



CHRISTCHURCH INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING IN PSYCHODRAMA

## Psychodramatic Couple Therapy Training Course Outline

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# Psychodramatic Couple Therapy Training

The theory and practice of Psychodramatic Couple Therapy (PCT) obviously has psychodrama at the core. Psychodrama is a philosophy and a method to foster creativity. Psychodrama is primarily a group method and it can be applied to couples. The couple therapist works with the ethos of a psychodrama director to promote exploration, experimentation and spontaneity.

The director has the vitality, originality, adequacy and flexibility to be present with the couple. To develop the presence and skills of a psychodrama director, in the context of couple relationships is the aim of the training.

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For an introduction to psychodrama see <http://psychodrama.org.nz/about/>

J.L. Moreno, the founder of psychodrama wrote about interpersonal relationship therapy:

*"... an active form of psychotherapy in which the personal and interpersonal problems ... are treated at the same time."*

Moreno, 1977:233.

*"Forms of treatment are necessary which are able to reach the interpersonal syndromes as deeply, if not more so, than it would a single person. Interpersonal therapy represents a special category; it might well be classified apart from individual and group psychotherapy"*

Moreno & Moreno, 1975:45.

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Moreno's devoted much of *Psychodrama* Volume 1 to marriage therapy. Psychodrama has a theory of child development that is related to adult functioning. Central to psychodrama theory are the concepts of *warm up, spontaneity and creativity*. *Begegnung* - translated as *encounter* is the heart of psychodramatic couple therapy. There is a word, *tele*, used to describe what goes on between people, including love.

Moreno was one of the first marriage therapists, with a session recorded in 1937. In the last 30 years specialist modes of couple therapy training have been developed. Many of them draw on psychodramatic roots. Psychodrama is an open system of thought and practice and can readily absorb material from other practices.

This course provides the required training for this specialist field. Psychodrama training is a form of psychotherapy training recognised by the Psychotherapists Board of Aotearoa New Zealand ([PBANZ](http://pbanz.org.nz)). Couple therapy is one of the items covered by the psychotherapist scope of practice. The course is offered by the Christchurch Institute for Training in Psychodrama (CITP) <https://psychodrama.org.nz/citp> For enquiries please contact Walter Logeman [walter@psybnet.co.nz](mailto:walter@psybnet.co.nz)

## Walter Logeman

The CITP is collaborating with a group of NZ trainers to offer this course. Walter Logeman is the main trainer. He is a Trainer, Educator and Practitioner (TEP) in the CITP. He has conducted *Working with Couples* professional development workshops since 2009. He has a background in education and social work and is an Imago relationship therapist.

Walter describes his motivation for presenting Psychodramatic Couple Therapy Training (PCT):

"In 2009 I wrote an article in the AANZPA Journal called *The Imago Affair*. I concluded with the intention: "... to explore how we can develop relationship therapy beyond what we know today. I think we can use the psychodrama process to expand and to enrich couple therapy, to explore possibilities and to consciously learn and evolve." Since then, I have been practising and teaching couple therapy using psychodrama. It is a comprehensive and holistic way to teach couple therapy. In May 2018 I was ready to offer this course.

"Couple therapy is a form of group work and psychodrama. This training is a form of group work and psychodrama. In this course we apply the same values and methods as we do in the work with couples. *We produce encounter*. The relationship is a drama. Each partner learns to be the protagonist and the auxiliary ego. We understand the process through role theory. We think in terms of warm up, action, sharing. The therapy room becomes the stage. These technical terms are rich and useful in the training but we don't use them so much with couples, nor should we. We keep our theory backstage and relate to the couple in a way they understand, and feel at home. Approaching a couple with the theory and practice of psychodrama as a guide in the background is a delight. I'm enthusiastic to offer a course which trains people in psychodrama by focussing on one application of the method. I am sure the course will be of value to new and experienced therapists and psychodramatists.

"We live in a time of urgent warnings about the planet. I am reminded of J.L. Moreno's book, *Who shall Survive?* (1978) as I write this. He was dismayed that survival was approached by biological and technological means and not by social means. He developed new relational tools and they remain vital for the survival of humankind. This vision motivates me to bring this course in psychodramatic couple therapy to your attention. My hope is you will be inspired and take up the call."

## Other Trainers

Sara Crane — Director of Christchurch Institute for Training in Psychodrama

Claire Guy — Centre for Experiential Learning and Development, Nelson

Marilyn Sutcliff — The Auckland Training Centre for Psychodrama

Hamish Browne — The Auckland Training Centre for Psychodrama

Martin Putt — The Auckland Training Centre for Psychodrama

## Features of Psychodramatic Couple Therapy Training

### 1. Encounter

Encounter, or meeting is the English translation of the German *begegnung*, is a central concept of psychodrama. In 1914 Jacob Levy Moreno (1889–1974) the founder of psychodrama wrote in a poem called *Invitation to an Encounter*:

*“A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face...  
I will look at you with your eyes □  
and you will look at me with mine.”*

Intimacy in the relationship is the organising principle of the work.

### 2. Experiential learning

Psychodramatic Couple Therapy is an experiential process for the couple. We help them have a new experience. Training for the therapist is also experiential. Training and the therapy both use the psychodrama structure of warm up, action and sharing.

### 3. Holistic practice

We will work with what is possible for a couple. The therapist will have a broad view of the current social forces on the couple and the influences of the families of origin. Psychodramatic couple therapy aims to have a positive impact on the whanau.

### 4. Well developed theory

The course is based on theory and practice developed by J.L. Moreno. It has been developed in Australia and Aotearoa NZ for our current time. See AANZPA Journals: <https://aanzpa.org/journals/> The course will refer to other theory and practice when relevant.

### 5. Supervised couple therapy practice

Participants will engage in supervised couple therapy practice.

### 6. Psychodrama training

No previous psychodrama training is required however the course will be relevant to experienced psychodramatists who do, or wish to do couple therapy. The training hours count towards a qualification in Psychodrama.

## **Description of the Course**

Training involves attending workshops, reading, writing, peer practice and supervision. Participants will attend a minimum of 12 days (90 hours) of workshops over two years. A Manual outlines how the psychodramatic method is used with couples.

## **The Aim of the Course**

The aim is for participants to

- Gain confidence and competence in working with couples in a relational paradigm.
- Discover the value of working with couples. Enjoy the challenges of couple therapy.
- Learn the fundamentals of couple therapy based on the large body of psychodrama theory and practice that has developed over almost a century.
- Be part of a group engaged in robust training and collaborative learning in couple therapy.

## **Workshops**

Workshops involve teaching, demonstrations, enactments, supervised practice, writing and group interaction. Psychodramatic methods including group work, sociometry, sociodrama and role training will be used. We will get to know each other and connect in new ways. We will collaborate and learn using the same methods we bring to the couples we work with.

Workshops are multilevel, suited to new as well as experienced practitioners. The workshops will have one or two trainers. Participants will bring forward relevant content from their work related to the course programme. We will work together with central concerns and topics in the Manual.

The training will be in 2, 3 or 4 day blocks. Four-day workshops are offered in Christchurch in 2019 and 2020. See website for the workshops:

<https://psychodrama.org.nz/couple-therapy-training-2019/>

## **Training and Supervision Plan**

Prospective trainees in the early stages of training will make a plan indicating areas of development they will work on, workshop attendance, peer practice, writing and supervision. The plan will be updated in the second year of training.

## **Fees**

The fee for workshops is similar to other training offered by the CITP details are on the website. Residential workshops will incur an extra fee to cover food and accommodation. Supervision fees are additional to the workshop fee.

## **Enrolment**

### **Criteria**

The trainee will...

- work in a context where couple therapy is a suitable form of practice,
- be a member of a professional body that has a code of ethics and a complaints procedure.
- participate in an interview to determine suitability for the Course.

### **Process**

1. Enrol on the website <https://psychodrama.org.nz/citp/programme-2019> The deposit is refunded in full if your application is not accepted.
2. We will contact you to discuss your enrolment.
3. Pay the course fee
4. Agree to the [CITP's Training Agreement](#)

## **Scope of the Course**

Topics will include:

### **Psychodrama Philosophy Theory and Methods**

#### *Forms of Psychodramatic Practice*

- Classic psychodrama
- Role training
- Sociometry
- Sociodrama
- Group psychotherapy
- Interpersonal psychotherapy
- Spontaneity training

#### *The relational paradigm*

- Therapeutic tele
- Social and cultural atom

#### *Encounter*

#### *Experiential Learning*

### ***The Canon of Creativity***

- Cultural Conserves
- Warm up
- Spontaneity
- Creativity

### ***The five psychodrama instruments***

- Stage
- Director
- Protagonist
- Auxiliary ego
- Audience

### ***Three phases of a psychodrama session***

- Warm up
- Action
- sharing

### ***Psychodrama Techniques***

- Doubling
- Mirroring
- Role reversal
- Concretisation
- Soliloquy
- Asides
- Future projection

### ***Role theory***

- Role Naming
- Role Enactment
- Role Gestalts

## ***Psychodramatic Couple Therapy in Practice***

### ***Warm up Phase***

- Engaging with couples in the early stages (often by phone, text or email).
- Assessing suitability for couple therapy:
  - Levels of risk
  - When and how to see partners alone
  - Considering the place of couple therapy in the context of the whanau.
  - Making appropriate onward referrals e.g. mediation, social work, parenting help.

- Working with couples who have ambivalence about the relationship — discernment therapy
- Conducting the early phase of a session as a warm up to action.
  - When and how to intervene in the “group” process.
  - Identifying the central concern.
- Framing the action phase.
  - Assigning the protagonist, auxiliary, and “audience member” structure
  - Constraints and spontaneity

### ***Action phase — Producing Encounter***

- Producing encounter - face to face, eye to eye.
  - One meaningful interaction
  - Dialogue
  - Working in the here and now
  - *Status nascendi*
- Enabling mirroring, role reversal and doubling
- Doubling the couple to
  - Avoid blaming, shaming and criticism.
  - Be with their partner
- Individual dramas with a protagonist — how to include the partner
- Dramas with the relationship as the protagonist.
  - Relationship with self (H)
  - Joint enactment - such as “memory lane”
  - Role reversal with the relationship
  - Role reversal with the “therapist”
  - Future projections
  - Diamond of opposites
- Techniques such as soliloquy, asides and concretisation.
- Working with the original social and cultural atom

### ***Sharing***

- Purpose of sharing is integration—bringing back the protagonist’s work to the “group”
- Conducting the sharing: impact, learning, what they will do differently
- Being with each other
- Sharing by the therapist

### **Other topics that may be covered**

- Approaches to affairs, addiction and violence
- Parenting, finances, sex
- Cultural factors in couple therapy
- Gender fluidity

Participants can add topics relevant to their area of work, e.g. elderly or immigrant couples.

## **Certificate of Psychodramatic Couple Therapy**

Upon successful completion of the following requirements participants will receive a certificate from the CITP. These requirements are to be met within a two year period (unless other arrangements are made):

- Participation in a minimum of 12 days of workshops.
- Written assignments.
- Collaboration with other trainees to develop their ability in couple therapy (peer practice outside of the training workshops).
- A minimum of nine (supervised) sessions with a couple and a letter from the supervisor stating the participant is able to practice psychodramatic couple therapy.
- Demonstration in a workshop of the ability to work with a couple and discuss the rationale for interventions.

## **Resources**

A Psychodramatic Couple Therapy Training Manual will be available on the website that includes

- Course material
- Handouts
- Reading list and links to useful material

See the flyer for this course here:

<https://psychodrama.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/PCT-training-flyer.pdf>

This Outline: <https://psychodrama.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/PCT-Training.pdf>

## **Podcast**

Walter Logeman was interviewed in 2018 on the [Couples Therapy Couch](#) podcast about this course, you might like to have a listen. You can subscribe to the podcast on an app on your phone and search for [couplestherapistcouch.com](http://couplestherapistcouch.com)

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[http://www.americandeception.com/index.php?action=downloadpdf&photo=PDFsml\\_AD/Who\\_Shall\\_Survive-J\\_L\\_Moreno-1978-879pgs-PSY.sml.pdf&id=290](http://www.americandeception.com/index.php?action=downloadpdf&photo=PDFsml_AD/Who_Shall_Survive-J_L_Moreno-1978-879pgs-PSY.sml.pdf&id=290)