

The moment one moves beyond the beginning level of directing it becomes necessary to set forth some guiding principles and the reasons behind them.

1) Economy in the use of intrapsychic scenes: A scene in which the protagonist confronts the double has much to commend it, but the director must beware of getting into it prematurely. Usually we do not know enough to make the best use of this approach early in the session. The director should avoid intrapsychic scenes when he doesn't know what else to do. A soliloquy or a reverse role interview may provide a clue just as easily without using up an approach which could prove of inestimable value later. If the protagonist shies away from interpersonal scenes, we may be able to get a good starting point from investigating the relationship with objects or animals. What places have been important? Let's see that place. As you stand here looking in, what do you see that has special significance for you? When working with adolescents I frequently have them 'show me your room,' and I always ask to see the posters on the wall. "Who decorated your room? Who can come into your room without knocking? Do you resent that? Is your door always open or always closed?" If you go through a whole house, discover where things happen.

2) Don't be in a hurry to use your clue the moment you find it. Be on the lookout for further indications of its importance as you move along through the psychodrama. You may stumble upon a metaphor which may be concretized late in the psychodrama to good advantage as a transition to applications in the real world beyond the psychodrama.

3) The main indication for an intrapsychic scene is a clear and strong polarization. "What advice do you give yourself again and again?" "Reverse roles" (with the double who is facing the protagonist directly, not alongside). "How do you feel about that good advice? Have you followed it? How come?" One typical polarity is between rationality or idealism on the one side and feelings and low self-esteem on the other. When the protagonist shows signs of really getting into the latter part, suddenly ask, "How old are you?" If the protagonist gives a younger age than you know him to be, you've struck gold. If he gives you his present age, you may help to this extent: "No," (as you point to the double playing the other part), "that's how old he/she is. Now how old are you over here?" If the protagonist gets the point and selects the younger age, ask, for example "What was going on in your life when you were ten years old?" When the director is familiar with development through the life span, questions come easily and the ability to evaluate the situation increases. Most therapists are biased in favor of individuation, but psychodramatists (and family therapists) are even more inclined to take a look at the family life cycle for hypotheses.

4) Of course one does not dig for early experience when the



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intrapsychic scene is bringing the psychodrama to a climax. It is better to concretize some symbol which will translate into action fitted for the protagonist's daily life beyond the psychodrama.

5) When the polarity which exists in the protagonist's mind is good vs bad, and the protagonist's agenda is to get rid of the bad part of self, the director must be very careful not to buy into that kind of a structure. Beware of metaphors which foster and perpetuate that kind of thinking. The most extreme example would be demon possession. In that special case, your task is to get the protagonist to OWN, not DISOWN the responsibility. If one disowns, this accentuates one's powerlessness; whereas if one owns, one retains at least a modicum of power over the situation. Persons from Western religious traditions may be reminded of the Genesis story in which God confronted Adam and Eve with their sin, and Adam said "The woman THOU gavest to be with me bid me and I ate" and Eve said "The serpent bit me and I ate." Adam would make God and the woman responsible and Eve would make the serpent responsible. Thus Adam and Eve present themselves as helpless victims rather than acknowledging that regardless of what may have influenced them they made their decision and now must face the consequences for them and for others who follow after them. In short, beware of metaphors which let the protagonist off the hook. Those same metaphors strip him of his power. And besides, life is not like that!

6) The immature, however, favor just the kind of metaphor which allows them to remain children. Thus anger is conceived of as a kind of excrement, which is to be gotten rid of -- and the same with tears, which conceptualization does enormous violence to the message one's body is presenting to the protagonist.

7) There are two ways to avoid this pitfall: i) Refuse the structuring into part-selves (which in its extreme becomes multiple personalities) on the ground that every part-self presupposes something beyond itself (which happens to be the opposing part self) and therefore neither could exist without the other. Offer as an alternative an analysis into ROLES. The beauty of the role is that no one ever supposes that a single role is ever all of one. Moreover, most people believe their roles have been learned, and if learned they are by definition subject to modification. The director could easily move into a role training format (if all else fails -- which would hardly ever happen) to resolve the impass. ii) When the identity of the opposites is so clearly established one may have auxiliaries play them while the protagonist looks on, we have a mirror situation. Without the pressure of the protagonist's having to come up with the next lines, this may free his spontaneity to the extent of being ready to take one of the roles again and see it through to resolution. The director may need to remind the protagonist that he will have to negotiate to get results, that there has to be give and take on both sides. If the protagonist shows no inclination to get back into the fray, the director has another ploy: send the protagonist back to the stage as the arbitrator of the opponents. This may involve some reversals between the negotiator and the auxiliaries as the



acceptability of the arbitrator's suggestions are tested out. The scene, under ideal circumstances, comes to a close with the former arbitrator at one of the polarities offering a handshake or a hug to the other polarities. Upon the offer, the director immediately reverses the protagonist into the opposite role to verify that the 'olive branch' has found a welcome, and then follows through with the welcome of the handshake or hug. The director has dismissed the auxiliary who was left in the role of the arbitrator, for his job is done.

8) If the director finds the psychodrama remaining on the surface of the present situation and wants to give the session some depth, he may call for the protagonist's earliest memory -- acted out. Nearly everyone insists that the memory is so fragmentary it either would make no scene or contain such inaccuracies as to render it valueless. I tell the protagonist that we are not writing, but rewriting history, that the difference between what actually happened and what the protagonist may invent at the moment does not matter to this exercise, inasmuch as both parts come from him. At times I am a little more directive, saying, "What is your earliest memory of your mother? or father?" or wherever the interest lies. If the earliest memory in action has been successful the director may choose to move forward chronologically all the way to the present. If so, hit only the high point or points. Moving in the direction of a forward time line appeals to the narrator in us all, but the more usual reverse chronological order has proven itself to be more productive in the therapeutic situation, providing more associative links with which to make appropriate connections.

9) And what of the situation where the director finds himself out of time and the psychodrama has gone nowhere? To begin with the director needs to reframe the situation in his own mind, for it is not possible for the psychodrama to go nowhere, just as a person cannot not-communicate. Without knowing any of the particulars of a given session, I would suspect that the protagonist has an investment in keeping the psychodrama on the surface and/or not resolving the dilemma presented. Indeed, even its standing as a dilemma may be problematic, for the implication may be the the protagonist is a helpless victim of this or that, which only you, the director can rescue him from -- or worse, which not even you the director can handle. You will fail, like all the others! And the helpless protagonist will have defeated you, too. This touches on the issue of whose problem is before us. It is not the director's problem, nor the group's problem, nor the problem of the significant persons' in the protagonist's life (flakey or perverse though they may be), but first, last and always the protagonist's problem.

10) One more possibility: to construe the matter as a problem implies there is a solution, a correct one to be discovered by someone clever enough. What if there is no solution, at least not in the sense that the protagonist seeks it! Existential situations do not readily lend themselves to solutions. There are limits in human existence. If we are confronted with one of these, then what

remains? i) I, the protagonist, have presented my confusion and pain to the group, that has become less confused and less painful in the process of my presentation, because ii) the director and the group have given my situation their careful and empathetic attention, and have not hastened to judge me. There has been no perceptible change in their attitude toward me -- in contrast to those (usually significant others) who push the panic button, were I to actually set these matters before them. The contrast between the audience here in person and the absentee audience in the protagonist's head cannot fail to impress the protagonist. iii) the director announces to the group that the protagonist is still working on the matter we've seen today, has not prematurely jumped to a conclusion but is giving the situation all the careful attention it requires. Next time the protagonist may want to include this or that. iv) finally the director thanks the protagonist for being open with us with his pain, and the group for hanging in their with him, lending him their support. Not only that, I'm sure there are some here ready to tell the protagonist where their own experience makes contact with his. Now in the instance where the group members are not quite so familiar with psychodrama and cannot easily come up with sharing, the director may create the points of contact by mounting the ladder of abstraction, as for example: "How many here have suffered from demanding parents? or How many have lost someone or something very important to them? or How many have found themselves in situations where there seemed to be no way out? or How many have concluded that you were different from everyone else in some major respect? ...etc.