

### **Symbolic realization technique**

Enactment of symbolic process by the protagonist using soliloquy, double, reversal or mirror for their clarification.

### **Analytic psychodrama**

An analytic hypothesis, for instance, that of the Oedipus complex, is tested out on the stage in order to verify its validity. The patient takes the role of his mother in a situation with his father (coming home, fired from his job because of a heart ailment). The analyst sits in the audience and watches. Analysis of the material is made immediately after the scene.

### **Auxiliary world technique**

The entire world of the patient is restructured around him "*in situ*" by the aid of auxiliary egos. William has been classified as a dementia praecox. He calls himself Christ and has written a proclamation to the world that he wants to save it. The auxiliary egos around him live in his world and are completely guided by his needs. One auxiliary ego becomes the apostle John. Christ asks him to kneel in a corner of the room with his head bowed. He does not want him to kneel in any other room or in any other corner. Another auxiliary ego becomes the apostle Paul with whom he prays. A third is the apostle Peter who is the only one he permits to bathe him once a month. He does not permit members of his family to come to visit him. The only persons he accepts are those who people the world of his psychosis, according to his instructions.

### **Treatment at a distance**

The patient is treated *in absentia*, usually without his knowledge. He is replaced by an auxiliary ego who is in daily contact with him and is the go-between between patient and therapist. He acts out in the clinic all crucial episodes in which the patient is involved. Other members of the immediate environment are drawn into the action, for instance the parents of the patient.

### **Warming up techniques**

Used to induce spontaneous states.

### **Techniques of spontaneous improvisation**

The protagonist acts out fictitious roles and tries to keep his personal character uninvolved from his fictitious characters.

### **Therapeutic community**

A community in which the disputes between individuals and groups are settled under the rule of therapy instead of the rule of law.

### **Mirror techniques – behind your back**

Many mirror techniques are so constructed that the individual can "see" and "hear" himself through other people's perceptions of him.

In the classic mirror technique as described above, the protagonist is physically present, but psychologically absent. The auxiliary ego "acts as if" the patient were not present, so as to challenge the patient when he realizes that the person portrayed on the stage is a radically truthful expression of himself.

There are other mirror technique forms that are used by Moreno and his associates at the New York Institute, as follows.

#### **(a) The behind your back audience technique**

The entire audience is instructed to leave the theatre but actually they are permitted to remain seated, pretending that they are not present, so as to give the protagonist full freedom of expression. The patient tells each member of the group how he feels towards them. The audience members are not permitted to respond, no matter how much he provokes them. The members of the group are now put on the spot; they see themselves in the mirror of the protagonist's world. This is frequently the starting point, the warming up period preceding a psychodrama. It is often effective if the members of the group *actually* turn their backs.

#### **(b) The turn your back technique**

Protagonists are frequently embarrassed to present a particular episode face to face before the group. They are then permitted, if unavoidable for the warm up, to turn their back to the group and to act as if they would be alone, in their own home, or wherever the episode takes place. The director, too, may turn his back to the audience so as to observe the protagonist or protagonists. Once the protagonists, for instance in the case of a matrimonial couple, have reached a high degree of involvement, they become ready to face the audience.

**(c) The black-out technique**

The entire theatre is blacked out although all actions continue as if there would be full daylight. This is done so that the protagonist may go through a painful experience unobserved, to retain for the protagonist the experience of solitude.

**Improvisation of fantasy**

Since the early days of psychodrama, improvisation of fantasies has been usefully applied in order to attain therapeutic aims (see "Bulletin of Psychodrama and Group Psychotherapy," *Sociometry, A Journal of Inter-Personal Relations*, Vol. VI, 1943, p. 349).

A popular technique was and still is the *Magic Shop technique*. The director sets up on the stage a "Dream or Magic Shop." Either he himself, or a member of the group selected by him, takes the part of the shopkeeper. The shop is filled with imaginary items, values of a non-physical nature. These are not for sale, but they can be obtained in barter, in exchange for other values to be surrendered by the members of the group, either individually or as a group. One after another, the members of the group volunteer to come upon the stage, entering the shop in quest of an idea, a dream, a hope, an ambition. They are expected to come only if they feel a strong desire to obtain a value which they cherish highly or without which their life seems worthless.

An illustration follows: A depressive patient, who was admitted after a suicidal attempt, came to the Magic Shop requesting "Peace of Mind." The shopkeeper, a sensitive young therapist, asked her, "What do you want to give in return? You know we cannot give you anything without your willingness to sacrifice something else." "What do you want?" the patient asked. "There is something for which many people who come to this shop long," he replied. "Fertility, the ability and willingness to bear children. Do you want to give this up?" "No, this is too high a price to pay. Then I do not want peace of mind." With this she walked off the stage and returned to her seat. The shopkeeper had hit on a sensitive spot. Maria, the protagonist, was engaged but she refused to get married because of deep-seated fear of sex and childbirth. Her fantasy preoccupations involved images of violent suffering, torture, death, etc. in the act of childbirth.

This illustration indicates the diagnostic value of the Dream Shop technique. The crux of the technique is for the shopkeeper to demand of the client what he wants to give in return; what price he is willing to pay.

Another fantasy technique is the dramatization of fairy tales as described in Moreno's *Das Stegreiftheater* (Moreno, J.L. 1924: 35-37; Moreno, J.L. 1947). The tale remains entirely unstructured so that the protagonists are required to fill in with their own fantasies around the theme.

Still another fantasy technique is improvisation of early childhood experiences. In the process of acting them out the protagonists go far beyond that which they actually remember.

Many psychodramatic techniques, however odd and fantastic they seem, can be traced back to the rituals and customs of ancient cultures and are found in the classic writings of world literature. Moreno has merely rediscovered and adapted them to psychotherapeutic objectives. *Their real inventors are the mental patients of all times.* The number of applications of the psychodrama method is practically unlimited, although the core of the method remains unchanged.