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PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHODRAMA

Chapter 3

Principles of psychodrama

Kate Bradshaw Tauvon

Am I only a corpse that will rot and turn into meaningless dust? Or is this consciousness that I now feel extending into the cosmos the most real thing there is? In other words, am I nothing or am I God?

(Moreno 1941 quoted in Holmes *et al.* 1994: 98)

Underpinning Moreno's 'Philosophy of the Moment' is a profound belief in the infinite spontaneity and creativity of human beings all of whom are considered equal in status. His first texts written between 1908–1919 – 'Homo Juvenis', 'Das Reich der Kinder' (The Realm of the Children), 'Die Gottheit als Komödiant' (The Godhead as Comedian), 'Die Gottheit als Autor' (The Godhead as Author) and 'Die Gottheit als Redner' (The Godhead as Orator or Preacher) (see Martineau 1989) – all reflect aspects of Moreno's philosophy and were the basis for his development of *axiodrama*, a forerunner of psychodrama which explores issues of ethics, cosmic relationships or values. Protagonists are, for instance, able to review their relationship with God, life, death, the universe, Satan, the future or perfection.

According to the principle of the I-god, a philosophy developed by Moreno around 1918 in post-war Vienna, each person is both the one who creates and the one who is created and is therefore responsible for the world which they have created and everyone and everything in it. It might be too simply expressed but may be of use to suggest that Moreno means that each of us tends to project our inner world on to the world around us and it is therefore up to each of us to correct the resulting distortions in our view of the world, by the reduction of transferential relationships and the development of *tele* (I define *tele* later in this chapter). Moreno promotes the development of each person's maximum involvement in life and every person's subjective reality is accepted as equally valid.

Philosophers who influenced Moreno are known to include Socrates, Dante, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche (see Martineau 1989: 49). From these philosophical roots, Moreno came to emphasise the primacy of the original encounter and to contend that human life develops against a background of the group in which one lives and action. He, among others, stressed the necessity to alter the form taken

by culture to arrive at a more 'fruitful chaos'. Malcolm Pines, a British group-analytic psychotherapist, has pointed out that the schools of psychotherapy have different styles and metapsychologies. He likens Moreno's to the Dionysian:

In Greek mythology . . . Dionysias, Pan . . . brings from his Asiatic sources a super-abundance of creative energy with which to celebrate life that leads to a desire for destruction in order to bring about change. . . . Dionysias is always surrounded by a Bacchantic crowd, bringing cathartic release from the oppression of individuality.

(Pines 1987: 16–17)

Moreno also stressed the importance of 'experiencing' reality as a means of change rather than just talking about it, giving prime importance to the body. Moreno's sensitivity to bodily experience was important in the development of the concept of *tele*.

In a letter to an American psychodramatist, Ira Greenberg, dated 17 June 1970 (Greenberg 1974: 122) Moreno listed nine principal concepts of psychodrama: (1) warming-up principle, (2) creativity, (3) spontaneity, (4) encounter, (5) tele, (6) co-conscious and co-unconscious, (7) role, (8) role vs. ego and (9) role reversal which I will now use as a basis for describing the central principles of his theoretical frame. In addition to these nine concepts I will describe a tenth, the centrality of action: (10) action.

PRINCIPLE OF WARMING UP

Spontaneity shows itself through the warming up of a person to a new setting. All activities have a warming-up phase, before they are carried out. Take, for example, going to the cinema. Before you go, you think about the idea, think which film you would like to see and who you might go with. You may ring a friend, look in the newspaper to see what films are available and check times of buses. There are myriad small details you will attend to before you find yourself sitting in the cinema looking at the film. An inadequate warm-up will lead to an inadequately carried out activity. If you don't ring the friend they won't be there. If you don't check at which cinema your chosen film is being shown, you will probably not see the film of your choice.

In psychodrama the same can be said. The warming-up process includes details which promote an atmosphere within which a psychodrama can be enacted and is designed to increase the level of spontaneity in the group. An inadequate warm-up leads to an inadequate drama. Susie Taylor, in her chapter about the warm-up in this book, describes these processes in detail (Chapter 4).

Moreno called the warming-up process 'the *operational* expression of spontaneity' (Moreno 1953/1993: 14).

CREATIVITY AND SPONTANEITY

Moreno, in his letter to Greenberg, listed these two factors separately but as they are so intricately interconnected I will talk about them in relation to each other here.

Moreno (1953/1993: 13,19) taught us that spontaneity operates in the present, here and now. It is the energy which moves a person towards responding adequately in a situation they have not previously experienced or facilitates the capacity to come up with a new response in a familiar situation. Based on his experimental study, spontaneity came to be considered through its four characteristic expressions:

- the spontaneity which goes into the activation of cultural conserves and social stereotypes (the concept of cultural conserves are described later in this chapter);
- the spontaneity which goes into creating new organisms (considered later in this chapter, under the heading of 'co-conscious and co-unconscious'), new forms of art, and new patterns of environment;
- the spontaneity which goes into the formation of free expressions of personality;
- the spontaneity which goes into the formation of adequate responses to novel situations.

(Moreno 1946/1980: 89)

Creativity only comes to full fruition with the help of spontaneity as it is spontaneity which catalyses its substance. The degree of adequacy of response to events is brought about and facilitated by spontaneity and depends on the extent of familiarity with a situation. In a novel situation a person may have: (a) no response, (b) an old response, (c) a new response (Moreno 1946/1980: 92). An adequate new response requires a sense of timing, a sense of appropriateness and autonomy.

Spontaneity is a catalyst for creative activity. If placed on an imagined line representing a continuum, it would be positioned at the one end and anxiety at the other. Imagine a fulcrum now in the middle of the line, since they have a see-saw relationship, the higher a person's level of anxiety the lower the degree of spontaneity and vice-versa. Spontaneity should be differentiated from impulsivity, which lacks any form of creativity and can rather be described metaphorically as jumping from the frying pan into the fire. A person may have creative ideas but without spontaneity they cannot be put into practice and realised.

A creative act results often in a product: a poem, a symphony, a painting, a play; these are what Moreno called *cultural conserves*. In the moment they are complete the creative act is over and unless they are subsequently approached with spontaneity they may lose their creative quality. We have all heard a set

piece of music played with varying degrees of spontaneity and the results can be disparate. Even our level of spontaneity when seeing for example the *Mona Lisa* can vary and what on one occasion can be a profound experience, on another leaves us flat. So creativity is catapulted into being by spontaneity. Spontaneity is not a pre-existent reservoir as libido is considered to be by psychoanalysts or as energy is deemed to be according to the law of the conservation of energy. 'It is not only the process within the person, but also the flow of feeling in the direction of the spontaneity state of another person' (Moreno 1946/1980: 81).

The idea of consciously developing spontaneity may seem paradoxical, since spontaneity is often equated with impulsiveness, but psychodrama predominantly works at the level of training up group members' spontaneity and creativity in order to more adequately respond in a given moment to life events. This can be done by continuously placing group members in situations which demand a response and providing the opportunity for them to try out a range of alternatives with the help of the director and the group. I am reminded here of Moreno's suggestion that what is functional in the free association in psychoanalysis is not the association of words but the spontaneity which propels them to associate (Moreno 1946/1980: xii).

ENCOUNTER

In the spring of 1914–15 Moreno published in three parts *Einladung zu einer Begegnung* (Invitation to an Encounter) which included his first written definition of encounter, the concept which became central to the existential movement. In his motto for *Psychodrama: First Volume*, he used the idea of two people exchanging eyes to comprehend and know each other.

A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face.
 And when you are near I will tear your eyes out
 and place them instead of mine
 and you will tear my eyes out
 and will place them instead of yours,
 then I will look at you with your eyes
 and you will look at me with mine.
 (Moreno 1946/1980: preface)

The principle of encounter, is essential to the philosophy of psychodrama, the ability to meet others, being as present and aware as is possible and each being capable of mentally reversing roles with the other. The concept of encounter shifted the focus of psychotherapy from the separate individual level, to that of the primary dyad and in that way to the interpersonal level, the area between people. In this way Moreno's theory of interpersonal relations was to contribute to a new epoch in the history of psychotherapy. He writes:

The theory of interpersonal relations is based upon the 'primary dyad,' the idea and experience of the meeting of two actors, the concrete-situational event preliminary to all interpersonal relations. The limiting factor in the individual centred psychologies and mass centred psychologies is the non-presence of the 'other actor.'

(Moreno 1993: 36)

It was this shifting of focus which was to differentiate psychodrama at that time from other forms of psychotherapy.

Encounter is the experience which occurs when a person immediately and meaningfully confronts himself in relation to important people either in his life or as portrayed by *auxiliaries* on the psychodrama stage. Zerka Moreno has, in the last few years, preferred to use the simpler term 'auxiliary', without the added 'ego' and what she has referred to as the 'auxiliary world' (Blatner and Blatner 1988: 160). The auxiliary does not only represent aspects of the protagonist's ego but also other aspects of himself.

Within a psychodrama it is not only possible to encounter *the other* but even to encounter *the self* (see Williams 1989: 17). Through the use of the empty chair technique or with the help of auxiliaries, it is possible to *concretise* and dramatise the self. It soon becomes apparent that the self is not one figure but several, existing in what can be called a system of aspects of the self. This system can be represented on the stage where a dialogue can be created, between such parts, inevitably changing the quality of the relationship (or *tele*) between these aspects of the self. This improved inner *tele* occurs as the relationship becomes visible through the dramatic dialogue. The relationship between these inner aspects of self is known as *auto-tele*.

Concretisation is the term used to describe the act of converting the concept of a role, a figure, a metaphor or scene into a concrete image on the psychodrama stage. Aspects of a person or her world can be concretised on the psychodrama stage by dramatically focusing on her operational roles and the pattern of surrounding role-relations.

TELE AND TRANSFERENCE

Tele is a concept born of Moreno's work on *sociometry*, the measurement of relationships between people. Tele describes the flow of feeling between people and expresses itself in terms of authentic here-and-now exchanges, or encounter. It was deemed by Moreno to be the decisive factor for therapeutic progress (Moreno 1946/1980: xviii) and is the process which attracts individuals to one another or which repels them. Most communication contains a mixture of both transference and tele but a goal of psychodrama is to minimise transference aspects of a relationship and maximise authentic communication. I will describe tele in relation to transference in some depth as it is so central to Moreno's theoretical approach.

The etymological root of the word 'tele' is from the Greek and means 'far, influence into distance' (Moreno 1946/1980: xi). It represents the capacity to sense, without words, the relationship between people and is the invisible bond which holds groups together. It is a two-way process, in contrast to the one-way feeling of empathy.

Transference is a concept born of Freud's psychoanalytic theory. It refers to the process, both in therapy and in real life, of unconsciously re-enacting patterns of relating, in current relationships, which have been learnt in infancy and *repressed*. A useful discussion of the concept of transference from the perspective of a psychodramatist is taken up by Paul Holmes in *The Inner World Outside: Object Relations Theory and Psychodrama* (1992).

According to Moreno's theory of child development, tele is initially undifferentiated. He defines the infant's 'first universe' as the first two developmental phases, in which he goes through two periods: first the period of 'all identity' where all things including himself are not differentiated but are experienced as one total entity; the second period is that of 'differentiated all-identity' or 'all-reality' in which people and things including himself have become differentiated (Moreno 1946/1980: 68). There is as yet no significant difference made between the real and the imagined, between animated and dead, between appearances of things (mirror images) and things as they really are.

With time, a tele for objects differentiates itself from a tele for people, positive and negative tele become distinct, as do tele for real objects and tele of imagined objects. This occurs at the onset of what Moreno defines as the 'second universe' (1946/1980: 72), when the personality normally becomes divided into two parts or pathways; one which warms up to reality acts and another which warms up to fantasy acts. These parts organise themselves and, depending on their degree of separateness, a person has greater or lesser difficulty in switching between them in order to gain mastery over their life. No person can live in an entirely real world or in an entirely imagined world. The cosy uniformity of the first universe is gone and the remaining breach bears with it the risk of inertia, arising from a blocking of spontaneity. As long as a person lives he tries to merge the original breach and since this is rarely possible even when most integrated, 'the human personality has a tragic touch of *relative* imperfection' (Moreno 1946/1980: 73).

In psychodrama one moves easily between these two parts or pathways in the realm of '*surplus reality*'. One can enact not only scenes that involve actual events in one's life but also the scenes that, as Zerka Moreno has said, 'have never happened, will never happen, or can never happen' (personal communication). These inner scenes, which may represent hopes, fears or unfinished psychological business, often have a strong influence on our lives and are sometimes experienced as being more real than the events of everyday life. These imagined scenes can be concretised, placed over and above life and beyond the grip of the ego. Leif Dag Blomkvist, a Swedish psychodramatist, points out that within surplus reality scenes 'an object only represents itself and does not stand for any hidden

thing. What is more important than explaining and interpreting is that one becomes involved in these new and unfamiliar experiences and bears the tension' (Blomkvist and Rützel 1994: 242). Psychodrama was also named 'the Theatre of Truth' by Moreno, since he saw the spheres of people's emotions, imagination and surplus realities as equally essential to their existential truths.

Transference is the repeating of a relationship pattern which is historic but which is played out in the present, whereby old patterns of relating are projected on to someone in the vicinity, in one-to-one analytic therapy, the therapist. Moreno considered that transference is not a one-way process even if an analyst tries as much as possible to be a 'blank screen' and described that the process does not occur in relation to a person but to a role (Moreno and Moreno 1959/1975: 8). The role which the therapist represents for the patient may be that of a parent, a higher authority, a lover, the perfectly adjusted individual and the therapist may fall into experiencing complementary roles.

It is not only in the protagonist's relationship with the director, that transference (a Freudian concept) and tele (a Morenian concept) can be observed but also in relation to group members or the group as an entity. An aim of psychodrama is to increase reality-based here-and-now communication and diminish *projection*. This is achieved by bringing into awareness the nature of the transference relationship largely via the auxiliaries. The etymological root of *projection* is the Latin for 'throwing in front of oneself' (Cox 1992: 165). It is the professional, psychological term which describes the process by which specific impulses, wishes, aspects of the self are felt to be located outside the self. In this way, ego-alien aspects of the self are often projected and displaced into other people. It is not unusual for alien aspects of the self to be projected into a part of the body, for example the stomach or back, which then is described as being 'the problem'.

Holmes gives us some tips on how to spot transference:

The relationship between psychotherapist and patient in individual therapy can be considered to consist of three elements:

1. those (not reality-based) aspects of the relationship derived from the patient's inner world (transference);
2. those similar aspects based on the therapist's inner world (counter-transference);
3. additionally, as a rule, if the patient is not too deeply disturbed, a reality-based here-and-now relationship. Psychoanalysts call this the therapeutic or treatment alliance. It is an adult-to-adult contract and, in Moreno's terms, it is an encounter involving tele.

(Holmes 1992: 46)

The example of Louise illustrates the interplay and differences between transference and tele:

Louise

Louise, who has recently joined an on-going therapy group, conveys what are experienced as excessively positive feelings towards the male therapist and excessively antagonistic feelings towards me and to a lesser extent the group. Her responses seem to be of a transferential nature. They have the quality of having to do with feelings she has towards other significant people in her life from long ago, rather than of a tele nature, which would have to do with feelings evoked in relation to the therapists and the group relevant to the here-and-now situation. She has experienced psychodrama before and is of the opinion that it is only in the protagonist position that she will gain anything from the group. She demonstrated this in early sessions by loudly criticising dramas and such like, when not selected to work on stage.

Often the protagonist of the previous session has the privilege of speaking first, allowing them to share reflections after their work. This time the group has just sat down in a circle at the beginning of a session when Louise, who was not the previous group's protagonist, lets fly a long harangue on how badly I had treated her in the previous session. What I had done was to set a very firm limit on her interventions in order to be able to work with another person on stage. Her anger is a direct response to my action but originated in deep-seated expectations of me, primed in her earlier relationship with her mother.

My co-therapist now asks her to reverse roles with me, a hard task when she is so angry. She accepts the direction and tries to go into my role. At first it is very difficult and she takes the opportunity of criticising the other group members. She persists though and after a while she gets in touch with what options a director might have in that situation. Through role reversal she can correct transference distortions. She feels that she has gained some insight and is much calmer. My limit-setting had been frightening. She needed me in the role of 'good mother', did not trust me, as she had not been able to trust her mother and interpreted my limit-setting as a rejection of her. Understanding of the 'bad mother' transference was facilitated by looking at a tele relationship through role reversal.

Locus nascendi, matrix and Status nascendi

In psychodrama, the moment at which the tele relationship was harmed and a person's emotional development was arrested can be returned to in order to re-establish a healthy two-way relationship. Moreno used the terms, *locus nascendi*, *matrix* and *status nascendi* to describe respectively the place, surrounding conditions and specific moment when a response to a situation emerged (Moreno 1946/1980: 55). Survival techniques we learned as children represent the best response to a given situation we could achieve at that time but are often not the most creative response to similar events we experience as adults. Where a response to a situation is no longer adequate, the *status nascendi* can be approximated on the psychodrama stage in terms of time, place and person. The director can enable the protagonist to return to a scene to;

- 1 re-experience the original feelings;
- 2 bring into awareness the prevailing physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual conditions;
- 3 creatively revise the scene;
- 4 experience catharsis and gain insight on all those levels;
- 5 thus providing an opportunity for re-integration.

The following example of Eve describes this process.

Eve

Eve talks about the loneliness she experiences in her work situation. As she works on stage the director asks her when was the first time that she recalls feeling so alone in her life. Eve sets a scene where she, aged 5, and her parents are sitting by a lake with her new baby brother lying in the arms of her mother. Her feelings of alienation arise in this place, the locus. The matrix in Morenian terms is the background of relationships and conditions surrounding Eve around the time of her brother's birth; the status nascendi is the temporal factor, the specific moment when the response emerged. In the scene Eve receives help from a double in expressing to her parents what she is feeling and what she needs. Eve's parents are able to explain why their attention is so much on the new baby; apologise for their neglect of Eve; express their love for her and introduce her to her new little brother, letting her know that there is a special place in the family for them both.

CO-CONSCIOUS AND CO-UNCONSCIOUS

The co-conscious and co-unconscious concepts of Moreno, are to be differentiated from the phenomenon of conscious and unconscious states described by Freud and the collective unconscious defined by Jung. Moreno states that the co-conscious and co-unconscious are phenomena which can be seen in relation to what he termed the 'inter-psyche'. He defines a concept which describes a two-way process whereby two or several individuals are interlocked within a system of co-unconscious states (Moreno 1946/1980: vii). The inter-psyche of a group can be made external and explicit through psychodrama techniques, thereby making manifest the tele relations, the co-conscious and co-unconscious states. These states have been experienced *jointly* by partners, family members or closely connected group members and can therefore only be reproduced or re-enacted jointly. 'A co-conscious or co-unconscious state cannot be the property of one individual only, it is common property' (Moreno 1946/1980: vii).

People who live in close symbiosis, like mother and child or like the famous couple of Greek folklore Philemon and Baucis, develop in the course of time a common content, or what might be called a 'co-unconscious'. I have frequently been confronted with emotional difficulties arising between individuals living in close proximity. I was not then treating one person or the other, but an inter-personal relationship or what one may call an inter-personal neurosis.

(Moreno and Moreno 1959/1975: 50)

Within a group the intricate network of relationships formed between protagonists and auxiliaries is the foundation for the therapeutic work. A protagonist in one drama may later play an auxiliary in another, building a shared network of emotional and cognitive traces which are more or less conscious – the co-conscious and co-unconscious. This network of traces is based on tele and is often experienced without being named.

Monica Zuretti, an Argentinian psychodramatist who has developed these concepts of Moreno, states (Holmes *et al.* 1994: 214): 'Man develops his life in successive matrices – genetic, maternal, identity, family, social and cosmic'; this network 'belongs to the secret realm of the genetic or cosmic knowledge'. Birth occurs at a moment in time and space, when the co-unconscious forces merge, in a place where a choice is made between life and death. This is what Moreno referred to when he talked about 'the spontaneity which goes into creating new organisms'. The first beginnings of roles, proto-roles, are expressed physiologically and are known as psychosomatic roles, such as that of eater, or sleeper. The first psychosomatic role, or proto-role emerging from the cosmic co-unconscious is that of 'contacter', enacted at the meeting of sperm and ovum, where tele reveals itself at a microcosmic level. All creative acts occur at a junction of holding relationships, both emotional and physical, where the co-unconscious

develops and nourishes the creative process. This is true within the psychodrama process too.

ROLE

The word role has its etymological roots in old French being taken from the Latin 'rotula'. In Greece and also in ancient Rome, the parts of the theatre were written on 'rolls' and read by the prompters to the actors who tried to memorise their parts by heart. . . . Role is thus not by origin a sociological or psychiatric concept; it came into the scientific vocabulary via the drama. Role is the functioning form the individual assumes in the specific moment he reacts to a specific situation in which other persons or objects are involved.

(Moreno 1946/1980: iv)

Moreno called the phase of development both before and after birth, when the infant lives in an undifferentiated world, 'the matrix of identity' (Moreno 1946/1980: iii). This may be considered to be the locus (place) from which the self and its manifest aspects, the roles, emerge. There are two main roles which arise early on during an infant's development: the role of giver and the role of receiver. A certain role expectancy results from the quality of interchange occurring between the infant and the carer, which lays the foundation stone for the capacity to give and take in all future relationships. Dalmiro Bustos, an Argentinian psychodramatist (1994: 70–71) has developed Moreno's theory of the development of self through role clusters and states that there are three role clusters. The earliest roles, defined by Bustos as Cluster One, have a dynamic which is passive-dependent-incorporative and they are learned mostly in relation to the mother figure. Roles in Cluster Two have to do with the performance of active roles which involve work, self-confidence, the capacity to achieve and to exercise power. They presuppose a prevalence of autonomy and activity and are learned mostly in relation to the father figure. The prototype of Cluster Three roles is the fraternal relationship where one learns to play, to compete, to rival and to share. Such roles have to do with imposing limits, taking care of possessions and attacking or defending one's self from aggression. Through developing these roles and expanding our role repertoire, that is to say the collection of roles one is able to play adequately; each of us learns to look after ourself more fully. All of us have experienced developmental obstacles through the excesses, failings or absences of others during our growing towards a mature self, which have left resulting scars. Thinking in terms of role clusters and identifying the areas requiring focus, can assist us in moving from transferential relationships towards tele relationships.

Role assessment is an integral part of this process of change. Max Clayton (1994: 139–142) has developed Moreno's theories concerning role assessment/role analysis. He has described role systems in terms of:

- 1 fragmenting and dysfunctional role system (archaic roles needed for survival but now undesirable),
- 2 coping role system (roles for dealing with situations in which survival is threatened),
- 3 progressive functional role system (desirable roles which are developing or well-developed).

By plotting roles within the various role systems a director can assist a protagonist in determining what is adequate, overdeveloped, underdeveloped, conflicted or absent in their role repertoire. Here it is role training, which aims to develop identified, limited aspects of a person's professional or personal functioning rather than a more wide-ranging psychotherapeutic process which psychodrama entails.

ROLE vs. EGO

Moreno argued that roles arise before the self and that they strive towards clustering and unification (Moreno 1946/1980: iii). Before a person is able to experience their unification, or what might be called a sense of self, operational links must be established between the physiological, social and psychological role clusters. Hypothetically the operational self emerges whilst the latent metapsychological self is still to emerge. Auto-tele is yet to be developed. 'The tangible aspects of what is known as "ego" are the roles in which he operates, with the pattern of role-relationships around an individual as their focus' (Moreno 1946/1980: v). Moreno states that, in the first stage of development after birth, the 'matrix of identity', no differentiation is made between internal and external, between objects and people, between psyche and environment, but all is one. The psychosomatic roles then help the infant experience their 'body', the psychodramatic roles facilitate the infant's experience of 'psyche' and the social roles to create what we call 'society'. *'Body, psyche and society are then the intermediary parts of the self'* (Moreno 1946/1980: iii).

ROLE REVERSAL

Moreno describes the five stages which represent the psychological bases for all role processes and for such phenomena as imitation, identification, projection and transference (Moreno 1946/1980: 61–62). I have interpreted these stages in the following way:

- 1 *The stage of the matrix of identity* the stage of the all-identity or mother/baby unit. Moreno described the mother as the baby's natural double.
- 2 *The stage of the double* the infant focuses on the stranger part of himself or 'mother'. The baby is mother's natural double.

- 3 *The stage of the mirror* the infant focuses on the stranger part of himself which is lifted out and all the other parts, including himself are omitted.
- 4 *The stage of role reversal* the infant places himself actively in the other part and acts its role.
- 5 *The stage of reversal of identity* the infant acts in the role of the other towards someone else, who in turn acts his role. It is only after completion of this stage that he has the capacity to assume his own identity fully.

Moreno described role reversal as the fourth stage in his theory of childhood development; the first stage being that which he terms both the all-identity and the matrix of identity, where the infant and mother have a shared identity and where the mother is the child's natural double. During the second and third stages of development, the infant has begun to recognise himself as separate from others and has developed a concept of self; but the capacity for role reversal requires that the child has developed to the fourth stage. This occurs at the onset of the second universe, where the child has learned to differentiate in the areas of time, place and person, and is capable of moving out of his own position into the position of the other to be able to act his part. The final stage, that of reversal of identity, the precursor to assuming one's own identity, is not fully developed until the 'child' has completed the separation from the originally shared identity and as it were stepped into his own shoes. This last stage is perhaps rarely more than partially completed even in adulthood. Three of these stages, stages two, three and four, have their counterpart in the psychodramatic therapeutic techniques of the double, the mirror and the role reversal.

The double is a group member or person trained in the technique of doubling, who takes on the role of another person, with him. What you see, is two people, who represent one person. The double echoes the physical position of the person he doubles and tries to express what he experiences in that role.

The mirror technique involves a person (A) demonstrating that he has perceived and understood something that another person (B) has conveyed. Person (A) mirrors back through action, what he has witnessed, thereby letting person (B) know that he has been seen and to some extent understood. Person (B) recognises himself in the 'mirror'.

The act of reversing roles involves physically changing places and stance with another, who changes places with you and each goes into and explores the other's role. Effectively one can see oneself through the eyes of another. These techniques are described by Moreno in *The Essential Moreno* (Fox 1987: 130–132).

According to Morenian theory, unity and integration come first before there is differentiation; then comes the important discovery of the child of a sense of self and only then can one place oneself in someone else's shoes. Since the time when Moreno developed his theory of child development, much infant research has been carried out and new theories of child development have evolved. Olivia Lousada, in her chapter in this book on the clinical use of psychodrama, presents

new theoretical developments and places the technique of role reversal within that frame of reference.

ACTION

The activity in the warm-up phase in psychodrama discloses the social structure between the group members by demonstrating their movement and positions in space with regard to one another. The movement stimulates energy and awakens body memories in each person and by focusing on and maximising what feels like a natural posture and pace, group members become more aware of what psychological processes are active in them at the moment. Additional to the social and psychological awakening and focusing, activity is considered to stimulate the functioning of the endocrine system which promotes the body's natural healing process. Peter Parkinson, an Australian General Practitioner and psychodramatist actively stimulates glandular function through the psychodramatic development of roles. When working with a patient with asthma, for example, he nurtures the adrenal gland.

By nurturing the adrenal gland I mean to encourage it to secrete its hormones in appropriate amounts at appropriate times. In other words I am asking the hormones to play their part in facilitating spontaneity in the production of adequate and appropriate roles. By doing this the wheezing should be reduced to its psychosomatic purpose. There are two parts to the adrenal gland:

- the medulla which secretes adrenaline and
- the cortex that secretes steroids (Hydrocortisone among others) . . .

Extremes of adrenaline production are achieved in the **Congruent Expression of Outrage**. It would seem prudent, therefore, to treasure this role in the development of a culture free of psychosocial wheezing.

(Parkinson 1996: 38)

When one listens to a person talking about something that has happened, the story is told in the third person, past-tense. This distancing diminishes the intensity of experience in contrast to seeing the experience on-stage which heightens and clarifies the experience. It is easy to hide behind words, most of us are experts at it, but seeing our story in action is innovative. As Moreno (1946/1980: 65) points out, a child warms up to spontaneous acts with such a degree of intensity that every particle of his being participates in this experience and this intensity is reflected by the fully spontaneous subject on the psychodramatic stage. By involving the body in the psychotherapeutic process the experience is deepened and brings to the moment all the information the protagonist has stored in his being. The inclusion of touch in the process of the drama often contributes invaluable to the therapeutic process, whether inherently protective and nurturing,

representative of the rough and tumble of siblings or outright aggressive (directed in a form that no one in the group is physically harmed). As in all forms of body therapy the leader has an awareness of and respects special ethical considerations in regard to physical contact.

Psychodrama can involve re-enacting events of the past in order to re-integrate them. Peter Felix Kellermann, a Swedish psychodramatist who lives in Israel, states that: 'this principle of "act-completion" is congruent with psychoanalytic practice, and . . . psychodramatic enactment is not defensive aggression opposed to working through but rather regression in the service of the ego, a therapeutic process of re-organisation' (Kellermann 1992: 129). He goes on to say that: 'No adequate therapy is possible unless all actions – whether emotional, cognitive or behavioural – are allowed to emerge within the therapeutic setting.'

Moreno's original term for what is now known as psychodramatic enactment, was 'acting out'. This term has since so often been used to describe the 'acting out' of unconscious behaviour elicited within analytic therapy but enacted outside the therapeutic environment that the term is seldom used in its original meaning.

Moreno said concerning acting out:

When I introduced this term (1928), it meant acting *that* out which is within the patient, in contrast to acting a role which is assigned to the patient by an outsider. It did not mean that they should not be acted out because they camouflage a form of resistance (psychoanalytic view). I meant just the opposite – that they should be acted out because they may represent important inner experiences of the patient which otherwise remain camouflaged and difficult if not impossible to interpret. In psychodramatic thinking, acting from within, or acting out, is a necessary phase in the progress of therapy.

(Moreno 1946/1980: x)

Here Moreno differentiates between 'irrational incalculable acting out in life itself, harmful to the patient or others, and therapeutic, controlled acting out taking place within the treatment setting.'

CONCLUSION

The '*philosophy of the moment*', developed by J.L. Moreno, is psychodrama's foundation stone. Moreno propounded a world-view within which all human beings are considered infinitely spontaneous and creative and equal in status. This stance then should be the starting point for the director of any psychodrama session. The director should be aware of the physiological signals of the group members; she makes use of physical *warm-ups*; she has an awareness of group members' body tensions, and may facilitate their body memories; she aims to stimulate the body's healing processes; in a process of psychotherapeutic

self-exploration through dramatic method in the here-and-now. This of course involves *action*.

Central to the method of psychodrama is Moreno's concept of *encounter*, which requires authenticity and the maximum of involvement in meeting oneself and others in the here-and-now. This leads to a greater awareness of *tele*, the flow of feeling between people, which in turn enables us to adequately respond to others. An awareness of the concepts of the *co-conscious* and *co-unconscious* provides us with the means to define problems in terms of interpersonal issues rather than those of an isolated individual. An understanding of *role theory* provides an instrument for the analysis of group members' *roles* and *role repertoires*, the quantity of available roles a person can enact with adequacy at a given time. An awareness of group members' role repertoires may guide a director when auxiliaries are being selected for a psychodrama, since a person's role repertoire can be expanded by playing roles which are underdeveloped. The capacity to *role reverse* enables us to see ourselves and others from new perspectives and facilitates moves towards self actualisation. The intermediary parts of the self are body, psyche and society.

Moreno wanted us to adopt his philosophy and principles, in order to work towards improving the world, by combating the negative effects of mechanisation, robotism in humanity and stereotypy – what he considered to be a living death or 'normosis'. It was his aim and can be ours, to develop spontaneity and creativity in order to co-create the world we live in.

The infinite spaces and the starry sky above us have been symbols to our ancestors that there is a place for everyone to live. They have been a perennial challenge to the inventiveness of man to create the means necessary to the survival of all.

(Moreno 1934/1953/1993: 246)

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