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Law Enforcement Critical Incident Teams: Using Psychodramatic Methods for Debriefing Training

JUNE SIEGEL

SANDRA L. DRISCOLL

ABSTRACT. The Critical Incident Stress Management Team of the Mesa, Arizona, Police Department uses psychodramatic techniques for debriefing training. The process involves the action methods of roleplay, warm-up, doubling, role reversal, and deroling. These methods blend well with current critical incident training models and with the previous models developed in the psychodrama department of St. Elizabeths Hospital. In this article, the authors report on their use of the models and present a scenario that they developed for training personnel in debriefing procedures.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS DEFINE a critical incident as any event that is beyond a typical police call. It is an incident that has the potential for causing extreme strain on law enforcement personnel and includes situations such as these:

1. Death/injury of an officer
2. Attempt on an officer's life
3. An officer involved in shootings
4. Suicide after lengthy negotiations
5. Multiple deaths at a scene
6. Major disasters (airplane/bus/train crashes)
7. Deaths involving children
8. Suicide by police (the intent of the victim being to precipitate a situation in which the officer is forced to shoot)

A critical incident means added distress on police personnel because of the additional demands of coordinating with various other departments, such as the internal affairs and the criminal investigation division. Officers must often deal with the media or with superiors and peers who may "second guess" the procedural decisions of those involved in the crisis. The last-mentioned stressor can be the most difficult to cope with. Not feeling the support of supervi-

sors and peers can have long-lasting negative effects on officers' morale and overall job performance.

Critical Incident Stress Management Team of the Mesa Police Department

To help law enforcement personnel involved in critical incidents, the Mesa Police Department employs a peer support team. The team is composed of dispatch and sworn personnel and have the aid of a mental health advisor. Team members endeavor to prevent cumulative stress difficulties by helping their peers understand the emotional, cognitive, physical, and behavioral responses to traumatic events. Upon request, team members respond to crime scenes, provide one-on-one help after incidents, and, as needed, manage debriefing groups.

When a debriefing group is required, a few team members (including the mental health advisor) are assigned to conduct the session. One member is assigned to lead, and the other members serve as auxiliaries. The auxiliaries act as therapeutic guides and help to encourage participants to explore feelings and reactions to the incident.

The Mesa Arizona Police Department encourages the use of peer support, to allow its personnel access to individuals who understand the special pressures involved in law enforcement. Peers, with the aid of a mental health consultant, help one another to come to terms with incidents that are beyond a typical police call.

Historically, this concept of peer helpers can be traced back to the late Jacob L. Moreno, M.D. Dr. Moreno, the founder of psychodrama, originated this concept in 1913-1914, in Vienna. He referred to group members as being "therapeutic agents for one another." This genesis of group therapy began with the creation of peer support groups with Viennese prostitutes. He gathered 8 to 10 prostitutes in groups that met 2 times per week. The groups dealt with common concerns such as sharing feelings, increasing self-esteem, addressing safety concerns, and getting health care.

In the 1990s, various forms of self-help and peer support groups are used throughout the United States. For instance, the Self-Help Support Group Directory in Maricopa County, Arizona (1993), included over 325 self-help groups. Goals vary, but the overall intent of most of these groups is to provide confidential support that lends mutual understanding, acceptance, encouragement, and coping strategies.

Law Enforcement Training

Jeffrey Mitchell, president of the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, originated the current formalized process for creating and train-

ing critical incident teams. He (Mitchell, 1988) has stated that "during the past 2 decades, mental health professionals have gradually become aware of the stressors that negatively affect emergency personnel." Mitchell's dynamic model uses peer/mental health trauma teams, in conducting debriefings of critical incidents. The formal debriefing model that Mitchell recommends involves the following 7-step process:

1. Introduction
2. Fact phase
3. Thought phase
4. Reaction phase
5. Symptom phase
6. Teaching phase
7. Re-entry phase

The use of roleplay scenarios has been part of the procedure to train mental health and law enforcement officers for over 40 years. In the 1950s, James M. Enneis, who was chief of the psychodrama section at St. Elizabeths Hospital, introduced action-training models to teach police officers in the District of Columbia how to deal effectively with mentally and emotionally disturbed persons (Buchanan & Enneis, 1981). In 1974, Alice Blumer and Earl Housenfluck (1974) stated that a compelling reason for the success of the first patrol techniques exercise (September 1972) at the Law Enforcement Training Center in Washington, DC, was the professionalism and skill of the eight participating roleplayers, all of whom were psychodrama students at St. Elizabeths Hospital. Today, police departments throughout the country continue to use roleplay to train new officers in various aspects of law enforcement.

Psychodramatic role training can be viewed as a positive addition to critical incident training models. Psychodramatic role training employs unrehearsed action techniques to create an environment that allows for role exploration, role experimentation, practice of peer support skills, and general (simulated) debriefing experiences.

A Model: A Barricade With Hostages

In February 1994, Mesa Police Department's Critical Incident Stress Management Team began its advanced debriefing training. Dr. Mitchell's debriefing model was the basis of the training, along with psychodramatic role-training techniques.

The debriefing format in these training sessions encouraged the participants to express their thoughts and feelings and provided them with information on stress management techniques and healthy coping strategies. The debriefing

leader warmed up the group by clarifying the reason for the debriefing and explaining how the debriefing process worked. Individuals were then asked to give their names, explain their roles in the department, and state something personal about themselves. After individuals were sufficiently warmed up, the members of the group reviewed the roles taken at the incident scene, what they experienced, the thoughts they had during and after the incident, the sensory images they remembered, and their current symptoms of distress that related to the incident. The team members or the leader provided information on common responses by law enforcement personnel and positive strategies for dealing with the incident. During the discussion that followed, the members considered the ways that would eventually enable them to gain emotional distance from the event.

The format of the sessions required some flexibility in order to meet the needs of each person in the group. The leader always made clear to the group that this was peer support and not psychotherapy. If some members needed therapy, those persons were referred to qualified, mental health professionals. After the debriefing, there was a post session in which the process was assessed, the required follow-up needs were clarified, and the debriefers are deroled.

The Scenarios

Training scenarios were created to allow the team members to practice the skills necessary for leading actual debriefings. We created the simulations to be as close to real life as possible. The following is a sample of a training scenario that we created.

As evening approaches, two officers respond to a family-fight call on 720 E. Brown Ave. in Mesa, Arizona. The first officer arrives and hears a blast of gun fire. He wants to approach but is informed by the sergeant (enroute) to wait for back up. The sergeant, a second officer (a field training officer), and his recruit arrive on the scene.

Radio (dispatch) advises that phone contact has been made and that the voice of a hysterical woman was heard before the line went dead. When the field lieutenant arrives on the scene, he advises using the radio to call out the tactical team (SWAT/Negotiators.) A perimeter is set up. (The officers on the scene are unaware that the woman and two children are now dead.)

The tactical team arrives, and the female SWAT sergeant takes command. The tactical team is composed of one SWAT sergeant, two SWAT members (including a sniper) and two hostage negotiators. As the team organizes, the male suspect opens the back window of the house, fires a shot, and closes the window. The round misses the recruit by about 1 ft.

The female negotiator establishes phone contact with the suspect. (She is

chosen because the background check of other calls to this location show a 918 [psychiatric patient] male with a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia. Males with this diagnosis respond better to females.) The suspect shouts into the phone, "Everyone will die if you don't go away," and then breaks phone contact. As SWAT prepares for J.E.R.K. the robot to enter, another burst of gunfire is heard. The robot opens the door, the police dog and SWAT enter. The suspect surrenders without a fight and states, "It's your fault they're dead. I told you to leave." He then whispers to the officer who is handcuffing him, "I won't do a day in jail. I'm crazy." The suspect laughs and is led away.

Role Warm-Ups

One week prior to training, the training group received a copy of this simulated incident. It was reread to the trainees the day of training. The debriefers were the first to be assigned roles. For this simulation, we selected three debriefers and asked them to take chairs in the center of the action-stage area. The instructions to the team were "Take your role when you enter the inner circle." The assigned leader of the debriefing was coached to be aware that the male negotiator and the male lieutenant would not be present but that everyone else in the scenario would be there. The leader was also told to do a pre-group warm-up with the team. The warm-up is a preparatory period during which the team discusses roles and the process to be followed. The team members were advised to review points about leadership style and how stress management education will be addressed.

The debriefing team roleplayers were told to "freeze action at any time, either for a break or to ask questions." They were informed that the trainer would stop action at various stages, to lend moral support or to check in with the team members. To achieve a more intensive experience, the roleplayers were encouraged to use psychodramatic doubling of their reactions or feelings.

To lead this scenario, we chose an officer who had never led an actual debriefing. Because he was the first to take a simulated leader role, he was allowed to hold cue cards to remind himself of the process. He calmly discussed with his peers how they would run the debriefing and what help he needed from his teammates. Next, we assigned the on-scene officer and dispatcher roles. Then we called on the team members and read their role instructions.

In the hostage scenario, for example, one of the roleplayers is warmed up to her role with these instructions: "You were the lead negotiator on the scene. You have eight years on the force. You were the one who found the two deceased children huddled together in their closet. The 6-year-old girl seemed to have been trying to shield her 3-year-old brother. Both children were shot twice in the face and once in the back. You recognized the pink pajamas the girl was wearing because your daughter has an identical outfit. The pajamas

were splattered with blood. Since the incident, you have been going to your daughter's room 2 or 3 times each night to make sure she is okay." We then asked the negotiator to walk around the outside of the debriefing circle as she gave a verbal soliloquy about how she felt in the role and what thoughts she was having about her role.

As the roleplayer walked around the circle, she discussed her feelings of helplessness that were related to her not being able to guarantee the safety of her own children, let alone children in the community. The horror of the deaths of the murdered children had been etched onto her memory bank.

When she entered the inner debriefing circle, we asked her to take a seat and stay in role until given other instructions. After all roles are assigned, the team leader began the debriefing/action phase. The debriefing was conducted with various stops in action for role reversals, mirroring, and doubling. This process took about 1½ to 2 hr.

In a roleplay scenario, three members usually take roles as the team members conducting the debriefing, with one being assigned a leader role. In advanced training, all three can be reversed into leader roles to allow for maximum training.

Mirroring can be used after a stop action. Peers not involved in the roleplay may be asked to mirror a leader, for the purpose of instantaneous feedback. Doubling can be used to provide feedback to any roleplayer and to increase the emotional depth of a role.

Deroling/Closure

Upon completion of the debriefing, those assigned to roles of on-scene personnel are deroled first. This is an essential procedure before closure and experiential integration. Each roleplayer is asked to leave the inner circle and slowly walk around the outside circle one or more times, while giving a verbal soliloquy about his or her reactions/thoughts in the role, and then, their personal thoughts/feelings touched off during the session. As they derole, one by one, they remove their chair from the inner circle, to concretize this process.

One roleplayer reports that in the role, he is fearful of continuing nightmares. He states that it helped him to talk about the incident but that he still wishes that it had never happened. From his own life, he states that he has children of his own and that calls involving children are the hardest to deal with.

The necessity of deroling has been addressed by Altman and Hickson-Lakhanour (1986). In a simulation lasting almost 15 hr, they discovered roleplayers had acute stress symptoms similar to actual hostages. They found that "a strong element of denial was operating and several role players reported a further need for processing over the next few days."

Trainers should note that the longer the action ensues and the fewer breaks

there are in the action, the more emphasis there should be on this deroling process. For instance, a 2-hr simulation (with breaks in action) may require only verbal soliloquies to derole. However, a 6-to 10-hr simulation without breaks would require a more intensive, lengthy deroling and relaxation/time-out period. Deroling is essential, regardless of the experience level of role-players.

Post Debriefing for Debriefers

Prior to deroling the debriefers of the scenario, we gave them this instruction: "Please move your chairs in closer together and process the debriefing as you would after an actual session. This entails discussing how you felt leading or participating in the debriefing, how the flow of the session went, who you are concerned about among the participants, and who will do individual follow-up contacts." After this processing, the debriefers were deroled, using the same deroling process we described previously.

After this session, the debriefing team reported that they were exhausted from having to deal with the intensity involved in the deaths of children. Everyone agreed that the lunch break was a needed role relief from the scenario. Everyone also agreed that stops in action were positive ways to decrease the intensity of the simulation.

Evaluation of Team Roleplayers

During the training, team members who were not given roles in the scenarios assessed those taking part in the scenario. The Mesa Police Department uses a 5-point Likert-type scale for its assessments. The evaluation forms for assessing the leader of the debriefing and the team members are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

We feel that this form of evaluation gives clear feedback to the trainees. To supplement the feedback, we suggest watching a video of the scenario, which can offer excellent critique material. Such a videotape can be viewed privately, with the group, or with the trainer(s).

Final Phase of Training

At this point in our training program, we reviewed the entire training simulation. Observers gave feedback, and we discussed these issues: What went well? What might we do differently? and What were the easiest and the most difficult issues to deal with? If the following points had not been previously addressed or if there were new team members, then trainer or team administrator/director reviewed these items:

TABLE 1
The Leader Evaluation Form

Statement	Scale					
Clarifies debriefing structure/warm-up	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Defers to mental health professional, as needed	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Demonstrates ability to facilitate expression of feelings	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Demonstrates listening skills	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Utilizes team members	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Responds to verbal cues	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Responds to non-verbal cues	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Ensures that isolates are incorporated into process	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Gives adequate attention to post-session with team members	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Note: Scale—Needs improvement (1), Adequate (2), Good (3), Very good (4), Excellent (5), Not applicable (N/A)

1. Confidentiality in debriefings
2. Avoiding excessive blaming of other agencies involved in incidents
3. Using silence therapeutically
4. Ways of focusing participants to increase their depth of sharing
5. Methods for incorporating the discussion of visual images, sounds, and smells from the critical incident into the debriefing

In the conclusion phase of the training, team members were once again reminded that this was not a process for doing psychotherapy. They were not expected to respond with perfect, magical answers to a distressful event. The purpose of the debriefing was to help them and their peers understand and identify their shared responses to horrific events, to help those involved to know and accept their limits and strengths, and, we hope, to clarify positive ways for people to cope with distress.

Team members initially conduct debriefings by taking their roles according to a strict training format. As they gain experience, team members expand upon their debriefer roles. When their comfort levels increase, they can take leadership roles with increased creativity and spontaneity. This three-step process of role taking, roleplaying, and role creating was formalized by Jacob Moreno, M.D.

TABLE 2
Team Member Evaluation Form

Statement	Scale					
Demonstrates ability to facilitate expression of feelings	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Demonstrates listening skills	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Responds to verbal cues	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Responds to non-verbal cues	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Performs role assigned by group leader	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Exhibits positive support to team leader and peers	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Note: Scale—Needs improvement (1), Adequate (2), Good (3), Very good (4), Excellent (5), Not applicable (N/A)

Summary

We maintain that psychodramatic techniques are excellent tools to teach peer debriefing skills to law enforcement personnel. Critical Incident Stress Management Teams are essential additions to law enforcement agencies. Dealing with common responses to distress at the time of trauma can help to prevent potential decreases in job or personal performance, decrease the potential of long-term emotional and physical illness resulting from prolonged exposure to numerous critical events, and assist officers and dispatchers in returning to normal functioning after a brief time period.

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JUNE SIEGEL, a clinical social worker, is in a group private practice and serves as the clinical advisor to CISM Team/Mesa Police Department. Sandra L. Driscoll, a lieu-

tenant with the Mesa Police Department, is currently assigned to hiring personnel and is the team coordinator for the department's critical incident stress management team.

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ERRATA

In the article by **Amy Schaffer** in the Spring 1995 issue of *JGPPS*, the last sentence on page 9 should read: I do **not** wish to suggest that transference to the director should become the major focus of psychodrama in the way that analysis of transference is central to psychoanalysis.

On page 11, the sentence in line 5 should read: To psychodramatists, the fundamental unit for understanding any human behavior is what Moreno called the "social atom," not the individual. So the construct of transference as a phenomenon involving only one psyche is of limited value. Moreno (1937, 1959) recognized the existence of transference and began the formulation of an interpersonal alternative to Freud's intrapsychic view.

Queries about the article *Sociodrama and Professional/Ethical Conflicts* (Spring 1995) should be addressed to **Steven A. Stein** at 629 Edgewood Drive, Kent, Ohio 44240.

The editor regrets these errors and apologizes for the stress and inconvenience they caused.

Assessing the Effectiveness of a Psychodrama Training Video

JANICE GABLE BASHMAN
THOMAS W. TREADWELL

ABSTRACT. The effectiveness of learning psychodrama, a group psychotherapeutic process, through video, a two-sense modality, was tested on college undergraduates, $N = 99$. The students were randomly assigned to one of four groups. Five predictions were made: (1) Those in the the video-training group involving demonstration and narration would attain better results in learning action techniques relative to other groups; (2) members of the video-training group involving demonstration and narration would achieve superior results in learning action techniques relative to the other two training groups; (3) those in the video-training group involving demonstration alone would be superior to the written-performance group in the learning of action techniques; (4) the group receiving the video training (demonstration alone) and those receiving written instruction would be better at learning action techniques than the group receiving no video presentation or written instruction; and (5) the group receiving no video presentation or written instruction would learn action techniques at chance level. After each group was exposed to its respective condition, a written multiple-choice instrument measuring knowledge of psychodrama theory and techniques was administered. Planned contrasts using one-tailed t tests indicated significant effect for the video teaching approach ($p < .01$). These findings support the predictions made indicating video would be an effective tool for teaching action techniques. The training video is entitled "Basic Theory and Techniques of Psychodrama."

FILM AND VIDEO are accepted, commonly used techniques in education and training. The effectiveness of learning through film or video has been tested, and the tests provide evidence that these methods are valuable tools in education (Arnspriger, 1933; Reid & MacLennan, 1967). Most research addresses the effectiveness of film or video compared with in-person, face-to-face teaching (Bundy, 1960; Meierhenry, 1952; Murphy & Gross, 1966; Reid & MacLennan, 1967; Street & Foot, 1989). Little research, however, has been conducted to compare film or video with other teaching methods, such as reading or discussion.

Although film has been used for decades as a means of communication, it is a costly and cumbersome technology (Berger, 1970). During the years fol-

lowing World War II, television emerged as a modern equivalent to film. Its success altered America's leisure-time patterns almost overnight (Murphy & Gross, 1966). The development of video technology is a direct result of the public's widespread acceptance of television.

Video as a method of communication allows both permanent recording and immediate playback of information. It is relatively inexpensive, compared with film, and is recognized as a major contribution to the development of science.

Historical Background of Visual Instruction

Attempts to use moving pictures as a training tool date back to World War I. However, it was not until the outbreak of World War II, which brought with it an urgent need to rapidly train thousands of men, that moving pictures were extensively employed as training tools (Miles & Spain, 1947). As of 1945, there were approximately 9,000 training films available from the armed forces (Miles & Spain, 1947).

During the mid-1950s, video was tested throughout the country as an instructional tool. These tests were conducted in response to an acute shortage of teachers and classroom space. Video was used to teach art, music, French, and mathematics. From 1956 to 1961, the Electronics Industries Association and the Fund for the Advancement of Education experimented with video as a training tool in the school district of Washington County, Maryland (Murphy & Gross, 1966).

In industry, the Sperry Corporation found that training time was reduced by 50% as soon as the company incorporated video into its program. Moreover, video training has the advantage of delivering consistent information (Cartwright, 1986).

Since the 1970s, the use of video training has increased dramatically in all aspects of society. Today, training videos are widely used in government, health care, education, and industry. And now more than 400 institutions in 40 states offer at least one course by video, and half a million people in the United States use video courses to acquire an education (Zoglin, 1984).

Learning by Means of Visual Instruction

Learning theory states that our memory for pictures is better than our memory for verbal names of those pictures (Postman, 1978). According to Paivio (1978), any given stimulus can be encoded in our memory verbally or visually or both verbally and visually. The type of encoding is dependent upon the nature of the task and the information presented. Paivio's theory, the dual-trace hypothesis, argues that pictures are better remembered than words. The theory states that words are coded verbally, whereas pictures are coded both

verbally and visually. The ability to react to and understand information is greatly expanded when the information is presented through both visual and auditory means (Berger, 1970).

Presentation of information in a training video must acknowledge the classic concept of learning: learning through comparison and analogy (Berger, 1970). Videotape training programs must present complex information in a manner that is clearly understood and meaningfully retained.

Studies conducted from 1931 to 1991 have yielded results that imply that the use of two-sense modalities, such as film and video, are more effective tools for learning than one-sense modalities. The two-sense modality has been supported by Clark (1983) and Tannenbaum (1956). For our study we developed and created a psychodrama training video, called "Basic Theory and Techniques of Psychodrama," and introduced it as a medium for classroom/training instruction.

Method

Participants

College freshman ($N = 99$), both male and female, participated in the study. The students could terminate their participation at any time without penalty.

Instrument

We designed an examination of 25 written multiple-choice questions and employed it as a postinstructional measure of psychodrama theory and techniques.

Design

The students were randomly assigned to one of four groups: Group 1 ($n = 25$) received the video presentation of an actual psychodrama combined with narration; Group 2 ($n = 24$) received the video presentation of an actual psychodrama without narration; Group 3 ($n = 25$) received written information containing basic theory and techniques of psychodrama but no video presentation or narration; and Group 4 ($n = 25$), a control group, received no video presentation or written instruction and responded to the multiple-choice test. The written information presented to Group 3 was the same material narrated on the video.

Procedure

The video and psychodrama training groups (Groups 1 and 2) received instruction through videos. Another group (Group 3) was allotted 30 min to

TABLE 1
Means and Standard Deviations for Groups

Statistic	Video with demonstration and narration	Video with demonstration alone	Written instruction	No video presentation or written instruction
<i>M</i>	14.16	10.50	10.76	7.60
<i>SD</i>	3.02	3.00	4.14	3.07
<i>n</i>	25	24	25	25

TABLE 2
Planned Contrasts Corresponding to Predictions Along With Significance of *t* Tests

Contrast	Video with demonstration and narration	Video with demonstration alone	Written instruction	No video presentation or written instruction	<i>t</i> (95)
1	1	$-\frac{1}{3}$	$-\frac{1}{3}$	$-\frac{1}{3}$	5.87*
2	1	$-\frac{1}{2}$	$-\frac{1}{2}$	0	4.31*
2	0	1	-1	0	-.27
4	0	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	-1	3.70*

**p* < .01.

read a text. The text consisted of psychodrama theory and techniques. The theory and techniques were also presented in various forms in the video training groups' videos. A control group (Group 4) had no video presentation or written instruction. All groups were instructed not to take notes on the presented material. After each group was exposed to its respective condition, the groups were administered a written multiple-choice instrument measuring knowledge of psychodrama theory and techniques. All students were debriefed upon completion of the test. We produced the training tape used in this study by using the television facilities at West Chester University. The video is intended for training in psychodrama, group processes, and sociometry and establishes the root of theater as a medium for communicating ideas, thoughts, and feelings to significant other people. By watching the video, students can see illustrations, through an actual psychodrama session, of the five structural and three process psychodramatic components. The techniques demonstrated and

explained are roleplaying, role reversal, doubling, future projection, soliloquy, the central concern model, action sociometry, and the divided needs spectrogram.

Predictions

Because of the effectiveness of film and video as a training aid, we predicted that our study would demonstrate the following:

1. The group receiving video-training that involved demonstration and narration would achieve better results in the learning action techniques relative to the other groups.
2. The group having video-training involving demonstration and narration would yield superior results in the learning action techniques relative to the other two training groups.
3. The group trained with the video of a demonstration alone would receive a higher rating in the learning of action techniques relative to the written instruction group.
4. The group that watched the demonstration-only video and the group that received only written instruction would achieve better results in the learning of action techniques than will the group receiving no video presentation or written instruction.
5. The group receiving no video presentation or written instruction would perform at chance level.

Results

A preliminary analysis was done to examine the reliability of the test. The internal consistency values (K-R 20) for the four groups were: video demonstration and narration (.45), video demonstration alone (.45), written instruction alone (.68), and no video presentation or written instruction (.50).

The predictions made are shown in Table 2 as planned contrasts. The planned contrasts were evaluated using one-tailed *t* tests. The error term for the *t* tests was derived from a one-way analysis of variance for the four groups. Because four contrasts were being tested, we decided to test each contrast at the .01 level of significance so that the overall level of Type I error for the four contrasts would not exceed the .05 level.

Tables 1 and 2 present means, standard deviations, and results of the *t* tests. As can be seen from Table 2, Predictions 1, 2, and 4 were supported. Prediction 3, however, was not supported.

Prediction 5 was tested by comparing the mean of the group receiving no video presentation or written instruction against a value of 6.25. This value is chance level performance given a 25-item test with four options. This expect-

tation was not borne out, as revealed by a two-tailed t test, $t(1, 24) = 2.19, p < .05$). The results can be summarized as follows: (a) The group trained with the demonstration and narration video was better than all other experimental groups; (b) the group that watched the video with demonstration and narration proved superior to those that saw the demonstration alone and those that had only written instruction; (c) the group that saw the demonstration alone did not differ significantly from the group that received only written instruction; (d) the group that saw the video demonstration and the group given written instruction performed significantly better than the group receiving no video presentation or written instruction; and (e) the group receiving no video presentation or written instruction performed slightly better than chance.

Discussion

Previous research indicates that significant differences in learning occur when groups are presented information in different formats, such as video training versus written instruction (Fox Film Corporation, 1931; U.S. Army Air Force, 1945; and Williams, Paul, & Ogilvie, 1957). People learn 10% of what they read, compared with 50% of what they see and hear (Dwyer, 1978). The findings of this study support the literature advocating the use of video as an effective training tool.

Test results indicated that those trained with a video involving demonstration and narration learned more of the group-action techniques. Planned contrasts using one-tailed t tests and a two-tailed t test revealed significant differences providing support for four of the five hypotheses. The marginal difference in means between Groups 2 and 3 appear perplexing but can be explained in the following manner. An item analysis indicated that Groups 2 and 3 responded correctly, but to different test questions.

Learning group action techniques through video training consisting of demonstration without narration did not prove to be the best method. Reading written material containing all the information necessary to respond correctly to the posttest questions was also not the best method of training. Although Groups 2 and 3 both learned as a result of their methods of instruction, Group 1 learned twice as much as either group.

We concluded that training in group-action techniques is most effective when it is presented in a video format (two-sense modality) and consists of demonstration and narration. The psychodramatic modality rests on individuals' spontaneity. Pausing throughout the session to explain the technique(s) used and the effects of group processes causes participants to lose the spontaneity and continuity of the psychodramatic process. The videotape that presented a demonstration of and a narration about group processes avoids this pitfall.

The results of this study encourage us to use a video to teach action techniques. Of course, certain limitations need to be addressed:

1. There are some weaknesses inherent in the video medium. Video training tools cannot give specific and direct personal help, answer questions, or detect confusion. Quality training videos must be produced with specific emphasis on the following multimedia criteria.

2. The instrument used to measure students' learning of action techniques needs to be tested further for reliability. We realize that the instrument was difficult because the highest score was 56%. The difficulty of the instrument is also indicated by the fact that it is possible for student performance to improve if the students viewed the video twice.

3. The participants in our study were a somewhat homogeneous group, consisting of college freshmen. We recognize that a cross-section involving people of various ages and educational levels, containing various professionals, nonprofessionals, and students, should be incorporated.

Overall, this video is a theoretical and applied video that can easily be separated into three 20-min videos instead of one 1-hr video. Having subjects view three shorter videos on separate occasions, we think, would allow for increased concentration and a greater attention span. We have concluded that when the weaknesses are recognized and the advantages are stressed, film and video are effective tools in education.

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BRIEF REPORTS

Editor's note: These three brief reports concern aspects of Moreno's sociometric theory and derivatives of that theory. The authors apply the term "strong" to the original and the term "weak" to later variations of Moreno's procedures. In the reports, the case is made for the use of these adjectives, a tool for interpersonal feedback is described, and some guidelines and techniques are presented.

Strong Sociometry: A Definition

To renew interest in Moreno's initial formulation of sociometry and its originally conceived use, I propose making a clear delineation between Moreno's formulation and its descendants. Moreno's definition of sociometry is broad, yet has been defined by the specific procedures he indicated and used. Some sociometrists will not agree with my interpretation of Moreno's writings and of his accounts. Nonetheless, I present citations from Moreno and other sources and accounts of my personal experiences that I believe make a strong case for my contentions. My objective is to have these observations and interpretations engender a debate, a closer examination of Moreno's ideas, and empirical investigations into the uses and impact of sociometry.

Sociometry

Sociometry, by definition, is the measurement of the socius, the interpersonal aspect of human relationships (Moreno, 1951). Key to this definition is the term *socius*. I maintain that the socius is defined by and is the result of the telic connections between and among people. To operationalize this rather abstract concept, one needs choices, that is, one person choosing others in relation to a criterion. These choices are a reflection of the telic connections in a group. Regardless of how involved, complex, or sensitive the mechanism for sociometric measurements and the resultant depictions, they are still extensions of these basic choices.

Moreno's Formulation

The difference between Moreno's (1953) formulation and its derivatives (for examples, see texts cited below) comes in his action orientation. Not only

must the choices be assessed, but they must be implemented. Accordingly, I maintain that the following requirements for sociometric measurement can be inferred from his work:

1. Choices, both positive (acceptances) and negative (rejections) should be made in relation to a specified criterion. (Choice making)
2. These choices should be implemented contiguously and as closely as possible to the way they were expressed. (Action emphasis)
3. The rationales behind these choices (the individual's warm-up) should be made explicit. (Study of the warming-up process).

Moreno believed that sociometry was not merely the measurement of interpersonal relationships but the use of that measurement. For whatever reason, Moreno recognized that simply stating the choices was different from implementing and experiencing them.

Distinctions

Where I differ in my interpretation from some other sociometrists is in my explication of the term *use*. Others maintain that what Moreno meant was to look at whether a group interaction was more or less effective as a result of sociometric assignment made from the measurement (choices of group members). Although such an assessment of effectiveness is a worthwhile goal, I believe Moreno emphasized not the outcome of the interaction but the warm-up to the choice, the process by which choosing those who could produce the optimal interaction (maximum spontaneity possible) within the parameters of the situation reflects the tele between individuals. To quote Moreno (1953):

The great misunderstanding, even among sociometrists, comes from the *neglect of studying experimentally the warming up process in the making of a choice . . .* (p. 134, emphasis added).

The important and different focus of Moreno's formulation of sociometry (the genius of it, if you will) is not on whether a better game of ring-around-the-rosy is achieved using sociometry (although that is a likely outcome) but on why the choices are made and what they tell about the socius of the group. To a degree, the criteria around which the choices are made are irrelevant. They are, for the present sociometric purpose, a means to an end, which is an assessment of the telic connections. This holds true as long as the criteria are adequate stimuli to produce the full range and depth of the warm-ups involved.

The choosing process and the warm-up to it are based on and reflective of the tele present. So what is "tele", and how is it assessed? Moreno (1975) described tele as

feelings into the actualities . . . insight into actual makeup (as opposed to transference) . . . feelings into one another . . . 'Zweifuhlung' . . . two-way communication. (pp. 6–7).

He goes on to describe the telic experience as

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. (p. 7)

From my personal experience and that of others (Remer, Lima, Rickey, White, & Gentile, 1993) what Moreno is describing is the result of making the reasons behind the choices (the warming-up process) explicit. In that exchange, the sharing of the reasons behind the choices, I see myself as others see me, and others see me as I see myself. I am forced to examine and to determine what I see as real and what I see as not, both in myself and in the other person(s) involved. Often, the process is not easy or pleasant. The interaction is, however, one way, if not the only way, to find out more about the part of self hidden from both oneself and others (Johari's Window as described in Johnson [1990], pp. 36–40). I interpret this to mean that Moreno considered this "studying experimentally the warming up process" to be, if not the primary focus of sociometry, at least a focus not neglected as it has been.

Strong and Weak Sociometry

To delineate what I view as the differences between Moreno's original formulation of sociometry and those that have developed from it, I have chosen to label Moreno's original *strong* and its derivatives *weak*. I have two reasons for choosing these terms, one reason based on the mathematical denotations of these labels and the other grounded in their connotations. I believe this labeling will both facilitate further discussion of my thesis and provoke discussion of my contentions.

Mathematical Rationale

In mathematics, when two theories can produce the same results but one is more general than the other, that is, grounds and implications of the second can be derived from the first, the former is called "strong," the latter "weak" (Lord & Novick, 1968). Borrowing this labeling, I contend that Moreno's original formulation might be termed strong, while its derivatives might be called weak.

Most applications and discussions of sociometry are now somewhat tangential to Moreno's (1951) intent for the use of sociometry. To see the validi-

ty of my contention, one need only examine some of the classic texts in areas where sociometry is used (e.g., Cartwright & Zander, 1968; Cronbach, 1969; Sax, 1980; Thorndike & Hagen, 1977) or the more recent and extensive coverage by Barclay (1991). All these sources underline the fact that as more and more uses for the techniques of sociometry and sociometric theory were developed, the original conceptualization of Morenean sociometry (Moreno, 1951, 1953) became more generalized and diluted. For example, the derivatives tend to use part of the first or of the first two of Moreno's three definitive criteria. They define sociometry as making choices (usually only positive choices or selections) in reference to a specific criterion. In fact, although Moreno's brainchild may have borne fruit beyond his expectations in one way, much of the intention of the original formulation—to focus on the choosing process in action—has been lost. (Even Hale's [1981] exemplary explication of sociometry fails to emphasize the action orientation and study of the warming-up process that Moreno initially saw as integral.)

Another, specific, example, which is typical of how many professionals define and use sociometry, can be seen in the *Barclay Classroom Climate Inventory (BCCI)* (Barclay, Barclay, & Stilwell, 1972) in which students are asked to nominate classmates in relation to specific criteria (e.g., "listens to others," "gets work done on time"). These results are then tabulated to indicate the position of students in the school social milieu and reported to teachers, school psychologists, and counselors. The students themselves rarely are privy to the results of the assessment, never having to implement their choices or explain the reasons behind them.

These procedures, while producing useful information, include only aspects of Moreno's formulation of sociometry. In addition, the data on which these results are based could easily be obtained as a step or a by-product of a complete, "strong" sociometric exploration. Therefore, I term these representations "weak" sociometries.

Connotative Rationale

Moreno's description of tele, "... I tear out my eyes . . .," could be characterized as brutal. Many people experience a severe visceral response (dread) to the advent of participating in a Morenean sociometric exploration (Remer, Lima, Rickey, White, & Gentile, 1993), because they fear the stark honesty required of them in making their choices public and for examining the rationales behind them. They are right. The process can be demanding. The kind of honesty required to open oneself up to the negative tele inherent in the warming-up process to choosing demands courage and strength. Other, less confrontive, assessments of where one stands with others are gentler and weaker. They simply do not carry the same impact. The potency of the impact

of Moreanean sociometry is a strong point, but this is also a weakness because people tend to shy away from its use.

Summary and Conclusion

Differences definitely exist between Moreno's formulation of sociometry and those popularly in use today. I have made the case for labeling Moreno's formulation strong sociometry. In concentrating on the benefits derived from employing other forms of sociometry, I believe the unique contribution derived from applying Moreno's full formulation of the process has been neglected, if not lost.

The addition of implementing the choices and studying the processes involved in their formation (Moreno, 1951), the two procedures often omitted in implementing sociometry, lead to differences in formulations and highlight problems in application. For example, the difficulty in coping with the possible attendant negative aspects of rejections becomes obvious in contrasting approaches to sociometry. This particular topic is one that Moreno did not address but is one that needs to be considered. Empirical questions regarding this equivalence of strong and weak sociometry also remain. I hope this essay will reawaken interest in Moreno's writings on sociometry and fuel debate about his basic concepts. All formulations of sociometry need to be assessed by empirical study so that they may be used conscientiously and effectively.

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Using Strong Sociometry as an Interpersonal Feedback Tool

With this report on our use of Moreno's formulation of sociometry, we hope to renew interest in Moreno's definition of sociometry. After our delineation of Moreno's formulation, we examine a particular application for providing feedback regarding a person's impact on others within the context of therapist training.

Moreno's Sociometry

Moreno believed that sociometry was not only the measurement of interpersonal relationships but also the use of that measurement to study the warming-up process to choosing. He recognized that simply stating the choices was different from implementing and experiencing them. In fact, he saw that this specific potential for the use of sociometry was often missed or ignored because even veteran sociometrists neglected the study of warming-up to selecting or rejecting *in situ* (Moreno, 1951). Our goal was to exploit the potential of "strong" sociometry for examining the tele in a group for the purpose of self-exploration. We also wanted our students to learn about the use of the sociometric method and its strengths and weaknesses.

An Application of Strong Sociometry

In many programs for training therapists, self-knowledge and personal growth are considered essential. A vehicle for addressing these aspects is one's awareness of the impact one has on others. Sociometry provides a powerful method for clarifying, expressing, and conveying this information in a tangible form.

In the Counseling Psychology Training Program at the University of Kentucky, the experientially oriented courses have a personal growth component. In the course on group counseling and particularly in the seminar, Counseling Psychology: Psychodrama, we teach the sociometric procedures, which are a vital component of the learning experience. Sociometry is employed to provide students with interpersonal feedback and input into their growth process. The impact of the method is meant to be felt firsthand so that the students will experience it as their clients will when they, as therapists, use it in their own practices.

Preparation

Before we engaged the group in our sociometric experiment, we discussed the ground rules to ensure adequate warm-up. Students knew that they were expected to make choices, would be expected to act on those choices, and would be responsible for explaining the reasons for their choices. During the warm-up, we encouraged the students to process their anticipated reactions to the experiment thoroughly to reduce undesirable results as much as possible. We recognized, however, that the full impact of the implementation is usually not appreciated until the hypothetical becomes the actual.

The Experiment

We gave the following instructions to ensure that the requirements for strong sociometry would be attained. We told them that their choices would be implemented in doing small-group work, which, in this case, meant empty chair/situational psychodramas. Students were to choose two others with whom they wanted to be involved to form the required group of three to do the exercise and to choose two with whom they did not wish to be involved. Students knew that choices would be used in the small-group formation for the exercise and to demonstrate the use of sociometry for promoting interpersonal feedback. The choice data were collected confidentially from private ballots and were submitted to the instructor, who constructed the choice matrix and the sociograms. First, the triads were formed, and the situational psychodrama exercise was completed. Then, the sociograms and choice matrix on which they were based were displayed to the class members. Finally, the reasons for the choices—selections and rejections—were discussed.

So that we are clear, the main objective of the experiment was not to produce a more effective exercise (although that was one result), but to provide a vehicle for examining the tele in the group. We could have employed any criterion of choice (e.g., "With whom would you like to sing a duet?"). That would

have served the purpose of producing the choices and the subsequent exploration just as well, so long as the full sociometric process was followed.

The Impact of Experiencing the Strong Sociometry Experiment

After the sociograms were presented and the warm-ups to the choices explored, class members wrote brief reaction papers about their experiences. The following quotes are representative of the students' reactions to the feedback process afforded by the sociometry in one specific case, the sociometric assignment of partners for doing an empty chair exercise.

Before they participated in the experiment described, students' attitudes toward "strong" sociometry were characterized by statements such as these:

Initially, my experience with the sociometric exercise was characterized by considerable fear of being rejected as well as a sense of discomfort with the process of shifting to a deeper level of interaction with other group members.

First, I was uncomfortable saying with whom I would rather not interact. To do so seemed to obligate me to state why I didn't choose that person.

I felt exposed—my views and feelings about other group members were out in the open.

As the process continued, the students' views changed, as is evident from the following statements:

However, as the exercise progressed, I began to feel a sense of excitement, a feeling of liberation, although I was no more comfortable than when the exercise began. The sense of liberation came from knowing where I stood with others in the group, and that they knew where they stood with me. There was little, if any, room left for pretense.

The effect of knowing what choices were made by whom was very interesting.

By implementing the choices made by each group member, the consequences of choosing were made explicit. . . . Seeing the choices implemented made me confront myself and my choices.

Statements made by the students at the end of the process seemed to indicate that the students had gained personal, interpersonal, and technical insights:

The first thing I learned about myself with this exercise was that I am considerably less honest in my relationships than what I'd like to be.

I was pleasantly surprised to find that I was not deeply hurt by the rationale given to me about being rejected. I felt calm and secure in my sense of self. I discovered that there will be persons who will choose me and persons who will reject me, perhaps for the same reasons.

When we were together in class during the ensuing weeks, it stayed in the back of my mind what people had chosen each other and the groups from which I was excluded. I learned that I did not mind not having been selected by certain peo-

ple but was quite concerned that those whom I did not choose would understand why. By that time, I had figured out the reasons for my choices and it was important that those group members involved knew the reasons. I wouldn't want them to guess some negative intent on my part and possibly have hurt feelings.

I presumed that, like me, they had some relatively simple non-personal motive for not choosing me. I did, however, feel more allied with the person who did choose me and found myself making more of an effort to speak to the person who was not selected by anyone lest they feel left out of the group.

I learned that I can be comfortable with my decisions and choices, even ones that include "rejecting" others . . . I can be and am comfortable with being "accepted" and "rejected" by others . . . one can always rationalize the actions of others, but hearing the other person verbalize the rationale behind their choices is more comforting to me.

I learned that viewing other people when they were feeling uncomfortable resulted in my wanting to rescue them.

Observations

After considering the students' remarks, we made two general observations. First, we concluded that those who experienced the use of strong sociometry gained insight into themselves, others, and the process of choosing. Second, we recognized that there was attendant discomfort among the students from participating in the experience.

The two issues that engendered the strongest reactions involved the choosing experience. Specifically, these reactions focused on the rejections. There have been instances where one's being chosen, especially as the "star," brought a negative response because of the responsibility that person felt for the group. Regardless of the reality that both aspects of choosing are consistently part of day-to-day life and that those involved in the process can understand this truth cognitively, we observed that making the choices explicit produced discomfort. Although we recognized that not all discomfort is dysfunctional and that it can provide motivation for putting feedback in a usable form, we concluded that we had not answered the question of how to reduce discomfort to a utilitarian level so that the gains made from employing sociometry are not outweighed by the energy necessary to cope with the uneasiness.

Cautions

We have labeled Morenean sociometry "strong" because of the impact it can have on individuals. Although this approach has great potential for providing input necessary for growth and change, it has the potential to be harmful. Those involved may not be psychologically stable and may become dysfunctional after receiving the feedback.

People are wary of getting and giving feedback for good reason. The reality of not being chosen and of not choosing someone must be dealt with. The strong sociometry technique, particularly if insensitively and ineptly used, can be very detrimental to participants and viewed by some as an attack, real or imagined, on one's defenses.

We hope that knowing the reasons behind the choices will help the people receiving the feedback to sort it and to use it for what it is worth to them. Because we work with therapist trainees, we have often assumed that they can process the feedback they receive. Sometimes we have been wrong. The outcome has been distressing, both for the recipient of the input and for the rest of the group. Such drawbacks can be avoided by attending to the manner in which the reasons for the choices are presented.

Conclusion

We contend that the application of Moreno's (1951, 1953) theories of strong sociometry provides an effective tool for promoting self-knowledge, interpersonal and intrapsychic insight, and concomitant motivation and backing for change. However, without awareness of the possible negative side effects and without adequate precautions, the applications can be painful and even harmful. In addition to the focus on the warm-up to the use of strong sociometry, which we have emphasized here, some minor modifications in the sociometric process should decrease the chances of engendering detrimental results. Research, however, will be necessary to determine whether such modifications to Moreno's formulation, when implemented, might significantly dilute the positive effects of his sociometric theories.

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Using Strong Sociometry: Some Guidelines and Techniques

With this article, I hope to renew interest in Moreno's original formulation of sociometry. Moreno's sociometry, which has been described as strong sociometry, is indeed strong medicine. Like strong medicine, it can be very effective when it is used correctly. Like strong medicine its side effects, anticipated and unanticipated, can cause problems. Therapists must cope with the possible attendant negative aspects, a topic with which Moreno failed to deal, to make the approach more viable.

The difficulties with the process seem to arise around the rejecting and being rejected aspects. Regardless of their recognition that both aspects of choosing are consistently part of day-to-day life and in spite of the fact that those involved in the process can understand this truth cognitively, those involved in making the choices manifest and focal find that this produces discomfort. Although therapists recognize that not all discomfort is dysfunctional, they still must address the problem of reducing the participants' discomfort to a utilitarian level so that the gains made from employing sociometry are not outweighed by the energy required to cope with the uneasiness.

Some Suggestions for the Use of Strong Sociometry

First, I propose some guidelines to help prepare people for the impact of Morenean sociometric techniques to facilitate group warm-up. Second, I suggest a specific model that can help those offering feedback to be more functional regarding their choices and help those receiving feedback to elicit supportive input. This model should promote more positive individual warm-ups. Third, I offer two techniques designed to help people invite feedback. They can be used as presented or as models for developing similar techniques to be applied with other, different groups. The suggestions are intended to help retain the strengths of the strong sociometric approach, as embodied in the original tripartite requirements suggested by Moreno (1953), and to reduce the discomfort and other possible adverse affects (e.g., reaction to sociometric rejection) to a manageable, functional level.

Guidelines for Group Warm-Up

All the participants should engage in an open and thorough discussion of the sociometric process. The therapist must present the steps that will be followed and the rationale behind each. Any foreseen problems or possible risks (e.g., that relationships may change as a result of the exchanges) should be

addressed. All those involved should have the opportunity to express any of their reactions and reservations. On the basis of the group input, modifications to the original plan, designed to minimize the anticipated negative consequences and maximize any positive outcomes, can be incorporated. The addition of this step underlines the importance of a group warm-up to Moreno's idea of attending to the individual's warm-up to making the choice. Although no guarantee should be or can be given that negative effects will not result, the final plan of procedure has become a group product and, hence, a group responsibility. Two ends will have been accomplished: The maximum possible group involvement/warm-up will be engendered, maximizing the group spontaneity (Moreno, 1951); concomitantly, the members will be more committed to making the process work to produce positive results.

In a similar vein, any participant should be allowed to halt the interaction at any time and address any qualms that may have arisen. This guideline is intended to induce a sense of shared control and shared responsibility. In this way, unforeseen eventualities can be accommodated. I have also found that agreeing ahead of time on how decisions regarding the process will be made—consensus, unanimity, majority, group leader synthesis—is also helpful.

Leaving enough time to complete the process is another essential. Scheduling a long session, agreeing that all will stay until adequate closure is reached, using more than one session for the interaction, or planning whatever else may be necessary to ensure a spontaneous outcome should be discussed as ground rules. However, total closure should never be promised. As they would with any learning process, participants will need time for assimilation on a personal basis, after the accommodation of new input has occurred (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969).

Facilitative Communication Forms/Techniques

If or when the group decides that specific feedback about the reasons for choices would be helpful, providing a supportive, constructive vehicle can ameliorate much of the attendant discomfort. The aim is to allow the participants to convey the reasons behind their choices in a manner that is effective and encouraging to the recipients. This goal can be approached by focusing on the giver of the feedback, to help in framing the input in a beneficial way, or by concentrating on the recipient, to aid in eliciting constructive input and in taking in and processing the material. For more information on the group feedback process, the reader may wish to consult such sources as Jacobs (1974), Kivlighan (1985), Morran and Stockton (1980), or Morran, Stockton, and Bond (1991).

Placing a focus on the phrasing of behavioral feedback from the chooser to those chosen and those rejected, within the context of the choice, can be help-

ful and less threatening (Remer, 1984; Watson & Remer, 1984). Further, stressing the consequences of that behavior and the feelings engendered by it can enhance the impact of the communication. Remer and deMesquita (1990) suggested a six-stage process for delivering feedback that they based on the psychodramatic enactment curve (Hollander, 1978).

An example of a participant's response follows:

I didn't choose you as someone from whom I would like feedback because, when you give me advice in group (behavior in context), I feel attacked (feeling) and I experience you as judging me (impact/consequence).

This type of input, introduced by an adequate lead-in (warm-up) and followed by supportive, active listening, usually allows the recipient to hear, take in, and, if necessary, clarify the feedback. Since the process is based on establishing a mutually respectful relationship and interaction, discomfort is reduced to a minimum.

Another effective way to ease the process of giving feedback is for the recipient (either one chosen or rejected) to invite it. For example, persons desiring feedback can confront the others and invite input and/or corrections by saying:

When I give you advice, I imagine you are irritated with me, because I come across as judgmental. Is that right?

Similarly, sharing one's known or imagined concerns about the impact one has on others usually helps others to be supportive and constructive in their responses. Through group interaction, members can gain the knowledge necessary for personal and professional growth. Coupled with group support for making specific changes, an open individual can become a more effective person (and therapist).

Two Sociometric Techniques to Promote Feedback

The direct application of sociometry—producing a choice matrix and resultant sociogram, showing them to the group, and having the rationales behind the choices presented—can be an effective method for providing feedback about the choosers' warm-ups for the choices made. However, like an enactment without sufficient warm-up, such an approach can easily produce a lack of closure and the consequent unresolved issues. Therapists can design techniques meant to promote an open, reassuring atmosphere to help individuals in the group warm up to the task. These efforts would encourage a spontaneous exchange of feedback. The following are two examples that should produce these results.

The Living Sociogram

By numbering individuals and not indicating their genders, therapists can produce an anonymous sociogram from the group's choices. Using the sociogram of the group's choices, the therapist can assemble the group into a living sociogram. By focusing separately on the acceptances and the rejections, the therapist can give each member of the group the experience of each position. The most efficient way to accomplish this is to rotate through the positions—1 becomes 2, 2 becomes 3, and so on until 8 becomes 1. The therapist may incorporate action to enhance the effect so that a member is either pulling or pushing on the individuals to whom he or she is linked. The experience is then processed. The therapist can ask the group this question, which often leads to inviting feedback: Which position felt most familiar to you and why?

The Projective Sociogram

In the actual space of the room, the therapist can lay out a target sociogram, as described by Hale (1981) with the levels reflecting total nominations. Using the anonymous sociogram for reference, group members can place themselves at the level commensurate with the person who they believe they are. Positioning should not be mutually exclusive. For example, if three people project themselves to be at the 4 level, but there is actually only one group member at the 4 level, that is fine. Members should then be invited to say why they believe they belong where they have placed themselves, and they may invite confirmation from the rest of the group members, either collectively or individually. Again, the members of the group must process the reactions to approach closure.

Techniques such as these interface nicely with the feedback techniques mentioned previously. In addition to providing firsthand experiential learning of the personal aspects of the sociometric process, these techniques also demand that participants comprehend both the mechanics of sociometry and the theory behind them.

Conclusion

Moreno's (1951, 1953) sociometric techniques provide a potent means for promoting self-knowledge and interpersonal and intrapsychic insight. The therapist's awareness of possible negative side effects from the painful applications can alert him or her to guard against any possible harmful outcomes from this effective tool.

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BOOK REVIEW

Acts of Service: Spontaneity, Commitment, Tradition in the Nonscripted Theatre. Jonathan Fox. 1994. New Paltz, NY: Tusitala Publishing. 276 pp.

In this newly published book, the founder of Playback Theatre presents his most comprehensive overview of the nature of this important method and its place in the sociocultural realm of dramatic activities in general. I have been impressed with the excitement about Playback Theatre and how it has been taken up by people in drama therapy. It is being used internationally, and it seems to respond to that hunger for community that is a natural response to the postmodern condition.

Jonathan Fox's background in both theater and psychodrama makes him uniquely capable of addressing the process of drama from its widest perspective, going beyond the conventional histories of theater and considering the nature of the oral tradition, storytelling, the improvisations of the ritual clowns in some cultures, and a variety of other activities. I was particularly pleased and informed by taxonomy of what the author calls "non-scripted theatre," described in the fifth chapter as having six major branches: experimental theater, community theater, clowning/new vaudeville, educational theater, comic-satire theater, and therapeutic theater. Fox notes Moreno's place on this sociocultural "tree"-like matrix both as a major founder of the therapeutic theater and as one who also informed experimental theater.

The author omitted a few related developments that, although not being "theater," I think should be recognized as addressing this same need. For example, other types of "play-shops" (instead of workshops) and sociodramatic activities have become more widespread. Many personal development classes, not only those in general adult education programs but also those for various professional or business training courses, have used theater games, encounter-group structured experiences, and psychodramatic warmups. Wiener (1994) has described how he uses these approaches as part of psychotherapy.

Playback Theatre appeals to many people who have no particular connection to psychodrama. This book is especially relevant to drama therapists, but psychodramatists will find it rich in its associations and basic theory. In addition to discussing many of the "nuts and bolts" considerations of developing a troupe, rehearsing, maintaining morale, working with different kinds of

audiences, and the like, Fox also discusses such issues as spontaneity, the personal development and consciousness of the director/conductor, rehearsing, and the fundamental theoretical issues involved in the oral versus the written tradition.

The inclusion in an appendix of a transcript of a performance is particularly helpful in making the process more vivid, and he cites examples from this process record at many points in the main text to illustrate various principles or dynamics.

I appreciated the way the author began by reminding the reader of the limitations of script and literary work in general, contrasting it with certain functions of the oral tradition, which allows for more of an adjustment of the performance to the circumstances of the group. Not only does this remind us of the tribal and spiritual foundations of much of drama, but it also informs us about some of the principles of the ritual process, which serves as one of the elements in the theory of how psychodrama is a healing process.

The author's roots in theater make him especially able to reflect on the original Morenean goal of a methodology for the people. Playback Theatre, for example, although frequently presented at psychodrama conferences, is not specifically psychotherapy in the sense of being a treatment for those who identify themselves as "patients." It is, however, therapeutic in the broadest sense, in that it is life enhancing to be able to tell one's story and have it mirrored dramatically, or to participate as actor or audience in validating the richness of another person's life.

Fox's scholarship is impressive, and he draws on a broad range of sources that are relevant to the nature of drama and therapy in our postmodern culture. For example, he discusses the particularly useful concept of "liminality," the overlapping frames of meaning and the therapeutic value of narrative.

In the spirit of Moreno's earlier work, the author includes in the appendix one full text of a session that provides the reader with a good sense of the process of Playback. He refers to these examples throughout the text to illustrate various points, and having the full record makes his discussion more vivid. In addition, Fox offers a great many rich and original vignettes.

My criticisms are minor. There is a little redundancy with another book written recently by Jo Salas (1993). The book also has some problems of organization, such as in the discussion of the linguistic forms—oral versus written—noted both in the first and the penultimate chapters. At times, the reading becomes a little dense, and passages require rereading and contemplation. Indeed, I could imagine this book being the subject of a book club or literature seminar, so rich is it in thought-provoking comments.

On the whole, *Acts of Service* is a valuable contribution to the literature of psychodrama, drama therapy, educational drama, and the field of theater in general. Moreno's vision was that methods for cultivating group dynamics

and spontaneity should be applied beyond the medical or “therapeutic” model, for a wider purpose of healing and developing the general social matrix. He called the endeavor *sociatry*, a term that is a play on the word *psychiatry*. Jonathan Fox’s approach offers a significant innovation and contribution to this goal.

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Call for Papers for the 1996 American Society for Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama Meeting

April 1996 will mark 75 spectacular years since Moreno began exploring psychodrama. This rich history is expressed in our theme for the meeting: “Seventy-five Years of Psychodrama: So Much More to Explore!” Authors should express this sense of celebration and explore the reciprocity of psychodrama and other creative therapies in their papers.

Please note that the deadline for submitting proposals is September 30, 1995. For specific instructions on how to submit proposals on disks, call Jackie Kenney or Cheryl Kilday at the ASGPP National Office (703/556-9222).

BRIEF REPORT

A Response to Moreno's Organic Form of Psychomusic in a Psychodrama Training Course: First, Warm Up the Singing Voice

In Latin America, as a psychodrama graduate student who had a previous conservatory degree in singing, I realized that Moreno (1977) in his organic form of psychomusic had unwittingly omitted warming up the singing voice before participation. Nonetheless, a slow vocal warm-up should be a routine practice; if participants become hoarse after a sung psychomusic session, the responsibility for that lies with the director. To prevent abuse, misuse, and overuse of the voice, psychodrama participants who are nonprofessional singers need to receive at least minimal basic instruction on this subject (see Feder, 1991; Levine & Finnegan, 1987). If participants are taught good posture and correct breathing and if they explore the range of their singing voice while refraining from belting and harmful excessive volume, they may be more eager to participate in experimental singing than otherwise.

To warm up the voice, the director instructs the group (participants and audience) to begin to hum slowly from the most easily produced middle range downward and then upward. Vowels are sung on one note and then are sung ascending and descending scalewise within a middle range in the most comfortable dynamics. Singing must be as natural as speaking, with the singer avoiding any type of rigidity. Practice should be fun.

Next, the following nontraditional exercises, based on Schafer (1970), are used a cappella as preparation for future participation in psychodramatic musical sessions. Participants are free to use the whole stage and add body movement. Those insisting on continuing to use the speaking voice are urged to sing. Because some may linger on one sound before progressing to another, a cacophony of sung sounds is soon produced. "Now let the reed of your voice express itself. Let it go free. Discover its scope, its expressive potential. Discover the shapes of the things you can draw with your voice" (Schafer, 1970, p. 3). Using their imaginations, the participants should gently produce the following sounds: the lowest, the softest, the highest, the smoothest, the funniest, the saddest; the sternest; the most boring. They should follow these with a loud sound, an interrupted one, a sound repeated rhythmically, and then an unrhythmic one. They should continue with the highest one again, followed by the softest, with a gradual modulation to the funniest. Variations include imitating the sounds of nature and of whispering, echoes,

or laughter and singing the person's name or surname at different tempos and intensities (Schafer, 1970).

Two or three notes are added to variations, always without forcing the voice, on expressing different emotions, including anger, crying, joy, happiness, and others excluded in the above list. If participants are initially too inhibited to initiate the exercises a cappella, a cassette recording of ocean waves or rain fall can be used as background sound instead of silence, but no music, other than what is produced by the individuals, is used (as in Moreno's organic form). Videotaped playback is instructive. Homework for the group members should include practicing, alone in front of a mirror as if a professional singer, to observe facial expressions while listening to the different sounds produced (Díaz de Chumaceiro, 1985a, b).

At the time I realized Moreno's omission, I believed that it was important for psychodrama participants to learn to use their vocal instrument safely while exploring their psyches and that it would be beneficial to offer nonprofessional singers a few preparatory lessons. A decade later, I still believe that.

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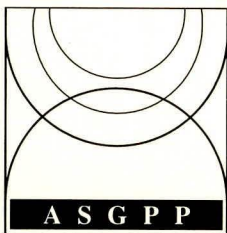
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