

THE HOLLANDER PSYCHODRAMA CURVE  
APPLIED TO THE PERSONAL GROWTH AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE STUDENT IN PSYCHODRAMA TRAINING

A Paper

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In Partial Fulfillment  
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A Director Of Psychodrama

By

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This thesis has been completed in partial fulfillment of the requirements toward certification as a practitioner by the Board of Examiners of the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association, Incorporated. It represents a considerable body of work undertaken with extensive supervision. This knowledge and insight has been gained through hundreds of hours of experience, study and reflection.

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## Abstract

This paper identifies some common difficulties in the areas of personal growth and skill development experienced by students undergoing formal training in Psychodrama. A questionnaire to identify the difficulties, was administered to twelve Interns at the Colorado Psychodrama Center, Colorado and the results compiled. Most difficulties centered around a lack of self esteem related in part to the change from a professional role to a student role, and to the expectation on the student's part that things be done perfectly. The Hollander Psychodrama Curve is used in an attempt to make sense of the difficulties and to suggest a structure that the student can use to assess and guide his or her growth in each area. It is hoped that the paper will be of benefit to students presently in training and to those people responsible for training programs.

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Introduction

Very little has been written to assist the Psychodrama student to understand the learning process involved in the training to become a Psychodrama Director. From my own experience in four years of training and from observation of students in Queensland, Australia and in Phoenix and New Haven, U.S.A., there appeared to be some common difficulties experienced by students regardless of the country or the training center. In an attempt to determine if my observations were borne out factually, I administered a questionnaire to twelve Interns studying Psychodrama at the Colorado Psychodrama Center, Englewood, Colorado. The results of the questionnaire are discussed. Common difficulties are highlighted. The Hollander Psychodrama Curve is proposed as a model for students to use in setting realistic goals for all stages of their development and to assist them to assess and guide their growth in the areas of personal growth and skill development. Many of the difficulties are seen to be related to setting unrealistic goals and to the loss of self esteem that many students experience in changing from a professional role to the role of student.

### Hypothesis 1.

That the difficulties observed in students in Psychodrama training in Queensland, Australia and Phoenix and New Haven, U.S.A. will be similar to those identified by Psychodrama Interns in Englewood, Colorado.

### Hypothesis 2.

That the Hollander Psychodrama Curve can provide a structure that enables students in Psychodrama training to put their difficulties in perspective and to assess and guide their growth and development as a Director.

### Survey of Literature

J.L.Moreno,M.D., the founder of Psychodrama has defined Psychodrama as "the science which explores the 'truth' by dramatic methods" ( Moreno, 1953, p.81 ). However, in many areas where Psychodrama is practised, the science of Psychodrama has been poorly understood, if at all. Many people, new to Psychodrama, are overwhelmed by what they perceive as the 'magic' of the process and so have great difficulty in their work as beginning directors. Some training centers have made attempts to clarify the process e.g. the Goldman Circle ( Goldman, 1980 ), the 'Outside - Inside ' concept ( Eliasoph, 1980 ). Moreno, himself, saw the process as having three phases - Warm-up, Action, and Sharing. He talks about the interaction between the protagonist and the director ( Warm-up ); the production as the auxiliaries move in and the director retreats ( Enactment); finally the audience drama taking the place of the production in

the sharing ( Moreno, 1953, pp. 84-87 ). In the course of their training, students struggle with individual techniques or with parts of the psychodramatic process and have difficulty seeing the process as a whole.

The Hollander Psychodrama Curve ( Hollander, 1978a) provides a firm base on which to stand all Psychodrama theory and indeed any human activity. Spontaneity, Creativity, Role Theory and Sociometry begin to make sense when seen in the light of the Psychodrama Curve. The Psychodramatic Process is plotted on an extension of the normal curve which includes an emotional and temporal continuum. The Curve has the value that it can be used to look in detail at any human activity in which there are the components of warming-up, activity and integration. The Curve is divided into three horizontal parts e.g. Warm-up, Enactment, and Integration. The vertical concept denotes the emotional qualities which exist as one proceeds from the Warm-up to Integration, reaching a peak at the catharsis of abreaction.

#### Warm-up

The Warm-up or the process through which we go to prepare for something, is part of any human activity. Unfortunately, not all our warm-ups are complete but are interrupted so that many activities are then incomplete e.g. the grieving process is often cut off at the funeral or death of a person. Hollander describes the Warm-up as having three parts:-

1. The Encounter. In a psychodrama, this occurs between the individual and the director both of whom examine where they are.
2. Phase. In some instances, groups will need some artificial structure or physical starter to alleviate anxiety.

3. Sociometric Process. Once contact is made with and between the group members, the sociometric process begins and a protagonist emerges. In other human activities, this may be the point when action begins and a direction is taken e.g. a tennis game.

#### Enactment

The time, place, circumstance and people present, are established as the first scene is set and evolves. There can be a number of scenes whose purposes may be different. Usually the initial scenes are diagnostic and exploratory while later scenes are moving towards integration. As the protagonist moves towards the catharsis, the auxiliary egos and the director help to catalyze emotions. After the catharsis, the emphasis is on integrating at a cognitive level. The catharsis is the turning point of the drama and as the most delicate part, should be handled with sensitivity and care. Following the catharsis, the emphasis is on applying and practising the new learning using surplus reality and role training. Each drama should end on a positive note which makes it possible for the protagonist to move back into his or her own life style with integrity intact.

#### Integration

Having worked on behalf of the group, the protagonist now rejoins the group and completes the drama by listening to the sharing and interacting with the audience. Though the most important part of the drama, it is often given the least attention. The protagonist having disclosed many painful areas hears that

others have had similar experiences and feelings.

The Hollander Psychodrama Curve offers a model which can be used to track the psychodramatic process, to critique a psychodrama, to provide a base for directing, and to look at any human activity that involves a warm-up, an enactment and an integration.

### Research Design

Purpose: To identify the difficulties experienced by students in Psychodrama training in the areas of personal growth and skill development.

Method A questionnaire was compiled and distributed to twelve students who have been involved in a Psychodrama training program at the Colorado Psychodrama Center, Englewood, Colorado. The questionnaire covered the following areas:-

1. What have been the major turning points in your personal growth work in Psychodrama ?
2. What have been your major mistakes in directing a protagonist in Psychodrama ?
3. What have been the difficult areas for you in taking an auxiliary ego role (including doubling ) in a Psychodrama ?
4. What is the area of greatest difficulty for you at present when you direct a protagonist ?
5. What has helped you the most as you have been learning to direct ?

The questionnaires were collated and the common difficulties



identified. These were then divided into the areas of personal growth and skill development.

### Setting

The Colorado Psychodrama Center offers a training program that has several components to it. Each Intern participates in a personal growth group every week ( minimum of two and a half hours ). A four hour Seminar which covers theory and practice is held evry week. The Intern is involved in a field placement with opportunities for skill development and direct supervision (minimum of two hours per week ). In addition, the Interns run their own group one night a week during which they direct, do auxiliary work or become a protagonist. Three one-week intensive workshops are held during the year. The program offers certification at three levels:- Psychodrama Assistant ( 260 hours of training ), Associate Director of Psychodrama ( 520 hours ) and Director of Psychodrama (720 hours ). The student must satisfy specific criteria in the three areas of skill, theory and personal growth. Supervision sessions are also available for work that is done outside the placement provided e.g. running groups or seeing individual clients.

### Participants

Twelve Interns participated in the study by completing the questionnaire. Ten of the group had been involved with the program since May, 1980. Two had joined the Internship in the last few months and one of these had not had an opportunity to direct. Five of the Interns had been involved with Psychodrama for four

to eight years though not in formal training. All were female and came from a variety of backgrounds including psychology, social work, nursing, improvisation, ministry, counselling and teaching. The ages ranged from 25 to 47 years of age. During the year, three had become Psychodrama Assistants and one an Associate Director of Psychodrama.

### Results

The difficulties identified by the Colorado Intern group were similar to those observed in Phoenix and New Haven in the U.S.A. and in Queensland, Australia. Many of the difficulties seem to stem from a misconception on the part of the Intern that she should be able to direct a psychodrama immediately and well, and that anything less than perfection is seen as failure. Many experienced a drop in self esteem that appears to be related to the change in role necessitated in becoming an Intern. Most struggled to find a role they could feel strong in. Doubting one's own feelings and intuition was common. The results are presented in detail in the following tables. (Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 ).

Table 1

#### Major Turning Points in Personal Growth

Identified by 12 Psychodrama Interns

Turning Points	Number of Interns
Expressing feelings, especially anger	8
Trusting feelings and intuition	6

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Making mistakes and taking risks	5
Giving and receiving nurtuting	4
Reaching out and asking for help	3
Accepting pain in self and others	2
Accepting feedback constructively	2
Seeing how others see oneself	2
Learning other options besides with- drawal when at risk	2
Setting limits	1
Exploring intimacy	1
Learning that others have similar problems	1

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Table 2

Present Difficulties in Directing  
as Experienced by 12 Psychodrama Interns

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Present Difficulties	Number of Interns
Keeping Director's Warm-up going	8
Following the spontaneity	6
Learning the techniques	6
Setting parameters	6
Trusting the process	4

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Table 3

Major Mistakes Made by 12 Psychodrama Interns  
in Directing a Protagonist

Major Mistakes	Number of Interns
Being immobilised by anxiety	12
Not trusting one's personal process	12
Inadequate Warm-up	7
Not identifying the central issue	7
Inability to recognize and facilitate the catharsis	7
Overdirecting (interrupting the action)	6
Insufficient or inappropriate role reversals	6
Ignoring the group sociometry	5
Integrating before the catharsis	5
Having a fixed outcome in mind	4
Over-identifying with the protagonist's process	3
Lack of parameters in the psychodrama	3
Inadequate scene setting and use of scenes	3

Table 4  
Areas of Difficulty in Auxiliary Ego Work  
as Identified by 12 Psychodrama Interns

Areas of Difficulty	Number of Interns
Having an inexperienced director	6
Lack of understanding of the role or its function	6
Distrust of personal feelings and experience	3
Role expansion	2
Being overwhelmed by personal process	1
Inadequate warm-up to the role	1
Working with a resistant protagonist	1
Taking children's roles	1

Table 5  
Things Found Helpful by 12 Psychodrama Interns  
in Learning to Direct

Helpful Things	Number of Interns
Practice in directing	7
Supervision and Critiques	6
Supportive environment	4
Observing and experiencing others direct	3

Table 5. Cont'd

Helpful Things	Number of Interns
Trusting the psychodramatic process	3
Making mistakes and learning from them	2
Doing auxiliary and doubling work	2
Personal growth work	2
Trusting personal process	1
Allowing the auxiliary egos to expand roles	1

### Discussion

Application of the Hollander Psychodrama Curve  
to the Learning Process of the Psychodrama Intern

#### Personal Growth

"The person who plans to develop his skills as a director of Psychodrama must pursue his own personal development with the same commitment that he gives to his professional training.... he must synthesize what he knows with who he is" (Blatner, 1973, p.134 ).

The most significant turning points in personal growth that were identified by the Interns were as follows:-

1. Learning that mistakes are acceptable and indeed, inevitable in a student situation. Most Interns had the expectation that everything should be done perfectly the first time. Many set unreachable standards for themselves and then struggled with feelings of anger and disappointment with themselves when the

standards could not be met. The mistakes they made were in fact a fruitful source of learning. Most Interns came into the training program from a successful professional role and found it extremely difficult to adjust to the role of student who knows little and needs help. There is an ongoing struggle to find ways of using the many skills the Intern brings into the program without closing down to the opportunities of new learning in the area of Psychodrama. Once the Interns could allow themselves to make mistakes, the critiques from the Supervisor or from their fellow Interns, proved to be a creative source of help rather than an ordeal. " Maximum growth occurs when the individuals are intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually involved, and can utilize their life experiences to incorporate new learnings" (Hollander, C. & Hollander, S., 1978, p. 1 ).

2. Linked to the above, most Interns experienced a decrease in self esteem. Learning to trust who they are and what they experience and feel took time. Some were learning for the first time to express feelings e.g. anger and sadness, and then learning that this expression of feelings did not isolate them from others but rather brought them closer.

3. Reaching out to others and asking for help was the third major turning point. Allowing oneself to feel pain in oneself and in others was a new experience for some. Learning how to give and receive nurturing without imposing; to confront and be confronted without being destroyed; and to help and comfort without rescuing were important skills to acquire in this process.

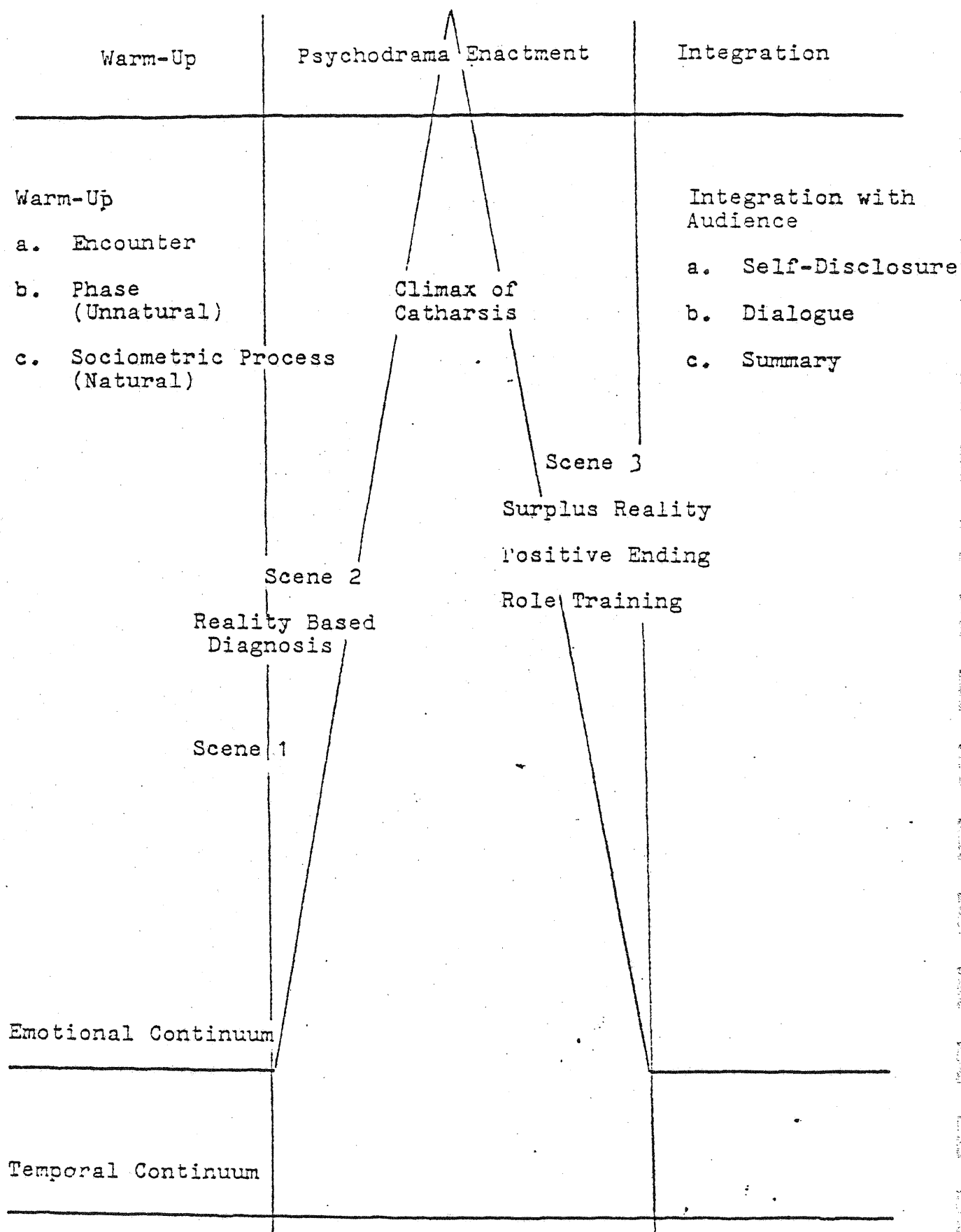


Figure 1. The Hollander Psychodrama Curve

(Hollander, 1978a, p.14)



## Hollander Psychodrama Curve and Personal Growth

With an understanding of the Hollander Psychodrama Curve, the student in Psychodrama training can give a direction to personal growth development that will enable him or her to set realistic goals. This in turn will lead to a decrease in anxiety. The Curve in no way denies variation in responses or individual differences. In fact, each student will be changing and growing in many different directions and at different paces.

### Warm-Up

a. Encounter. When a person first begins Psychodrama training, the experiences and life history already past, influence all that follows. The encounter of the 'self' occurs as the individual becomes aware of his or her physiological and psychological readiness to commence training in Psychodrama. Having an opportunity to identify personal processes is essential to the development of skills as a Psychodrama director. Unless the student is prepared to do this, then the chances of developing a feeling for or an understanding of the processes of others are minimal.

"Every human being lives by an accumulative process. In order to sustain that process, each person requires an awareness of the surrounding environment and the processes of other people who make up that environment. The clearer we are in understanding of our processes, the clearer the understanding is of the processes of our friends, family, co-workers, students, counselors and enemies ( and the clearer we will be understood by them )" (Hollander, 1978, p.178 ).

If the search for personal growth is an ongoing one, it enables the Intern to get maximum benefit from the time spent in training. Initially, the student could be asking these questions:-

What brought me to this point i.e. to commence training ?

What am I bringing with me in terms of skills, experience and previous growth ?

Who am I and how do I respond to people ?

What do I want for myself ?

The encounter of the 'other' begins as the Intern meets the Program co-ordinators and determines if they can provide an environment that will promote growth. Meeting the other Interns concludes the encounter as each person has an opportunity to be with the other and begin to learn something of the many journeys that are converging at this point.

How will I fit with you ?

How will you fit with me ?

Tenuous links begin to form in the group. This part of the process can take weeks or even months for some individuals. There is no time limit on any part of the process.

b. Phase. In the initial period of training, anxiety related to personal growth can impede spontaneity. Many people need time to test the environment and the people in it to see if it and they are trustworthy. Issues related to integrity, sexuality and spirituality can not be dealt with effectively in a group with low cohesion. For many people commencing training, as at the Colorado Psychodrama Center, the training is in a city a long way from home. That in itself is anxiety-producing as the

Intern struggles with building a Social Atom and establishing links in the community. "Every person in this culture requires a specific number of people to respond to their manifold needs.... When one's psychological social atom size falls below that which is required, energies redirect themselves toward locating people to fill the void. This search pattern exists as a priority, often at the expense of all other activities" (Hollander, 1978, p.220).

Once the anxiety begins to dissipate and spontaneity rises, the group is more able to look at issues previously inaccessible. Questions begin to surface:-

Whom do I feel close to and can talk to ?

What groups do I belong to and feel good in ?

Where do I feel safe ?

What do I need to do in order to belong ?

c. Sociometric Process. The goals of the training group begin to emerge and the norms and themes develop. The Interns seek to find their place in the group, and also in the other groups that are part of the program. Areas of difficulty begin to surface as people make choices about who they want to spend time with and who they do not want to be with.

#### The Psychodramatic Enactment

During this part of personal growth development, The Intern is exploring and experimenting with many areas of concern. Being faced with many different situations brings to the surface forgotten conflicts and anxieties from the past. Feelings emerge that appear quite unfamiliar to the Intern. As the exposure to

skill development continues, new areas of concern become apparent. This is a time of upheaval, pain and discovery.

Experiencing the psychodramas of other people draws on personal experience that may have been pushed out of sight. As each issue is worked on and integrated, another comes to light at a deeper level. The emotional involvement heightens as the person moves from issues on the periphery to those at the very center of being. The action is moving towards the apex.

Just before the apex is reached there will be a point of high resistance. The central issue may be so frightening as to immobilize the person. This issue will probably mark the turning point in the person's growth to being a director. It is essential therefore that the intern be in a supportive environment in which he or she can be encouraged to keep going. Some questions that the intern might ask are as follows:-

What issues could I work on as a protagonist ?

What situations do I find uncomfortable or difficult to handle ?

Where do I become immobilized as a director ? What goes on inside me at this point ?

What situations make me anxious ? What do I do when I am anxious ? What do I need when I am anxious ?

What feelings are difficult for me to handle either in myself or in others ?

How do I warm-up to things e.g. being a protagonist ?

How do I relate to people ? How do I affect them ?

In what situations do I feel most spontaneous ?

### Catharsis of Abreaction

"The initial scenes of a psychodrama are exploratory and disclosing in nature. Efforts to make total meaning are discouraged; for as the process is permitted to evolve, the meaning becomes cumulative and accretionary. The emotional apex of the psychodrama is that point which frequently signals the half-way point of the session. At this point the exploration and validation of the theme has been achieved, the height of emotional spontaneity reached, and the second half of the psychodramatic process begins" (Hollander, 1978b, p.199).

As the Intern begins to center in on the major issue in his or her growth as a director, all that has gone before draws together and forms a unique pattern. There comes a point which must be passed for any further growth to take place. In facing this point, the Intern experiences the change it liberates, as do the others who have been part of the growth thus far. Obvious changes begin to take place as the person integrates all that has evolved.

### Catharsis of Integration

"As the protagonist draws the session to a close, the director must aid the protagonist by introducing rehearsal-for-life situations, corrective alternatives, self-confrontation, or psychodramatic ego-repair endings. By doing this, the protagonist is encouraged to spontaneously evolve new creativity for his life without fear of

reprisal or embarrassment" (Hollander, 1978a, p.9).

The Intern applies what he or she has learnt in the context of individual life situations. There have been many issues raised and looked at. Each needs to be finished with and made sense of. It can be expected that the turning point in the personal growth area will also have great significance in the skill development area. The Intern is building a picture of his or her creative potential and determines how he or she can draw on this in the future.

#### Integration with Audience

- a. Audience Sharing
- b. Dialogue
- c. Summary

As the Intern comes to the end of the training program, he or she needs to hear from the people who have been part of the growth. Feedback will have been an ongoing part of the process but this final sharing allows others to reflect on the growth that has taken place. Open interaction amongst the group allows any unfinished business to be dealt with. Both the individual and the group needs time to summarize what this time together has been like for them "bringing feelings, experiences and thoughts into a congruous whole" (Hollander, 1978a, p.11).

As this curve only describes one part of a person's growth e.g. as a training psychodrama director, it is important to note that on completion of training, the Intern begins another curve in personal growth. The growth experienced during this period acts as a warm-up for the next period of growth.

## Skill Development

### Difficulties as a Director

The present difficulties experienced by the Interns vary depending on what level of training they are at but all could identify similar patterns of difficulties through the course of their training:-

1. All the Interns indicated overcontrol as a major problem for them when they began training as a director. This included taking all the responsibility for the psychodrama onto their own shoulders and involved constant intervention and interruption of the action. Many Interns are anxious initially and the tendency is to revert back to a role they feel comfortable in - usually that of asking questions. This manages to cut off everyone's warm-up and to increase anxiety. The Interns try to fight this overcontrol in themselves but it is probably better to go ahead and overdirect and feel the process.

2. Also part of this process is an inability to allow the auxiliary egos share the work of the drama e.g. by taking the roles and expanding them. The beginning director keeps in the middle of the action and diverts the attention of the protagonist away from the auxiliary ego so that the director and the protagonist become an isolated dyad.

3. Many Interns identified that they direct dramas with a fixed outcome in mind. They get a picture in their heads of what they see as the problem and also what the protagonist needs to do in order to resolve it. Consequently, the action

does not follow the spontaneity. One of the characteristics of spontaneity is that it be in the 'here and now' and not in the future.

4. Most Interns identified the technique of role reversal as a difficult one to learn e.g. when to role reverse, how often, when not to. Most had experienced the discomfort of leaving someone in a role too long and seeing the spontaneity disappear.

5. One of the commonest problems faced by the beginning director was that of being overwhelmed by everything e.g. how to remember all the techniques, what to do if the protagonist has a catharsis, what to do after the first scene. Feelings of panic are common and are often immobilizing.

6. One of the first things to learn is how to set a scene. Many Interns identified difficulties related to this, e.g. spending too long in setting the scene and not leaving enough time for action, not using the scene or the people in it, or moving on to the next scene too quickly.

7. All the Interns identified difficulties related to inadequate warm-ups e.g. finding the bridge between the warm-up and the action; linking the individual warm-up to a group warm-up; allowing the protagonist, group and director to fully warm-up; ensuring that the warm-up of the group is moving where the group wants to go.

8. Understanding the importance of sociometry both in the group and in the psychodrama on stage is a major difficulty for most Interns e.g. what to do when the audience goes to sleep;



determining were the protagonist fits in the family; including the most isolated member of the group in the action.

9. Difficulties around the catharsis and resistance are also common e.g. knowing when the catharsis has taken place, what to do when the protagonist refuses to do what the director instructs, identifying where the resistance is coming from.

10. Identifying the central issue and not being distracted by all the peripheral ones is a common difficulty. The Interns noted problems related to staying on the periphery and never dealing with the main issue, and also the reverse problem of going straight to the central issue without allowing a warm-up. Traumatic situations provided special problems for the Interns. Often they were frightened by the trauma itself as well as by the protagonist.

11. All the Interns related difficulties centered around knowing their own personal process and how it affected their directing. Some of these are as follows:-

- a. Trusting their own feelings as being adequate instead of trying to 'feel as they should'.
- b. Believing in themselves as having value.
- c. Recognizing that they often get caught in the protagonist's process because it is so like their own.
- d. The anxiety related to knowing what to do and when, and to how they are appearing to others.
- e. The need for parameters for themselves and for the group and the protagonist.

f. Getting in too close to the action so they lose the ability to be objective.

g. Knowing that it is alright to ask for help and what to do with it when help is given.

#### Difficulties as an Auxiliary Ego

Many Interns related their difficulties as an auxiliary ego to a lack of understanding of the function of the role. Confusion as to how to take the role, when to use their own feelings and experiences to develop the role and when to create new experiences, was part of the problem. Interns had difficulty taking roles that were similar to their own in life or to that of members of their own families. A common problem was knowing when to promote affect and when to assist the protagonist to become cognitive. Similarly, the Interns often had difficulty staying out of their heads and allowing feelings to emerge particularly when the protagonist was very verbal and articulate. Many Interns needed very clear directions from the director when learning to take auxiliary roles.

#### Application of the Hollander Psychodrama Curve

The Hollander Psychodrama Curve can be used as a guide to skill development. Combined with the concept of the learning process as having three parts, Role playing, Role Taking and Role creating, the Curve provides a focus and direction for the student to assess and guide his or her growth.

Role playing is the first step of the learning process (Moreno, 1953 ). Just as the child learns many different roles by playing them out, imitating others, making up dreams and

and enacting them with toys and games, so we can learn any new role by trying it out ourselves. We draw on someone else's cultural conserve of the role which then provides us with parameters for our own role which in turn allows spontaneity to develop. "The cultural conserve is the finished product of a creative process....it is the successful mixture of spontaneous and creative material into a permanent form" (Moreno, 1977, p. 107). The person tries out the role in many situations testing its usefulness and value. Gradually, changes are introduced into the role to fit the individual's particular life style, feelings and experience.

Role taking is the next step and involves this incorporation of the role into oneself. "The roles we chose to retain in our repertoires as well as in relationships are considered role taking - a more permanent role structure" (Hollander, 1979, p. 3). Not all roles that are role played are retained.

Role creating, the last step in the process, involves the highest level of spontaneity and included the whole process of warming-up, creative process and cultural conserve. Role creating follows the catharsis and takes place as the person creates the role to be his or her very own. Feelings, thoughts and impressions are all incorporated into the role.

#### Level 1: Role playing the director's role

The Intern comes to Psychodrama training with some concept of what a director is or begins to build this concept by watching others direct in the first few weeks of training. This acts

as a rolemodel which is used as a basis to develop the role of director for each individual. At this level, the Intern is using the experience of others who have developed their own role to act as parameters for themselves as the role of director develops. Combining this concept with that of the Curve, the following guidelines can be used by the Intern:-

1. Become familiar with the various parts of the Psychodrama Curve. Know the sequence even if you do not understand how the parts fit together.

2. Take the parts one by one and practise the techniques involved e.g. Setting a scene

- Artificial Warm-ups

- Reversing Roles

- Doubling

- Leading the sharing

3. Learn what you need to do in order to warm yourself up to the role of director e.g. Know ahead of time if you are going to direct and prepare for it. Establish what you need to do with your anxiety in order to take care of yourself. Set short term achievable goals for each drama e.g. concentrate on role reversal.

4. Define the space for the psychodrama i.e. the stage area. This is the first parameter for you, the protagonist and the group. Have the action facing the audience. Establish the time, place, circumstance and the people involved. The issue or the problem will only make sense in a context.

5. Start with the simple techniques and work up to the complex. Only direct what is within your competence e.g. empty chair rather than beginning with a classical psychodrama.

6. Determine how you want help given to you as you direct. Some people prefer to ask for help at the moment they feel immobilized. Others prefer group members to come up to them during the drama. Freezing the action and asking the group for suggestions is often profitable. No matter how you get help; remember that you are the director and need to keep the control.

7. Choose someone you trust as the auxiliary ego or the double so that they can share the responsibility with you.

8. Work as much as you can as an auxiliary ego, double and protagonist. In this way, you will also be learning about directing as you experience different styles ranging from the most skilled to the most inexperienced. Taking different auxiliary roles will add to your repertoire of roles that you have available and this will augment your directing skills.

9. As an auxiliary ego, concentrate on warming-up to the role and establishing rapport with the protagonist. Take on the role exactly as the protagonist presents it until you can feel the protagonist respond to you. Then you can begin to add your own feelings and perceptions to the role.

10. As you watch other people direct, follow the psychodrama on the Hollander Curve. Identify the warm-up, the scenes, the catharsis of abreaction, and of integration and watch what happens in the sharing. Ask yourself what you would do differently and keep notes on the questions that come up for you re the

choices the director makes. Critique the psychodrama afterwards with others so that you can learn from their perceptions as well as your own.

11. Use this same process for the psychodramas you direct yourself. Identify the areas you feel immobilized in and what was going on inside you at that moment. What could you have done differently and what are some other ways of dealing with the situations that arose. Be as creative as you can be in your critiques.

12. Finally, allow yourself to over-direct instead of fighting it. Watch what happens to the spontaneity. Be aware of what it is you do as you over-direct.

#### Level 2: Role Taking the Director Role

By now, you are feeling much more at home in the director role and have mastered many of the basic techniques. You are beginning to add many of your own feelings and ideas to the role of director and know what you are comfortable with. The role has become conserved and you can do things without thinking too much about them. The anxiety of the earlier level is not so immobilizing. The sociometry of the group is taking on a sharper focus for you. During this time, many people feel as though they will never develop any further. The novelty of directing that was so exciting initially has given way to a familiarity. Role taking by definition has the least spontaneity of the three levels.

### Some Guidelines

1. The Psychodrama Curve is becoming a process to you. Follow the spontaneity in the psychodrama and note the build-up of emotion to a catharsis. Begin to identify what you and others do to cut off the spontaneity and what enhances the spontaneity. "Spontaneity is related to the moment; has defined parameters; a specific goal: creativity; adequacy (i.e. to time, space, circumstances and people ); novelty (i.e., a quality of newness, freshness, originality, and the energy to activate one's warm-up to the expression of feelings - 'S-Factor' )". ( Hollander, 1978b, pp. 233-234).

2. Allow the auxiliary egos to facilitate the action and interaction. Stand back from the action and from the protagonist and encourage the auxiliary egos to expand and develop their roles. "He (the director) should take advantage of the fact that the auxiliary egos are extensions of his own self, permitting them to be subjectively involved but keeping himself at a distance objective and uninvolved" (Moreno, 1977, p.257). Confusion arises when the director moves from the 'here and now' of this moment in time into the 'here and now' of the scene in the protagonist's life. This happens most obviously when the director intrudes on the action e.g. coming between the protagonist and the auxiliary ego.

3. Develop a concept of parameters, what they are, and when and how to use them in a psychodrama. Establish the context of issues. Learn to direct within a time limit. Protect the protagonist and the auxiliary ego from any physical injury.

4. See the issue to be worked on as part of a process. Your role is to locate all the parts of that process. When and where did it begin; who was there and what was happening; what is the warm-up to it now; and what is the belief system behind it.

5. Concretize everything so that it becomes larger than life e.g. frustration, conflict, ambivalence, terminations, dependency etc.

6. Develop a sense for what is happening in the group. Use your knowledge of sociometry to build cohesion in the group and on the stage. Be aware of the group throughout the drama and use their energy wherever possible.

7. In the auxiliary role continue to work on expanding each role. Use everything the protagonist says as a spark for your creativity. Build into the role your own experiences, feelings and existensial reaction to the protagonist. Allow yourself to feel the role. Work on expanding the feelings and facilitating the warm-up of the protagonist in the first part of the drama .

8. Trust the psychodramatic process. " The director must trust the psychodramatic method as the final arbiter and guide in the therapeutic process" (Moreno, 1969, p. 238 ). Once you have all the characteristics of spontaneity, the process will drive on to an end without anything else needing to be done. An adequate and complete warm-up will lead on through an adequate enactment to an adequate integration.



### Level 3: Role Creating the Director's Role

Role creating is the last stage of the learning process and follows the catharsis. It also has the highest level of spontaneity. The Intern has now become skilled and capable and is ready to develop a role as a director that is totally his or her own. The blocks and resistances have been dealt with. The Intern is feeling the power of creativity and is no longer bound by the parameters of another person's role, but is developing internal parameters. From the role already developed, a warm-up begins to a totally new role that is creative and spontaneous. The Intern becomes a director and feels the power of the process.

#### Some Guidelines

1. The time before the change to Role creating from Role taking can be baffling. The resistance before the point of catharsis may be experienced as a hopelessness that things will ever change. The turning point will be different for each person but the catharsis will be around the central theme that the Intern has had most difficulty with. It is important to be patient and to get support for yourself during this process.
2. Integrating the changes will be exciting and challenging. Try to direct in as many different situations as you can, and build on your style.
3. Experience the flow of the drama and how the process takes care of itself.
4. Refine the nuances of your style e.g., how you lead a

group; how you bridge the gap between the warm-up and the enactment; how you work with the auxiliary egos.

5. In the auxiliary ego role, concentrate on working towards cognitive integration of the perceptions and feelings of the protagonist. This may involve ego-repair work which requires perception and intuition on your part as well as warmth and nurturing.

6. Enjoy being a director and the creativity it produces and promotes.

### Summary and Conclusions

Common difficulties experienced by students in psychodrama training are identified and some reasons for these difficulties are explored. The difficulties are seen to be similar to students in training regardless of the training program or the country. The Hollander Psychodrama Curve is offered as a model to enable the student of Psychodrama to understand the theory and to guide and assess personal growth and skill development. Personal growth and skill development are seen to follow the process of the Curve and guidelines are offered to the student director in each area using the development of the learning process of Role Playing, Role Taking and Role Creating.

It is hoped that this presentation will help present and future students of Psychodrama to understand their process and alleviate if not prevent, some of the difficulties experienced. Training Programs need to offer the student a warm supportive environment which facilitates learning. The Intern is then open to becoming a creative and skilled Director of Psychodrama.

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