

**MARIA SCHEJBAL**

A hand is shown reaching out from the bottom right towards a large, flowing blue fabric that dominates the center of the frame. The background is a vibrant sky with soft, golden-orange clouds, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. Several other pieces of fabric in red and green are seen floating or blowing in the air, creating a sense of movement and lightness. The overall composition is dynamic and evocative, symbolizing the pursuit of something intangible like creativity.

**THE SEARCH FOR CREATIVITY**





This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



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POTENS – Psychodrama on the Educational Stage

This book was originally written in Polish. It was later published in five languages: Polish, English, Romanian, Greek, and Portuguese.

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Photos: Krzysztof Tusiewicz and Tomasz Zieliński

Also used in this publication are various works created by participants of the project's pilot workshops.

Copyright: Potens Project Partners

Typesetting: Anna Mańska

Printed by: Zakład Introligatorsko-Drukarski Stowarzyszenia Teatr Grodzki

Zakład Aktywności Zawodowej

**Publisher**

Bielskie Stowarzyszenie Artystyczne Teatr Grodzki

Ul. S. Sempołowskiej 13, 43-300 Bielsko-Biała, [www.teatrgrodzki.pl](http://www.teatrgrodzki.pl)

Bielsko-Biała, 2010

**ISBN: 978-83-926612-4-5**

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## INTRODUCTION

**I want to start from a very personal reflection.** Fifteen years ago, my adventure began working with young addicts in theatre groups. For me it was the first direct contact with drug addicts and my first experience of volunteering. In the Centre for Catholic Education and Rehabilitation of Youth in Bielsko-Biała, I decided to create and lead a theatre group. I started an ambitious artistic and educational project on my own, without the proper preparation. As I soon discovered, my theatrical studies were only slightly helpful in implementing this new task. For the first workshop I took a script I had prepared – a dozen pages of text with every detail of the staging I had intended to create. I hoped that we would proceed immediately to creating the spectacle, though of course, expecting various problems and difficulties. The reality, however, exceeded my expectations ... The standard method of working on a show, with readings and text analysis at the beginning, multiple, tedious repetition and polishing of individual scenes, could not work in this environment. The group first had to be understood, "tamed", and encouraged to work together. Before my theatrical dreams could be realised, I had to confront, face to face, suspicion, low self-confidence, discouragement, and the aggression and resistance of the young actors. I also had to cope with my own uncertainty and lack of experience.

**What helped me was moving away from the traditional approach** and tapping into resources, games, exercises and less conventional, more play-like methods, which supported group integration. Thus we were able to create the first show, followed by many other productions, presentations and events that have stood up to meeting an audience. The participants were active co-creators in all of these artistic projects, and not just passively acting out my staging ideas. For several years, experiments and research related to the behaviour of groups particularly affected by their own dramatic experiences were accompanied by my constant need to go beyond the strictly theatrical and educational context. Work on spectacles constantly ran up against the need to resolve conflicts and difficult situations in the group. I lacked the therapeutic expertise and knowledge of the methods that help overcome fear, frustration, passivity, and activate and motivate participants. Quite by chance I came across psychodrama training, which proved to be, in many ways, a watershed experience, and gave me new tools and new approaches to educational tasks. My initial acquaintance with psychodrama – a three-year course in The Polish Institute of Psychodrama in Cracow – also resulted in the implementation of international initiatives developed within European Grundtvig programmes.

**The project "Psychodrama on the Educational Stage"** (October 2008–September 2010) was implemented in partnership with five organisations operating in Poland, Romania, Portugal and Cyprus. The partnership was made up of the following institutions: The Bielskie Artistic Association Grodzki Theater in Bielsko-Biała (author and project coordinator), The J.L. Moreno Psychodrama Society, from Cluj-Napoca in Romania, The Cyprus Adult Education Association from Nicosia in Cyprus, The Portuguese Society for Innovation from Porto in Portugal, and EST Lifelong Learning Centre from Wadowice in Poland.

The first phase of the project was devoted to a consideration of the possibility of implementing psychodrama in education, in particular, developing and implementing the pilot program of workshops with psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy experts, and educators. The project created a platform for cooperation between these communities and has allowed international discussion on the pertinence of psychodramatic methods in educational programs. Particular emphasis was placed on work in so-called "sensitive" groups. This publication is an attempt to collect and summarise the most important, fruitful and creative experiences from the project, specifically focusing on descriptions of actual activities, techniques and scenarios used in the workshops.

**The publication's structure** is comprised of four thematic blocks. In the first, the conditions and rules for the safe and efficient use of psychodrama and related disciplines in the therapeutic education of adults are presented in brief. An important part of the chapter is an introduction to key concepts in the field of psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy. This section – "Theoretical Background" refers to a document drawn up by the Romanian partner on the basis of reports and results of the entire project team (full text available in English on the website: [www.potens.com.pl](http://www.potens.com.pl)). The next section, "Educational Contexts", focuses on the trainers working with adults – on their needs and the problems and challenges posed by the task of leading the group and contact with people requiring special support. The third chapter – "Warm-ups and Sociometric Techniques" contains descriptions of various exercises to help integrate the team, and motivate the participants to participate in the activities and explore their creative possibilities. Finally, "Educational Scenarios" is a selection of good practices and practical ideas to run the courses using creative, customised methods.

The book is supplemented by four films on DVD directed by Krzysztof Tusiewicz. They illustrate pilot workshop activities implemented in all partner countries.



**The publication was created as a result of the cooperation of an international team of experts** working in the field of psychodrama, sociodrama, dramatherapy and education. The formulation of methodological theories, detailed reports of the workshop sessions, and the significant attention of trainers and educators were the starting point for my work on the publication. I want to thank all those involved in the documentation process of the workshops and reflect on their achievements. This project's pioneering work was performed by a group comprised of the following: Dr Éva Varró, Dr Maria Roth, Sorina Bumbuluț, Horațiu Nil Albini, Júlia Szigeti (Romania), Roulla Demetriou and Klitos Symeonides (Cyprus), Jose Luis Mesquita, Ana Leal and Sara Brandao (Portugal) as well as Anna Bielańska, Igor Hanuszkiewicz, Piotr and Justyna Kostuchowski, Anna Wróbel and Aleksander Schejbal (Poland). Of great importance in developing the final form of the publication were the reports from workshop participants from all the partner countries. They brought valuable knowledge about the application of ideas, techniques, and new approaches to educational work in specific environments, in the contexts of various training and schooling programmes.

*This publication, with the permission of the project partners, is dedicated to my psychodramatic group: Anna, Beata, Bożena, Dorota, Ela, Joanna, Kasia, Magda, Małgosia, Monika, Zuzia as well as both of Romans (Polish Institute of Psychodrama – Level I Moreno's Psychodramatic Methodology, Krakow 2006–2008).*

Maria Schejbal







# THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The most important task of this project was the analysis of the specific usage of psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy in adult education. The common aspects within those fields were tested in all of the partner countries, and performed on various levels: investigative (the analysis of the source texts, interviews with educators and therapists, a survey), by developing and implementing pilot projects for teachers and trainers who work with adults, as well as on a daily basis in the education of various groups of adult learners. The aim was to check whether the methods which were used in the therapy, connected with each person's potential for creativity, could contribute to diversification and to a general improvement of the already widely understood field of adult education. Extremely important was the answer to the question about the influence of applied psychodrama techniques on basic skills acquired by the participants: creative expression, independence in learning and social competence.

The results of the partners' cooperation within the field were presented in the document "Guidelines on Psychodrama Use in Adult Education" – available in full on the project's website ([www.potens.com.pl](http://www.potens.com.pl)). The following chapter is a presentation of selected concepts and theories which form the theoretical basis for the activities, educational ideas and scenarios used within the project and described in more detail in later sections of this document.

## Definitions

The program of the pilot workshops, in all of the partner countries, consisted mainly of practical activities, with theory playing a lesser role. This came about mainly as a result of the beliefs of psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy experts, which state that the most important element for understanding the potential of these phenomena are: activeness, the experience of performing on

stage, meeting the group and direct experience. However, the participants of the project emphasised that the elements of theory which they learnt during the training were very relevant for them.

*Theoretical introduction is necessary because all of the things I discover here are completely new to me.*

*I have to admit, sometimes I empathise with the action so deeply, that I lose my distance and stop understanding what's actually happening. That is why theory is needed.*

A roughly outlined introduction of the main terms which cover the subject of the project can not give a full image of the methods applied in psychodrama, socio-drama and dramatherapy. Those interested in detailed knowledge about these fields should refer to the source literature, which is available in many languages. There are dozens of items which may be useful for educators and trainers in the bibliography section (English-language publications above all).

A valuable supplement for particular definitions is the video material, which contains, among others, a psychodrama workshop recorded during classes in Romania. It gives a unique insight into the protagonist's work (the person who is analysing his problem on stage), which is usually primarily witnessed only by the members of the group. The other video materials are also an important supplement and an illustration of the "theoretical background". It allows us to see those things which cannot be described in words. The following chapters of the publication specify the definitions more clearly, and are focussed on particular examples – events which happened during the classes.



**Psychodrama** is a psychotherapeutic method and supports personal development, it provides a unique possibility to present experiences, problems, difficulties and internal conflicts in the form of a dramatisation. On the psychodramatic stage – "here and now" – the memories of specific past events are presented, as well as intimate dramas, fantasies and dreams, but also scenarios of situations which may happen in the future. Those on-stage presentations are either very similar to situations that happen in real life or are a method of presenting mental states and processes. The roles of different characters and feelings which are important to the protagonist are played by different members of the group, who the protagonist has chosen. Multiple objects and props may also be used in the plays.

The basic technique applied in psychodrama is role reversal. It allows the protagonist to play the roles of various characters, while performing on stage, and to speak in their voice. The words and behaviour of the protagonist are then repeated by a person who plays a given role, and he is called the "supporting ego". The theatrical reality of psychodrama always plays out according to the personal scenario of the protagonist. Some of the remaining psychodramatic techniques are: role play (the adoption of various characters and their behaviour in different situations), doubling (the members of the group speak in the name of the protagonist, they give him hints, which he may find adequate to his situations, or reject them) and mirroring (introducing the representative of the protagonist on stage, thanks to whom the protagonist is able to distance himself and watch the situation from a distant perspective).

The structure of psychodrama includes three main stages: warm-up, acting and closure, which is based on the sharing of emotions within the group. The last stage is: sharing (the participants talk about their own emotions and experiences, which they associated with the scene played out), feedback from the roles (the people who played particular roles now talk about the feelings and emotions they experienced during the play) and identity feedback (the members of the group talk about the experience originating from impersonating either the protagonist or another character, which took place during the enactment).

The creator of psychodrama is Jacob Levy Moreno (1889-1974), a psychiatrist and psychotherapist born in Romania, whose thoughts have since been implemented and practised by many therapists all around the world. Moreno, in his theory, significantly emphasised the meaning and the value of a group experience. He claimed that each man develops and grows up in a group, which has a unique force of interaction coming from its internal dynamics and the dynamic processes which happen in the group. A group is like a mirror in which everybody can see their own reflections.

*Based on: Anna Bielańska "Teatr, który leczy" [The theatre that heals], Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego [Jagiellonian University Publishing House], 2005 and Peter Felix Kellermann, "Focus on Psychodrama. The Therapeutic Aspects of Psychodrama", Jessica Kingsley Publishers 1992*

**Sociodrama** is a method which is very much related to psychodrama. It has the same fundamental structure covering three stages of work. The main difference between the two methods is that psychodrama deals mainly with personal causes of problems, while sociodrama reaches for the underlying foundation on which our collective roots were shaped or misshapen. The most important reasons for applying sociodrama are: better understanding of the social situation, to deepen the knowledge of the participants in regards to the roles which shape that situation (the roles which they and other people play) and the experience of catharsis by expressing emotions connected with a given object.

*Based on: "The Handbook of Psychodrama", Edited by Marcia Karp, Paul Holmes and Kate Bradshaw Tavon, Routledge 1998*

**Dramatherapy** is a branch of arts therapy which makes intentional use of the given art form and the creative process for specific therapeutic aims. The methods used in dramatherapy range from myths, on stage performance, motion, personification, drawing, speaking, a repertoire of roles, symbolism and metaphors. A combination of therapy and creative activity allows the therapist, as well as the patient, to participate in the process in an active way. The basic element of dramatherapy is improvisation, where no previously prepared scripts or scenarios are used. The activities correspond to the group's needs, concentrating on "here and now". The processes of dramatherapy are reminiscent of stage productions. The group supplies the subject of the show, and the knowledge, experience and skills of the therapist are the technical support. It is not about being a good actor, but about using artistic means for one's own development. Required for the process are openness, and an established relationship with that part of our personality which we consider weak or ill. Dramatherapy is not so much for solving the problem as for making an internal dialogue possible, by using one's own imagination and creativity. We gain the courage to start an extraordinary journey – the one which Joseph Campbell, American anthropologist and a student of religions, described as the "Hero's Journey". In dramatherapy, the therapist is like Hermes; he moves smoothly between the worlds – the consciousness, subconsciousness and the present moment. Frequently, he is also the director, messenger, traitor, spectator and the reviewer. The therapist does not heal or tell the patient what they should do and how to live their life. The drama itself possesses the healing power.

*Based on the article by Roulla Demetriou, Arteri Magazine, no 4, 2007, Cyprus*

**Spontaneity and creativity**, according to Moreno, are symbiotic – one could not exist without the other. Moreno describes spontaneity as the process of gradually opening up under the influence of intuition and imagination. The term "spontaneity" originates from Latin "sponte" – readily, of one's own free will. Spontaneity is the key to creativity and to vitality. It is the source of deep joy and the essence of the most authentic aspects of "I". In Moreno's view, man possesses vast resources of spontaneity, which are hidden, and training is needed to liberate and to activate them. Spontaneity may be present in different moments – when man is thinking, acting, feeling something, but also when he is resting. The term "creativity" comes from Latin word "creatio" – creation. According to Moreno, creativity is not the result of contemplation or planning, but it emerges from an interactive process of improvisation, in which the physical activity increases the intellectual involvement.

*Based on: Anna Bielańska, "Kreatywność – źródło w ogrodzie życia" [Creativity – the source in the garden of life] in: Psychodrama. Elementy teorii i praktyki [Psychodrama. Elements of theory and practice], redakcja naukowa [Scientific Editorial Office] Anna Bielańska, ENETEIA, 2009*

**Creativity** is an energy which has the power of transformation; it introduces new things to existing forms. It is a process – a journey, not the final destination. Creativity needs to be fostered, to prevent it from congealing. It requires imagination, spontaneity, fantasy and dreams, thoughts and afterthoughts, and wonder. Imagination and fantasy supply ideas for creativity – believable or unbelievable. In order to make them come true, thoughts and afterthoughts are needed, and thanks to spontaneity the creativity stays alive and prolific. Finally the feeling of wonder, which allows us to perceive the beauty of all that surrounds us.

*Based on the article by Roulla Demetriou, Arteri Magazine, no 4, 2007, Cyprus*



## **Role Theory**

A role can be defined as the actual and tangible form which the self assumes. A role functions in a given context and time, and is a reaction in a situation which involves other people as well. The previous experiences of a given person and cultural patterns that exist in society influence its shape. Every role contains a personal and a cultural aspect.

The idea of roles is the key aspect of Moreno's psychodrama. According to him, each of us has their own repertoire of roles, which cooperate with one another. An anti-role corresponds to each of the roles, which is often hidden and inactive. Roles may be observed, developed and practised, allowing us to change them according to our will. The opposite of spontaneity and creativity is the "cultural conserve" – traditional, common schematics for behaviour and roles, namely the mask that we wear on a daily basis. Moreno was deeply convinced that a man may always seek new ways of expressing himself, seek new roles. He may also play the "old" roles in a new way. A good example of such a situation is in the work of a teacher who either copies the same old patterns or searches for various new innovative ideas on how to pass on knowledge.

*Based on: Anna Bielańska, "Role i ich znaczenie" [Roles and their meaning] in: Psychodrama. Elementy teorii i praktyki [Psychodrama. Elements of theory and practice], redakcja naukowa [Scientific Editorial Office] Anna Bielańska, ENETEIA 2009*

## **Psychodrama in Education**

"Guidelines on Psychodrama Use in Adult Education" – the document that was created as a part of the project – forms many relevant theses, based both on theoretical reflection and on experiences coming from the pilot project. It points to multiple advantages that are the result of a creative connection of those two fields, but also to the dangers associated with using psychodramatic techniques with people who are not properly prepared.

- Psychodrama, as a method of group work, may create suitable conditions for the course of an educational process by building an atmosphere of trust and safety, and also by reinforcing the integrity of a group. These are the factors which help the listeners to overcome the fears and difficulties connected with the challenges of the educational program, and also facilitate contact with the teachers and other members of the group.

- Psychodrama focuses on the value of being accommodating in the learning process, by developing spontaneity and creativity. It also restores the balance between the assimilative and accommodative ways of acquiring knowledge, which was lost as a result of the popularity of memorisation. The terms "assimilation" and "accommodation" refer to the theory of cognitive development by Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, biologist and epistemologist. He claimed that a man, in particular stages of his life, is equipped with specific cognitive structures – so-called cognitive schemas. Reality is assessed and experienced using these schemas, through the processes of assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation aims to conform the observed reality to the existing cognitive schemas, without changing them. However in the process of accommodation, there are some modifications of the schemas in order to adapt it to the observation. In other words, assimilation is understanding the phenomena using the already present set of terms and structures, while accommodation means re-building the terms and structures when stumbling across a new, incomprehensible object of cognition.
- Psychodrama offers practical tools of application in the field of education, which is understood by gaining skills and shaping attitudes. Skill – is the ability to practically implement possessed knowledge, and Attitude – here the learner's attitude – covers his emotions, beliefs and prejudices, his values and expectations, which all influence his relations with the educator, the group and the whole educational process.
- The application of psychodramatic methods cannot mean a simple implementation of procedures and techniques (by assimilation), but requires a responsible, creative and a unique approach in building personal and group relations. Psychodrama is not only a technique. It is a relationship between a teacher and a student, it is a kind of a special agreement. Achieving the assumed educational goals efficiently depends mainly on the occupational competences of the trainer. All the techniques are like "cultural conserves" – they may be used in a creative and effective way, or in an unproductive, even harmful way. The validity of applying psychodrama techniques depends mainly on how the trainer understands his occupational role (its limitations and challenges), the needs and motivations of his students, and the purpose of the psychodramatic intervention in that particular situation. In order to teach, first the interpersonal skills are required, and psychodrama may fundamentally contribute to their development, to deepen the knowledge about oneself and to help in better understanding the needs of the listeners.

- All psychodrama techniques may be useful in the process of education, but in order to use them efficiently, the educator has to have enough skill. These skills may be acquired only through comprehensive training in psychodrama methodology. The pilot project of this course, conducted by professionals, covered the presentation of many psychodrama techniques, including the protagonist's work in the supervision sessions. However, the participants of the classes, in their own occupational practice, applied mainly the warm-up and sociometric exercises, and also various forms of role-play – both in subgroups and team games. A lack of reliable preparation – meaning not having completed the training in psychodrama – prevents its safe and effective application and may cause blockades, resistance and may even hurt the people who participate in the educational process. Each action that steps outside the educational agreement involves the threat of touching intimate inner-spheres of personality, which is particularly risky when working with sensitive groups.
- The analysis of difficulties which the educators face when working with adults proves that psychodrama may be helpful for them in several branches of their own occupational practice. It may become the key to better understanding one's own professional skills and the field of experimenting with various techniques and methods of work. In the environment of educators, the need to seek new, innovative ways of passing on knowledge and support the development of learners is a consistent priority. Psychodrama is also useful in building partnerships with learners (adult-adult contact) and in creating suitable conditions for team work. It focuses on the importance of the mechanisms which govern the group process. The role of psychodrama in supervision is very important and valuable, which guarantees the productivity and safety of the group work, particularly for those people who require extra attention.

To sum up the aforementioned reflections, once again it must be emphasised that the application of psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy in education may enhance and improve the work of the group, but also carries multiple threats in a situation in which the trainer does not possess sufficient knowledge, skills and experience.





# EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS

Educational activities are always rooted in specific contexts and cannot be separated from the group process, which is affected by the experience, problems, histories and emotions of all who make up the group – both teachers and students. Teachers do more than teach and students do more than acquire knowledge or practical skills. The educational process brings together people of very different temperaments, needs and habits, and the teacher is responsible for implementing the planned educational content, and for monitoring the situation in the group. It is a very difficult and burdensome task, which is not easy to deal with, especially in environments referred to as "sensitive" – working with those affected by or at risk of social exclusion. Participants in the pilot project repeatedly recalled the difficult and dramatic situations of their own professional experiences, in which the context of educational activities determine the quality and effectiveness of the learning process. Problems with the group, problems with oneself, problems with the institution – All these issues arose during every group workshop, which is why we need to concentrate on them.

In visiting each of the workshop groups I had the opportunity to participate actively in classes, experience the dynamics of group processes, and conduct interviews with the leaders and participants in training sessions. Selected examples of situations and phenomena that I observed form the content of this chapter. It focuses on the educator and the challenges posed by working with a group, especially with adults. By recalling detailed descriptions of workshops and elements of individuals' participation, I want to show how valuable the trainers' experience was in psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy. It was an opportunity for them to look at their work from a new perspective, through extended reflection and their individual understanding of other group members. Through meticulous reporting of fragments of the classes I want to give the reader a more intimate experience of the phenomenon of psychodrama, which one can fully know and understand, standing on the psychodrama stage.

## **Skills Training**

**Group training in Cyprus, Larnaca, 27–28 June 2009**

**Dramatherapy Trainer: Roulla Demetriou. Educator: Klitos Symeonides**

The workshop on first day had provided an important experience for us, working on the theme of perfectionism and being perfect–imperfect. We observed various phenomena within the team (support, destruction, leadership, commonality). All these issues were the subject of exercises and activities related to symbols, images, and loose associations. The trainer also offered intensive work with the body, which is extremely important in dramatherapy, as it serves to foster expression without self–control, relying on hidden sources of creativity and spontaneity.

The next workshop activity begins with dynamic movement. Two pieces of fabric are linked to create a loop – the participants all take hold of it in both hands while performing dynamic movements, moving in different directions. It's rather like a dance, with some fighting mixed in. We are together – literally – bound, the actions of one person determine the movement of all others. Training lasts about half an hour, alternating between intense and mild. There are always new ideas as the participants interact. The trainer pauses the activity to ask about people's impressions, and how we see our roles and the roles of the other participants in the game. One of the people, "X", points out that not everybody is participating equally, and that it would be better if there were more involvement from those less active. The trainer encourages the participant to achieve this by being so active, that it influences the attitudes and behaviour of others.

...Back to the game. X dynamically enters into a leadership role, encourages us to be more active, addresses each by name, gives instructions, and is quite assertive. The pace of movement clearly rises, but at one point participant Y refuses to continue with the exercise, citing fatigue and malaise. Participant Y then sits down, and stops all other activities. Consternation: The leader does not quite know how to react. One of the participants suggests that Y be excused from the group for a moment so as to be able to rest. Y reacts sternly, disagrees with the suggestion, expresses opposition and general dissatisfaction.

The trainer stops the exercise, we sit down and analyse the situation. We try to answer the question of how each of us feels, what we think happened in the

group, how we evaluate the attitude of the leader and what could be the solution to the problem. There are two proposals. Some people suggest that the leader address the rebel participant, devoting only his own time and attention, while the group continues the exercise. Others are in favour of finding a solution that will allow Y to remain in the group, even in a passive role. The trainer proposes improvising both scenarios – repeating the initial situation, in which one of the participants interrupts. We first play out the scene, in which leader and Y go to one side, and the group keeps working. In this situation, chaos dominates. Y feels rejected and behaves angrily, refuses to cooperate, and sits in the corner. The other participants try to continue, one person takes a leadership role, but there is a sense of tension and discomfort. In the second scene, the leader does not leave the group, but interrupts the exercise. The leader then proposes that everybody sits, and invites Y to take place in the middle. When Y refuses, the leader asks if anyone else wants to sit in the centre. The moment somebody volunteers, Y spontaneously joins him. The rest, still seated, begin to move, and continue to exercise. Gradually, the action becomes more dynamic, and eventually the whole group has joined in.

The trainer stops the game and invites us to discuss the two improvised scenarios. The participants talk about how they felt in each scenario – what we experienced playing various roles, and how we perceived the group process. Insights are shared about the behaviour and reactions of others.

*Y: First, I was overcome by anger towards the leader. That she was shouting at me, and telling me to be more active. I thought that I would show her what I'm capable of, and then she'd be sorry. And when I finally softened and gained the courage to admit that, I felt that I had a strong position in the group and I can use it somehow. I decided to see how far I can go and how to use my advantage against the leader, who quite obviously had no idea what to do. The only threat I saw was another participant, who suggested that I be excluded from the group for a moment. When we acted out the first scenario, I felt really rejected, separated from the leader and the entire group by an invisible wall, I did not want to have anything to do with them. In the second version of the game, I felt insecure, I did not know how to behave, but when another participant volunteered to sit in the middle at the invitation of the leader, I felt great relief – for me it was an "honourable" exit from the situation, I felt a strong bond with the whole group.*

*X: At first, the situation provoked in me a sense of chaos and confusion, which was intensified when we repeated the first scenario. Leaving the group and trying to cope with the rebellious participant, I felt really bad, and I got a knot in*

*my stomach. The second situation allowed me to regain my balance. I felt like a real leader, I was calm, I was controlling the group, and I had made use of what had happened in a constructive way.*

The other participants first speak of the confusion and uncertainty caused by X's behaviour and the need for the leader to resolve the conflict. The vast majority explain the ill will they felt toward the leader when she left the group. Some, on the contrary, praise the leader for tending to the needs of the unhappy individual.

The trainer had engaged us in an exercise which at first glance seemed a purely physical warm up activity. In reality, however, it allowed the creation of space in which typical group behaviour and phenomena were revealed. Participants had the unique opportunity to test their own ideas on conflict resolution and practise different scenarios. This allowed them to confront their ideas and conjectures with reality, in a safe context. Equally important was the second part of the session – discussion of the whole exercise, and getting to know the feelings and viewpoints of other group members.

## **On The Psychodramatic Stage**

**Group training in Romania, Cluj–Napoca, 9–10 May 2009**  
**Psychodrama trainers: Dr Éva Varró, Sorina Bumbulut**  
**Educator: Dr Maria Roth**

This was the first workshop in which the trainers, in addition to integration and warm up activities, spent a lot of time on problems associated with participants' professional experiences. Analysing relationships with the people they take care of, members of the group felt the need to return to the various situations which had arisen in the past and remained difficult and problematic for them. Psychodrama provides a unique opportunity to revisit the past – events played out on stage, evoking the people, emotions, objects, and everything else in a given situation from the history of the main character, or "protagonist". Thanks to role reversal, a basic technique in psychodrama, the protagonist has the opportunity to become a character they have recalled, speaking with the character's voice, and seeing themselves through the character's eyes.

One of the attendees – "X" – declares a desire to work on a situation which had taken place within a group of older people who meet regularly in the centre where she works. The group under X's care come together to read, have discussions, participate in various educational activities, engage in light exercise, and sometimes go on excursions. During one such activity, where X was the only person in accompaniment, a group member – "Y" – temporarily lost control of a particular physiological function, which caused negative reactions in the other group members. X proposed that Y go home to change clothes. She drove him there, but he no longer wanted to go back to the activity, and indeed never showed up again in the group. X visited him afterwards, speaking also with his family, but that did not change the situation. Y talked about the traumatic experience which stops him from rejoining the group, and of suicidal thoughts.

The trainer proposes this event be replayed in a psychodramatic scene to see what happened in the group. X arranges gaming space and selects one of her colleagues for the role of Y and assigns the roles of several other people who in that event took an active part. Each figure recalled to the stage is assigned some characteristic detail by X, for example, "You always say exactly what you think, but then you're sorry" or "You are the leader of the group, everybody respects you." The game starts with the conversion of roles – X takes up the role of Y, and is now the main character in the scene, speaking with Y's voice. Y then takes X's chair.

X (as an old man who found himself in difficulty): *It's me. It's me they're talking about. Someone should help me. I want to disappear. I do not want to come back here anymore. Once this happened when I was alone. I take medicine, but it does not help. How do I get out of this? I have friends here. But I don't care if I lose them. What must Y think of me? She's so young. She shouldn't have to deal with this type of work. I don't tell my children what's happening, it's very embarrassing. Disgusting. Ever since my wife died, I haven't wanted to live anyway... and now this. This girl should somehow help, reduce the burden of what happened, and bring me some clothes.*

The other participants join the activity, improvising according to the behaviours and attitudes assigned to their roles.

Next is another exchange of roles – X and Y switch places. X cries, when the trainer asks how she felt being in the role of Y. She recalls the situation, speaks of her helplessness when she could not find a solution. The trainer initiates a psychodramatic technique called mirroring. Others are allowed to speak in the role of the protagonist – standing behind him, their hands on his shoulders.

Trainers and participants speak both as X and as Y.

- *I don't want them to laugh at me. I want them to respect me (Y).*
- *I'm afraid that if I go now, that I won't come back (Y).*
- *Either I lose him, or I lose the group (X).*
- *It's all out of control (Y).*
- *I feel just like him. I am helpless, and afraid that I will be criticised no matter what I do (X).*
- *My job is absurd (X).*

The activity comes to a close with the sharing of various events and experiences which participants recall from their own lives, and associating them with the protagonist's situation. This phase, usually the last in psychodrama, is called sharing.

- *I was still wet behind the ears as a therapist. In the group I had a young girl- An hysteric. Her reactions were so startling that I ended up calling a doctor.*
- *I worked with a group of children. Some of them came from families where hygiene is a problem. It was very difficult for me.*
- *In my group of youths I had a disabled person, she could not ever give proper answers. Others laughed at her, and I do not know how to respond. I had a conversation with the two most aggressive bullies, and asked them if the disabled person should actually be excluded from the group. That helped.*
- *In one group there was a typical "victim" – the subject of constant derision and harassment. Sometime during the course she was rather viciously attacked. I tried to take control of the situation, but she was unable to withstand the tension and she left. Then I had the problem of what to do, I couldn't be here and there. Fortunately, one of those present took it upon himself to go after the ridiculed girl. By the time they returned, I had managed to speak to the group and the situation was under control.*

In accordance with the adopted structure of psychodrama games, other participants also share their experiences within the scenario, playing auxiliary roles. This is called role feedback. On this particular occasion, due to lack of time, the trainer asked that only the person who played Y give his impressions. He talked about the great difficulty of entry into the role, and then leaving it – The release from the shocking feelings of humiliation, panic, helplessness, shame and suffering. The next day, the trainer readdressed the difficult emotions caused by the game, starting the session with a so-called "pulse", which is gathering information from participants about their current well-being. The participant who had played Y talked about the heavy emotional load, which he had felt the previous

evening. He had tried to deal with it, going for a walk and talking with a friend. The protagonist also shared her difficult feelings. She had been left with a sense of guilt, a burden of responsibility, and the question of whether what had happened can be fixed. The trainers emphasised how important it is to realise that working with difficult groups is very tiring and stressful, and it is absolutely necessary to find ways to release the difficult emotions caused.

*Trainer: You do not have to feel guilty because of what happened. Things like that happen often. Yesterday you got a lot of signals from other people during the sharing, that they experienced similar situations. Do you have a supervisor? Someone who helps?*

*X: No. My colleagues tell me that I can't distance myself – that I put too much emotion into my work. They also said that my solution had been inappropriate.*

*Trainer: What can we do in our group? For sure we can help you not to feel alone, alone with your problems. But it may happen that in this group we don't find a solution. I'm wondering why you feel guilty. What caused it?*

The trainer encourages all participants to talk about it, to exchange experiences.

*– My first reaction to the scenario was to laugh. It was a defensive reaction, because really I wanted to cry. I also work with older people and it could happen in my group. I wondered what I would have done.*

*– Yesterday I didn't have the courage to talk about my experiences. Once I had a similar situation. I don't have the opportunity to discuss my problems with anyone at work. These meetings here – they're the only possibility.*

*– I never thought that I could enter the role of somebody I look after, step into his "skin". It's a very valuable experience.*

*– Supervision is very important. Assuming the role of a person receiving care helps us to understand how it is for them.*

A very important aspect of this group experience was the ability to identify with the needs and points of view of those people in the care of the participants. The knowledge the participants gained in this way is especially valuable and helpful when working with sensitive groups, and those with special needs. The session's trainers made special note of this fact.

## **The Need for Supervision**

**Group training in Poland, Bielsko–Biala, 28–29 March 2009**

**Psychodrama Trainer: Igor Hanuszkiewicz**

**Educator: Piotr Kostuchowski**

The second day's workshop session was reserved for supervision – to look at the activities completed by participants in their own training groups. Some people had attempted to use the techniques presented in previous classes, and several doubts and questions had arisen. These were the methods used in sociometry and group integration. One of the simplest sociometric techniques is a map, which has several variants. Starting a map in a new group often begins by identifying the places where the participants either come from or live. The trainer marks, in some way, an imaginary space for the game, giving participants an indicator, for example, two scarves or other items, located at opposite ends of the hall as means of directions: north and south. Participants are invited to find their place in accordance with the instructions given by the trainer. For example, "the village where you were born." The participants take appropriate positions, say the name of the village, and adjust their position relative to others. They can also define their place more specifically, recalling particular details in order to give others a better sense of the atmosphere they associated with the place they are representing. Changing of the placement criteria (e.g. where you currently live, a place where you would like to find yourself, the place you feel most at home) causes a change of the map. This form of mutual understanding of participants is very different from traditional ways of presentation – all the members of the group are immediately included in the action, come together in direct interactions, and establish contact. The resulting maps can be very different depending on the purpose the trainer has in mind, and the criteria may relate to different spheres of life – family, work, skills or interests. The extent of personal information disclosed also changes with different types of map.

One of the attendees – "X" – describes a course schedule which she had carried out with a group of about 30 people employed in a sheltered workshop. They were adults of all ages, with varying levels of intellect, various forms of disability, from two towns. The classes would help prepare them for employment, awaken their motivation, as well as encourage team integration. As a starting activity, X proposed the creation of maps based on two criteria – "Where do you live?", then "Where do you want to be? Close your eyes and imagine this dream place." The trainer proposes that the scenario be played out on stage as X described it,

with X in the role of the leader, and the rest of the group playing the roles of the workers. Following its conclusion, the scene is discussed – participants sit in a circle and share their feelings about the roles they had played, paying special attention to those aspects which made the roles difficult for them.

- *It seemed to me that this space is very abstract – I felt lost.*
- *I had no contact with the leader, I heard only instructions.*
- *Most helpful for me was the direct contact with the leader, when he asked where I was. That personal approach helped me to find myself.*
- *I felt I needed some clearer definition within the space – an explanation of where my town was, and where the sea was. I couldn't find any orientation points.*
- *For me, the instructions were clear, but I needed more introduction of the new situation: we choose the path, we go to places where we want to find, prepare to do so in a theatrical way.*
- *The way the leader was speaking to us, it felt to me, was as if she were speaking to children, not adults. It struck me – I thought: why is she treating us like this? Then I started to wonder about how I treat my students.*
- *I felt lost. But at some point the leader came up to me and took care of me and helped me – then it was fine.*
- *It's a pity that it wasn't possible for everyone to say how they felt in their dream in this place. I missed that.*
- *I constantly felt insecure, I couldn't work out where I was in the space. Establishing the landmarks and directions with just words wasn't enough for me. If it were plotted out with some different objects, it would be easier.*



- *I had no idea where I was, but I went along with the group and I was sure that someone would look after me.*
- *I didn't want to close my eyes, because then I felt threatened.*

The trainer asks X how she had taken the feedback from her fellow participants, and whether it would be useful for her in her work. X draws attention to several issues which she considered to be quite important.

*X: What you had all said about how to address the participants really stopped and made me think. It really is difficult for me I'm working with is diverse in terms of intellectual capacity. How to talk in a way that everybody will understand, without appearing condescending to the more able minded? I also realised that the context of the play introduces an interesting aside: I don't have to be so deadly serious all the time. My problem is the continuous high pace – new training, constant rush. There's no time to properly listen and consider things... But that time should be available. The time to pause, and to query every individual.*

Discussion of the scenario continues...

- *Was the objective of the integration exercise actually achieved? Probably not, because there was no time to share feelings, and get to know each other.*
- *For those with a lower level of intellectual function, clear guidelines are needed. For example, in this situation, some form of visual indicators, posters, signposts.*
- *As participants represented only two places, we could have created detailed maps of these two places. Both groups could visit each other, and show each other these two places. Then, the integration would be more complete.*
- *I have a technical note. It would be useful to restrict the space available for the map. We got lost in this big hall, as it was difficult to determine distances.*
- *You could use the more able to help the less able.*
- *But this solution also has the negative aspect – It encouraged division.*
- *For me it was important that I could talk to people throughout the scenario, it helped me make choices.*
- *I think there should have been a summary, and discussion of the whole exercise. The exercise just ended, and there was nothing more.*

X and the trainer summarise the supervision session.

*X: I see in myself a lack of openness to new methods. I am afraid of them, I'm not creative. I thought, for example, that these people could be divided according to other categories, perhaps by profession: those working in the laundry,*

*others in the kitchen. But I was afraid that they wouldn't have anything to talk about in those groups.*

*Trainer: People will certainly talk, because the situation is based on meeting people. Not everything has to be structured. On the other hand the structure is important, that's why you can give specific instructions – help the conversation along with specific topics.*

*X: I'm afraid of a disaster.*

*Trainer: We'll look at this in our group. How each of us feels in the presence of structure and the presence of disaster.*

Later in the session, the technique of using maps in groups was analysed by a second participant, who works with young people with drug addictions. Her experience has shown that a seemingly harmless question about a person's home town can evoke very deep connotations. Summary of the session brought many important and valuable insights. Participants discussed how various forms of this method could be utilised within education, and also the possible risks and unanticipated consequences.

- It may seem that the map is just for fun, yet this activity revealed many important and deep problems. We need to be careful with what this can open up in people.*
- Much depends on firmly establishing the criteria. Why was the exercise created in the first place, and what was it intended to achieve? The trainer must be aware of what he or she is doing. If the goal is training and education – we don't turn it into therapy. We need to be aware of the limits we've set.*
- The starting point determines the course of the exercise. There is a huge difference between the questions "Where do you live?" and "Where is your family home?" The second question immediately opens up many associations that may be difficult, painful, and engulfing.*
- The map could be really effective in various educational contexts. For example, when we teach geography – we can set parameters like: where does your family live, where have your friends travelled to.*
- The map can also be used in creative activities. We ourselves are the map, we become it, and create its shape. It's something completely different to current schematics for educational activities.*

## **Communication Problems**

**Group training in Portugal, Porto, October 10, 2009**  
**Psychodrama and Sociodrama Trainer: Jose Luis Mesquita**  
**Educator: Ana Leal**

The meeting was part of the last block of training devoted to educational scenarios prepared by the participants themselves. They had the task, working in pairs, to use dramatic techniques, which met during the course, of illustrating standard situations and problems from their professional experiences. One of the proposals concerned the relationship of educators with the institutions employing them. Often these relationships are difficult and adversely affect the level of work with the group. Teachers rarely have any influence on the choice of participants in the teams with which they work – their task is to construct a particular program and obtain the best results for their students. This is an example of instrumental treatment, in which there is no place for analysing personal attributes and limitations. The lack of cohesion between the team of instructors and the employer has repercussions on the education process and its outcomes. Therefore, conducting classes – Ana Leal and Ricardo Quinta presented a set of exercises and activities focused on how we communicate with others, the ability to express needs and objections, and also expressing opposition to the rules imposed by the institution.

The workshop begins with a physical warm-up. The participants wander around the hall in different directions while following the instructions they're given. First, to avoid eye contact with other participants, looking only at the walls and floor. Then to look into the eyes of every person you pass. The next stage of establishing contact is the handshake – as quickly as possible and the largest possible number of people. At the conclusion, already in the quieter pace, we all greet each other, shaking hands and briefly exchanging some polite words. Everyone sits in a circle to share impressions. The leader asks how everyone felt when the instruction was given to stare at the floor and avoid contact with others. For most people, this experience was very uncomfortable, awkward and unnatural.

The second exercise, taking further advantage of the large area available for moving around, allows for closer mutual understanding between people in the group. Post-It style notes are made available to everyone. They write down questions for particular people, then stick them to that person's back. It is also a form of physical contact, getting close to each other, quick, face to face en-

counters. After a few minutes, everyone sits in a circle, reads the questions, and are given a moment to reflect on the answers. The questions are very different nature: "What do you feel, looking at the sea on a summer day?", "What colours reflect your nature?", "What are you most afraid of?", "What would you like to tell us?". Everyone takes turns answering, starting with a brief introduction. The entertaining nature of the activity allows the participants to ask questions that might be difficult to express directly, which gives the respondent a chance to take an important role in the group, saying things that are important to them, that they would like to share with the others. During the exercise many people revealed a clear need to talk about themselves, unveiling the various aspects of their personality to show something that was, until now, unknown. This is a very important experience in the work of the educator, who helps, supports, and directs teams of people every day, but often does not have the opportunity to be heard. Instrumental was the choice of moment at which to start the activities – The participants had come to know each other well, and the level of trust between them had been developed to a high level. To encourage such play in a group which had not had the time to properly integrate would undoubtedly result in highly conventional and distanced questions. The point of the exercise is to create an opportunity within a friendly atmosphere to talk about those things which might not normally be discussed with fellow learners.

The next stage is individual work using craft supplies. The task is to create an advertisement – a poster made of two pieces of cardboard, joined by pieces of string so that they can be hung around the neck to create a "living" ad. Anyone can express their own opinions and communicate them to their own institutions – the theme for the posters is simply our message to our employer. We have newspapers and magazines, markers, scissors, glue, staplers, and we work at a large table. The resulting work is composed of words, images, and colours. When they are ready, the participants put them on and the leader arranges



the space for group work. Our task is an impromptu protest – to take part in street demonstrations. Spontaneous action begins, the participants initially protested separately, an occasional shout here and there, but after some time they come together in a group, and begin to work together, chanting a chosen slogan. When one person moves away from the rest, it leads to confrontations and clashes between the demonstrators. Next, a general confusion, typical of many street protests – emotions come to the fore. In discussing the activity, the question rises of how the participants had felt in this improvised situation. Most people talk about the difficulties of entering into the role of a street demonstrator. The trainer stresses how important it is to work in harmony with one's own opinions and manner, and shows the risk involved with adopting new approaches which are against our nature, as well as how ineffective it can be. Also discussed are the posters that had been created. Each participant presents their poster and explains its meaning. The works are very different and communicate their content with varying degrees of success. The understanding taken by the group from the discussion is an emphasis on the specificity of the language used on each poster. Too great an accumulation of symbols, text, or ornaments obscures the message. Those works which keep to the point using expressive symbols have the greatest impact.

This session had a logical structure and touched various issues related to communication. It revealed the participants' needs and inhibitions. It also allowed them to experience – on the stage – a confrontational situation with their employer. In discussions about the different classes, each had the opportunity to share experiences from their own professional practice, not only in relation to the institution, but also in the wider context of communicating their views and beliefs. It became apparent that, for the participants, simply raising the subject was quite worthwhile in itself, as for many educators it is a major difficulty in their professional work.









## WARM-UPS AND SOCIOMETRIC TECHNIQUES

The beginnings of group work are of great importance in the period when the new team is forming, as well as during subsequent classes. A good starting point for adherence within a new group may be developing a group agreement which determines the basic rules, to which all participants must agree. That kind of a collective agreement, oral or written, concerning adhering to the established rules (such as punctuality, discretion, fulfilling duties), possesses a specific, magical force, which influences and tightens the group bond. It is also the point of reference in solving difficult, conflictual situations.

The usefulness of warm-ups in educational work was emphasised by all of the experts who participated in the program. They also underlined the need to adapt its character to the aim of the classes, the situation in the group and the dynamics of the educational process. It is worth investing some time and effort in preparing a special warm-up program, especially in the field of an informal education and when there is contact with groups of people which have to be motivated and encouraged to undertake new challenges. The most important function of warm-up is stimulating the group's abilities and preparing the team to fulfil the tasks they will be faced with. A warm-up which involves movement is also called a physical starter, what very accurately defines its role in the process of a group work. For the participants, it is an opportunity to establish common relations, but also a chance to change the school-type lesson order which is generally approved and practised. Furthermore, various warm-up activities are often a kind of a metaphor and symbolism, thanks to which the trainer may obtain some valuable feedback, discover more, avoiding direct questions about the state of mind, readiness for work, actual needs and problematic phenomena among the group. Creativity and spontaneity, which are both brought to the educational process by the means of play, are also very important. Each of the exercises makes the participants face specific tasks which are often new and surprising to them. Facing those tasks, requires direct, active answers, effort, but also courage and the ability to overcome shyness or fear. So, it can be both an efficient method of encouraging people to act, but also may cause resistance. It has to be emphasised, that not always, and not in every group, are the warm-up

exercises approved, understood and accepted. It happens that the participants treat such forms of action as puerile, inadequate to their needs, and even inappropriate in the context of educational classes. The trainer has to be prepared for such a circumstance to occur, and should very carefully register the reactions of the group and figure out an appropriate time and manner for introducing those methods which might be described as unconventional. Forcing their own previously planned ideas for integrating the group and making people do things may give results totally different than planned. It may block the energy and the willingness to work.

At this point, it is worth quoting a section of one of the reports that summarise the study of relations (existing and potential ones), between psychodrama and adult education. The report was prepared by the team at EST Lifelong Learning Centre, and the chosen section concerns the reflection on the role of warm-up in educational programs.

*The unanswered question remains, whether the warm-up exercises are well integrated into the program of the whole lesson, or are merely a loose collection of plays and tricks. A cogent example justifying that question may be a situation taken from classes devoted to intercultural communication with the participation of a group of international computer scientists. The participants, who are waiting for the session to start, "warm-up" in various ways – they talk in small groups, chat, play with their laptops. Meanwhile the trainer pulls various toys out of a bag – teddy bears, teletubbies, Barbie dolls, kittens and other, not so well-known, ones – and throws them to particular people. The only explanation of this situation is a proposal for the participants to introduce among themselves, in use of the new identities they received along with those toys. The result of that situation is that Ken and one of the kittens leave the room to have a smoke and continue the warm-up at the hallway. Those remaining – the amused teletubbies, an embarrassed dinosaur and the rest, try to communicate. Is it really a good way to warm-up the group? Is it the beginning of an spontaneity test or the beginning of training? What, in fact, is it? Would it be possible to provide examples of such warm-ups, which had been shown to work in specific classes, and were a natural part of its methodology?*

There are no straightforward recipes for effective and efficient ways of controlling the group. It is not possible to come up with a list of warm-up exercises which would work well for the aim and the character of hypothetical classes, because every single group situation is different and requires an individual approach. The decisive issue is the creativity and spontaneity of the trainer himself, his plasticity and ability to register what is happening "here and now". In various examples of warm-up games listed below, I try to point out their particular function and utility in various situations.

Among the actions which are to prepare the team for various tasks, sociometric techniques have their own separate space. They are used mainly for studying relationships within the group, but very often are also an attractive form of warm-up, and are strictly connected to team integration and creating a safe, friendly environment, which is a prerequisite for effective cooperation. However, just as is in the case of warm-ups, in applying sociometric techniques, one has to also consider problematic phenomena and resistance from the participants. The essence of sociometry, according to the definition by Moreno, is the insight in the organisation and the structure of the group, in which particular people have a defined space, while at the same time forming relationships with other people. Sociometry allows us to reveal the relationships between the group members, including those hidden ones, unveiling those things which they have in common, and those things which vary between them. Due to that fact, it may be a very useful tool for improving the group work of every single group, in various fields: therapy, education, profession. According to Moreno's concept, a man is a "network of connections", he never functions as a single unit, and that means that sociometry refers to the most elemental dimension of our reality.

## **Warm-up exercises**

Warm-ups were an important component of the work program for each of the four groups. The participants were given the opportunity of becoming a leader, conducting the warm-up exercises themselves, and experimenting with the group. The games and activities presented in this chapter are examples of various methods of revitalisation, stimulation and integration of the group members. Many exercises appeared in all four of the work programs, in various forms and on various levels of cooperation. The descriptions below are often a compilation of various versions of the same exercise. They are best utilised as an inspiration for ideas and further exploration, together with the group.

*Warm-up exercises and warm-up games are both very helpful devices in the process of integration among the group, they reduce tension. They let the trainer know the anticipations and needs of the participants, who usually come to classes with different fears, uncertainties and prejudices. The form of a game allows them to feel safe and confident, it helps them to trust the leader and stimulates them to think as "we", instead of "I". Warm-ups often involve actions in pairs or small groups, which, for the participants, train valuable and desirable skills. It is*

*very difficult, for many people, to function in a team and to cooperate with others. Through warm-up games, they learn the rules of cooperation.*  
*Klitos Symeonides (Workshop Group in Cyprus)*

## **Greetings**

The trainer asks the participants to greet each other in a different way to how they usually do. The task is first to greet a person using their feet, then knees, hips, shoulders, and finally – by touching heads. There is a lot of movement and fun involved in the exercise, more and more sophisticated forms of greetings appear, the participants usually behave freely and spontaneously, they look for various ways of establishing relations. All of them have an opportunity to meet each other in a form of a direct contact. The game requires its players to break through their resistance to physical closeness (which for many people is a big problem), but at the same time establishes safety boundaries – Everyone has the ability to control how they relate with their partners. Similarly to other movement activities, "Greetings" are most suitable in those situations where the level of energy in the group has fallen, and the participants are tired from the pace of activities.

## **Names**

The task of the participants is to look closely at their own specific characteristics, occupational capacity and skills, by analysing their own names. They all write down words that start with the respective letters of their names, creating a short auto-presentation. For instance: "Adam – altruist, distinct, active, melancholic" It is also allowable to invent words, neologisms which specifically characterise one's personality. Next, each of the participants presents himself using the words he wrote, explaining their meanings in the context of various life and occupational experiences. In a different version of this exercise, the participants first wander around the whole room and introduce themselves to other participants using the words they wrote down, and only later do they analyse the words they have chosen, in a big circle. Another form of this exercise is based on constructing a logical sentence from the respective letters of names. For instance: "Adam – adores deep, abstract meditation" The game's purpose is to reflect on the strong and weak sides of one's own character through wordplay, by playing with meaning and allusions. An interesting supplement for particular auto-presentations may be information coming from the members of the group – everyone explains why they agree or disagree with the characteristics provided by its author. This activity can be useful at various stages of group work, not only at the beginning, when it helps participants to get to know each other and get over their "stage fright". In many educational contexts it can encourage participants to seek out new, creative solutions and ideas.



### **Space**

The participants walk around the whole room, looking for a place with which, according to them, particular emotions are connected. They stop in place, where – according to a hint made by the trainer – they feel freely, safe, joyfully, comfortably, or insecure, restlessly, in a place where they see danger all around. Everyone speaks about their emotions briefly. There are a lot of variants of this game, connected to knowing and getting used to the space, in which the group is performing. The task of each of the participants may be, for example, to choose one spot – the most intriguing one, to which the person will bring the rest of the group and then explain his choice.



### **Complementary**

The participants work in pairs. One of them, acting as the leader, begins a sequence of movements. His partner's task is to complete the sequence in his own way. After a while, they switch roles. The game is not about repetition or miming the moves of the partner, but about completing it. Rather like a puzzle, each person has to find a way to fit in and have an idea to "insert", like a missing piece of a puzzle. The game, which appears quite easy, is in fact a great challenge. It can be hugely difficult to guess what the true intentions of the leader are, to understand his expressions, gestures, actions, and subsequently propose one's own logical and coherent conclusion. An interesting summary for this exercise is to discuss it in pairs – comparing the points of view of the leader and his partner, pointing out the similarities and differences in human body language and gesture interpretation. This game is excellent for training interpersonal communication, makes participants aware of the complexity and richness of forms available for the transmission of information, messages, and knowledge. Because of this, it has an important place in movement and relaxation.



### **Yes-No**

The point of this exercise is to confront, it is a direct clash of opposing opinions and arguments. The participants form pairs and conduct a conversation restricted to only of two words – one of them can only say "yes" and the other one can only say "no". The common task is to test and deepen the relations, the balance of power and the ability to communicate and persuade. It is about using and testing various methods of communication, about engaging and freeing various emotions. As an additional element of the "conversation", physical contact may be introduced – the participants face each other and grapple, using only their hands. It is also possible to perform this exercise in a group, with the group split into two opposing teams.

## Weather forecast

The trainer asks each of the participants to talk about how they feel and describe their mood in the form of a weather forecast (for instance: this day is a cloudy one, with occasional rain, low barometric pressure and rising temperature. There is a chance that the sun appears in the afternoon). The participants describe their feelings in an analogical way to this metaphorical one, and then they have to present those events which, according to them, best illustrate the way they feel. They have a short while to prepare the presentation and to choose props, and then they start the improvised activity on the leader's command. Participants interact, exchanging their feelings. Props are an important element of the game (multicoloured scarves suit this exercise very well, because they can be used to represent shape and motion). The activity integrates the group brilliantly, developing participants' imagination and creativity in responses.

## Trust

The exercise is a test of the mutual trust between the members of the group. Half of the team leaves the room where the classes are taking place, and in the meantime the rest of the group prepares the space for the activity – they set up various objects and obstacles around the room. Then they invite the rest of the group, who are blindfolded, back into the room. They enter the room individually, and each of them has his own guide. The blindfolded person places his hand on the guide's shoulder and then is safely led around the whole room. Now and then, the guides exchange the blindfolded people, and then guide different people. At the end, all of them describe their experiences in the group, and then they form living statues which are supposed to illustrate their emotions. The next stage of the exercise starts with forming groups consisting of a few people. The choice of members of a particular group being based on similarities of the presented feelings, and then they build the group sculptures – monuments. In that way, a few symbolic ideas appear, which show the balance of emotions within the group.



*Warm-ups are very valuable and advisable. Warm-ups teach and help to "break the ice", but also create a good atmosphere, through playing. They liven up individuals, as well as the whole group. They bring people closer, integrate the team. They create an opportunity for direct contact, also physical, through touch. Warm-ups increase the confidence and they make the group relations stronger. The form of the exercises has to be chosen wisely, in accordance with a particular group and the subject of the classes – the warm-up has to have a purpose. Similarly to its function in sport, warm-ups let to prepare and mobilise us before a particular task, and at the same time it is a crucial element of learning the rules and*

*useful skills that are needed in following stages of work. Depending on the imagination of the leader and the needs of the group, warm-up exercises may be modified and upgraded.*

*Piotr Kostuchowski (Workshop Group in Poland)*

### **Animals**

The trainer prepares pieces of paper with the names of various animals on them, in two copies. The pieces of paper are then distributed among the participants, who are to find the second representative of the same species. The difficulty is that all of them have to close their eyes, and find each other only by making the sound of that animal (dogs bark, hens cluck, cats meow). While moving around the room, all of them have to keep their hands straight in front of them, as a safety measure. This activity does an excellent job in situations where the group has tired following extended cognitive effort – It refreshes, giving new energy and halting stagnation.

### **Opposites**

Just as in the previous exercise, the task of each participant is to find a partner based on the contents of the cards they have been given by the trainer. This time, however, the idea is to find the person who is your opposite. For example: Thief and Policeman, Student and Teacher, Patient and Doctor. The participants move around the entire space, playing the roles given to them. They try to understand each others' roles using behaviour, facial expressions, and characteristic gesticulations. With these things, they are able to identify any character.

### **Normal day**

Each of the participants finds a space for himself in the room. The aim of the task is to stage those activities which particular people do at different times of the day, every day. Everybody works simultaneously, at their own pace. The trainer explains what time it is, starting with five or six o'clock in the morning. At this time of a day, most people are usually sleeping, some are walking the dog and others persons are drinking coffee. At 7am some people brush their teeth, some walk or drive to work, someone switches off an alarm clock, someone smokes a cigarette. The time signalled by the trainer jumps two or three hours forward, and the exercise ends at, say, 1am. The leader is allowed to stop the game at any particular moment and ask some participants to explain to him the details of the action they are performing. The game is not only a good role-play training, but also allows the participants to learn more about other participants, to discover things that are common and those things that aren't.



### **The Enchanted Forest**

The participants start moving – they wander around the whole room as the trainer tells them about the changing scenery around them: "you are wandering on grass, sand, mud, through the forest, steep rocky path, through a stream bed, in the deep snow". Each of the participants tries to find his own individual way of moving around those imaginary sceneries. After a while they all reach a magical valley, where they become enchanted. First, they become 5-year-old children, playing, and then respectively: teenagers, who meet in the city or at school, young adults, who face important decisions and choices to make, mature grown-ups, and finally retired senior citizens. The task of the participants is to improvise the roles, according to age, as well as interact and build relations. This activity helps to integrate the group, eases the participants into closer contact, and also teaches them how to express feelings, needs, and impulses.

### **Walking**

The participants stand in two rows, facing each other. In this way they create a symbolic path for a volunteer. His task is to tell a story, any story, during the walk. Every person the volunteer passes says one word only, which he next has to incorporate into the story he is telling. The necessity of taking new themes and suggestions into account, and at the same time maintaining the logic of the story, requires creativity, flexibility, imagination, and concentration.

### **Hands**

The participants form a circle, and while kneeling, they keep their arms straight, placing them alternately: hand X, hand Y, hand Z, hand Y, hand Z, hand V, etc. The rhythmical banging on the floor, in use of hands, begins. One hand bangs after another, in a clockwise manner. Two bangs of the same hand signals a switch of direction to counter-clockwise. Additional impediments can be also introduced, for instance three bangs means skipping three hands, while maintaining the same direction (it is a very difficult version of the game). The exercise strongly integrates the group and improves concentration.

### **Machine**

The task is to build a multi-functional mechanism, in which each of the parts plays an important role. The game starts with a volunteer who has some kind of idea for what the machine may be, and then the rest of the group joins him in a spontaneous manner, forming new links and functions. Any form of movement and sound is permitted. The trainer stops the exercises at the moment when the mechanism is completed and fully operational. The game can perform the func-

tion of a movement-oriented "pause" in activities, and may also be used with a particular topic, preparing participants for the main goal of the session (for example, constructing a machine made of computer parts probes the limits of technological riddles).

### **Objects**

The exercise is in the form of a "warm-up for the subject" and uses the language of metaphor. Each of the participants creates his own sculpture – a construction for which he may use anything in the room. The trainer may also prepare a set of some additional things before the classes, which would also be useful for other activities. The sculptures are supposed to be an illustration of the ideas and terms related to the theme of the session. For instance, during classes devoted to the history of Europe, the participants may create symbolic images of a chosen country, with the emphasis being put on those facts, characters and phenomena, which according to them, are the most important. Next, each of them describes his work, one by one, explaining the significance of particular elements. Then, the whole group analyses and evaluates the subject of the lesson together with the trainer. The exercise has a lot of educational merits. Referring primarily to imagination and artistic expression, it captures the imagination to make associations and gradually makes the listeners more aware of the subject covered during the classes.

### **Sociometry**

Sociometric exercises involve making the participants aware of the complex nature of relations among the group. Mutual, multi-dimensional relations are connected to their personality traits, feelings and beliefs. One of the main aims of sociometry is also to study the motivations and needs of the group members. Knowledge in this particular field is extremely relevant in the process of education and determines the efficiency of the process of gaining knowledge. Getting to know yourself and developing a better understanding of how the team functions has an essential influence on the evolution of each of the group members and improves their cooperation.

*Sociometry was proposed as a form of warm-up, allowing the participants to get to know each other, very quickly, and feel unrestricted. It was also an introduction to work with methods of psychodrama, which assumes an active way of auto presentation, namely acting. Sociometric maps constitute to a simultaneous introduction before dealing with the main subject of the meeting – which is aware-*

*ness of the roles, in reference to the work of the educators. For the members of a new team, the important thing is the quick insight into the group – according to such criteria as age and job experience. So the choice of those categories was not random.*

*Maria Roth (Workshop Group in Romania)*

An example of a practical use of sociometry in analysing the relations among the group, are exercises which reveal the common influences and connections among the people who form a team. They may be in various forms: For instance, the trainer provides terms – the criteria, which are the base for the participants, who then group and form "live sociograms" (images of bonds): "you are the one with whom I would like to discuss a very risky project", "you are the person who I would like to confide in", "you are best suited to handle the group's financial management". The rule, which applies to all of the participants, is that a participant may choose only one person and then grab his shoulder. Various connections emerge, which dynamically morph, depending on the character of the criteria. In another version of this sociometric test, each of the participants has to answer to the trainer's questions, by forming a row of the participants (meaning the group), or by distributing the participants in various distances from himself. "Who in the group influences me most?", "with whom do I have the best relations?", "who has let me get to know him best?". This technique also shows the complexity and multidimensionality of common group relations, and involves movement and action. A different way of presenting the position of a particular person in a group, is a game, in which the character and the personality of people are symbolised by three categories which are marked out within the performing area: lone wolves, sociable wolves and leader wolves. In the first round, each of the participants assumes a position, which according to him, is the one he belongs to, considering both group and everyday life. The second stage is about rearranging the participants. Each of the participants, respectively rearranges the rest of the group according to the same criteria. A comparison of both of the situations produces very interesting cognitive data. The feedback each of the participants receives from the rest of the group allows them to verify their own behaviour and attitude.

Sociometric techniques are also very useful in those situations where a group decision has to be made. Let us imagine a situation in which two people, during classes devoted to literature, come up with different ideas as to how to proceed. One person would like to analyse the poem first, and somebody else would like to know some background concerning the biography of the author first. An

educator, who does not want to act as the judge in this matter, and for whom the real eagerness of the participants is important, proposes the group come to a conclusion together. The people who volunteered have to sit, facing each other, and present their arguments. Every other participant – before he finally decides of which of the volunteers he supports, may switch from one to another, many times. They may also choose the "in between" position, and then justify it. That kind of a method of making a decision is an alternative to the traditional voting, it is the one which motivates the participants to reflect, and state his own, deep and more personal approach towards the given subject. The movement itself is also relevant, as well as the direct contact with others, which is a diversion from routine.

*That kind of an informal way of getting to know each other (sociometric tests) may be a form of warm-up, which allows the participants to find common features and similarities, and that creates the state of willingness to cooperate in the course of the following actions. That technique may also find its application in a context of a specific subject. For instance, the criteria for creating a map in art history may be choosing a favourite period – cubism, realism or expressionism.*  
*Ana Leal (Workshop Group in Portugal)*

## **Maps**

The most popular sociometric technique, which appeared in various forms in all of the groups taking part in the course, is the map. It was described in detail in the previous chapter ("the need for supervision") in a context of specific examples of use and with the focus on the difficulties and threats which may occur during the work. The map has various forms and may be used in many different situations (maps of places, feelings, needs, interests, dreams). Depending on criteria determined by the trainer or the participants, the group creates spatial and moving configurations, which show the common features of particular people, as well as the features which differ between them. The map may relate to both visible characteristics, for instance the age structure in the group, as well as it may unveil the personal beliefs, attitudes, and intimate experiences. In one group in Portugal, an example of a deepened sociometric test, was the one in which the participants had to answer to the question concerning their identifying with masculinity and femininity. Extreme points on the map were determined by objects symbolising two sexes: male and female. All the group members had to gather around the space which was limited by those two poles, according to their own conception of both terms and according to what they identified with. As was emphasised by the educator who took part in those classes – none of the people chose strict belonging to only

one of the poles. It showed that the differences between those two terms are not as – big as it seems.

A unique version of the map is a warm-up exercise, which was very much appreciated in the pilot program of the course:

### **I am the only person in the group, who...**

All the people stand in a circle. Everyone is allowed to step inside the circle and finish the sentence, by expressing an experience, skills or life situations, which distinguish him from the rest of the group. For instance: "I am the only person in the group, who can walk on stilts." The sentences the participants say should be true. If any of the others in the group also walks on stilts, or has done it in the past, they join their colleague. It often proves that the feature, which according to someone seems to be special and unique, appears to be shared by other participants. The rules of the exercise do not impose any specific number of presentations, the game keeps going, until it ends in a natural way. The participants are presented with an opportunity for getting to know each other better, a lot of new, interesting information emerges, which is interesting for the whole group, everyone may share with other people with the information related to their passion and prove their own uniqueness. A continuation of the exercise intended to help the group decide on a direction for further activities might be to present the following question: "I am the only person in this group, who would like to talk about ..." .. or .. "I am the only person in this group who is interested in ...". The responses to such statements can help to crystallise the needs and interests of each particular member of the group.

A huge advantage of the map as the integrative technique, is its dynamic, revitalising character, as well as the literalness and accessibility of the ad-hoc images created with it. It was the map which was the method most often used by the participants of the course in their own educational practice.

### **MAP – an example of practical use**

*A workshop with the participation of educators, trainers and therapists, devoted to reflecting on Edmund Husserl's philosophy and various ways of experiencing time.*

*The map technique was used to initiate a discussion on those topics which for centuries have been the subjects of philosophical debates. The space of the first map was determined by four points, which were also given the following associa-*

tions: north – Europe, south – India, east – harmony, west – crisis. The participants wandered around those extreme poles and tried to find a place with which they identified themselves. Each of the participants had to justify his choice. Next, four different meanings were assigned to those four directions: north – rationalism, south – irrationality, east – spirit, west – matter. The aim of the participants was to, once again, choose one place only, meaning the one they feel the most comfortable with, and then they had to talk about their choice. In the second part, the group read some philosophical texts and prepared theatrical scenes which illustrated various ways of communication and experiencing time.

### **Educator's comment**

The nature of the idea was to use the maps in order to induce associations and experiences related to those terms, which are the basic ones in a chosen text which was written by Husserl. Thanks to that method, it was possible to introduce new, unknown problems to the group. While there was a reluctance to engage in philosophy and educational content, better than indifference. The classes led to a change in attitude towards the new subject, it opened the doors to cognition. The exercises, one fragment in particular – namely the discussion, let the participants reflect on their own philosophical and educational stances.



### **Atom**

Atom – society, family, occupation – it is an image which shows the network of connections from other people to the person chosen to be in the middle. Various relations may be the subjects of analyses – those in the family circle, the workplace or a generally understood network of interpersonal connections. For creating the atom, drawing on a sheet of paper is the technique which is the most often used, but it may be also possible to create atoms of various items – keys, building bricks, leaves, coins, pebbles. Every participant draws his own atom, using of a previously explained code of symbols, for instance circle and triangle both symbolise sex, a solid line or a dotted line symbolises the character of relations – firm, stable or problematic and variable, an arrow symbolises the attitude – one-sided relations or mutual. The structure of the drawing may also include other important elements: question marks, bold solid lines. The distance between particular components of the atom is also important and it relates to the depth and the intimacy of a relation. The author places the symbol of himself in the middle of the drawing, and he may write down his name on that symbol. Similarly, by writing down names or initials, he marks the other people on his drawing. After the individual work is done, the presentation of particular dia-

grams and group discussion takes place. This part of the task may start with an exposition of the atoms – placed on chairs or on the floor, so that all of the participants may see all of the pictures. Next, particular participants talk about their own projects in turn, and then other participants join the discussion. They ask questions, point at the meaning of the elements of the drawing, discover many things which the author himself could not see, even though they were present in his work. It is very valuable feedback, which helps in better understanding one's own relations with other people – it puts emphasis on the phenomena and aspects which are relevant for existence in a particular society.

The next step is converting these atoms from the two dimensional drawing to the stage. Members of the group are used as associations for the scheme, and are of the author's choice. He also chooses someone to take his role on stage. Using the role reversal technique, the trainer conducts short interviews with all the characters chosen. First, the author of the atom answers for them, and only then the participants play their roles, by repeating author's lines and behaviour. A summary of the game is the feedback from the people who played particular roles in an author's atom, which provides him with a lot of valuable information and hints, which help in reassessing and better understanding the functioning in a particular group.

### ***ATOM – an example of practical use***

*A multi-day training camp for social workers who are just starting their careers. The classes are aimed at training interpersonal skills and mastering one's own professional skills.*

*The trainer asks the participants to think about their place in the work environment, about their relations with their colleagues and the boss. Next, they are to illustrate their thoughts and imaginings in the form of a drawing. Once the atoms are ready, the whole group discusses particular illustrations in turn. Many questions arise and some of the presentations evoke discussion. The participants ask for the option of keeping their own pictures.*

### ***Educator's comment***

*For many participants it was the first experience connected with professional development. Introducing an unconventional technique at the beginning of the training resulted in much greater openness and success during the following classes.*









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## **EDUCATIONAL SCENARIOS**

Education is a continuous search for new ideas, methods and solutions. Questions about how to teach, motivate, develop passions and interests, and assist in personal development are a constant issue for educators. They are particularly important in the areas of non-formal education and work with people who need extra incentives to take up educational challenges. The implementation of the workshop for the project provided extensive documentation – descriptions of activities and analyses of their usefulness in education. I have selected the following workshop scenario techniques in the hope that they will be inspiring and supportive for trainers working with different groups and engaged in various fields of knowledge and practical skills. Each of the scenarios presented is a starting point for a leader's personal research and imagination. One can return to the exercises and techniques described repeatedly. The best results are achieved by transforming, improving, and adapting them to the specific needs and didactic purpose of a particular usage. Course participants often give a leader great ideas and suggestions. Making use of their initiative reinforces their sense of belonging to the group, and encourages further effort.

## MASKS

### Group training in Portugal. Trainer: Jose Luis Mesquita

Participants are given access to a large selection of materials – cardboard, paper, coloured paper and magazines, markers, scissors, glue, string. Their task is to make masks for themselves, depicting the role of an adult educator. They are given plenty of time – they work without haste, at a large table. They talk, help each other, discuss their ideas with the trainer. Many different forms of expression slowly come to life, each of which speaks with its shape, colour, texture, and choice of decoration. The trainer photographs each participant in their mask. The photos are taken using a camera built into a laptop, so everyone has the opportunity to see their reflection on the screen.



When work is completed, everybody is invited for a stroll around the hall. It's time for a meeting of masks, enthusiastic greetings, meeting each other's new "incarnations", exchanges of opinion and various interactions. After a while we all gather in a circle and in turn, one after the other, say how we feel in the masks. As each participant talks, the corresponding image is displayed on the wall, creating an enlarged mirror image, which is seen by the entire group. Almost all says that they feel good wearing the masks, and that the images created by them really represent what is relevant to the role of educator, which they play in their professional lives. Some are not entirely satisfied with their final results – They hadn't turned out quite as initially imagined in this ambitious project.

The next step is a presentation of the masks by each participant. In the middle of the room, on the stage, is a chair covered with a colourful scarf. Its occupant has the role of adult educator. Participants sit on the chair in turn, a mask over the face, and explain the meaning of the forms they've created, analysing its various elements. They explain, for example, the importance of the colours used to represent the qualities and skills useful in education. They reply to questions and comments made by the rest of the group. At the end take off the mask and say how they feel without it.

After the completion of their presentations, all masks are removed and placed on the floor, participants sit in a circle around them. The trainer asks that each chooses other than the one which they created. One which in their opinion seems closest to the role of educator. An additional task is to create and present a simple scenario of movement, illustrated with sound. It should express the feelings

associated with the new mask. Participants are given colourful scarves and various musical instruments, also they use their own voices. At the end, they say why they chose that particular mask, rather than one of the others, and explain the meaning of their stage performances.

The session closes with a discussion of the exercise, a clarification of its purpose, and bringing to light those aspects which could create doubt. The trainer stresses that the activity was mainly intended to create an image that represents our "I" in the role of educator. Mask work is focused precisely on the experience of playing very different roles from everyday life and professional situations. The structure of the session reflects this diversity – the masks are used in many ways, continually revealing new possibilities, and surprising with their functionality. According to the assessment of one of the workshop's participants, they can be used widely in education.

*– I can use this exercise to work with different teams. For example, one of my training groups is made up of sales representatives. By building masks they will realise how many different roles there are in the work they perform. Instead of a theoretical lecture I can propose a practical activity, which involves the whole group. Through creative activity we will achieve the same result as with the presentation of complex concepts and theories. The form of the classes is very important, and such methodology is attractive and interesting.*



## **SIGNIFICANCE**

### **Group training in Cyprus. Trainer: Roulla Demetriou**

One of the greatest skills for educators is the ability to develop interest and curiosity in learners. The exercises in the workshop described below are aimed specifically at enhancing that skill.

#### **Relationships**

The trainer marks out a space for the scenario using some fabric – the circle, the same symbol used with the group in earlier exercises. A circle of intertwined hands began the activities classes, then – also in a circle – movement exercises were conducted, and now it becomes the stage for another play. Two volunteers come to the centre, face each other, and shake hands. The rest observe and comment on this arrangement. What do we see, what comes to mind? What is the situation and what emotions are apparent from the attitudes of both players? Who's who? Group gives various titles to this image, and share their feelings:

- *A meeting of two good friends.*
- *The beginning of a conversation between a boss and a subordinate.*
- *Two people were just introduced to each other.*
- *These people have a friendly attitude toward each other...*

After a moment, one of the players leaves the circle, and somebody else stands in his place, in any position they like. The second participant responds with a new gesture or pose, and they form the next image, which again is interpreted and described by others. Each successive arrangement produces a lot of comments, often contradictory, presenting different points of view. A discussion follows the end of the exercise. Many people emphasise how valuable and revealing the experience had been and how it can be used in a practical way in education. Participants point out the usefulness of this game in overcoming stereotypes, rigid thinking, and the use of ready-made opinions.

#### **Centre**

The next exercise also focuses on uncovering multiple meanings and interpretations, and the wilful search to find different ways to understand scenes. The trainer places three items on the stage. In the middle is a table, on it a closed casket. To one side, facing the table, is a chair. Participants are asked to identify where, in their opinion, this arrangement has its centre of power. Opinions differ, each explanation shows a different point of view.

- *The chair is the centre of power, as it makes us think of man. It's related to the word "chairman" – he who holds power.*
- *The casket, because it's on the table, it's exposed and draws attention.*

The trainer invites the participants to change the scene – the base of power, through the shifting of objects. One person takes the stage and turns the chair around. In this new situation, again, interpretations vary.

- *The centre of power is located in a casket.*
- *The table is in the position of strength – it's large and it's supporting the casket.*
- *The chair has lost all relevance.*

The next change is to place the casket on the floor and open its lid, and take the chair outside the scene.

- *The casket attracts attention because it is open.*
- *The chair has full control over the entire scene, because it is outside. With full view of situation and the position of an "outsider", it has the greatest strength.*
- *Table sits in the centre, dominating the space with its size and solidity.*

The trainer ends the exercise and dismantles the "decorations". In closing the session, the participants' attention is directed to the shape of the circle, which was the symbolic axis of the whole exercise. The last addition to the workshop is the formation of a circle of participants, holding hands – a time for reflection in silence. Ritual, celebration of gestures, and the repetition of certain actions build the structure of the session and create a distinctive atmosphere. They also serve to strengthen the integration of the group.

Both exercises are valuable in education and can be used for various tasks. Above all they motivate independent thinking and exploration in any subject, problem, or complex issue of multiple layers of meaning and references. They are also specific training for creativity, understood as the search for new insights, new solutions, as well as openness to different and often surprising situations. They help in understanding body language, increase sensitivity to the transfer of non-verbal information and signals. They are a proposition for going beyond the traditional ways of learning and acquiring knowledge, which is what makes them so attractive.

### **CIRCLE – An example of practical use**

*A group in the Education Centre for Adults. English language course designed for immigrants (various levels of language). Classes devoted to inter-cultural education.*

*The leader invites the participants not to sit in a usual "classroom layout", but to sit in a circle. The aim for the whole group is to find some English words which sound similar or identical in other languages. Next, the participants form small groups and continue the game. The aim of this exercise is to master some vocabulary, but it also includes understanding of etymology.*

#### **Educator's comment:**

*The circle layout gives the participants the feeling of equality in reference to other participants, as well as to the educator. It is crucial while working with a team in which the people come from various cultures, very often marked with ethnic conflicts. The circle allows participants to express their opinions freely and cooperate during classes. An important element is also the so-called "face-to-face" contact. In such configurations, the participants feel safer and less embarrassed, all of which beneficially influences the process of gaining knowledge.*



## ROLES

### **Training group in Portugal. Trainer: Jose Luis Mesquita**

The exercises proposed by the trainer were a part of a session devoted to the conception of roles – the key issue in psychodrama, on which the Moreno theory is based. The supplement to the lecture was practising the role-playing in various contexts.

#### **Oracle**

The game refers to Greek mythology, in which the oracle was a place of dialogue between man and divinity, a source of knowledge of the future and the miraculous being providing guidance. The participants play the roles in pairs, one of them is the oracle, while the other is a stranger who seeks answers to his doubts. The aim of the person who plays the oracle is to empathise with the problem and the situation of the stranger, and try to understand his situation. Next, the oracle represents two people giving different answers to the same question. What is worth paying attention to, is the comment of the educator who participates in those classes, who emphasised that the high level of integration and trust among the group is crucial in order not to affect or offend those participants who are over-sensitive.

Stranger: *Should all the listeners take part in the training?*

Oracle: *And how do you think?*

Stranger: *Should I hide my emotions while leading the training?*

Oracle 1: *Authenticity is always the best choice.*

Oracle 2: *There is also another possibility, the one that you do not see.*

The exercise is an example of an educational technique, which engages the participants in exchanging knowledge and experiencing in an active way. It can also be a unique tool during an exam or as means of passing on new information. An important function of the game is to make the participants pay attention to various, sometimes maybe not obvious, aspects of phenomena and problems, to wake their curiosity and creative thinking, but also mobilise them to deeper insights on the issues that are being covered.

## **Playback theatre**

A form of improvisation theatre which was created in the United States by Jonathan Fox, that is based on acting out the stories that are being told by the participants, on the spot. Each of the private stories gains its own theatrical shape, without any previous preparations or rehearsal. The characters of the narration are played by other participants and the author of the story watches his own experiences and feelings from the perspective of a spectator, along with the rest of the group. This exercise is a form of body language training, but also spontaneity and creativity.

The trainer proposes the theme of the game – relations between educators and the institutions they work for. Two people volunteer to tell their stories. The first story concerns an employer who demands that his employee be available at all times and perform many additional tasks, and all without any kind of an adequate financial gratification. The narrator describes his position in a figurative manner: "I felt like a vampire was drinking my blood". The subject of the second story is the clash of the rules imposed by the employer and the educational program implemented by the employee. Both stories are then presented on stage with use of cloth, props and musical instruments. Then, the whole group discusses the staging. In the middle of the discussion, many crucial observations appear concerning the predispositions of the educator and their influence on his work and his relations with the institution. Thanks to the on-stage performance, the mechanisms and the logic of the presented events become clear.

Both exercises allow the discovery of different dimensions and aspects of the discussed issues, by watching them from the "outside", from a distant perspective. Role play – both for the actors and the audience – is an experience that improves perception, it helps one to better understand that events are multi-dimensional. A valuable source of cognition here, is not only the intellectual view of things, but mainly the very direct experience.

## **CHAIRS**

### **Training group in Romania. Trainers: Dr Éva Varró, Horațiu Albini**

A trainer proposes actions which correspond to the interest of the group, related to the subject of discrimination and the suitability of psychodramatic techniques in that particular field. The problem of society's dislike for Roma people which became apparent on the previous day in one of the participant's protagonist work, resounded among the group. Polarised opinions, feelings and stances were revealed during the discussion on the matter. The central theme became the assessment of the function of the unit, namely the educator playing his role as a part of the system – the network of relations, rules, habits, practices and conventions, which all have a great influence on people.

The exercise starts with placing three chairs in the space of the "scene". Each of them represents a different approach towards a difficult occupational situation in the context of the system. Chair number one represents an individual way of making choices and decisions, determined by one's own experience and wisdom, as well as features of the character and personality. The second chair is an adoption of the attitude that is backed up by the "old" system (corresponding to the well established and stereotypical beliefs in society), and the third chair uses the "new" system (people and institutions representing the way of thinking, feeling and acting, which are different than the generally approved ones).

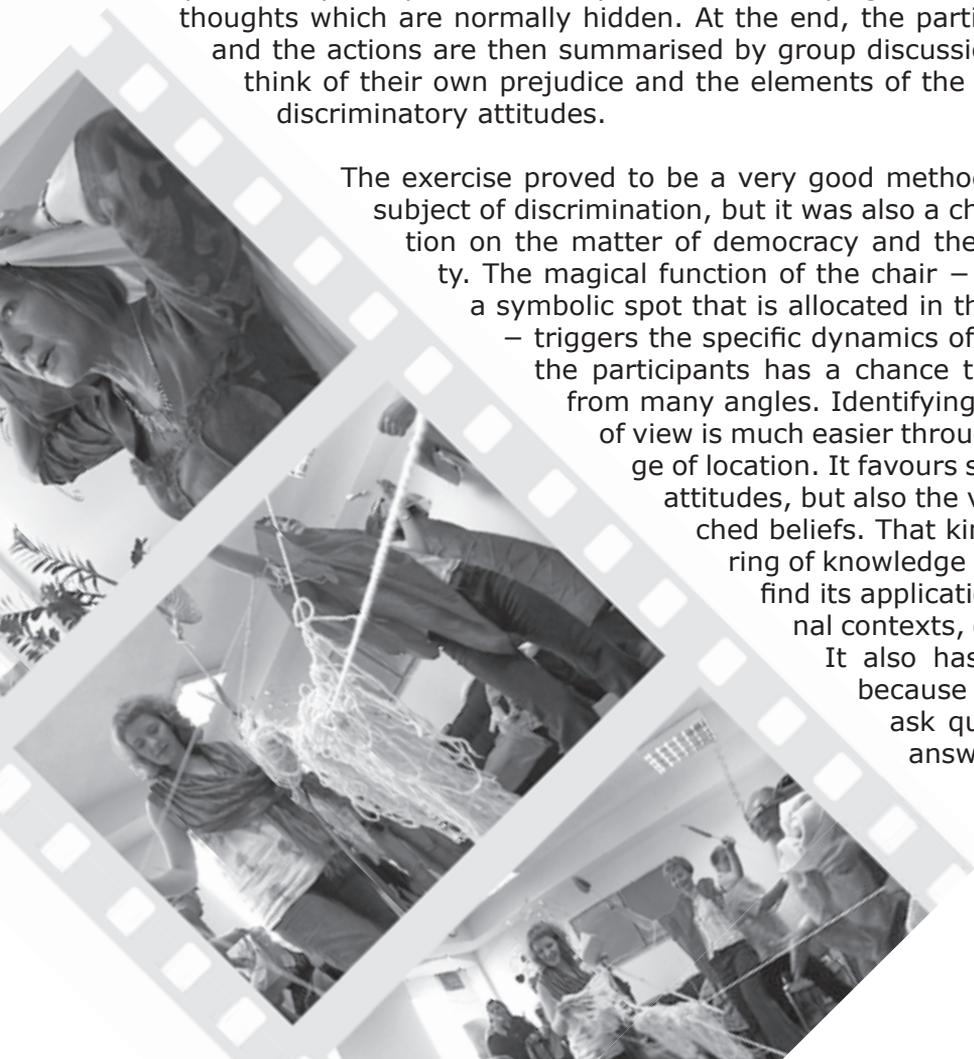
The trainer encourages the participants to take part in an individual confrontation with each of the three elements of the scene. They may sit on any of the three chairs and then talk about their motivation for choosing a particular seat, about their understanding of its meaning, but also how it relates to some specific situations from real life. The common context of all the actions is the attitude towards the society of Roma people. A very dynamic activity begins. The participants move from chair to chair, many times, identifying with the symbols of the system and determining its components, based on their own experiences. They talk, assuming different perspectives, and then correct each other's comments. In that particular way, a multicoloured picture of three different attitudes and ways of reacting, set by characteristic features, is painted. The "old" system is: impersonality, discrimination, fear, the use of force, indifference, tradition, corruption, welfare, helplessness, defence against violence. The "new" system is characterised by: activity, democracy, respecting yourself (as well as others), the law, knowledge of other people, readiness for change, solidarity, openness,

empathy, development. On the other hand, the participants name the following individual predispositions influencing the behaviour and attitudes: imbued respect for other people, empathy, feeling of loneliness, powerlessness and helplessness.

At the beginning of the game, most of the people choose the "old" system, however after a while, some of them – also because they are influenced by the arguments of the other side – change their approach and switch to the "new" system. This part of the exercise comes from the soliloquy technique, which requires the participants to betray themselves, saying out loud those feelings and thoughts which are normally hidden. At the end, the participants form a circle and the actions are then summarised by group discussions. The participants think of their own prejudice and the elements of the system which favour discriminatory attitudes.

The exercise proved to be a very good method of approaching the subject of discrimination, but it was also a chance for deep reflection on the matter of democracy and the rules of civic society. The magical function of the chair – or any other kind of a symbolic spot that is allocated in the space of the stage – triggers the specific dynamics of this activity. Each of the participants has a chance to see various things from many angles. Identifying with different points of view is much easier through the physical change of location. It favours shaping and changing attitudes, but also the verification of entrenched beliefs. That kind of interactive sharing of knowledge and experiences may find its application in many educational contexts, on any given subject.

It also has an activating part, because it mobilises people to ask questions and look for answers.



## **GROUP GAMES**

### **Group training in Poland. Trainer: Igor Hanuszkiewicz**

Group games – as the name suggests – are based on the cooperation of all the members of a class. Their course and subject matter may be very different, the principle remains constant improvisation and spontaneous creation of events, interaction, and exploration of their roles.

#### **Galaxy**

The trainer invites everyone to create a team setting, in which they will be able to present feelings and emotions. The idea is to arrange the area to make use of well known scientific knowledge. As a result of "brainstorming", participants decided to create a galaxy, which they regard as the greatest choice of roles and scale with the other winning proposals (for example, solar system). The group recalls various astronomical objects and briefly discusses them. They mention: star, planet, black hole, asteroid, comet, comet's tail, pulsars, radiation. The activity area is marked with the galactic centre, where there is a cluster of stars, symbolised by a yellow scarf. Now the participants have to choose a role for themselves – the embodiment of any of the objects. Everyone takes a short walk around the room to consider their decisions.

The trainer announces the beginning of the activity, and the participants enter their roles. Next to the galactic centre, one participant sits on a black scarf, playing the role of a black hole. Someone else sits on a green scarf on the outside edge of the game space – This is a living planet, similar to Earth. A few other planets are also formed. In the space, comets move around constantly, their tails made using scarves. Comets are the most crowded part of the galaxy, their paths following those seen in nature. Participants start to talk to each other, checking who is who and what they're doing. One of the comets derides the planets, criticising their preference for immobility and isolation. The comet falls into the black hole by the force of gravity (as the comet explains it). After an unsuccessful attempt at social contact, the comet, contrary to the laws of physics, is spat back out by the black hole and continues its journey across the galaxy. Comets frequently meet, interact, remain together for a moment, then return to their journeys. The culminating moment is the collision of a comet with one of the planets, changing its location. The disaster evokes vivid comments from other galactic objects. The trainer stops the activity, asking that all participants look at the area and say how they

feel in their current locations in the galaxy. The game closes with sharing of experiences and impressions in a circle.

### **Magic garden**

In this game as well, the first task is to select the environment for the activity. Finally the team decides on a garden, which brings with it much symbolism. The choice of roles, however, works differently. They are assigned to each participant by the whole group. Taken into account is knowledge about an individual, their place in the team, predisposition, specific character traits, and needs. The group's proposals show how each person is perceived by the others – for example, as a gardener, queen bee or a child playing in the garden. The game was introduced only at this stage of the session, when the participants already knew each other well, and the group was integrated.



Next is the preparation of scenery – participants use all the available props and materials in the room. This time they are going to equip their characters in a richer setting. As the classes take place in an art therapy hall, there is a very large selection available – at their disposal are masks, puppets and theatrical costumes, stage decoration pieces and scarves. Participants show great inventiveness and ingenuity in creating the scene, the coach reigns in control of the preparations, announcing two minutes remaining for this phase of the exercise. Then the next phase is explained: "You are in your own roles, you can develop them in any direction you like. Enter relationships with others and see who is in this garden". The activities in the magical garden last a few minutes, and are very spontaneous. The stories of individual characters evolve through sharing and interaction. The trainer announces the approaching end of the game: "Last two minutes in the garden". After a while, he brings it to a halt: "The garden is no longer enchanted! Remove your magic, leave your roles! Now put everything you used as costumes and set together in the middle, and sit in a circle." The game closes with sharing focused mainly on discussing the various roles – participants examine how they felt in their development and what had become. It turns out that many people have changed the functions allocated to them as a group. For example, those who had played passive characters, found new impetus and energy for intense activity.

The essence of this exercise is to play out roles, and their improvised nature leads to spontaneity and creativity. Group games have a very large educational potential. To suit various needs, the activity can be used to dramatically incre-

ase the amount of information and understanding that becomes apparent, and is then used over its course. For example, in the first game the structure of the galaxy could be further analysed, or reassessed according to the viewpoints of different periods – the cosmos of the ancient Greeks and medieval painting of concentric blue spheres. The game also gives each participant a special opportunity to see their function both within the group, and in daily life, in different contexts and situations. It is often the case that participants discover the true nature of their behaviour and attitudes during improvised drama. Selecting, for example, the role of a comet, may symbolise a person's hyperactivity or chaotic tendencies. Such knowledge is sometimes difficult to obtain through intellectual analysis – only an emotional experience brings it to light. Group games are also valuable for the trainer, as a source of information about the group members and their relationships with each other.

### ***GROUP GAME – an example of practical application***

*A workshop for psychiatrists and psychologists at the conference "Consultant Psychiatry". Workshop designed to encourage reflection and better understanding of patients' resistance.*

*Participants are given the task of presenting, as a group, patient resistance. A circle is formed. Next, a few participants are removed from the group and given new roles – they are to present "Behaviour in the case of resistance". Each participant is given two minutes for their task. The exercise ends with the sharing of impressions – participants talk about their emotions and experiences in a very open manner, and discuss methods and strategies that increase or decrease resistance.*

### ***Educator's comment***

*The method used allowed the participants to experience being both "the resistance" and "against the resistance" and has become a base for discussions on working with resistant patient. The technique has proved very effective – it helped to develop interest and commitment to the group, led the participants to reflect on their own way of working, and helped to integrate the team at the start of the exercises.*

## FISHBOWL

### Training group in Romania. Trainers: Dr Éva Varró, Sorina Bumbulut

The subject of the entire session was the relations between educators and those people under their charge who required special care and support. In their early activities the participants characterised the groups of people with whom they work on daily basis: older people, mentally ill, addicts and families (parents with growing children). In four groups they make and discuss the scenes, which illustrate typical situations with the participation of the representatives of each of the groups. The next link was the exercise that deepens the analysis of the main theme – the "fishbowl".

The trainer asks the participants to divide into two groups – one of which plays the role of leaders and the other are the people under their charge. The groups form two circles, one of which is smaller, and the second, the bigger one, surrounds the first one. The educators are the outer circle. The members of the inner circle conduct a discussion, share their opinions of their guardians, make complaints and spread gossip. They act as if they were alone in the room. The outer circle members just listen, without interfering. The exercises starts with two, short interviews – the trainers asks the inner circle members, one by one, to introduce themselves – by telling a fictional name and age. The game begins. Everybody takes part in the conversation.

– *Those specialists should help my child and should not summon me here. Nobody is able to deal with that boy.*

– *The organisation has the money they received from the EU, but they do not want to give me any.*

– *This woman who takes care of me always says that she understands me. But what can she understand?*

– *I buried my husband and my children and these people here say that life is beautiful. They send the volunteers to play with me, but I do not want that.*

– *This is the only place where I feel safe and where people respect me.*

– *It is not so bad, I do not feel lonely here.*

– *I do not understand all the rules here. They keep inventing some new rules that we have to stick to. They are having fun and they are laughing in the office, I'd like that too.*

After a while, the trainer stops the game, all the participants stand up and switch positions – meaning, those people who played educators sit in the inner circle

and start to talk freely, and those people who form the outer circle now, just listen.

*– There is no way to make everybody happy. If we manage to even partially satisfy their needs, then it is good enough.*

*– They have expectations that we are not able to satisfy. We are not magicians.*

*– The needs of my folks are small – to eat something and to be together.*

*– Maybe we should commit more to the lives of the people who are under our charge.*

*– They call us names and everybody laughs at us.*

*– They do not tell us what they think, openly and honestly, but they talk behind our backs.*

The trainer ends the exercise and invites everybody to form one, big circle. In the summary discussion, the relations between the leader and the group are analysed. The participants emphasise that they acquired a new awareness of their influence and impact on the people under their charge.

This exercise is another example of the educational and cognitive function of role-playing. The magical, invisible walls of the "fishbowl", through which it is possible to watch and listen to the improvised scene, make it possible to get much valuable and important information about the way of thinking, feelings, expectations and needs of the people we work with or have any other kind of contact with. The arranged situation may be fictional, but it contains an important element of true experience, feelings and observations made by various people. Various points of view are focused in that situation, namely points of view that are often inconsistent, that provoke us to question fixed ideas and beliefs.



## **PRESENTS**

### **Training group in Poland. Trainer: Igor Hanuszkiewicz**

The leader proposes this exercise as the last link in the group work process – a form of a psychodramatic farewell, and at the same time, the summary of the whole cycle. The group's task is to make an unusual gift for each of the participants. The participants, one at a time, leave the room where the game takes place, and the task of the rest of the group is to decide what kind of gift they should give to the person who left. The gift is supposed to be in the form of a so-called "vignette" – a tableau or a short motion scene, which symbolises an important feature of the character of the person who has left the room – the person's role in the group or a thing, which the person may particularly need in that stage of life. First, the participants talk about the absent member of the group, they recall the situations and events that took place during the classes and are important for the person, but also his, or her, statements and the roles he or she played. Then they try to come up with a theatrical form of the gift idea they invented and test its various possible forms. The trainer hints that the "mirror technique" might be used, using an understudy – a person who is a substitute, representing the main character in the created image. That kind of procedure will be then repeated in all the scenes. When the idea of the "vignette" is ready and generally approved, then the absent person comes back into the room and watches the presentation.

### **Paintbrush**

The group agrees unanimously that the female participant, for whom the gift is being prepared, played a special role in the group – namely, she brought order and peace to various difficult situations. She also paid great attention to the aesthetic aspects of the activities and the reality that was created during those classes. One of the participants suggests a scene in which the understudy will re-paint the group, providing it with a new, orderly shape. That idea seems to be the most distinct and clear. After a short rehearsal of the planned activity, the main character (the previously mentioned female) – the protagonist, ceremoniously enters the room, where the participants sit and lay in sloppy poses, demonstrating dejection, boredom and ambivalence. The understudy is situated to one side, sitting, covered with a piece of cloth. The protagonist switches positions with the understudy and then watches the performance. In one hand, the understudy carries a paintbrush and approaches every participant and then sketches his new pose with a few paintbrush strokes. The picture of chaos and lack of

harmony gives way to a picture of an active and coordinated group. Afterwards, the understudy gives the paintbrush back to the protagonist, and the scene ends with applause.



### **The carousel of scarves**

When talking about their female friend, the participants all agree that there was a moment during the training in which there was a positive change in her – only then did she really open up and let the group truly get to know her. They decide to show that metamorphosis in a symbolic manner, using scarves. After considering various ideas, they form a close circle around the understudy, who crouches in the middle holding a bunch of scarves. After a while, the understudy comes to life and gives each person one scarf, and next he sets the circle in motion with a gesture. The participants unfurl the scarves on their outstretched arms, and they create a colourful "carousel". At the end, the understudy brings the activity to a close by giving the final scarf he has to the main character.

This exercise may be helpful in fulfilling various aims, as well as educational tasks, for instance as an attractive and uncommon form of repeating and entrenching the aim of the course, but also reaffirming the proper techniques, through application and creative usage in a new situation. It can also take the form of an exam, in which the person who receives the gift guesses the meaning or the hidden message of the presented scene and analyses its character and the structure. The action itself plays an important, integrative role, reinforces the group bond, and at the same time is focused on the individual needs of each of the participants. It can also appear in a simplified version, as suggested by a trainer in Portugal: The participants give things to one another (scarves) that symbolise, for instance, peace, love, dreams – all those things, which in their opinion, the chosen person needed the most – the things she might miss at the moment. The exercise may be connected with a particular occasion, such as Christmas, which is the time of the year when people already normally give presents to other people, or it may be conducted at the end of a larger session, as was described in this case. The activity requires quite some time, and it would be beneficiary if each of the participants received a gift (the classes described here lasted for several hours).

## PATH

### Group training in Cyprus. Trainer: Roulla Demetriou

The trainer invites the group to a symbolic journey through the workshop program implemented so far. Her goal is to freshen memories and reveal the whole process of group work, the most important and successful experiences, and key moments. Participants first close their eyes and think back to subsequent meetings, trying to recall the saved images and activities. Then they share their reflections – everyone talks about what they found most memorable. Their task is also to imagine, and show using gestures and movement, their participation in the course, like a path with a specific shape – Their very own "topography". Many different concepts are demonstrated: climbing stairs, a straight line, conquering mountainous slopes, a labyrinth.



The second phase of the process reconstruction requires all the workshop participants to work together. They are tasked with laying out a path, using multi-coloured scarves, and the entire space of the room. They must work together and agree on one version of the image that everyone accepts, even though each has their own subjective feelings and impressions. This is excellent for training skills like cooperation, compromise, and communication. On the floor a road with many turns comes together. The trainer repeatedly asks the participants whether they are satisfied with the result, or would like something changed or added. Some people benefit from this opportunity. The next task for the whole team will be to mark the boundaries between the different sessions, and identify each workshop using any objects in the room. Participants, together with the coach, discuss and remind each other of what has happened at various stages of the program, and which exercises and games for them were important. The coach encourages the group to seek creative signs and symbols to best express the meaning and atmosphere of each session. The people present at each particular session are responsible for creating that session's representation. The rest, observing and listening, have an opportunity to learn about activities in which they hadn't participated.

When the image is finally formed, the trainer asks the participants to individually and silently walk the path, turning their thoughts at each stage to those situations and experiences which held meaning for them. Then, in small groups, they prepare short impromptu presentations illustrating each of the sessions on the path. Through movement, sound, and words, they try to present some

specific incident which is particularly representative of each given workshop, to reproduce the atmosphere, showing their emotions. The participants' task also includes joining in with others. All activities presented are discussed, and some exercises are quickly repeated, so those absent during the earlier classes can understand something of their nature.

The final activity of the workshop is a symbolic illustration of the ongoing nature of the session by creating live sculptures. Participants shape themselves in way which reflects their feelings. The coach briefly summarises the whole exercise.

*– This is our journey together, where each had his own place, and was part of a group. Today we looked on our achievements, the awareness that we have developed, which will help us in our work.*

At the end, each participant, in one word, explains what they feel at that moment, thereby closing the symbolic journey.

The path technique is a very good way to repeat the experience and knowledge which the group has gained during the implementation of the educational program or workshop. It may also be a test of practical skills – giving participants a chance to present selected exercises and tasks in their own ways. The activity has a multi-layered structure allowing for in-depth analysis of the individual steps in the process of working together and solidifying understanding. Another variation of this exercise is to build an individual path for each participant. In this version there are many different variants of the same educational experience. Each focuses on what is best remembered, and repeating the main themes helps to consolidate the acquired knowledge.



***PATH – an example of practical application***

*Centre for adults addicted to alcohol, drugs and gambling. Classes on individually planning one's own therapy.*

*Participants sit in a circle, and the leader explains the proposed technique. Each person, in the order established by a group, uses coloured squares of cloth to mark a point on the floor which represents the end of their therapeutic path. Next, they show where they feel they currently are on this path. Standing in that location, they examine their achievements so far, and how far they have left to travel. The coach, and the whole group, encourage each participant in his journey of reflection and realisations, asking helpful questions and sharing their own experiences. In the last part of the session, everybody summarises their work, talking about the feelings and thoughts with which they end the session.*

***Educator's Comment***

*A very useful technique for building motivation and learning a systematic approach to self-help. It gives confidence and helps people with low self-esteem to believe in themselves. The group was enthusiastically involved in activities, which brought forward a lot of emotion. The centre plans to incorporate this technique into its standard programme.*









## SUMMARY

The year long series of pilot workshops in the four project partner countries was not only a concept for training educators, but also a platform for cooperation between psychodramatists and educators. The methods and techniques suggested by psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy experts were discussed in the context of their eventual transfer to the field of educational programs. The voice of educators in this debate is extremely important to verify the value of the program of workshop for its usefulness in the process of knowledge acquisition and multilateral development for adult learners. Some of the reports from educators who took part in training courses contain valuable observations and comments, which are cited in many parts of this publications. They are an invaluable inclusion in any attempt to summarise the project.

*Stage presentations draw directly on the creative potential of adult learners – they require the use of visual form and body language. When preparing in sub-groups, the participants gain useful skills, learn the rules of teamwork and how to communicate effectively with others.*

*Ana Leal*

*The use of craft supplies in the process of creation may be helpful for people who last took up a new educational challenge a long time ago. Art helps them express their thoughts and feelings.*

*Sara Brandão*

Psychodrama, dramatherapy and sociodrama clearly suit the theatre world, in creating a new reality in close collaboration with other people. The stage is a unique medium that allows one to experience phenomena through their own emotions and creative effort. Experiences and direct influence from the reality created on stage can not be replaced by an intellectual understanding alone. The combination of these instruments for educational programs can be an important factor in stimulating activity, self-motivated problem solving and new answers, and exploration of passions and interests.

Drama is a synthesis of arts, and includes expression with the body and with words, the elements of motion and sound, and the presence of the subject matter which in the process of creation, copy and refer to life. Using theatre, it is possible to relay information in many ways, the rich and colourful language of symbols, suggestions, metaphors, ambiguous images.

In the theatre, people meet each other on a plane which is conventional, fictional, yet very real – making it easier to establish relationships and to reveal one's creative potential.

*The success of the project depends primarily on whether we can find a way to use the benefits provided by dramatherapy and psychodrama in the implementation of educational programs for adults. I am confident that working with adults today requires searching for attractive new methods and strategies to be an alternative to the ubiquitous mass media.*

*Klitos Symeonides*

Theatre is just one of the creative ideas that can be an effective mechanism to motivate adults to acquire new skills and knowledge. Used in a variety of educational programs, custom forms and activities provides a counterbalance to routine and monotony, it surprises, motivates, stimulates experimentation and courageous curiosity. The attractiveness of didactic teaching is valuable in itself. This should not mean disregarding the curriculum, which will always remain important, and in the fore. But in order to effectively fulfil its objectives, we must find a way to help learners take an interest in the subjects of classes, to get familiar with the work of their group, to mobilise them to make the effort. Adult students often have to overcome large obstacles on the path to understanding their educational needs.

*In the context of adult education we can risk saying that psychodrama can motivate a group to make an effort in their education. It can be used as a method of overcoming old habits and ways of thinking and value judgements lingering from earlier years ("this is boring, not worth reading"). In psychodrama, through reflection, you can consciously accept or reject the proposed content. The opening of this sphere allows the fragmented experience, which nonetheless can be reshaping for the participants.*

*Piotr Kostuchowski*

The concept of a path is an excellent metaphor for the educational process, in which both the whole group and its component individuals seek the same destination. In turn, the essence of the psychodramatic experience is to find yourself in an "surplus reality" (one of Moreno's key terms denoting the possibility to go beyond established models and patterns of behaviour). The use of psychodrama

in education gives participants a unique opportunity to discover themselves again "in transit", in the process of releasing hitherto unknown, hidden or suppressed talents, aptitudes and needs.

*Psychodramatic techniques are very helpful in the supervisory work of educators, especially in their contact with vulnerable groups. In exchanging roles with those in their care, teachers gain a new perspective and understanding of their actions. They have the opportunity to reconsider ideas about the needs of students and their role in providing them with support. Supervision which makes use of psychodrama techniques facilitates discussion about professional roles, the conflict between professional and personal values and the ethical dilemmas associated with professional work.*

*Maria Roth  
Sorina Bumbuluț  
Éva Varro*

Educator, coach, leader, teacher – someone who leads the group and carries out educational program is a key figure in course participants' acquisition of knowledge and skills. The nature of each student's educational path is highly dependent upon the educator's courage in proposing innovative, creative and effective methods of work.

Every day, educators are faced with many difficulties and problems in their work – they need support. Supervision conducted using psychodrama provides the opportunity not only to discuss difficult issues, but also to transfer them to the dimension of activities and experiences on stage. Psychodrama is also a very valuable source of feedback from group members. Through sharing, role feedback and identification feedback, each problem analysed gains a broader context with many possible names that helps to overcome the feeling of loneliness, frustration and helplessness.

I wish all educators, especially participants in the pilot workshop project partner countries, creative energy, courage and perseverance in your daily, difficult work, which is extremely important and necessary.

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### **Films on DVD „Psychodrama on the educational stage”**



Workshop activities in Cyprus



Workshop activities in Poland



Workshop activities in Portugal



Workshop activities in Romania

## ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT

The Bielskie Artistic Association Grodzki Theatre, Bielsko-Biała, Poland

Project author and coordinator. Responsible for the creation and publication of both book and film materials as well as the organisation of "Bridging Psychodrama and Adult Education", a Grundtvig seminar held in June, 2010 (Cracow, Poland)

**[www.teatrgrodzki.pl](http://www.teatrgrodzki.pl)**



The association has been running since 1999, and is a registered charity with a wide support programme for the assistance and motivation of the disabled and disadvantaged, based on creative and artistic approaches. Grodzki Theatre has produced a number of books, films, and multimedia materials of an instructional nature, it also organises training, conferences and seminars related to the arts, education and social economics, runs the work therapy programme "You're needed!", as well as two sheltered workshops.

The J.L. Moreno Psychodrama Society, Cluj-Napoca, Romania  
Responsible for development of methodology for applied psychodrama in adult education.

**[www.psihodrama.ro](http://www.psihodrama.ro)**



The society has been running since 1994, and is a non-profit NGO which runs training in the fields of psychodrama in many cities around Romania (in Romanian and Hungarian languages). It also organises many psychodrama seminars and international conferences. The society is a member of The Federation of European Psychodrama Training Organisations (FEPTO).

The Cyprus Adult Education Association, Nikosia, Cyprus  
Responsible for coordination of the pilot workshop program in all partner countries.

**[www.cyaea.org.cy](http://www.cyaea.org.cy)**

The association has been running since 1982 and is a well – recognizable European organisation working in the field of adult education. The association's mission is the promotion of lifelong learning in Cyprus and the development of international cooperation in that area. CAEA is a member of The International Council for Adult Education as well as the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA).



Portuguese Innovation Society, Porto, Portugal  
Responsible for the creation and implementation of the exploitation campaign.

**[www.spi.pt](http://www.spi.pt)**

The organisation has been in operation since 1997, developing activity in three sectors: Training, counselling and research and development (R&D). It concentrates on the promotion of innovative thought and the benefits of international cooperation. SPI is active in Europe, North America and Asia.



EST Lifelong Learning Centre, Wadowice, Poland  
Responsible for the evaluation of all project's activities and the promotional campaign.

**[www.est.iq.pl](http://www.est.iq.pl)**

EST has been running since 1994, providing languages courses, computer courses, training in interpersonal and intercultural communication, research and development projects, and evaluation of educational programs. EST actively works in partnership with many European organisations in the field of lifelong learning.



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[www.potens.com.pl](http://www.potens.com.pl)

