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Founded by J. L. Moreno, 1947

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Purpose and Strategy Behind the Magic Shop

ALTON BARBOUR

ABSTRACT. The magic shop is an integrative activity familiar to many psychodrama directors and group facilitators. It is believed to have been used by psychodramatists for over 40 years, but there is no publication available that elaborates on the resources and strategies available to the facilitator of the activity. This article provides that description, emphasizing the logic behind the strategy and the personal growth potential that the experience holds.

PSYCHODRAMA DIRECTORS PROVIDE some warming-up experiences for groups, when the groups are newly formed, in order to generate information about the members and open them up to one another. Other exercises, which are provided for the group once it has matured, are believed to be integrative and culminating (Treadwell, Stein, & Kumar, 1990). One of those integrative experiences that appears in the repertoire of many psychodramatists is the magic shop. J. L. Moreno refers to the magic shop in *Psychodrama, Vol. I (1964)* as an established activity and gives as an example a session with a patient that took place in 1948. The magic shop in *Psychodrama, Vol. I (1964)* as an established activity and gives as an example a session with a patient that took place in 1948. The 1970; Blatner, 1973; Greenberg, 1974; Leveton, 1977). I think that part of its longevity and popularity as a psychodramatic activity is twofold: It manages in one session to fill the needs of the various group members simultaneously, even if their needs are inordinately different. Nearly every person in the group manages to take away something personally meaningful from the experience. Second, it is integrative in that it allows the individual to take what he or she has learned in the group and to look for ways in which this might be incorporated into useful and productive behavior outside of the group. It calls for honest self-evaluation and sets the stage for personal growth in the future. For these reasons, the magic

shop bridges the gap between the intensive group experience and the take-home applications for achieving personal growth.

What is remarkable about the magic shop is that, even in the hands of an inexperienced group leader, it seems to have the capacity for providing a successful group experience. Moreover, in the hands of a skilled director, it can provide a group experience that is powerful, memorable, and highly therapeutic. It is as if the activity provides the entire group with license for a shared catharsis of integration, all the more remarkable because it takes place in a setting that is not anchored in reality. Quite the opposite, the setting for the exercise is one of mutually agreed upon fantasy, or surplus reality.

A Typical Scenario

In spite of the fact that the magic shop has been around for over 40 years and is a well-established resource for psychodramatists, there is no available explanation of the logic and strategy behind this deceptively simple exercise. When a psychodramatist opens a magic shop and when a group member comes forward to participate in the exercise, what are they both trying to get done, and how can the director best facilitate the exercise? These are the issues and questions that this article addresses.

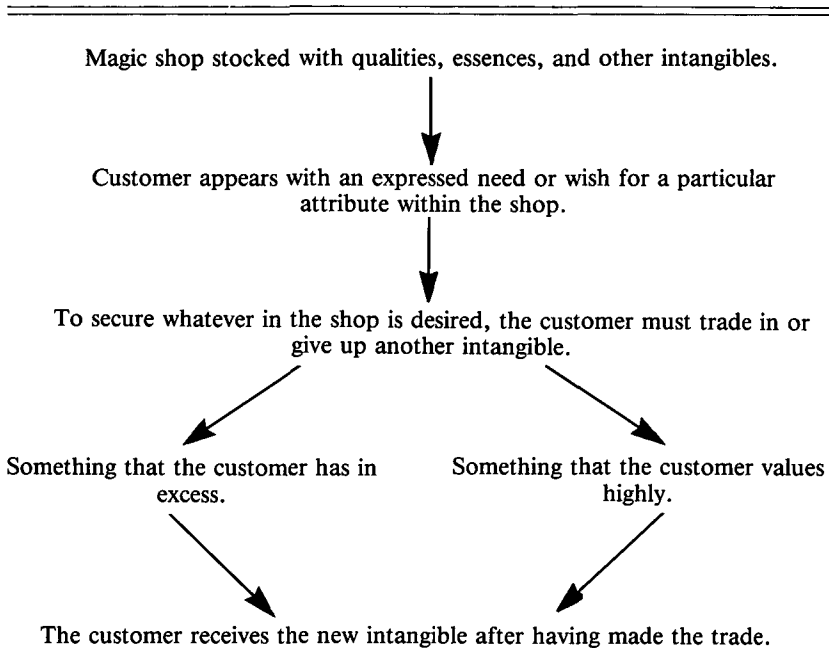
In a typical magic shop scenario, one person, the psychodrama director, acts as the keeper or proprietor of a shop that contains no objects, only intangibles and essences. Others in the group assume the roles of potential customers, which means that they are also potential protagonists or auxiliaries. A variation on the typical scenario might have one of the group members acting as the shopkeeper or having the shopkeeper role rotate among the group members. Whereas a customer cannot purchase or acquire a million dollars or a better grade or a new Porsche or an advanced degree, a customer can find traits or qualities such as warmth, openness, assertiveness, or tranquility. Individuals who participate in the magic shop often do so because in previous sessions they have gone through some self-assessment and are at the point at which they may feel the need for some particular intangible traits or qualities that the magic shop may provide. The customer who experiences the need then comes to the shop and asks for the intangible that he or she desires. The keeper of the magic shop explores the request with the customer and provides the intangible in varying amounts, depending upon the needs of the customer and the proposed use of the purchase. It is at this point that some bargaining is likely to occur. The ground rules for the bargaining are as follows:

1. The customers ask for what they believe they need or would like to have.

2. There is no cash exchange (even in fantasy) for what is acquired because the intangibles cannot be purchased with money. In exchange, customers are expected to trade in an intangible that they either prize highly or have in excess.

The psychodramatic exploration of the magic shop customer may occur in three areas. The first area is in the concerns or difficulties that lead the customer to express the need for the intangible. The second is in what the customer will have to give up in order to get what he or she wants from the shop. Ideally, there will be a match or appropriateness between what is acquired and what is exchanged. The third potential area for psychodramatic exploration is what it might be like to have the new quality and to incorporate it into an improved self. A schematic of the magic shop appears in Table 1.

TABLE 1
A Schematic of a Magic Shop



Director as a Wizard

Thus far, what has been described has the appearance of a relatively simple trade-off. Customers appear and ask for what they want. They receive an intangible from the magic shop and leave another intangible in exchange. If nothing more than this exchange occurs, then the exercise can be productive, depending upon how insightful the participants are about what they believe they are lacking and will receive and what they will need to give up. What takes this exercise out of the realm of the ordinary and into the realm of the remarkable is how the keeper of the magic shop bargains with the customer about the trade-off.

What is often apparent is that participants are not all that insightful about what they need and what they will have to give up. For that, it is helpful for them to have the perspective and feedback of the group and the skillful facilitation of the shopkeeper. In an effectively run session, the participant will quite often come to the magic shop for one intangible and leave with a different one or may want to trade one quality but end up trading a different one. Whether the exchange is an appropriate one can be clarified in the psychodramatic exploration of what is wanted and what is to be traded. Each customer is a protagonist. Each exchange in the magic shop is a minidrama or vignette. Group members may have insights they wish to share with the shopkeeper and the customer about the trade-off, and they may want to assist in the negotiating process. They can do this by suggesting alternatives to be tried out by the shopkeeper and customer to determine which decision seems best. They can also do this in auxiliary positions by exploring and testing the customer's decisions in old and new roles to arrive at a sense of appropriateness. In addition to the group-centered fantasy aspect of the exercise, it is this "goodness of fit" that occurs during the trade-off that makes the experience appear so mystical.

Purpose and Strategy Behind the Exchange

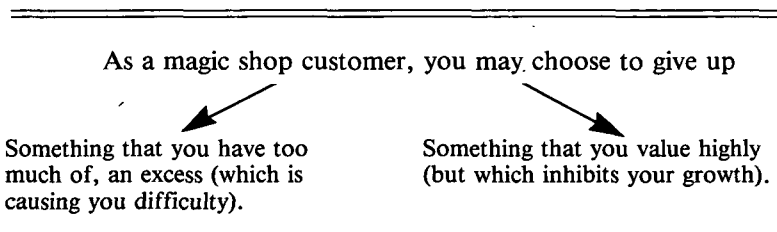
What kind of strategy can the magic shop owner use to make this exercise more rewarding for the participants? The first area that the psychodrama director might scrutinize is the expressed need of the customer. The director can explore with the customer whether what is requested is really needed and how seriously needed. Is the customer asking for something that is basic and essential to his or her emotional survival, or is the customer seeking something that might be seen as an important personal goal or a desired change that would be an improvement on the present self? The exercise allows the customer to show up at the magic shop, expressing a lack or deficiency, a wish or want. It is the presenting problem

for the minidrama and is worth understanding in order to decide later what must be given up to get the need met. The psychodrama director can take the customer at his or her word or can further explore the nature of the need and the importance of the want. The second opportunity the director has for analysis and strategy is the choice point at which the customer and the shopkeeper decide what has to be given up in order to get what is needed. A slightly elaborated version of the options in the previous schematic is shown in Table 2.

Rather than simply giving the customer what is asked for without exploration, the keeper of the magic shop may wish to interact with the customer about what is needed and what the customer should give in trade. For example, a customer may want to deal only in positives. He might say, "I am exceedingly generous, and so I can give up part of that; and in exchange, I would like to be even more compassionate than I am already." Of course, customers can get whatever they want at the magic shop and can leave whatever they choose, but on the face of it, this kind of offered trade does not appear to be a productive one. First of all, the proposed exchange appears to be an avoidance of any kind of challenge. Second, there is no apparent match between what is given up and what is acquired. Finally, this kind of trade-off does not appear to fit the metaphor of personal growth that the magic shop represents because the exchange involves no apparent sacrifice by the customer. (I will return later to the idea of the metaphor that the magic shop may represent.) Ordinarily, the customer will want to acquire an intangible that satisfies a need or want and is somehow seen as an improvement. But the question remains: What will the customer give in order to improve?

It is helpful to look upon the alternatives for what the customer is to give in trade as being negative, even if they sound like highly positive words. That is why it is necessary for the psychodrama director to keep in mind the phrases "which is causing you difficulty" and "but which inhibits your growth." A customer may want to give up skepticism because it sounds

TABLE 2
Possible Options for the Customer



negative and to acquire hopefulness or trust because it sounds positive. That sounds like an appropriate trade-off because one is the opposite of the other. A healthy skepticism, however, is not all that bad, and trust should be selective. With a skillful director administering the magic shop, the customer can come to understand that too much openness, frankness, humility, pride, patience, and discipline (all of which sound good) can be excesses that cause him or her difficulty. A person can be too patient or too humble or too disciplined. Participants can also come to understand that something that they value highly, such as independence, self-control, idealism, generosity, or dependability, may keep them from having something else that they want to have.

I remember very well a magic shop conducted by Zerka Moreno in which the customer had to give up some status and prestige, which he valued greatly, in order to have a few friends. His difficulty was captured in the old maxim "Love flees authority." He had worked for years to achieve status and superiority, only to discover that he was now unapproachable and isolated. I remember another magic shop in which a sweet, kind, cooperative, and gentle woman had to give up some of those admirable qualities because she was unable to stand up for herself and subsequently was taken for granted and frequently used by others. It may be difficult for the customer to give up something so highly valued, but it may be necessary to do so in order to get what is wanted.

Arete and Hamartia

Here is the paradox that the magic shop confronts and explores. The customer comes in because of a felt need or deficiency, such as some developmental deficit or character flaw. That is where the exchange begins, but what often gets explored in the minidrama is an overdevelopment, something the individual has in excess or something that is valued and difficult to give up. The paradox surfaces in the magic shop because the magic shop, in being an integrative activity, deals with personal growth, fulfillment, or actualization. One of the curious aspects of personal growth is the realization that some of our most positive and valued characteristics are also what is wrong with us. The qualities we possess that have served us well and have made us successful are oftentimes the same qualities that cause us difficulty. This paradox is not a new idea. The Greeks referred to *arete* (excellence) and its counterpart *hamartia* (the fatal flaw). According to the Greeks, our problem areas were not the opposites of our excellence, and our fatal flaws were to be found within our best qualities, our strengths.

The bargaining aspect of the magic shop is an opportunity to examine

such strengths and weaknesses, to look at what a protagonist has and might even have too much of or prize too highly. One further aspect of the paradox is that some of our acknowledged weaknesses might be strengths in disguise. If we are willing to admit to being fallible or flawed (which is the human condition) and to examine those flaws, we may discover that we have been exaggerating them, that they are sometimes helpful to us, or that others see them more positively than we do. We might question how others would see our flaws or weaknesses as positive attributes or how they might see our strengths as negatives. We must remind ourselves that when we are discussing strengths and weaknesses, we are discussing perceptions or value judgments. What we might regard as a strength or a weakness, others might not.

Putting Language to Our Perceptions

To the extent that someone is a particular kind of personality, he or she is not some other, different personality. To the extent that we have some outstanding, positive personal traits, we will also lack other particular personal traits. To the extent that we are one way, we are not some other way. To the extent that we are reliable, we may also be predictable. To the extent that we are systematic and methodical, we may not be spontaneous. To the extent that we are resolute, we may also be rigid. To the extent that we are mature, we may lack youthfulness. And even our most positive traits can be described negatively by someone who does not value them. One person's self-control is another person's inhibition. One person's patience is another person's procrastination. One person's frankness is another person's cruelty. One person's bravery is another person's stupidity. It is not so much the trait itself that is at issue, but how the trait is perceived and interpreted as it filters through another person's value system. The magic shop has the capacity for acquainting us with that which we have in excess or value highly and which is problematic or growth inhibiting. It has the capacity for acquainting us with how others perceive our more positive qualities, so that we might reexamine them. It can also acquaint us with how some of our most valued qualities are inappropriate and counterproductive in some contexts.

More often than not, the issue confronting the protagonist and the keeper of the magic shop is not so clearly one of positive or negative traits, but one of self-perception and the perceptions of others. Because the shopkeeper can dispense or receive intangibles in any quantity, he or she can also deal qualitatively with how much or how little of a trait or quality a person might require. If, in the exploration of the presenting problem, the shopkeeper identifies a difficulty not of type but of degree,

then he or she can achieve balance for the customer in the quantity that is taken from the customer and the quantity that is received.

The keeper of the magic shop has the capacity for letting the customer see what it is like to have given up that which was valued or excessive. What is it like to be without it? How would that change things? The shopkeeper can also have the customer try out the new trait or quality psychodramatically to see how it feels and how it might be used once it is acquired. It can be tried out in brief scenes with members of the group acting as auxiliaries. The protagonist can experience what it is like to be smart or seductive or assertive. The protagonist may find the newly acquired trait or quality to be uncomfortable or disappointing or different from what he or she had anticipated. On the other hand, it might be wonderfully rewarding. This exploration of the surplus reality is, of course, role training.

Scene Setting Warm-up

Some directors will warm up the group to the magic shop by explaining the expectations, setting the stage, showing where the door is, where the intangibles are stored, and even identifying some of the intangibles that are available to customers. If a director wants to set the scene in this manner and wait for customers, she or he might unroll the awning outside and get an imaginary broom and sweep out the shop while waiting for customers, anchoring the shop in space, making it familiar and comfortable for the group members. While the scene is being set physically, the director can be speaking with the group about what is available inside and making the qualities and essences attractive to customers. The director can model spontaneity for the group and set the tone for conducting the session. While this kind of monologue unfolds, the customers will have time to consider the possibility that they can have wisdom or decisiveness or peace of mind or leisure, or whatever else is available in the shop. The shopkeeper's monologue also gives the potential customer some preparation time for making personal decisions and for warming up before entering the shop.

Trading in Possibilities

Although all of this discussion thus far has been about the magic shop as an activity that is provided when a group is matured, some directors will use it to open a group and get it going; still others will use it at some midway point to clarify group and individual progress. My own bias about training is that group facilitators cannot have too many resources

for any stage of group development. The more resources they have, the more options they have in group facilitation and the better equipped they are for meeting particular group demands. There are a number of ways of closing down groups, of achieving termination, and of assisting the group members to make the transition from the intensive group experience to the world outside of the group (Barbour, 1977). In my opinion, the magic shop is best used as one of those resources. The advantages of the magic shop as an activity are many. Because it takes place in fantasy and deals in magic, it is relatively nonthreatening. Psychodramas involving dreams have shown us that some people are able to learn things in dreams or fantasy that they resist learning otherwise. Most customers who come to the magic shop will already have in mind what they think they need and what they might want to trade in so they will feel more secure than they would if the situation were more uncertain.

The expectation that the trades are not extended dramas but are brief exchanges makes them easier to attempt, even if the potential is there for a drama at a later session. As a training activity, the magic shop is loaded in the direction of successful learning because each person who comes to the shop wants to take away something positive and, if allowed to, will most likely see the experience as beneficial. Participants are virtually guaranteed that they will get something positive from the experience, because after all, it's magic. With magic, all things are possible.

The word *process* comes from the Latin word *procedo*, meaning "to move forward." Personal growth involves change; in fact, it is not possible without change. Not all change, however, is growth. The change that is growth-producing is that which moves an individual toward maturity. A person who does not grow personally will remain immature but will not remain young. Some people mature, and others who do not experience inner growth merely get old.

We recognize that it is usually easier not to do something than to do it, easier to avoid challenges and to seek comfort and stability. Nonetheless, a growth cycle calls for leaving predictability, routine, and comfort, for shattering the stable world structure, and for restructuring one's world view to include a changed reality (Jourard, 1969). It calls for one's moving forward and for taking one's foot off first base in order to get to second base. The magic shop is a virtually ideal activity for facilitating that growth cycle. Participants begin by acknowledging faults, imperfections, and mistakes. They trade in a part of their current self-image or self-concept that is problematic to them. In exchange, they acquire another "possible self" that is an improvement on the way they were. They do this visibly, vocally, actively, and in the presence of others, a virtual public declaration of their willingness to change in a positive direction.

Earlier, the concept of the magic shop as a metaphor was used. On one level, the magic shop is already a metaphor that involves trading and bargaining, but a metaphor for what? I believe that if we examine it closely, it is one of death and rebirth, because inherent in the activity is the idea that we do not gain unless we are also willing to give up. A part of us dies so that another part of us can be reborn. There is no growth without cost, no getting without giving—the opposite of that old theme: The best things in life are free. That which has a low value has a low cost. That which has a high value has a high cost. In the “real world” outside of the magic shop, we set goals for ourselves somewhere between that to which we aspire and that for which we are willing to sacrifice. The magic shop allows us to confront that which we believe we need or wish for or want, to assess what the value of that might be, and to determine what we must give up in order to get our wish.

Moreno (1966) presented several rationales for the use of psychodrama. The psychodramatic method overcomes the “conserved,” blocked, and frozen condition of people through action. It uses the group as a therapeutic agent and encourages creativity through spontaneity. It moves in time and space and is nonanalytic. Perhaps most important, the psychodramatic method has an optimistic view of human potential. It tells us that we each have the capacity to improve our condition if we can discover and mobilize the resources we have within us. From among the many techniques and activities available to psychodramatists and group facilitators, the magic shop is a superior resource for the synthesis and accomplishment of the psychodramatic rationale.

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ALTON BARBOUR teaches at the University of Denver, where he is chair of the Department of Speech Communication.

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Address:
Alton Barbour
University of Denver
University Park
Denver, CO 80208

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Stanislavski's Affective Memory as a Therapeutic Tool

WENDY A. LIPPE

ABSTRACT. Stanislavski's Method is a dramatic technique that has traditionally been used only by actors. This article explores the possibilities of incorporating this method into traditional modes of drama therapy and into therapy in general. The relative controllability and reliability of Stanislavski's Method is also compared with the more common drama games now being employed in drama therapy. A case study involving delinquent boys exemplifies how this method can be used as a therapeutic tool to uncover suppressed life experiences and to achieve mood alterations within minutes. Further implications for using Stanislavski's affective memory technique in therapy are discussed, and relative guidelines are given for when this technique should and should not be employed.

STANISLAVSKI'S METHOD IS A DRAMATIC TECHNIQUE used by actors to achieve realistic, believable performances. The "Method," as it is commonly called, has two components—sense memory and affective memory. Although I will give a brief explanation of sense memory, I will focus on the relative controllability and reliability of Stanislavski's affective memory technique when it is compared with the more common drama games employed in drama therapy. I will also illustrate, with case studies, the effectiveness of using Stanislavski's affective memory to uncover suppressed life experiences and to act as a behavioral tool that can alter mood within minutes. The elucidation of suppressed events and the mood alteration are viewed as positive results that can lead to therapeutic ends in any type of therapy.

The term sense memory is deceptive because actors employing the technique actually relive sensory experiences rather than remembering them, as is implied by the term memory. Sense memory is most helpful for an actor who must perform a complex sensory experience with a multitude of stimuli. In this article, for the sake of simplicity, I will explain the single task of reliving the sensory experience of drinking a cup of coffee.

The actor closes his eyes and starts to create the feeling of a coffee mug in his hands. This is where the term memory can be helpful in understanding the technique because the actor must first remember and then re-create the feeling of holding a mug. To do this, the actor's senses recall the texture of the mug, the aroma, and the steam emanating from the mug. All this is re-created before the actor puts the imagined cup to his lips. Then he continues to re-create the experience of the taste of coffee in his mouth and the feeling of coffee flowing down his throat. If this is done correctly, the actor truly believes he is drinking coffee, and this experience is quite distinct from the memory of drinking coffee because all of the actor's senses are awakened. He is able to see, smell, feel, and taste the coffee.

Understanding sense memory makes the second component of Stanislavski's Method, affective memory, more comprehensible. In affective memory, the actor relives, again through his senses, an emotional experience. In principle, actors are urged to work only with encounters that have occurred more than 7 years in the past. This traditional temporal principle has been followed because it is thought to protect the actor from unresolved emotional experiences. The principle, however, is based on underlying assumptions that seem debatable. First, it assumes that earlier emotional experiences are more likely to be resolved than more recent ones; second, it assumes that exploration of unresolved experiences is dangerous, whereas exploration of resolved events is not. As Uta Hagen (1973) explained: "When I say that you must have distance from the experience you wish to use as an actor, I am not referring to time, but to understanding. In 1938, I had an experience with death . . . , which I still cannot fully cope with or discuss, and therefore cannot use as an actress. Yet, I have also had an experience in the morning which I was able to digest and put to use by evening" (p. 50).

This temporal rule, thought by some drama teachers to be "psychologically safe," may only be "psychologically random." Perhaps, drama teachers, who are usually not members of the mental health professions, should not be using this technique, regardless of the temporal considerations. It may be that drama teachers should abide by the time principle but that therapists, using the technique as a therapeutic tool, could safely abolish it. After all, patients share past, present, and current experiences with their therapists, although, typically, they do not relive them. In any case, the temporal principle warrants further study before Stanislavski's affective memory can be widely used as a therapeutic tool in the field of psychology.

Let me further illustrate how affective memory works. The actor, while seated comfortably in a chair, is guided through a series of muscle

relaxation exercises with his or her eyes closed. The actor is then told to envision a calming white light and to breathe deeply and regularly. When the actor feels tension-free, she or he is guided by a teacher through a series of steps leading to the reliving of a particular emotional experience. The actor is asked to imagine being in the space where he or she was when the event occurred and is slowly led to re-create this space. The actor is helped with the following questions, which are not answered aloud:

1. What do you see in the room or space you are in?
2. What sounds do you hear around you?
3. What do you smell?
4. How does the temperature feel in this space?
5. What do you feel touching your body?—clothing? If so, what is the texture like?—another person? If so, is the skin of this person rough or smooth?
6. Are you standing, sitting, or lying down?
7. What type of surface do you feel underneath your body?
8. Are you alone or with another person? (If with another person, the actor is asked to re-create the way the person looked at the time of the occurrence.)

After all these externalities have been re-created in detail, the actor begins to re-experience the event, whether it be a conversation or a moment alone; the actor starts to feel the way he or she did at the time the event first occurred. Usually, having chosen an intense experience, the actor becomes visibly depressed, euphoric, or agitated. The actor may move about the space; she or he may talk, mumble, scream, cry, or behave in any manner that the experience dictates. If no visible signs occur, and the actor remains involved but frozen, the teacher asks the actor to express everything she or he is feeling with one word and one action that are arbitrarily chosen by the teacher. Following the emotional release, there is a finalizing process, called neutralization, that involves relaxing the actor and bringing him or her back to the present reality. The teacher guides this process of neutralization by gently suggesting that the actor clear his or her mind, again envision a calming white light, and relax by breathing deeply and regularly. The actor is urged to come back to the present reality and to pay close attention to any sounds and smells presently occurring in the room. Only then is the actor told to open his or her eyes and acquaint himself or herself visually with the room within which the actor is situated.

For acting purposes, it seems clear that Stanislavski's Method enables actors to create believable emotion that they can incorporate into their scene work. This technique protects actors from falling into the trap of

fake acting because it provides them with real affect from their own experiences.

Current Modes of Drama Therapy: Advantages and Shortcomings

Irwin (1987) maintains that the less structured a dramatic interlude, the more a child reveals about himself. Because people using the Method are reliving an experience, it is not possible for them to censor any emotions associated with the experience. A child acting with a prop, however, is quite able to pick and choose what will be acted out and thus revealed; the child is therefore more able to manipulate the situation and censor any resulting emotion. Stanislavski's Method allows less manipulation than does acting with props and, for this very reason, is a more controlled technique. The Method permits therapists to share actual experiences with patients and allows them to see the real and immediate effects of these experiences on patients. Therefore, distortion of events and emotions on the part of the patient is not possible.

Improvisations and acting with props have long been regarded as vehicles for expressing emotional conflict. It has been expected that a drama therapist make sense of what is communicated and why (Irwin, 1987). The obvious problems with this are that several different therapists could arrive at countless interpretations of the emotional conflict being acted out. Imagine that a young girl improvises a scene where she is raped. One therapist might conclude that the girl actually had been raped. Another therapist might suggest that she was fantasizing, possibly about her father if she were perceived to be in the throes of the oedipal conflict. Yet a third therapist might suggest that the young girl was being adversely affected by the excessive violence portrayed on television. Thus, improvisational work and acting with props can lead to varying interpretations of an emotional conflict. On the other hand, Stanislavski's Method allows a therapist to share the patient's experience as it actually occurred and then to understand the catalyst of any resulting emotion. This technique makes clear to the therapist the true origin of any emotional conflict. The young girl in my earlier example, if using Stanislavski's Method, would make clear to her therapist whether a terrifying television program had scared her or whether her father had truly raped her.

Improvisation and acting with props should not be entirely ruled out; there are situations in which they are needed. It is true that improvisation has allowed drama therapists greater insight. Irwin (1986) has described a case study in which a young boy had a particularly strong reaction to a scenario being enacted. As it turned out, the improvisation caused the child to "remember" something he had "forgotten all about." So, it is

possible for improvisation to bring out the real-life experiences of an individual; however, improvisation may also elicit fantasies, fears, and wishes or stimulate an active imagination. These are indeed impressive results; however, improvisation does not allow a therapist to distinguish a patient's fantasy from reality. Stanislavski's Method allows a therapist to partake in a real incident that a patient has most certainly experienced. The Method should thus be a more valid and reliable way to uncover past experiences and to draw conclusions about personality growth. As mentioned before, it should also elucidate the real roots of emotional conflict.

In regard to scene work, drama therapists have continually made the assumption that "the roles individuals choose provide deep insight into personality and character" (Irwin, 1986, p. 353). This assumption has not been adequately shown. It is more reasonable to say that one may choose a role for psychological reasons, thus providing the insight Irwin mentions, or one may choose a role randomly, thus providing no psychological insight. It is important to recognize that even if one does choose a role for psychological reasons, one then necessarily chooses that role because of past experiences that have led to certain personality characteristics. In this case, the personality characteristics resulting from life experience are the impetus for choosing a particular role. Stanislavski's Method allows therapists to delve directly into these life experiences. This method provides more definite insight into personality and character than does role choosing because the uncertain intermediary step of analyzing why an individual chose a role is unnecessary.

A central reason why drama therapy is practiced is that many patients, particularly those who are young, communicate interactively rather than introspectively (Irwin, 1986). Stanislavski's Method, although highly intellectual and introspective from the therapist's standpoint, still provides the interaction needed by many patients.

Two Case Studies Illustrating the Effectiveness of Stanislavski's Method

The following cases, which took place within the context of a drama class, illustrate how the Method can be applied not only to drama therapy but also to therapy in general. The first case explains the Method's ability to uncover an experience that was previously suppressed. The other case shows how the Method can be used as a behavioral tool to alter the way one thinks and feels.

These cases come from my experience at a state-run juvenile facility for male minors who had been convicted of crimes that varied from selling drugs to rape and murder. All of the boys at the facility have conduct disorders that are addressed in individual and group therapy. I taught a

drama class to a group of 13 boys whose ages ranged from 13 to 18. I was not told the details of any of the boys' problems, nor was I told the crimes they had committed.

All of the boys seemed pleased with the notion of a drama class and were anxious to get started. Jeff, however, was the exception about whom I was warned. He had been at the institution for a little more than a year but had not made any improvement. I was told by the staff that although Jeff would remain in my class, he should not be forced to participate.

The drama class progressed nicely, and by the end of the second month, I was ready to introduce Stanislavski's Method. After I explained the Method in theory and practice, I asked for volunteers who were willing to go through the process. Jeff, who until now had sat quietly in the back of the room, volunteered. I was leery of using this particular technique with Jeff because the goal is to evoke affect, something that Jeff seemed to lack. Nonetheless, I proceeded. He decided to re-create a negative emotional experience that involved a fight with his brother. I took Jeff through the steps of affective memory, as previously discussed. Typically, the actor becomes visibly elated, agitated, or upset, depending on the event being re-experienced. Jeff, however, remained expressionless throughout the entire process. He appeared to be experiencing no emotion—neither good nor bad.

In an attempt to elicit some type of a response, I asked Jeff to release everything he was feeling by yelling the word "horse" and by jumping as high in the air as he could. (The word and action are arbitrarily chosen by the teacher to serve as a vehicle of expression.) In response to my request that he release his emotions both vocally and physically, Jeff said, "I can't do it." Jeff's intonation made it apparent to everyone in the room that he was engrossed in an intense experience, though he did not appear to be moved by emotion.

Because it was clear that Jeff was unable to share with us the emotion he was feeling, I helped him through the final stage of the exercise, the neutralization. Once he was completely relaxed and neutralized, I told him he could open his eyes and join the group again. Jeff said that he did not wish to talk about the technique he had just tried; he seemed neither distressed nor happy, just his usual stoic self.

A week later, I was informed that Jeff had had a major breakthrough with his individual therapist. Apparently, while working with me the week before, Jeff had unintentionally relived a particularly painful drug experience; this distressful experience had until this time been suppressed. A point of interest is that Jeff had said he was going to relive a negative event that involved a violent fight with his brother. The reliving of the drug experience was not planned, however, because it was not a con-

scious event about which Jeff could speak. The re-experiencing of this drug-related event was an outgrowth of the reliving of the fight with his brother. Thus, the fight with his brother and the drug experience were related in some way in Jeff's memory. While in his therapist's office, Jeff was able to recall and relate the drug experience in its entirety. He was then able to begin working through this troubling occurrence.

As I found out later, this previously suppressed experience was directly related to Jeff's malfunctioning in other areas of his life. I was informed by the staff that Jeff had been making enormous strides because he had "remembered" (as they incorrectly phrased it) this particular drug experience. As I worked with Jeff once each week, I was acutely aware of his improvements. He was becoming more energetic, sociable, helpful, and talkative.

Approximately 3 weeks later, Jeff approached me in class. He thanked me for helping him re-experience his drug encounter because he had been feeling much better ever since. He also felt the need to explain why he had been unable to complete the exercise that day. Jeff explained that the affective memory technique had helped him, first, to relive a fight with his brother, which then led directly into the drug-related memory. This latter memory had evoked fear and rage within him, and he had been terrified to release it; he had feared losing control and harming someone. It should be mentioned here that going through Stanislavski's Method cannot be likened to a trance because the Method always allows people to retain awareness and some internal control. Jeff exercised this sense of control by stopping the process when he felt he could not go on. However, this notion of controlling oneself is highly relative; it depends upon what one considers losing control. My next illustrative case bears directly on this point.

Marlon also went through Stanislavski's Method; he too chose to re-experience a negative event. Marlon's choice of events was poignant and devastating; this was made clear by his red face and trembling body. When I asked Marlon to release everything he was feeling by jumping and yelling the word "sky," he went far beyond that. He ran around the room screaming and throwing chairs and tables. Marlon appeared to be in a frenzy, and the other boys stood frozen until some staff members came in to seize him. I immediately neutralized Marlon by yelling, "Stop; it's over, Marlon." He then fell to the floor. (This abbreviated form of neutralizing still had the effect of bringing Marlon to the present reality.)

He lay limp on the floor, and the staff and boys looked at me in utter disbelief. This caused the staff to make its first complaint about my use of Stanislavski's Method. Although impressed by how easily one could be neutralized, they feared that someone could be harmed. After Marlon

cried for half an hour, he thanked me. He described in his own words that he had undergone what I interpreted as a catharsis. However, he could not rid himself of what he called a shaky feeling. We went through Stanislavski's Method again, although this time Marlon re-created a positive emotional experience. It was striking to watch the transformation of the agitated, shaking boy into one who was smiling and happy. When the exercise was completed for the second time, Marlon went around the room and hugged everyone. (This was a highly unusual display of affection for the boys at the institution.) Marlon, unlike Jeff, had been able to re-experience the events that he consciously chose.

Jeff's case illustrates how Stanislavski's affective memory can be used to uncover experiences that have been suppressed. Marlon's case demonstrates, quite differently, how this dramatic technique can be used to alter emotional states in a matter of minutes.

Implications

I consider Stanislavski's Method to be a more reliable and controllable technique than the games now used in drama therapy. Additionally, there are far-reaching implications for using Stanislavski's affective memory outside of drama therapy. For instance, I have already reported on the Method's ability to bring an entirely suppressed event into consciousness. For a partially suppressed or repressed event, Stanislavski's Method might be used by drama therapists and by therapists from other disciplines to uncover fragmented bits of an experience that otherwise would be lost.

An adult using the Method in therapy could re-create a troubling childhood experience and could then reinterpret the event in more logical, sound, and mature terms. Perhaps this re-interpretation could result in a resolution of the previously unsettled issues associated with the event. Irwin (1986) proposes a similar idea when she mentions that improvisations can allow people to act out an experience they have had, making various changes that make the experience more positive. Improvisations, because of their inability to isolate fantasy and reality, might not be as reliable as the Method for diagnoses but might be adequate for therapy thereafter.

The Future: When Stanislavski's Method Should and Should Not Be Used

In this article, I have only touched upon the surface of how the Stanislavski Method might be used in therapy. This dramatic technique, if used as a therapeutic tool, could help patients in a multitude of ways. It

should be realized, however, that there are guidelines for when Stanislavski's affective memory technique should and should not be employed.

Stanislavski's Method can be used, as are more traditional modes of drama therapy, to explore fantasies, dreams, fears, and desires. The Method has the advantage of delving into a real experience and is therefore able to distinguish this reality from fantasy. Temporal considerations aside, a therapist must cautiously determine whether it is beneficial for a given patient to re-experience a particular incident. There are, of course, times when a therapist should determine that re-creating an event from a patient's past is detrimental to his or her emotional growth. The factors weighing in the decision of whether to explore the past are left to the individual therapist. As mentioned earlier, temporal considerations must be more closely analyzed before we can say yes to an experience from 10 years ago, but no to an experience that is 3 years past.

Therapists must also consider the age of the patients because the therapists will need to adjust their explanations and approaches to varying levels of cognitive development. This is not to say that a young child will necessarily have more difficulty using Stanislavski's affective memory, but rather to say that the technique must be explained at a level that is comprehensible to the child.

Stanislavski's Method might be appropriate for patients who have blocked out a segment of an experience. Perhaps when the patient was a child, a particular moment was overwhelmingly painful and was suppressed; now as an adult, the patient can bring that moment to consciousness and re-examine it in more sound and mature terms.

As a behavioral technique, Stanislavski's Method might be used to control mood swings and negative affect, just as cognitive therapy does. The Method can alter a person's mood in minutes.

Obviously, additional research must be done before guidelines can be more clearly specified. Although the terms *re-create*, *relive*, and *re-experience* lend themselves easily to a mystical interpretation, this is not at all what they mean. The reality is that one's senses are awakened and help to bring back a past experience in full terms. This re-creation then triggers all the emotions that originally accompanied the past experience.

Limitations and Possibilities

The two case studies discussed in this article did present limitations. Because I was hired solely as a drama teacher, I had limited information about the young men with whom I was working. I was given only vague information regarding the young men's disturbances and their daily lives. Because of this fact, I cannot address the issue of intervening vari-

ables. It is possible that other events in the men's lives influenced the Method's power to uncover suppressed events and the ease with which it acted as a behavioral tool.

Stanislavski's affective memory, if used as a therapeutic tool, might be helpful not only to the field of drama therapy but also to therapy in general. Drama therapy has typically been practiced with very general drama games such as improvisation, acting with props, and scene work (Irwin, 1986, 1987; Johnston, Healey, & Magid, 1985). It has not, however, focused on specific techniques, such as the Method, that can be controlled and be determined reliable.

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WENDY A. LIPPE is currently a graduate student in Boston University's clinical psychology doctoral program.

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Date of final acceptance:

June 18, 1992

Address:

Wendy A. Lippe

19 Pond Ave., #215

The Brook House

Brookline, MA 02146

The Anatomy of a Psychodrama Class: A Student's Perspective

Paul R. Smokowski

ABSTRACT. This article follows a student's experiences as he takes a college-level course in psychodrama. It discusses methods and uses of roleplaying in an educational setting, reviews case studies from the class, and explores the student's development through his journal entries and from three required progress papers. All case studies are real, although the names have been changed to protect privacy.

ALTHOUGH I HAD READ about psychodrama while doing research in psychology and theater and knew who J. L. Moreno was, I was not ready for the experience that I was about to embark on when I attended my first psychodrama class. The class initiated several changes in my life, and I would like to share my experiences with readers of this journal.

September 5

First class. What a strange situation. We came in, were arranged in a circle, and talked. The classroom atmosphere was very chatty. No syllabus, no grading system. The professor suggested we look into a few books and warned us that this class would be different from any other. We would have to be ready to give of ourselves if we expected to get anything out of it, he said.

I was scared. What would we have to give? How much would I have to participate to get by? Teachers always claimed that their class would be different. Yet this man seemed to be in earnest. He was gentle and soft-spoken. He did nothing but solicit conversation from the class. Warm-up, presentation, sharing. He chatted on as if we were lounging in a living room. I kept wanting organization, a lesson plan, a course outline, due dates for papers. The professor talked about psychodrama for individuals, sociodrama for groups. I began to feel awkward. My well-

rehearsed role as a student (write what the professor says, learn it for the test) wouldn't work here. What was coming next, I wondered.

The professor asked us to describe ourselves in pantomime. I had never considered what movements could typify my life. One girl pantomimed combing her hair to show her attractiveness, and a man handed his wallet to a friend to display his willingness to give. I was too inhibited to act out my images. I went home, did it for myself, and discovered that many of the images that came to mind were new ways of looking at myself.

September 12

We did a sociodrama today. The professor warmed us up by asking us to think about role models, real or imaginary, that had affected our lives. Then he offered the stage to those who would like to act out what their role models were like. People hesitated, then one woman asked what he was looking for. The professor seized the opportunity and pressed her into action. Does being ready to ask a question show that you're warmed up enough to perform?

Nancy began to describe her role model, but the director insisted she act, rather than verbalize. Her role model was a character in a novel who successfully juggled both family life and a career. By the time Nancy finished, we were all amazed at how quickly she shifted from enacting the character's problems to playing out her own. She had started by showing us a literary character who was important to her. In the end, she willingly divulged where she was in her own life. Nancy couldn't tell when she fell out of the role and began acting as herself.

That must have broken the ice. Others offered to do scenes, and the action passed smoothly from person to person. Suggestions seemed to come at just the right time. There was a flow to the drama, a life of its own that the professor was not really directing. We were taking ideas as they arose without knowing that we were forming something larger—the sociodrama.

As I watched, I began to feel strange, a little like the omniscient narrator in a novel, all-seeing, all-knowing. I was involved, yet distanced. I was able to find bits of myself in each protagonist and bits of each protagonist in myself. We were many and we were also one. Each of us had encountered the same problems, it seemed, but in different situations.

I was not the only person who thought these things. After the drama, we shared our reactions, and several people brought up the same thoughts I had had. We talked about empathy and flow and the possibility of a universality of human feeling. We had built a drama, link by link, each person contributing to form, in the end, a larger production that no one of us could have made on our own.

September 15

So much is going on as we do a drama that it takes me a few days of sorting my thoughts and feelings before I can begin to understand everything that has happened. Our dramas have been fascinating emotional experiences, but I am honestly puzzled at the purpose behind them. Does the drama move the protagonist toward new insight? Problem solving? Empathy? New methods of acting in our own roles? What are we aiming for? Several people appeared to have released bottled-up feelings through the action or in the sharing. Is the expression of concerns, just getting them out, enough? The first week, a woman acted out a problem that she was having with a coworker. She had a lot of empathy when she was in her role, but it dissolved when she went back to being herself. In sharing, she denied that the situation that had taken her an hour to portray bothered her at all. I failed to see the point.

September 19

This week's drama was about a man who was having problems with his relationships with women. Larry had dated a woman for some time and was about to tell her that he loved her when the relationship ended. A year later, he was dating a different girl who was devoted to him, but he couldn't commit to her. He was still thinking about the first girl.

As the professor worked with Larry, he caught the metaphors and figures of speech that Larry used and converted them into action. When Larry said "commit," he was made to demonstrate, using an auxiliary ego, his idea of committing. When he described his breakup, he said he felt that he was "being put in the closet," so the professor put him in an imaginary closet in the corner. The director was trying to make Larry feel his rejection again, rather than being so cerebral. As the drama progressed, Larry revealed more and more about himself, information that he had been reluctant to give at the beginning. The depth of his feelings for his first woman dawned on him as he acted, and he realized that he was doing to the second woman exactly what the first woman had done to him. Role reversal encouraged him to feel what his current girlfriend might be feeling.

I participated in the sharing. It has taken me some time to warm up to the class. I am strongly drawn to the dramas and, at the same time, scared to death of them. It's strange that I feel so inhibited about getting up in front of the class when I have had all sorts of theater training. Audiences of hundreds of people don't bother me, but I'm frightened to leave my seat to appear before these 30 classmates. Maybe it is because I would be playing myself in these dramas. I am unsure how good the script of my life

story is. This technique is powerful, and I am afraid of what might come pouring out if I let myself be spontaneous.

Progress Paper One, October 3

In these first 4 weeks of class, I believe that I have gained some invaluable insights. Seeing these few dramas woven out of scattered ideas has been an amazing, sometimes mesmerizing, experience.

Action is the innovative device that gives psychodrama and sociodrama their potency. People seem to be strongly drawn toward talking, yet words fall short. The most articulate people stammer when trying to describe their own feelings. Getting them on their feet to act makes what they are thinking and feeling much more graphic. The distance between the speaker and his or her words vanishes when the protagonist is forced to create or recreate a situation and relive it. Then we can deal with the present, which can be molded and sculpted instead of being an unyielding, cerebral past. In spontaneity, there is freedom. The protagonists seem less guarded, and this helps them reveal what they would otherwise hold back. The creative involvement is probably therapeutic in itself.

I realize I have identified with parts of each drama, even when the topic was alien. The dilemma of going back to school instead of staying home with one's children was foreign to me, but it was not difficult for me to identify with the emotions and conflicts the protagonist portrayed. Being in a productive group has cultivated my empathy. Without sacrificing individuality, I start feeling that something larger, something dynamic, is going on and that we all have a part in it. I have never felt this type of group interaction before, and I find it soothing. I can see the therapeutic implications of what we do, and I can get excited about the flexibility of psychodramatic methods.

The work excites me. The insights into self and others, the implementation of the forces of imagination, the subjugation of time, space, and reality to the whims of the mind—all seem to stimulate our creativity. Each week, I look forward to expanding myself as I glimpse new psychodramatic horizons.

October 9

The professor has been trying to draw me out. I've begun to participate in the sharing, but I still haven't been able to do a drama. Today I was asked to read my paper to the class. I was reluctant and embarrassed but surprised to find that I did it quite spontaneously. At first, my voice cracked and I blushed. Then I warmed up. By the end, I was glad that I

had agreed to participate. A little drama of my own was going on. Sharing intimate words, even if they are on paper, was not easy for me. The professor had sensed that I needed some coercion and found the best way to move me to action.

October 16

We've been doing role training, actually rehearsing for the future. For instance, Lori was becoming frustrated in dealing with the university's bureaucracy. She played out her role, confronting authority figures until she got frustrated. Then she reversed roles to see things from the authority figure's perspective. Once she began to see the bureaucrat's humanity, the professor brought her back to being herself and gave her doubles—literally, a “self” outside the self. Lori's doubles (Lori 2 and Lori 3) tried suggesting how to deal more effectively with the bureaucracy. With new ideas, Lori 1 was urged to be assertive and to vent her frustration. She gained practical experience to use in her next real encounter.

Jill was having trouble with a demanding, incorrigible boss. When she played the role of the boss, she began pouring out grievances that she had with Jill (herself). In the sharing, someone asked Jill how much of her role as boss was really her *boss* and how much was her *inner boss*. Many of the grievances, she realized, were her own critical ideas about her work. Her coworkers and friends in the group were now able to help clear up her self-distortion by telling her that she was really doing a good job. At the bottom of all her problems was a need for support and appreciation. When she received that from the group, she brightened considerably.

October 19

I've finally come to terms with it. I feel stupid that it took this long. Ever since this class started, most of the dramas left me cold. I kept wanting them to have nice, neat endings, and they never did. What was the purpose if the protagonists didn't have the solution to their problems dawn as they acted their dramas? I had been too simplistic to account for the messiness of life. Suddenly I saw that our dramas were not to find magical solutions to problems but to provide the protagonists with experiences as boundless as the imagination and as limited as the individual's vision. Now I understood what the professor meant when he said the dramas we do in class are only excerpts from the larger drama that is life. I'm getting only a glimpse of each protagonist; whether their drama has given them solutions, I can't really know. But it doesn't really make any difference.

October 24

Jim had a problem. His best friend was a virgin who was dating a girl who wanted to have sex. Both Jim and his friend, brought up as strict Catholics, were against premarital sex, yet love was at stake.

Jim picked me to play his confused friend. I was excited to be involved, but I didn't do much in my debut as an auxiliary ego. I watched Jim for hints about my character as we kept reversing roles to build the situation. I caught on quickly. The hard part was dumping all of my personal thoughts and feelings. I felt an urge to take the drama in different directions, but I had to remember that it shouldn't go anywhere that the protagonist didn't want it to. It was Jim's drama, not mine; my job was to keep the focus on him and to move the scene forward if I could.

The focus shifted from Jim's friend (who wasn't there) to Jim's values and how he wanted to handle his friend's need for advice. One auxiliary ego was preaching moral values and social mores, while I, jerking the opposite way, urged Jim to use his short life to feel good. In this way, he had to deal physically with his urges in either direction as well as with any conflict between the two. He quickly decided what was important to him.

Progress Paper Two, October 31

As our classroom situation progressed, the class members seemed to be warming up as a group. The number of willing protagonists increased so much that we had had to choose some, disappointing others, and increased our productivity to two dramas per class. Spontaneous doubling increased, as well, and I noticed more freedom in sharing. Doubts or reservations about the dramatic techniques that we had been using caused inhibitions in the early weeks. Now they had faded. I realized that our work was simply expressive and that that was enough. We could not hope for solutions to life's dilemmas in 2 hours of roleplaying.

Armed with that knowledge, I became more relaxed and easily warmed up to participation in the dramas. When I had my chance to work as an auxiliary, I found it both straightforward and difficult. Being in action made everything different. Now I could feel what it was like. I was thrilled—and terrified. It seemed possible to stretch my imagination to fill any circumstances. It was as if I were a variable, an X , that needed defining. An auxiliary ego needs to be everyman and no man simultaneously. The problem arises from not being able to submerge one's own feelings and select only those needed by the protagonist or from being so warmed up that you steal the focus from the protagonist. From the experience of picking and choosing traits, I discovered the many possibilities that I had

at my disposal. It was like glimpsing the vast storehouse of “self” and realizing that I had a very well-stocked inventory.

The protagonist’s plight seems similar, except the worlds he must portray are more defined and tangible. He or she already knows the characters and plot intimately. Being in control of time, space, and reality as they are, however, must give a sense of the expansiveness of the protagonist’s world both on and off the stage. Yet the dramas are not really controlled. They seem to have lives of their own, and even the protagonists don’t anticipate the avenues that we explore. In one drama, a girl was exploring her relationship with a demanding older sister. She stopped in mid-sentence, amazed. She was the strong one in the relationship, she realized. She had no idea the drama would flow in that direction. Neither did anyone else in the room. As in life, one idea conjured others, helping us to discover the power of creativity and learn about ourselves as we were swept along.

November 7

This week we reenacted a dream. Barbara had a dream about a car accident that ended with a baby’s screams. On the way to work the next morning, she saw the accident she had dreamed about happen right in front of her. She was the only person who stopped to help. She drove an injured pregnant woman to the hospital. In class, she was dealing with the mystery of her premonition. Was God using her, she wondered. The professor told her to question God directly. She asked me to play God. It was an interesting role, looking on all of these mortals who couldn’t understand my divine logic. I didn’t speak, but my silence was terribly powerful. We stopped when Barbara couldn’t decide whether she believed in me or not.

Next weekend I expect to travel to Poughkeepsie to participate in a workshop with Zerka Moreno. I’ve experienced so much already this semester that I wonder what more could happen. Maybe—no, definitely—I will do a drama of my own. I am still afraid, but I can’t take my interest in psychodrama seriously unless I am willing to do it myself.

November 29

This class struck home. It moved me deeply. A woman had a problem with the treatment of a handicapped fellow employee. She was the only person on the staff who acted kindly toward him. Her coworkers insulted him and abused her for befriending him. As I watched, a string of experiences from long ago came flooding back. I wanted to cry. I thought of

my own visual impediment and felt an old, buried pain. Then an extraordinary thing happened: I opened up. In the sharing, the others were discussing how she might make this boy Employee of the Month. I spoke up, telling about my eye disease, which I have always avoided mentioning. Suddenly, I found courage and realized I trusted the group enough to reveal myself. I wanted them to understand that extraordinary attention might embarrass the boy. I told them about my experiences of being singled out. This was a milestone in my being able to express myself. The group was supportive, and I had no regrets. All of this experience and my reactions to the Moreno workshop last weekend have brought up many emotions. I never thought that anything would be so intense.

December 5

We did an axiodrama today. The entire audience was involved. The professor put an auxiliary ego in the center of the room and had us relate to him as if we were his parents seeing him getting ready to go to war. The lights were turned out, and we could see only shadows of people. The gloom hid our identities. We were humans without names or backgrounds. Emotions flowed quickly. I heard mothers crying and pleading, fathers talking about duty and country, youths confused and vacillating, plots to escape, renunciations to destiny, thoughts of honor, of what it meant to be a man, of schemes to kill. I felt frustrated and helpless. A great pain welled up inside of me as I grieved for the suffering that humanity inflicts on itself.

Two Vietnam veterans shared their experiences with the group. Instead of playing a son, one of them played a man—the man inside each of us who fights before he talks. He was ferociously aggressive, ready to destroy, kill, and win, no matter what. He knew that he did not start the war. He was there to finish it, to follow orders, and to save someone else from the battle. The professor asked us to put ourselves in that character's place. I was surprised that I was able to. Now I found this soldier within me. It was very unsettling. I know he is there, and I must try to deal with him. I never expected to find a strange new part of myself in that moonlit room.

In the sharing, the veterans told us that what had happened was a continuing nightmare for them. They never discussed it with their families or friends, yet they did share their pain in the group drama. What power psychodrama has to release something like that! Is there anything you can't feel psychodramatically?

Progress Paper Three, December 5

Never have I enjoyed a class that resulted in as much personal growth and change as this one. It was exactly what I needed in my current situa-

tion. I have long been disturbed over my learning habits; studying for tests, chasing grades, promptly forgetting what I memorized after I took the tests and got the grades. This class was totally different. It was a model of life. You could participate or withdraw. The whole process was voluntary, putting things on the shoulders of those present, no plans or outlines, only people and ideas. We had to rely on each other for creative and emotional support. Without group support, the whole process would have ceased. In this group atmosphere, learning noncompetitively was invigorating. I could share as well as gain knowledge from others' sharing. Relating my feeling in public is difficult, but I managed to do it at different times and to different degrees during the semester. That was a major breakthrough, and this class was the catalyst. I have taken my first wobbly steps toward becoming a more-open person.

After each class, I went home with a host of new thoughts. The problems of each week's protagonists, of trying to put myself in their shoes and relating my experiences to theirs, of forcing myself to realize that we are all trying to cope with dilemmas that are different, yet are the same, discovering that there would be no miracle solutions, maturing enough to understand that there shouldn't be, deciding that thinking, feeling, and trying was enough, finding myself in others and others in myself—all of these things grew out of our dramas. This experience with psychodrama has changed my life.

Last week, as I put myself in a handicapped boy's place, a flood of childhood experiences hit me. But my emotional dam began to crack 2 weeks before in a weekend psychodrama workshop under Zerka Moreno's direction. She asked me about my vision problem, and I explained the disease to the workshop group. I said the problem had caused me a lot of pain all through my childhood. She looked at me with empathy and said, "Yes, it must have." Her recognition of the drama of my suffering was a profound emotional experience. Her sincerity and the psychodrama about the handicapped worker revealed for me a part of myself—the struggling, visually handicapped boy—that I had tried for years to ignore. Now I can try to welcome him back and give him the honest recognition that Zerka Moreno gave to me.

During the workshop, I interacted intimately in a small group and wove a drama of my own. I didn't find the 7-person workshop nearly as intimidating as my 30 classmates at school, and I seized the chance to be a protagonist. My drama centered around an intimacy problem I was having. I had been in a close relationship with Joanna for years, but it seemed that we no longer knew how to relate to each other. Zerka put me in Joanna's shoes and had me try to relate to Paul (myself) as she might be trying to do. I started seeing Paul's idiosyncracies from a new perspec-

tive. Then the all-female group and I, still as Joanna, had a rap session about men, intimacy, passion, and pressure. I struggled to see the feminine side of sexuality. Never before had I explored Joanna's feelings and attitudes. As I stepped into her shoes, she became more complicated, more fascinating. I went home afterward and began trying to relate to her differently. Our intimacy deepened, and there seems to be much more to explore in our relationship. All of that from one well-directed psychodrama!

I have learned that psychodrama is an extremely powerful, flexible tool. I have seen the riches of the imagination, heard other people's intimacies and watched their growth, found myself in humanity and humanity in myself. I have gained hundreds of new ideas, felt many emotions, and found a fascinating discipline that I would like to devote my career to. My life and love have changed for the better. That's not too bad for one semester of work.

December 12, Last Class

We finished with a group hug. I have never before embraced 20 people at once, never even felt close to 20 people at the same time. It was a fitting ending. We came together and shared each others' problems, intimacies, and dreams. Now it is time to say goodbye. Our journey is over. The whole semester seems like one large sociodrama, so it's appropriate that we shared our feelings about the class, hugged, and will now move on to other things.

PAUL SMOKOWSKI participated in a psychodrama class at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

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Address:

Paul Smokowski

102 Magnolia Street

Lackawanna, NY 14218

BRIEF REPORT: The Moreno Social Atom Test-Revised (MSAT-R): A Sociometric Instrument Measuring Interpersonal Networks

THOMAS TREADWELL
LISA COLLINS
STEPHEN STEIN

Revision of the social atom test is an ongoing research project following a four-phase undertaking. Phase 1, a reorganization of the social atom test, was reported in 1989, in the *International Journal of Small Group Research*, a journal that has since merged and is now called *Small Group Research*. The following is a succinct update of Phase 2.

In reviewing the literature on tests measuring social atom constructs, researchers determined that the instruments are difficult to administer, interpret, and chart because of the complex, time-consuming, and ambiguous design. The social atom concept appears quite promising as a projective and a self-report instrument; however, it has not been standardized as either, and its use has been limited to specific populations. Furthermore, Moreno viewed the social atom concept as one that included a "wished for" or fantasy relationship category, yet he did not clearly define this "wished for" component. Thus, the "wished for," or fantasy, constituent central to his spontaneity theory was modified, redefined, and included as a fourth element: the future projection subatom. Accordingly, it was necessary to redefine the social atom, examine its applications, and revise the social atom test as a self-report measure of intrafamilial and interpersonal relational patterns. The revised version of the social atom test is referred to as the MSAT-R.

The administration process of the MSAT-R has been standardized. Directions and scoring procedures are plainly stated; a concise format identifies and defines the four basic subatoms of Moreno's original 1936 social atom concept. The first three subatoms assess a person's "actualized" (reality) relationships, and a fourth appraises "wished for" (fantasy) relationships. These are defined as follows:

1. *Psychological quadrant*: The smallest number of persons, pets, or objects that have an effect on one's life.

2. *Collective quadrant*: The smallest number of groups one belongs to that influence one's life.

3. *Individual quadrant*: The smallest number of individuals from the collective quadrant with whom one has developed friendships.

4. *Future projection quadrant*: The smallest number of people "wished for" that would make one's life "ideal" in the future. (Therapists must define "future" cautiously, according to the population being measured.)

The future projection quadrant is included to give the test taker an opportunity to list relationships that are "wished for" and not necessarily a reality.

The MSAT-R is designed to be easily understood by the test taker. Its directions and test format are self-explanatory, and the amount of time needed to complete the instrument is approximately 15 minutes. In addition, this self-report version is standardized, quantifiable, and practical to administer and interpret in a brief time period.

The visual/projective component of the MSAT-R (placement of significant others), has been modified to clarify the structural properties of the psychological, collective, individual, and future projection subatoms. The raw scores of each subatom are plotted on a quadratic grid, divided into four quadrants, each representing a subatom. This grid becomes the visual map of one's "significant others" interpersonal network. The point of origin begins at the center of the grid and represents one's self. The future projection quadrant is an addition and modification of the original social atom test.

The MSAT-R has been tested experimentally on both clinical ($n = 70$) and nonclinical populations ($n = 69$) and appears to be a viable assessment and research instrument. Multivariate analysis was performed to examine whether nonclinical and clinical populations differed in the average numbers of people mentioned in their psychological, collective, individual, and future projection subatoms. The analysis revealed a significant difference, $F(4, 121) = 29.74, p < .001$. Further univariate analysis revealed significant F s in all four quadrants, with $F(1, 124)$ values ranging from 26.10 to 91.08, $p < .001$. Examination of the means for each of the quadrants showed that in each case the nonclinical population reported approximately twice as many people as the clinical population. This finding supports research suggesting that individuals diagnosed with a mental disorder have small social networks. Reliability of sociometric data was determined by correlating the number of choices made by each person at two different times, yielding a coefficient of stability. Stability estimates ranged from .73 to .95 on the four quadrants and were .92 for the total test.

The MSAT-R is intended for use as a research tool and clinical assessment device. It enables the clinician and researcher to use the social atom concept in a manner that is standardized, quantifiable, and practical. This self-report instrument has proved to be reliable and easy to administer and interpret. Reliability is a never-ending project; hence, the instrument is always being tested. This instrument is analogous to a road map; it allows one to assess the strengths, structure, and dynamics of a person's intra-familial and interrelationship patterns.

For research purposes, the MSAT-R has various applications for industrial/organizational psychology and for health, geriatric, and developmental psychology. Further studies of the MSAT-R are currently concentrating on validating the instrument, isolating and clarifying the role of gender, age, and specific psychopathology in differing populations. Additionally, emphasis is being placed on investigating individual social atoms of specific diagnostic groups. These groups are not limited to the DSM-III-R but include special populations, for example, HIV positive persons, geriatric patients, and those with addiction. Last, the social atom test will be computerized, making the administration and taking of the test less cumbersome.

For additional information about the revision, use of the revised instrument, and reliability updates, readers should write the authors at this address: Department of Psychology, West Chester University, West Chester, Pennsylvania 19383.

Book Review

Subpersonalities: The People Inside Us. John Rowan.
London & New York: Routledge. 1990.

This is a remarkable and important book, presenting what I think will become a significant new paradigm in psychology. The author offers a comprehensive and delightfully clear and readable review of the idea that it is more useful to view personality as the product of a variety of parts of the self.

Rowan generously cites the work of a wide range of other workers in psychology, ranging from Freud's topological model of ego, id, and super-ego through Jung's work on active imagination with archetypal images and Eric Berne's three ego states to more contemporary object relations theories in psychoanalysis, with their ideas about "internalized object representations." The author acknowledges psychodrama and the work of Moreno and notes that this approach may well be the best therapeutic method for helping these parts of self become more integrated. Still, I felt that he did not fully appreciate the implications of Morenean role theory, namely, that the role concept applies to phenomena beyond the social role—psychosomatic and psychodramatic roles, for example. Also, I would have liked to have seen more of a recognition of the use of the "multiple ego" technique, with illustrations regarding its application.

After reviewing a variety of contributions to this emerging perspective, Rowan describes some of his own group experiments in bringing out the various subpersonalities in the psyche. It seems obvious that if one cultivates these "roles," they can easily and quickly become clothed in more complex elaborations and seem to take on a semi-autonomous personification. In other words, as in dreams, the psyche will naturally generate richer imagery if it is given free rein and attention.

The author goes on to offer a developmental schema that partakes of a variety of psychodynamic theories and yet reveals Rowan's own originality. Near the end of the book, he addresses the work of Ken Wilber and recent ideas about transpersonal psychology, which reveals the scope of Rowan's thinking.

I was especially pleased with the book because it complements my own efforts to generate an integrative meta-theory based on the concept of "role." I think this is a better term than the others (i.e., subpersonalities,

parts of self, complexes, ego states, functions, attitudes, de-integrates, areas of the mind, part-selves, subphases, psychic “dramatis personae,” etc.) for a number of reasons, such as relative popularity of or familiarity with the terminology, lack of implied pathology, capacity to address different levels of psychosocial organization, and so forth. In other words, if readers substituted “role” for a term such as “subpersonality,” they would be helped to appreciate the theoretical foundations of psychodrama and related therapeutic approaches (Blatner, 1991).

Other recent books (Samuels, 1989; Braude, 1991) address related issues that indirectly complement this emerging pluralistic paradigm, but Rowan’s book is far and away the most complete review of the subject. There are extensive and current references. I think this is an outstanding book, and I recommend it highly.

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ADAM BLATNER, MD

The Bingham Child Guidance Center
200 East Chestnut Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40202

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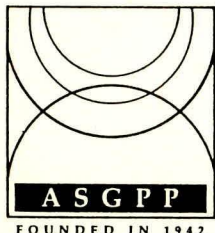
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