasis. Psychodrama emerged from Moreno's attention to social atom repair. As a medical doctor in a refugee camp with persons whose lives were in tatters following the first world war, Moreno (1966) was part of a team of professionals in Mitterndorf, outside Vienna, who addressed the concerns of refugees, beginning with housing. (p. 157-158) Autocratic assignments to living quarters based on the number of sleeping rooms required by a family offered little to alleviate the feeling of displacement and loss. Moreno began to interview the refugee families eliciting their preferences for neighbors first, before making up households. The social atom is that smallest number of persons with whom we associate in order to experience sufficient *sociostasis* (social equilibrium), necessary for a productive and creative life. In Mitterndorf Moreno treated the dis-equilibrium first. In the example of Manuel's plight, he had also been uprooted and struggled to find friends who could give him the feeling of connection he missed---belonging. The drama is anchored in his here and now situation or social atom *in order to* warm up to the spontaneity state as it existed in the

recalled moment.

The absence and presence of the spontaneity state is something to which psychodrama trained persons are particularly attuned. Nolte (2008) documents the history of Moreno's writings on the subject throughout his lifetime. (p. 103-135) Moreno and Moreno (1946, p. 56-57 presented the Spontaneity Theory of Child Development in which they explored development of the child from the matrix of all identity to stages in development during which spontaneity becomes a nearly forgotten function:

“It is paradoxical that the infant has at birth an organism whose anatomic and physiological unity is never greater. But he has no world of his own within which to operate. He is an actor—without words and almost without a cerebral cortex. He is compelled to form his world on the basis of small and weakly related zones, scattered unevenly over the body...In the first days of life, the infant experiences all objects and persons as co-existent with him, belonging to him, or himself as being co-existent with them, or belonging to them.”

Spontaneity is an energy, referred to by Moreno as the *s* factor, which comes into being or dissipates based on the situation and capacities of persons and groups. There are degrees of novelty, adequacy, attunement, grounded perception, excitement, and flare. One psychodrama trainer, Jonathan Fox (1986, p. 18) founder of a world-wide practice of improvisational, non-scripted theater, Playback Theater, gives this definition: “Spontaneity is knowing what's going on—to be able to articulate it and act on it. And, when not to articulate it, and when not to act on it.” Discernment in our actions is an example of state integration in psychodrama.

In our example, the director may have generated all sorts of hunches about Manuel's stack of books, from "Is he dyslexic?" to "Are these books designed to show others he is bright and intellectual?" The director may collect impressions and ideas; however, directing psychodrama is about resisting the impulse to suggest meaning. Instead a director creates small structures which enable the client/protagonist to investigate and reveal what is going on, to place the emphasis, to select from all the pathways, one which his/her body knows is "articulating via sensation". The director completes enough of their own personal work during training in order that attunement occurs in his/her body and mind, *and* then is able to see into the protagonist's mind and co-create structures which focus the integrative process of the session.

The following quote from Mike Consedine (2004, p. 39), a Christchurch, NZ psychodrama trainer, elaborates on the connection between spontaneity and integration:

"For me spontaneity is the urge to live—the spark inside which prompts us to move forward unconflicted and non-anxious. The prompt which urges us beyond the known! The unconscious spark which propels us out of the conserve toward a freedom seldom experienced. Spontaneity enables us to be in the moment fully with all that we are and all that we have experienced. We are aware of nothing but our urge to live and yet we are aware of everything. In this sense perhaps we have recaptured something of what Moreno referred to as the "stage of all identity".

State integration also includes cycling through states related to harmony and conflict. While these states may appear to be opposites they are mostly co-existent. The range of volatility from

stillness to old issues to bifurcation and dissociative states may be plotted on a Harmony-Conflict Cycle and be used in processing a psychodrama, or any therapeutic intervention. Hale and Little (2004, p. 1) recommend engaging in discussions following enactments: “What makes the outcome memorable, both as a healing and a learning process, is the depth of truthful reflection given to it. Moments of difficulty experienced in the action are explored. The persons involved disclose complex processes which co-produced the action, what informed the choices undertaken and contributed to the varying degrees of success of the event.”

7. Interpersonal Integration (Siegel, 2006)

At the heart of interpersonal integration are the visceral, social and self-regulating processes woven together in middle prefrontal regions of the brain which integrates input from others, opening us to self awareness and perceptions of the other. Regarding the mirror neuron system, Siegel (2006, p. 14) offers: “The mirror neuron system also illuminates the profoundly social nature of our brains. This social basis of neuron function may offer new pathways for us to understand how psychotherapy leads to the process of change. When two minds feel connected, when they become integrated, the state of firing of each individual can be proposed to become more coherent.”

Psychodrama practice and Interpersonal Integration

Psychodramatic explorations make visual and immediate the interpersonal nature of life events through role reversal and the use of one’s interpersonal perception. Sometimes the actual significant persons are present, as in the case of a facilitated meeting (encounter). In most

psychodramas the significant others are absent, and presented on stage *as if* they were present, first by the protagonist through taking the roles of other persons in the scene, and then by an auxiliary ego, a group member who plays the role as the story unfolds. Accuracy of portrayal is dependent upon the degree of integration and coherent self assembly. Manuel's portrayal of his parents as not really available to him and unlikely to offer real support during his initial role reversal, changed once he *experienced genuine attunement* from his director and group. During the surplus reality scene with his parents, after ventilating stored up feelings and resentment, Manuel was able to remember that his Mother had invited him to share his feelings ("Why so sad, Manuel?") and that his Father was capable of disclosing his earlier school difficulties and offer a solution.

Difficulty in role reversal is more evident in persons who have not been affirmed sufficiently in their own being, or whose feelings of disgust reject embodying a person whose actions are at the root of a traumatic event. Psychodrama has available the resources of a group *and their composite role repertoires*. Interpersonal integration may take place immediately within one psychodrama, as in Manuel's case, or over time in increments of integration, as a person prepares to face their most difficult experiences.

As psychodrama is most often practiced within a group, in clinical and non-clinical situations, the study of group dynamics becomes basic to psychodrama training. Moreno (1934/1953/1978, p. 3) offers this sentence at the beginning of Who shall survive?: Foundations of sociometry, group psychotherapy and sociodrama: "A truly therapeutic procedure cannot have less an objective than the whole of mankind. But no adequate therapy can be prescribed as long as

mankind is not a unity in some fashion and as long as its organization remains unknown.” There have been seventy-five years of concerted efforts to generate methods to address the complexity of the objective, “all of human kind.” Interpersonal consciousness is raised, and strategies offered through the use of the social and cultural atom explorations, the sociometric test, the sociodynamic test, the role diagram, the role accessibility test of interpersonal perception, the healing circle, the sociometric cycle, the diamond of opposites, the harmonic-conflictual cycle, the therapeutic spiral, dream technique, surrealist psychodrama, sociodrama, bibliodrama, and encounter, to name a few.

The study of interpersonal relations is grounded in the belief that each group position is of value and offers members moments of focus, roles in which to contribute, role relief, and time to attribute meaning and reflect, to integrate. Moreno (1978, p. 76) wrote: “Role emergence is prior to the emergence of self. Roles do not emerge from the self, but the self may emerge from roles.” If identity is tied to roles *then the dynamics related to accessing roles is directly tied to creation of our identity.*

Roles are negotiated in most social situations. If the roles which have high value for a person are “occupied” or “blocked” due to constraints or cultural norms (conserves) a possible result may be the generation of *act hunger*, energy for a role which is inaccessible and which builds, seeking release in a role or situation which has fewer restrictions, fewer inhibiting factors. Moreno devised methods to assist groups in identifying its role repertoire and the patterns of choice-making activity which result in open or closed access to roles and partners for activities.. These are described as sociometric methods.

The sociometric cycle (Hale, 1987, 2012) is a model for understanding the expected movement of persons through group positions and roles. The cycle examines the states associated with being overchosen (more choices than you can reciprocate) and the states associated with being underchosen (fewer choices than needed for sociostasis). The opposites of acceptance and non-acceptance of these positions result in four referenced positions: (1) belonging to others (relationships are reciprocal) ; (2) belonging and beginning to leave (relationships are incongruous) ; (3) not belonging (rejection and/or loss of one position and not having created a new position; and, (4) belonging to self (issues of relationships are more neutral).

At the beginning of Manuel's psychodrama he was more differentiated than linked in his new neighborhood, and he was not secure. His interpersonal process had elements of the chaotic and "resigned". Once the feelings the scene evoked were unleashed, he was "energized". This offered a more secure state of being and acceptance of his temporary lack of linkages. There was morality in his decision not to engage in retaliation, and he made choices for attachment, rather than judge himself or isolate himself. He ended in a position of strength and he was able to attribute meaning to his inability to read the books he had bought.

For psychotherapists it may be encouraging to realize the existence of methods and structures capable of sorting out intricate and complex interpersonal connections. Well-being professionally and personally comes with increased facility with the processes involved and application of methods at the point of need with clients. The beauty of these devices is their origins in the way we think, respond, intuit and choose to connect. They are not reduced to tools

for measuring and observing people. They are designed to sensitize us to the clues people drop, to arouse curiosity, and to map directions when lost in the complexity of intersecting needs, goals limitations and challenges.

8. Temporal Integration (Siegel, 2006)

Temporal integration is occurring at the moment of realizing that life is time limited. We seek certainty, have a drive for permanence, and at the same time know there will be a time when we will no longer be alive. Integration occurs when these facts enter the personal narrative, and we self-regulate according to the paradoxical situation of wanting “now to be forever” and accepting things as ever changing. Siegel (2006, p. 12): “Temporal integration directly confronts this organizational role of time, and our transient lives, in helping us consider the deep questions of purpose in life.”

Temporal Integration in Psychodrama Practice

In psychodrama the worst case scenario may be enacted. For instance the director suggested, “Manuel, set up a scene where you are in your last year of life, and you have continued to buy books and not read them. Take us to this room. Choose someone to be you at this younger age, and someone to be you at the oldest you will ever be.” The strategy of this direction is to make concrete what will likely occur if things do not change. Temporal integration occurs when the protagonist alters their script sufficiently and makes choices reflecting the awareness of time passing.

Walking a time line may also be used to bring the notion of “over time” to the surface. From the

earliest memory a step may be taken, and during the pause the protagonist makes a soliloquy. Another step, another year is represented, and so on, year by year, or phase by phase. There are times a protagonist may be warming up to the possibility of their death based on the approximate time of death of one of their parents, or a relative. A time line may be used to approach that year, experience the year, and one or more years afterwards. Being able to express fears, and face them, sometimes accompanied by a double, externalizes the fear and gives the protagonist the possibility of moving into life unencumbered.

Linnea Carlson-Sabelli (1994, p. 180) developed the *household method* to capture the personal history as a series of sociograms, which tap into a fundamental natural group: “We ask participants to draw sequentially each household of which he was a member, starting with his parents’ place before he was born, and defining a transition from one household to another by the entry or exit of one person, or changes in domicile.”

A psychodrama director may request a developmental double. This assistant doubles the protagonist by translating the here and now dialogue and actions *as if* he/she is much younger, or significantly older in years. Including the sweep of time allows the protagonist to investigate present day options with the span of years in mind.

9. Transpirational Integration (Siegel, 2006)

Alleviating suffering once addressed personally impacts wider and wider circles of the human pool. Transpirational integration defined by Siegel (2006, p. 16) involves being connected to a larger whole: “As individuals move forward in achieving new levels of integration across the

eight domains described above, clinical experience reveals a fascinating finding in which people begin to feel a different sense of connection to both themselves and the world beyond their previously skin-defined sense of self. The term “transpiration” denotes how new states of being seem to emerge as a vital sense of life is breathed across each of the domains of integration...It may be that our highly evolved mirror neuron systems reveal the fundamental ways in which we are neurally constructed to feel connected to each other.”

Transpirational Integration and Psychodrama Practice

Psychodrama came into being with the objective to encompass all of mankind. Attunement to unknown others allows us to reverse roles with people, animals and entities in the universe, to be all inclusive. Bringing to consciousness the impact of our choices on others, helps us integrate our life decisions outward to the macrocosmic level. Sociodramatic enactments are those which have a central concern as the primary focus, rather than an individual’s life situation. For example, a training group was impacted by the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl, April, 1986. Fresh fruits and vegetables grown and harvested prior to the disaster were no longer available for purchase. Farmers weren’t able to graze their animals and no one knew whether or not to continue spring planting, or even walk in their fields. The group suspended personal psychodramas and experienced a series of sociodramas, some taking the role of a plant for the first time in their life. Trainees reversed roles with reindeer from Lappland, and pilots forced to fly into the containment area. The students and I experienced transpirational integration from the roles we took that week. Our closure session involved generating our activist role. We agreed to continue attuning to unknown others, and to seek ways and take actions to raise consciousness in

corporate sectors where decisions are made about the “relative” safety of nuclear power plants, and mining for uranium.

We discovered as we generated the role of activist that support from our families and circle of friends helped to sustain us in times of risk and negotiation. So, why is it important that Manuel, at age seven be helped to find a good place for himself in a new neighborhood? We may not immediately know the connection of his story to our own, or to the wider world in which we live and mature. However, psychodramatists work *as if* it matters because we believe in the power of supportive networks which enable us to reach out and include those more isolated than ourselves, to foster the interconnection necessary to create ourselves and solve serious global and interplanetary issues.

The morality of Manuel’s statement: “I wouldn’t want to do anything that would hurt somebody like I was hurt.” if spread outward across the planet would produce a world Daniel J. Siegel spoke about: We are all interconnected. And when we believe this then kindness will become as natural as breathing. (2008, the end of CD 7)

In conclusion

While writing this article I have listened several times to the Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto, no. 2 in C minor. Before the horn solo in the first movement, there is a sequence of descending orchestrations of the theme, through all the minor keys to a deep cavern of sound. From this complexity emerges the pure and single notes of the main theme, wafting and ascending, bringing with it the sensation of unity. Never before have I understood interpersonal integration

so clearly. Each domain of integration, as in the notes of an octave, resonate together. I now understand why this particular piece of music has such universal appeal, and also why Daniel Siegel's vision of interpersonal neurobiology makes such sense to me: I experience through my circuitry, including the auditory channel, a neural resonance with the integrated state, whether it is in music, in paintings, cooking for company, or directing a psychodrama. The music of Rachmaninoff, for me, matches the spontaneity state which came to life while writing and synthesizing Moreno, Siegel and my own practice of these methods.

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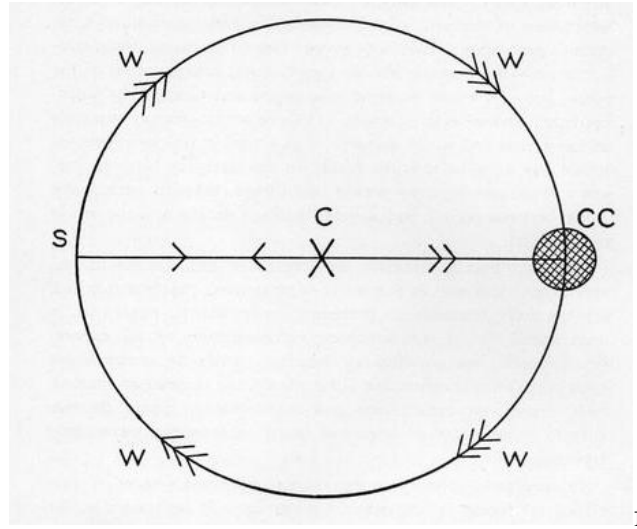


Figure I. Canon of Spontaneity, Creativity and the Cultural Conserve. J. L. Moreno, *Who Shall Survive?* (1953, 1978) p. 74.

Appendix I: Example of personal psychodrama: Manuel

A protagonist, we will call Manuel, is in a newly formed training group. The training director has asked for each person to think of a situation involving a problem he/she is having and one which evokes their curiosity rather than a fear, due to the newness of the assembled group. The plan is to work with a protagonist and give as many group members as possible an opportunity to be in action. The group chooses Manuel.

Manuel: “I keep buying books I know I want to read, but I can’t seem to bring myself to open them and begin.”

Director: “Set a scene in your home where the books are stacked. Read off some of the titles.”
The director holds one of the books, and suggests: “Imagine that this book is made up of only

three sentences.³ Tell me the story.”

Manuel: “(1) Once there was a child sitting all by himself with nothing to do. (2) Another child, dressed as a book dances up and begins singing, “I know something you don’t know.” (3) The child reaches out eagerly, but the book/child dances away, laughing, leaving the child sad and mad.”

Director: “Okay. Create this scene on the stage and pick someone to be you, and someone to be the dancing book/child.”

In psychodrama the protagonist concretizes the scene of this action on the stage and reverses roles with all the key elements. While playing the role of the book/child the protagonist is asked, “Tell me where you are running off to.” In answer, the protagonist as the book/child, whispers with delight: “We’re all going home!” Upon saying this the protagonist freezes, looks away, then back to his director. His vulnerability is apparent.

Manuel: “I know what this is about. When I was seven I moved to a new neighborhood and was asked to play hide and go seek with some of the other kids. I was so excited, since I missed my friends from home. When it was my turn to be it...”

Director: interrupting: “It sounds to me as though you are already imagining that scene happening right now. Let’s go. Take us to this new neighborhood right now. Choose the neighbor children, and also choose some children to be the friends that you miss from home. Let’s also have your parents available. We’ll have them sit slightly off stage.”

The psychodrama progresses to the source scene as remembered. The protagonist experiences in the here and now the trick the children played on him when they all went to their homes while he counted to a hundred. The protagonist is then encouraged to be fully in his body, to ventilate feelings, using his body and gestures to rid himself of stored sounds and movements which have created a somatic block to having what he knows he wants and needs right now. As his catharsis winds down, he is instructed to reverse roles with one of the children who ran home.

Manuel, *in role of the other child*: “I guess it was a mean trick, but we just thought it was funny. You don’t think we hurt his feelings or anything, do you?”

3. The device of using three sentences is one I learned from Jonathan Fox (1986), who used it in training practitioners of Playback Theater to elicit the essence of a story.

Director: “This might be a good time to ask him. Manuel, reverse back into your own role.”

Manuel: “It made me mad. I thought you didn’t really want to play with me. How can I go to school with you and sit near you when I never know what you are going to do next?”

An apology is offered and accepted. The director has Manuel reverse roles with one of his old friends on the sidelines. As a friend he gave support, and shouted suggestions about how to get even. Some imaginative revenge strategies were entertained.

Manuel: “While it might be fun to do those things, I don’t want to hurt anybody like I was hurt.”

Director: “Let’s go to a scene with your parents. In your own words tell your parents what has happened.”

In their roles, despite some anxious and uncertain responses from his Mother and “stiff upper lip” from Father, he is able to tell them how much he missed his “real” friends. They talk together about what they could each do to be more connected to the neighborhood.

Manuel, *as Father:* “I remember when I went to overnight camp for the first time. I was miserable until I found one buddy who helped me be more comfortable with the crowd of new kids. I think I showed you a picture once of the two of us fishing. Maybe it is time your Mother and I to invite one of the neighborhood families over.”

Another surplus reality repair scene came next. Two new kids are invited to a “book party” at his house and bring some of their favorite books. This is supervised by his parents. The original props from the first scene, the ones he had not yet read, are used in the scene. Having just a few children to relate to was deemed safer and more fun. They played with his toys and books, making up strange new titles.

Director: “As this is a new group, I think it would be a good idea to have all the group members involved in this scene. Come up, two at a time, and engage in the scene. Then return to your seat, with two others coming up on stage. Remember to be your age at seven.”

The group members engage in a surplus reality scene, *as if* they all knew each other in elementary school. They share titles of favorite books and games. The scene closes with Manuel his present age in his room with all the unread books.

Director: Handing Manuel another book, “Tell us a new story in three sentences.”

Manuel: “This book is called Hide or Seek.” (Shared laughter from the group members) (1) A child is invited to play with some new kids, who play a trick on him. (2) He gets really mad, and then sad, knowing he doesn’t really want to be alone. (3) Then he remembers his old friends and

that his parents really do like him, so he goes home, deciding that he will first invite one or two new kids over to his house to share stories and have adventures.”

After the drama, group members share their own connection to the protagonist’s story, linking their story in ways that the collective experience is woven into the group history, connecting and enlarging their experience of one another. One group member wept about never having told an acquaintance she was sorry. The tentativeness of group members with each other has been dispelled through the enactment which gave each person an opportunity to join their childhood with the others.