

To Get Going with the Psychodrama

STRATEGY AND TACTICS for growth through psychodrama. education and therapy generally

INTRODUCING MAIN ACTORS: When in doubt, ask P. "Is this person important for your story?" You hardly ever get this far for it to be a problem. Cardboard characters are roles.

Suppose P isn't well known to group. "A very good way to get to know someone is to explore the relationships." This takes the pressure off P, for he doesn't really believe these are transparent. "F Move into this chair. When you are in this chair you are not yourself but someone else who knows you **CHOOSE SOMEONE HERE TO GET READY TO PLAY THE ROLE.** This is your auxiliary. [Don't bring A onto the stage yet] I'll interview you as if you were him/her. What is your name? Describe yourself so that we can see you. [Be physical, not psychological]. "Do you know P? Tell me about P." What's mentioned may have scene potential. and can be used now.

Otherwise P-as-A stands aside while A takes the chair. "P, is there anything you'd like to say to A? Almost always one alludes to a past situation which can be staged in the here and now.

SET UP A CONTRACT WITH P: "P, Here you have a unique opportunity. For some it occurs only once if then in a lifetime. Let's make the best of it. To do that you may need to work harder than ever, but if you put more into it, you'll get more out of it."

What do you want to get done in the short hour available to us? [NB: Does she allude to a symptom or a disease? Something which will get P past the present crisis, with no change in P, or something more ambitious, requiring a fundamental change in P? The first focuses on the interpersonal level, and calls for more skill. The problem is in the other guy. How may I get around him? VS the problem is in me. I can't expect him to change to suit me, but if I were another kind of person, perhaps he'd be only too willing to accommodate me.

The first has to do with choices among alternate options (which the P is aware of) for handling the situation. This involves audience participation and is easily accomplished within time limits.

The second explores "Has this always been a problem for you? Give us an example of when you first noticed it. (This time the P merely tells, unless D recognizes it would make a good scene)

Bring in the self-observer. Have the double be P. SO, tell P what you see. RR and reply. Take this as far as you need it to go.

D: Changing yourself is a tall order. At the end of the session, how would you know whether you've made any progress? What would show that? This will be our goal. OK? Contract made. Shall we begin with the current situation? Or a soliloquy, or tell (someone in) this group what you want, what gets in the way of what you want, or what would be practice toward meeting the challenge.

CHOOSING DOUBLES: We give P first choice for someone to be just like P when P is on stage. But you retain veto power, though you don't say so. "Not everyone tunes into you in the same way." [selects an alternate double. Or an audience member offers. D may refer this back to P. BUT HARDLY EVER MORE THAN ONE AT THE SAME TIME---unless P shows dividedness. The original double becomes one pole and P shows us the other. Select the 2nd double if needed.

ROLE REVERSAL: Create dialog with P's choice of A. When someone gets it wrong, we do a RR to correct it. P does the correcting when in the RR position. A typical situation is the SO becomes the critic who likely echoes a parent, teacher or clergy. Identify who and go to a reality scene.

YOU ARE ENACTING, OR RE-ENACTING A STORY. This is how we move forward. The P's view is all we need to come to a better alternative, often done as a future projection.

If you can accept P's current version, he doesn't have to defend it, and then he is able to criticize it himself and seek an alternative. Don't act as if this is the right answer. Let P evaluate it in action. You are restoring P's agency, no longer a victim, but an adventurer. **Don Miller.**