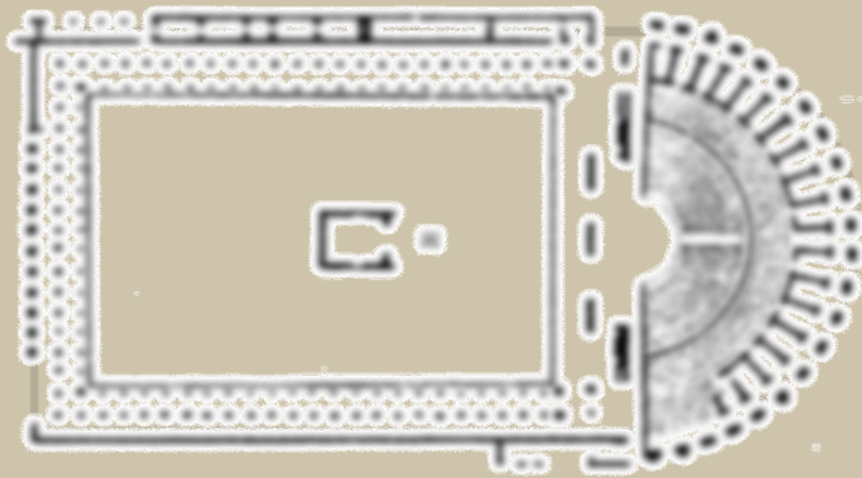




n7 march 2018

forum

Journal of the International Association for Group Psychotherapy
and Group Processes



IAGP
International Association
for Group Psychotherapy
and Group Processes

CONTENTS

President's Introduction Kate Bradshaw Tavon (Sweden)	5
Introducción del Presidente Kate Bradshaw Tavon (Sweden)	6
Editorial Lars Tavon (Sweden), Ray Haddock (UK) and Teresa von Sommaruga Howard (UK)	7
Editorial Introducción Lars Tavon (Sweden), Ray Haddock (UK) and Teresa von Sommaruga Howard (UK)	10
ARTICLES	
<i>Conducting Support Groups for Bereaved People after Disaster</i> <i>Realización de grupos de apoyo para personas en duelo después de un De-</i> <i>sastre</i> Rob Gordon, Sharon des Landes and Salli Trathen, (Australia)	13
<i>Liminal Space and Transformative Change in Group Training in Guatemala:</i> <i>A Group Analytic Perspective</i> <i>Espacio fronterizo y Cambio Transformativo en el Entrenamiento de Grupo</i> <i>en Guatemala: una Perspectiva Grupo Analítica</i> Elisabeth Rohr (Germany)	27
<i>Under-age Migrants in Temporary Absence of Supportive Adults</i> <i>Los Menores Migrantes en Ausencia Temporal de Referentes Adultos</i> Amina Bargach (Morocco and Spain)	39
<i>Psychotherapy for Women avoiding Intercourse in a Traditional Culture</i> <i>Terapia para Mujeres que evitan las Relaciones Sexuales en una Cultura</i> <i>Tradicional</i> Arşalays Kayir, Sevda P. Bikmaz, Banu Aslantaş Ertekin (Turkey)	51
<i>Del diván y del escenario a la pantalla</i> <i>From the Therapist's Couch and from the Stage to the Screen</i> Raúl Vaimberg (Mexico)	65

4 Contents

<i>'Christmas Cleaning': Are we able to heal the Culture?</i> <i>Limpieza de Navidad: Somos capaces de curar la Cultura?</i> Ekaterina Mikhailova (Russia)	79
<i>Figure and Ground in Group Analytic Theory and Training</i> <i>Figura y fondo en la Teoría y Entrenamiento Grupo Analítica</i> Malcolm Pines (UK)	93
<i>Porque Psicodrama?/Why Psychodrama?</i> Dalmiro Bustos (Argentina)	105
<i>Máscaras, cuerpo, y escena en un grupo</i> Mario J. Buchbinder (Argentina)	111
<i>Group Work with Masks, the Body and Scenes</i> Mario J. Buchbinder (Argentina)	123
<i>The Concept of Sociatry Beyond Moreno - Designing and Crafting Societies that Value the Collective Good: What IAGP and EAGT Might Bring to the World!</i> Kate Bradshaw Tauvon (Sweden)	135
<i>El concepto de sociedad más allá de Moreno. Diseñando y creando sociedades que valoren el bien colectivo: lo que la IAGP y la EAGT pueden traer al mundo</i> Kate Bradshaw Tauvon (Suecia)	149

President's Introduction

As for many of you meeting IAGP was for me life changing! IAGP has been and is a university of life! Moreno and Foulkes together with other pioneers created a space for us to meet friends and colleagues from all over the world, to reflect and act together to forge methods of group psychotherapy and group processing globally. We do similar things but differently and being challenged on our theories and methods causes us to refine them. We are there to support and encounter each other - to walk the walk together when local circumstances are grim and celebrate each other when we achieve the well-nigh impossible!

As a psychodramatist and group analyst it has been and is tremendous not only to meet the authors of inspiring literature and outstanding practitioners but also to participate in their uplifting presentations at conferences and the triennial IAGP Congresses. Meeting younger pathfinders has thrown new light on old ideas and experiences. At times seeing the cracks in the professional veneer of others has been part of my learning curve, shown me my own capacity and empowered me to cope with our human frailty in facing the fundamental questions for humanity.

Leading scientist and pioneer in research on social-ecological systems, resilience thinking and sustainability science, Carl Folke, has pointed these up as: poverty, security, democracy, power, health, human rights, equality, peace, resting on the life-maintaining power and resilience of the biosphere. The biosphere provides the basic conditions for maintaining the dignity of human relationships. Resilience—the capacity to live, persist and develop with changing conditions in a globally intertwined world of humans, societies and nature is also central to our work. Together we can and do make a significant impact globally.

Welcome to XXth International Congress of Group Psychotherapy and Group Processes of IAGP in Malmö Sweden. Precongress 31 July 2018 - Congress 1-4 August 2018 with the title:

Rising Tides of Challenge and Hope: healing identity, in society, groups and individuals.

Kate Bradshaw Tavon

Introducción del Presidente

Al igual que a muchos de vosotros unirme a la IAGP cambió mi vida. La IAGP ha sido y es una universidad de la vida. Moreno y Foulkes, junto con otros pioneros crearon un espacio para reunirnos con amigos y colegas de todo el mundo, para reflexionar y actuar juntos, para forjar métodos de psicoterapia de grupo y procesamiento de grupo a nivel mundial. Hacemos cosas similares pero de manera diferente y ser desafiados en nuestras teorías y métodos nos lleva a perfeccionarlos. Estamos ahí para apoyarnos y encontrarnos – para recorrer juntos el camino cuando las circunstancias locales son desalentadoras y celebrarlo cuando logramos poco menos que lo imposible

Como psicodramatista y grupoanalista ha sido magnífico no sólo conocer a autores muy significativos y profesionales sobresalientes, sino también participar en sus edificantes presentaciones en los congresos trienales de la IAGP. Conocer profesionales más jóvenes ha arrojado nueva luz sobre viejas ideas y experiencias. En ocasiones ver las grietas en la chapa profesional de otros ha sido parte de mi curva de aprendizaje, mostrándome mi propia capacidad y facultándome para manejar la fragilidad humana al enfrentar las cuestiones fundamentales para la humanidad.

Científico líder y pionero en la investigación sobre los sistemas socio-ecológicos, pensamiento resiliente y ciencia de la sostenibilidad, Carl Folke, ha categorizado dichas cuestiones: la pobreza, la seguridad, la democracia, la energía, la salud, los derechos humanos, la igualdad, la paz, el descanso en la energía que mantiene la vida y la capacidad de recuperación de la biosfera. La biosfera provee la condición básica para el mantenimiento de la dignidad de las relaciones humanas. La resiliencia -la capacidad de vivir, persistir y desarrollarse en las condiciones cambiantes de un mundo globalmente entrelazado de seres humanos, sociedades y naturaleza también es fundamental para nuestro trabajo. Juntos podemos y hacemos un impacto importante a nivel mundial.

Bienvenidos al XX Congreso Internacional de Psicoterapia de Grupo y Procesos Grupales de la IAGP en Malmö, Suecia. Precongreso 31 de julio de 2018 - Congreso 1 - 4 agosto, 2018 con el título:

Mareas Crecientes de desafíos y esperanza: Sanar la identidad en la sociedad, grupos e individuos.

Kate Bradshaw Tauvon

Editorial Introduction

This edition takes a small step in fulfilling our initial vision of making Forum a bilingual journal. It includes two contributions in Spanish and one in both languages. Most articles describe experiences from areas of the world that are less familiar to those of us who live in the Western Europe and North America: Turkey, Australia, Morocco, Guatemala and Russia. Many of the articles describe work in situations not in the traditional clinical setting and demonstrate how applying this knowledge can be extremely therapeutic.

Rob Gordon, Sharon des Landes and Salli Trathen live in the State of Victoria, Australia. It is an area that frequently suffers from raging bushfires that destroy acres of land and whole communities. In February 2009, on what is called 'Black Saturday' the fires created incredible damage to 25 towns, killed 173 people and destroyed over 2000 homes. In their article, 'Conducting Support Groups for Bereaved after Disaster', they describe the emotional effect of this destruction and how the authors set up and organised support groups for the bereaved survivors over a period of five years. As they point out, "Disasters are group events, impacting upon communities. The threat and disruption associated with loss of family, friends, neighbours, home, property, environment and community as it was are life-changing experiences. A new life must be rebuilt in a changed world; recovery takes years, perhaps decades. There is no short cut, rebuilding new routines and assumptions requires repeated experiences of seasons without new tragedies to provide a context for the disaster".

Elisabeth Rohr describes the potential of group analysis as a powerful tool of transformation for individuals as well as for groups, for organizations and for societies as well. She describes her experiences, of introducing group analytic supervision for professionals in Guatemala, a country still suffering from the consequences of a cruel civil war that officially ended 1996. The challenge of creating a working climate in a group for educational purposes where the members are traumatized by socio-political events become clear. She ends her paper with an illustration of how supervision can be used in a non-clinical setting, in this case a large group of young people working in the State Archive. It had been discovered by chance 8 years previously and contained millions of secret documents, which needed documenting and cleaning.

Armina Bagach's article appeared in Spanish in the last issue of Forum. She is a child psychiatrist and family therapist from Morocco. In her article, 'Under-age Migrants in Temporary Absence of Supportive Adults' sets out the social context of Morocco and its background with unhealed wounds from the colonial era that gives rise to the present situation of widespread economic difficulties. Her main focus is on why many young people feel compelled to immigrate to Spain and how the vulnerable they are when they find

themselves without adequate and continued adult support, facing racism and extreme loneliness. She suggests that current ‘helpful’ interventions from Europe inevitably camouflage prejudice and do little to transform the situation.

Arşluy Kayir is a pioneer in acknowledging and treating sexual problems among Turkish women. In her article with her fellow psychiatrists Sevda Bikmaz and Banu Aslantas, ‘Psychotherapy for Women avoiding Intercourse in a Traditional Culture’ she describes their work. In particular their paper focuses on very eclectic ways of treating vaginismus, a common problem among Turkish women and shows how it is related to traditional family attitudes towards female sexuality and in particular the importance of virginity at marriage. It is a pleasure to read how the women respond by being given a place to talk to each other in a group setting.

Ekaterina Mikhailova writes about how she and her colleagues at her Institute in Moscow, used the very special ongoing New Year tradition, ‘Christmas Cleaning’, as a metaphor for supporting people facing the psychological challenges of late December during a severe national financial crisis 16 years ago. It turns out to be a creative sociodramatic method that can help people who are not seeking therapy but with the possibility of healing past traumas in the everyday. She poses an important question, can this kind of work heal the trauma of a whole culture?

Malcolm Pines in ‘Figure and Ground in Group Analytic Theory and Training’ shares his knowledge gained through years of experience about the origins and development of group analysis. He takes a very broad historical and cultural perspective and along the way highlights the historic limits of Freud’s psychoanalysis, the emphasis on wholeness, the importance of understanding rather than explaining in human sciences and the overwhelming impact of society on the single individual. He traces the people and ideas that influenced Foulkes’ thinking.

Mario Buchbinder is an Argentinian psychotherapist, founding director of ‘Institute of the Mask’ who for many years has practised psychoanalytic psychotherapy and psychodrama using masks and different creative techniques. In his article he provides a group case study up to illustrate the original theoretical approach to his work. There are phenomena of identification and disidentification, structuring and destructuring, and some techniques in the group related to the presence of masks, body and scenes. The relation of the intimate with the public, the freedom of life in front of the *biopower* and the possibility of the scene outside the pressure of the society of the spectacle and the merchandise is reconsidered.

In the last article, our present president, Kate Bradshaw Tavon uses and updates JL Moreno’s concept Sociatry and connects his views with present

existential challenges for human survival.

She takes inspiration from poets like the Swedish Nobel Prize receiver Tomas Tranströmer and W. E. Henles famous poem *Invictus*. She describes the sociometric procedure and refers to Moreno who coined the concept ‘cosmic man’. It says we are responsible for our biosphere, for our whole world. Two-way empathy is what can keep groups and ultimately societies and the world together.

She expresses her belief that to promote social integration one must find a way to embrace the enemy and gives two examples, a touching encounter between British and Japanese veterans from the second world war and the attempts by courageous persons like Nelson Mandela and Albie Sachs to create an integrated society in the post-apartheid South Africa. She points at our responsibility for our ultimate ecosystem, “There is no business to be done on a dead planet”. Finally, IAGP was founded by SH Foulkes, JL Moreno together with others from a shared vision that development and practice of group methods can contribute to necessary changes in the world by meeting ‘the other’.

Lars Tauvon, Ray Haddock and Teresa von Sommaruga Howard

Editorial Introductorio

Esta edición avanza un pequeño paso en el cumplimiento de nuestra visión inicial de hacer una revista bilingüe. Incluye dos contribuciones en español y una en ambos idiomas. La mayoría de los artículos describen experiencias de áreas del mundo que son menos familiares para los que vivimos en Europa Occidental y América del Norte: Turquía, Australia, Marruecos, Guatemala y Rusia. Muchos de los artículos describen el trabajo en situaciones que no están en el entorno clínico tradicional y demuestran cómo la aplicación de este conocimiento puede ser extremadamente terapéutico.

Rob Gordon, Sharon des Landes y Salli Trathen viven en el estado de Victoria, Australia. Es un área que frecuentemente sufre de incendios forestales que destruyen acres de tierra y comunidades enteras. En febrero de 2009, en lo que se conoce como “Sábado Negro”, los incendios causaron daños increíbles a 25 ciudades, mataron a 173 personas y destruyeron más de 2000 hogares. En su artículo “Realización de Grupos de Apoyo para Desamparados después del Desastre”, describen el efecto emocional de esta destrucción y cómo los autores establecieron y organizaron grupos de apoyo para los supervivientes en duelo durante un período de cinco años. Como señalan, “los desastres son eventos grupales, que afectan a las comunidades. La amenaza y la interrupción asociada con la pérdida de la familia, los amigos, los vecinos, el hogar, la propiedad, el medio ambiente y la comunidad son experiencias que cambian la

vida. Una nueva vida debe reconstruirse en un mundo modificado para siempre. La recuperación lleva años, quizás décadas. No hay atajo, la reconstrucción de nuevas rutinas y supuestos requiere de experiencias continuadas sin nuevas tragedias para poder proporcionar un nuevo contexto ante el desastre.

Elisabeth Rohr describe el potencial del análisis grupal como una poderosa herramienta de transformación tanto para los individuos como para los grupos, para las organizaciones y para las sociedades. Describe su experiencia en la introducción de la supervisión analítica grupal para profesionales en Guatemala, un país que aún sufre las consecuencias de una cruel guerra civil que terminó oficialmente en 1996. Describe el desafío de crear un clima de trabajo en un grupo con fines educativos donde los miembros están traumatizados por eventos sociopolíticos. Ella termina su trabajo con una ilustración de cómo la supervisión se puede utilizar en un entorno no clínico. En este caso, un gran grupo de jóvenes que trabajaban en el Archivo Estatal habían descubierto por casualidad 8 años antes millones de documentos secretos, que necesitaban documentación y limpieza.

El artículo de Armina Bagach apareció en español en la última edición de Forum. Es psiquiatra infantil y terapeuta familiar de Marruecos. En su artículo, “Migrantes menores de edad en ausencia temporal de adultos de apoyo”, se expone el contexto social de Marruecos y sus antecedentes con heridas no curadas de la época colonial que dan lugar a la situación actual de dificultades económicas generalizadas. Su enfoque principal es por qué muchos jóvenes se sienten obligados a inmigrar a España y lo vulnerables que son cuando se encuentran sin apoyo adecuado y continuo de adultos, enfrentando el racismo y la soledad extrema. Ella sugiere que las intervenciones actuales ‘útiles’ de Europa camuflan inevitablemente los prejuicios y hacen poco para transformar la situación.

Arşluys Kayir es un pionero en reconocer y tratar problemas sexuales entre mujeres turcas. En su artículo con sus colegas psiquiatras Sevda Bikmaz y Banu Aslantas, “Psicoterapia para las mujeres que evitan las relaciones sexuales en una cultura tradicional”, describen su trabajo. En particular, su artículo se centra en formas muy diferentes de tratar el vaginismo, el problema común entre las mujeres turcas y muestra cómo se relaciona con las actitudes tradicionales de la familia hacia la sexualidad femenina y en particular la importancia de la virginidad en el matrimonio. Es una delicia leer cómo las mujeres responden al darles un espacio para hablar entre sí en un entorno grupal.

Ekaterina Mikhailova escribe sobre cómo ella y sus colegas del Instituto en Moscú utilizaron la muy especial tradición del Año Nuevo, ‘Christmas Cleaning’, como metáfora para apoyar a las personas que se enfrentan a los retos psicológicos de finales de diciembre durante una grave crisis financiera nacio-

nal hace 16 años. Resulta ser un método sociodramático creativo que puede ayudar a las personas que no buscan terapia, pero que conlleva la posibilidad de sanar traumas pasados en la vida cotidiana. Esto sostiene una pregunta importante, ¿puede este tipo de trabajo sanar el trauma de toda una cultura?

Malcolm Pines en ‘La figura y el fondo en la teoría analítica de grupo y formación’ comparte sus conocimientos adquiridos a través de años de experiencia sobre los orígenes y el desarrollo del análisis de grupo. Él toma una perspectiva histórica y cultural muy amplia y pone de relieve los límites históricos del psicoanálisis de Freud, el énfasis en la integridad, la importancia de entender en lugar de explicar las ciencias humanas y el impacto abrumador de la sociedad sobre el individuo individual. Indicios de las personas y las ideas que influyeron en el pensamiento de Foulkes.

Mario Buchbinder es psicoterapeuta argentino, director fundador del ‘Instituto de la Máscara’ que durante muchos años ha practicado la psicoterapia psicoanalítica y el psicodrama usando máscaras y diferentes técnicas creativas. En su artículo proporciona un estudio de caso de grupo para ilustrar el enfoque teórico original de su trabajo. Hay fenómenos de identificación y desidentificación, estructuración y desestructuración, y algunas técnicas en el grupo relacionadas con la presencia de máscaras, cuerpo y escenas. Se reconsidera la relación de lo íntimo con el público, la libertad de vida frente al biopoder y la posibilidad de la escena fuera de la presión de la sociedad del espectáculo y de la mercancía.

En el último artículo, nuestra actual presidenta, Kate Bradshaw Tavon, utiliza y actualiza el concepto de sociología de JL Moreno y conecta sus puntos de vista con los actuales desafíos existenciales para la supervivencia humana. Ella se inspira en poetas como el ganador del Premio Nobel Sueco Tomas Tranströmer y el poema famoso de W. E. Henles, *Invictus*. Ella describe el procedimiento sociométrico y se refiere a Moreno que acuñó el concepto de ‘hombre cósmico’. Dice que somos responsables de nuestra biosfera, para el mundo entero. La empatía bidireccional es lo que puede mantener a los grupos y, en última instancia, las sociedades y al mundo juntos.

Expresa su creencia de que para promover la integración social uno debe encontrar una manera de abrazar al enemigo y da dos ejemplos, un encuentro conmovedor entre los veteranos británicos y japoneses de la segunda guerra mundial y los intentos de personas valientes como Nelson Mandela y Albie Sachs para crear Una sociedad integrada en el Sudáfrica post-apartheid. Señala nuestra responsabilidad última para nuestro ecosistema, “no hay negocio que hacer en un planeta muerto”. Por último: IAGP fue fundada por SH Foulkes, JL Moreno junto con otros dan una visión compartida de que el desarrollo

y la práctica de los métodos grupales pueden contribuir a los cambios necesarios en el mundo al encontrarse con ‘el otro’.

Lars Tavon, Ray Haddock y Teresa von Sommaruga Howard

Agradecimientos

Después de muchos años convirtiendo nuestros textos en formato editorial, Patti Tihey nos va a dejar. Antes de que se vaya nos gustaría agradecer su trabajo incansable y su amable atención a los detalles. Conforme a su modo de proceder, Patti ha completado esta última edición como regalo de despedida para la IAGP. Gracias por todo, Patti. Ha sido un placer trabajar contigo.

También nos gustaría agradecer el trabajo del equipo de traductores, y el de Maite Pi y Cristina Martinez-Taboada Kutz por su receptivo trabajo, con frecuencia traduciendo los textos necesarios en cuestión de horas.

Lars Tavon, Ray Haddock y Teresa von Sommaruga Howard

Acknowledgments

After many years turning our texts into publishing format, Patti Tihey is leaving us. Before she goes we would like to acknowledge her tireless work, and gracious attention to detail. Typically, Patti has completed this last edition as a parting gift to IAGP. Thank you for everything Patti. It has been such a pleasure working with you.

We would also like to thank the team of translators, and that of Maite Pi and Cristina Martinez-Taboada Kutz for their receptive work, often translating the necessary texts in a matter of hours.

Lars Tavon, Ray Haddock and Teresa von Sommaruga Howard

Conducting Support Groups for Bereaved People after Disaster

Realización de grupos de apoyo para personas en duelo después de un Desastre

Rob Gordon, Sharon des Landes and Salli Trathen, (Australia)



Rob Gordon, PhD, has been consultant psychologist to the Victorian Emergency Recovery Plan for over 25 years and to Australian Red Cross Emergency Services. He has been involved in the recovery programs after 35 large and small natural and human caused disasters in Australia and New Zealand. He is a past president and current Director of Training for the Australian Association of Group Psychotherapists and conducts a private practice in psychoanalytic psychotherapy in Melbourne, Australia. Email: rob@robgordon.com.au.

Dr Sharon des Landes trained is a clinical psychologist, and has specialist interests in disaster recovery, trauma and parenting. She is presently the Victorian State Coordinator for Headspace School Support, a suicide postvention service. She has been involved with recovery processes after bushfire and floods in Victoria, Australia and the earthquakes in Christchurch, New Zealand. She has been awarded the Australian *National Emergency Medal* for her work after the 2009 Victorian bushfires and was part of a team awarded the *Greater Canterbury Social Sector Award 2011 for Collaboration Following the Earthquake*.



Salli Trathen is a psychologist, couple and family therapist in private practice in the Yarra Valley, Victoria. She is a member of the Australian Association of Family Therapists and the Australian Association of Relationship Counsellors. She has specialised in traumatic stress disorders in emergency services personnel and their families. She has conducted time-limited support groups in a variety of contexts and trauma-focussed and relationally focussed therapy with individuals, couples and families after the Black Saturday bushfires. She has edited: *Blood Ties: The stories of HIV positive women*.

Abstract

The social dimension of disasters is a strength and a liability. After bushfires destroyed 2,000 houses damaged 25 towns and killed 173 people in the state of Victoria, Australia on Black Saturday, 9 February 2009, community-based recovery programs were established for the thousands of people living in devastated communities. Among these were bereavement support groups to assist the grieving. They met monthly for 4 years. While therapeutic, they are not therapy groups yet require careful establishment and a technique to engage community members who would probably never have sought therapy. The technique is restrained, allows groups to find their way but to hold the purpose. The process showed a distinct rhythm with engagement through tears, humour and comradeship in adversity during the first year deepening to mutual support with recovery problems in the second year. Then in the third year, the safety of their common bonds allowed expression of the depth of anger, pain and grief. In the fourth year they were able to work on damaged identity, reflect on the lost pre-disaster life and look towards new life. The 'group in mind' formed gave confidence to cross the abyss created by disaster in the life continuum and begin a new future.

Resumen

La dimensión social de los desastres supone fuerza y responsabilidad. Después de que unos incendios forestales destruyeran 2000 casas, afectaran a 25 ciudades y mataran a 173 personas en el estado de Victoria, Australia, en un sábado negro el 9 de febrero de 2009, se establecieron programas de recuperación basados en la comunidad para miles de personas de las poblaciones devastadas. Entre ellos, grupos de apoyo al duelo con una frecuencia mensual durante 4 años. Aunque terapéuticos, no eran grupos de terapia que requirieran unas condiciones y una técnica rigurosas y permitieron la participación de miembros de la comunidad que nunca hubieran buscado terapia. La técnica es limitada, permite a los grupos encontrar su propio modo de hacer pero manteniendo el propósito. El proceso mostró un ritmo definido con compromiso a través de las lágrimas, el humor y la camaradería en la adversidad. Durante el primer año dependiendo del apoyo mutuo y resolviendo problemas en el segundo. En el tercer año la seguridad que proporcionaron los vínculos establecidos permitió la expresión de enfados, dolor y duelos profundos. En el cuarto año se pudo trabajar sobre las identidades dañadas, sobre la vida anterior al desastre ahora perdida y considerar la nueva vida. El 'grupo interno' aportó confianza para atravesar el abismo originado por el desastre en el continuo de la vida y crear un nuevo futuro.

Introduction

The authors live in communities affected by the Black Saturday Bushfires in the State of Victoria in Southeastern Australia and continue to observe the effects at first hand. On February 7, 2009, after years of drought and three days over 40°C the previous week, a hot gale was predicted with temperatures of 45°C. Fire authorities warned it was the worst fire risk day in Victoria's history. On that day, there were 316 fires throughout the state, the 15 most

severe burnt 430,000 hectares of land, destroyed over 2,000 homes, devastated or damaged 25 towns and communities, and killed 173 people including whole families sheltering in their houses (Teague, McLeod & Pascoe, 2010). The boundary between objective professional assistance and being part of the pain defines the difference between normal clinical practice and disaster recovery work.

Disasters are group events, impacting upon communities. The threat and disruption associated with loss of family, friends, neighbours, home, property, environment and community as it was are life-changing experiences. A new life must be rebuilt in a changed world; recovery takes years, perhaps decades. There is no short cut, rebuilding new routines and assumptions, requires repeated experiences of seasons without new tragedies to provide a context for the disaster.

The initial rush of sympathy and assistance impose additional disruption. Decisions are demanded when those affected need time to stop, take stock and connect with themselves. Supporters rapidly return to normal life, while it is impossible for those affected to return to theirs. Many of those people whom they expected would be there to help and understand them move on sooner than they can. In a surprisingly short time, supporters say, "You must be getting over it by now;" "Are you feeling better yet?" "If you put it behind you it would help;" "Stop dwelling on the past and look to the future."

The resulting sense of isolation and alienation makes recovery harder. Disasters violate deeply held beliefs and expectations about self, others, nature, the world and life itself. At a time of identity change, the affected feel misunderstood. Many people lack a language to communicate or understand their experience. Those suffering long-term posttraumatic injuries indicate isolation and loss of a communicational environment that is as damaging as the event itself. Social bonds between affected people and those outside the impact are often damaged, although it may take months or years to manifest.

The social impact of disaster and trauma begins with loss of the reflective network in which those affected can recognise their predicament and gain a sense of normality for their abnormal situation. The focus is on property, infrastructure and finance; but they are only important because they serve social needs. Eventual quality of life is the real measure of successful recovery. Social attachment to others who understand is the resource for integrating the experience. In a disrupted community, with competing demands and survival orientation, this requires a temporary, facilitating recovery community to be convened around those affected as the precondition for offering focussed mental health care. Without the community normalising, making sense of reactions and relating them to services, many cannot understand their need

until they acquire a recognisable mental health disorder at considerable cost to their lives.

For the bereaved, the problem is especially significant. They have lost loved ones, friends, neighbours perhaps in the context of threat to themselves, in the midst of others' losses associated with property loss and disruption. In natural disasters, bereavement of neighbours, friends and community members reveals the role they play in life. Many country people have more frequent, intimate contact with neighbours than with their extended families. They are forced to engage in complex, unfamiliar legal processes with coroners, local and state governments, insurance and building professionals. The need to grieve competes with survival demands for attention so grief is often put aside and congeals later into depression. Traumatic features of the deaths compete with the loss and interfere with the grief trajectory. These deaths are not like other deaths they have had to come to terms with.

Mental health interventions do not provide all that is needed, especially when working out what is normal. Sharing the experience with others going through it helps form a new identity to include the tragedy as part of a new and different future. Most affected people would probably never have sought mental health treatment. The incidence of diagnosable mental health problems after natural disasters is between 10-25% (McFarlane, van Hoof and Goodhew, 2009), which means much of the suffering cannot be classified as mental illness and yet information and support are needed to avoid becoming unwell. The majority of people in need are unlikely to have previous experience of the role of mental health professionals so make no use of them until they become unwell. Social networks promoting a sense of support and normality among affected people create a communicational environment for reflection and integration of the experience and activate their resilience.

In Victoria, a decade's experience with recovery from emergencies has shown the value of facilitated support groups as part of a psychosocial recovery strategy for people bereaved following the Port Arthur Massacre in 1996, the Bali bombing in 2002 and the East Asian Tsunami in 2004. The value of facilitated community meetings has also been demonstrated in large and small natural disasters.

After Black Saturday, a specialist agency for grief education and counselling was funded to coordinate facilitated support groups in communities requesting them. Eight groups were established, each facilitated by a clinician from a local mental health agency and a specialist in trauma or grief. The facilitators were asked for a two-year commitment to conduct monthly meetings within the communities, usually at night, but they continued to the end of the fourth year. An initial orientation session ensured that facilitators approached

the task with common assumptions and goals; normal clinical approaches and methods were set aside for the unique needs of disaster-affected people. Experience from previous disasters demonstrated that if the approach is not sensitively adapted to the need for identity support but is directed towards clinical or therapeutic needs, disaster affected people are likely to disengage. They do not recognise themselves as needing therapy.

Since the groups would involve intense, sustained exposure to collective traumatic grief, quarterly reflective, supervision groups for the facilitators throughout the program were provided in the funding. These meetings enabled debriefing the emotional impact, discussing management of group situations, teaching about group process and sharing experience and expertise. Two of the groups offered in different contexts will be described.

Group 1: Cohesive Community Group

This community was devastated with much property loss and many deaths. Three women who moved away prior to the fires were committed to assisting their former neighbours and shared a community work background. They saw a need to encourage women to meet and share stories so they contacted the agency organising the groups, helped set up the first meeting and encouraged women to participate. They were crucial in establishing it but did not continue attending. The criterion for membership was having lived in the affected community prior to the fires.

The first meeting was held away from the community as no meeting places had survived. Twelve women came who lived in a totally changed locality. They knew each other through the school and local groups. Some lost family members, some lost homes, some lost animals and all lost neighbours. Some stayed and defended but lost their homes and had traumatic escapes. Others were away on the day but belonged to the community. A few who still lived in the area were affected by the black, devastated moonscape. All were deeply bereaved though not necessarily recognising it to start with.

The second meeting occurred back in the community in a temporary building and this continued for the four-year life of the group. Each monthly session was backgrounded by the gradual return of flora, fauna and infrastructure. Most of the group could not live back in the community to start with but travelled some distance each month to what had been their home. Some did not return to live but still identified with the area.

Outside the group, they attended local activities: choirs, committees, outings, meetings and events. The group became a place where they could share

in depth and connect with each other. They would check on each other if someone had not attended.

Initially, sessions were accompanied by laughter and joking, particularly when anything painful was touched on. With gentle encouragement over many sessions, this reduced and they talked at length of their stories, pain and sadness. They shared histories and losses, painful sights and insights. They joked and laughed throughout, sometimes we all had tears streaming down our faces. With time, the humour developed a sense of joining, experiencing and recognising pain, rather than avoiding it. Food was a regular part of each evening, which often lasted from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Finishing and getting out the door was often a challenge. The sense of belonging was very strong - we enjoyed being together.

We two women who facilitated these conversations had backgrounds as trauma therapists but what we were doing, while therapeutic, was not therapy. These were normal women living with an abnormal life experience. At the beginning, being together seemed the important theme. The significance of being together continued as conversations deepened and trust in each other increased and the sharing developed. Our witnessing and questioning from a curious standpoint helped. We ensured each member had a voice. We fostered caring, frank conversation that included everyone. We made hints and suggestions such as: 1) recovery often takes much longer than people expect, 2) it is worthwhile putting experiences into words, 3) it is important to stop and rest regularly, and 4) leisure and pleasure are valuable priorities in lives with so many demands. This simple information helped them understand themselves and foster their recovery.

The first months involved sharing about their lives, where they were living, what they were doing, what decisions they were making, what they were buying, and what they were getting help with. One woman described how she had used her losses as an opportunity to have better quality clothes than she had previously. After several months they began to discuss where they were on the day, the timing of events, who knew what about whom and where.

During the first two years there was a lot of comparing, people thinking they had no right to feel distressed, that the stories of others were worse. We encouraged them to value their own story. Gradually the tragedy of all their stories was revealed. They came to understand how much had been lost – relationships, possessions and lifestyles. Talking of their experiences of the day created understanding of the horror and grief they shared. Putting all this into words was painful but healing. People who had not really known each other before came to connect deeply.

After about two years, some new women started attending at the invitation of current members. They were enthusiastically welcomed. Group members had seen them struggling with the effect of the fires on their lives. When they joined, it was clear they were not as far on in their recovery process but with longstanding members' knowledge and the group process, they quickly 'caught up' and became integral members.

It took a several years for members to share the intensity of feelings associated with their stories. They were described as though they had just occurred yesterday. Many had no sense of the actual depth of their grief and loss when we started. One poignant moment was when we visited the area where many community members died and most had not yet been there. After about three years, they began to describe events in their lives prior to the fires. These gave a perspective on the fire and afterwards. Sometimes there were lighter stories of friends who died and community events were held such as birthdays in the local hall. There were moving stories unrelated to the fire, which had never been spoken about but were put to the group because they seemed relevant.

The group also shared the practical recovery story - whether to move back, whether to rebuild, how to rebuild. We visited member's homes, sharing what they had been and what they were now. They often said the home they rebuilt looked beautiful but wasn't the same. They missed what they had and wanted it back. Sharing common experiences that the rest of the world did not understand was a common theme. In the group, others understood. They often commented that people in the rest of their life did not understand. The group was an important part of their month that they looked forward to and prioritised. They described it as critical to their recovery.

The identity they developed was of women with a common story, despite separate and unique experiences, the many facets created valuable bonds. They could voice their story and come to a better understanding of its place in the wider story of the community. Some members remained throughout others moved in and out. At times some missed six months or more as they engaged in life or attended courses but absent members still viewed themselves as part of the group though not attending.

We came to know each other's lives as events unfolded - moves, holidays, relationship changes, births, deaths and marriages, including us facilitators. We felt blessed sharing time with these strong women. Their stories became part of our lives once a month; we drove some distance to be with them. We were outsiders who witnessed, nudged, guided, encouraged, supported, suggested and shared. We shared our personal lives at times. Both our fathers died during the life of the group, and the impact of other life events, such as being part of another disaster were some of our shared journey with them.

Our place was to join with care and consideration, not overwhelming them, nor being secretive. To do otherwise seemed to negate the intensity of their experiences and the quality of the connection we shared

Our commitment was to turn up and be with whoever made the effort to attend; it was important, even if it was just one person. We viewed members not attending not as being about us or a signal of the end of the group but signs of them re-engaging in the world, while having a safe place to return to. Holding this space for them, whatever was going on, was a priority for us. We sensed they felt valued through their adversity by our commitment to travelling to them. At one point numbers dwindled to one or two but after about four months the group resurged and continued with enthusiasm and commitment.

We facilitators were able to work together over the four years. Sometimes there was just one facilitator due to illness or other unplanned events. We occasionally had to cancel. Two of us made it easier to maintain the group life. Ideally, meeting before we started and some prior joint training would have been good. Instead we learnt as we went along, relying on skills from years of other experience. We reflected together between sessions on what had happened and where to from here. It was daunting at times and we frequently felt we had been thrown in at the deep end. We managed to swim with it and all thrived. It was a deeply humbling, enriching and healing process for us.

Group 2: Regional Group for Members of Surrounding Communities

Our location was a small township in the heart of a fire-affected valley about 50 kilometres east of Melbourne. Both facilitators lived and worked there and were personally and professionally affected by the bushfires. It was the backdrop for our meetings every four weeks over three and a half years (This group started about six months after the others). Participants travelled outside their communities to attend the group and expressed relief at confiding in people outside their communities. They described their estrangement in the damaged, treeless landscape mirroring damage to the social fabric, eroding their sense of belonging. The group, while located inside the fire-affected valley, offered some respite. Members forged a group identity bridging individual and neighbourhood differences, sharing traumatic loss and efforts to restore and rebuild. They were ‘insiders’ of their fire-ravaged world; those beyond the hills were well-intentioned ‘outsiders’ who never understood.

Participants heard about the group through local networks or the facilitators. They were screened, the group’s purpose explained and their suitability assessed. They could enter and leave as needed, but were asked to send apolo-

gies if unable to attend; non-attendance was followed up by a facilitator. They were asked to discuss with a facilitator if they decided to withdraw.

The group was unstructured, which facilitated group engagement, developing group norms and mutual identification. A core of six to eight participants attended throughout but membership fluctuated in the third year, some 'core' members leaving and new members entering. Facilitators discussed group 'rules' and boundaries to establish a safe, respectful space.

There were approximately equal numbers of men and women, three couples and some 'delegates' attending for their partner looking after children. All but one person was married at the time of the fires, two separated immediately after. A father of two boys was almost killed in his unsuccessful efforts to save their home and get his family to safety. He was hospitalised with severe burns and believed he failed his family. On discharge, with his friends, he completely rebuilt the home within eight weeks. His wife refused to return with their boys. Another woman with three children separated after the family were almost killed in their escape. She wanted to return to the area for the children's schools and friends. She sought rented accommodation but her husband moved to the city.

Most were aged in their 50's and 60's nearing retirement. Many had to rebuild, re-finance their homes, manage tax, insurances, replace equipment and tools, rebuild businesses, support ageing parents, children and grandchildren. They struggled with sleep deprivation, short-term memory loss, organisational difficulties, exhaustion, pain, illness, stress, anxiety and sometimes, inconsolable sadness. They experienced rejection, failure, incapacity, role and identity loss, loneliness, loss of employment and feared running out of time. Members with school-aged children struggled to attend since group competed with netball, dinner, homework, sick kids, family life and exhaustion.

The facilitators were more active early, initiating conversation about experiences, drawing out expectations, being curious, linking concerns, inviting responses, prompting, gently redirecting when conversations veered off course into light repartee or evasive camaraderie. Psycho-education on stress management, grief, sleep, memory, hyper-arousal was provided.

Most defended their properties or communities and described fear, distress, exhaustion, plans, decision-making, getting to safety, recriminations and fears for family and friends. They discussed loss and damage, brought photos, poems and memorabilia. They talked about trauma, 'bushfire brain' as their shorthand for high arousal, sensory overload, noise intolerance, sleep disturbance, short-term memory, limited concentration, confusion, overwhelm and exhaustion.

Sadness and vulnerability were in everyone's stories, interspersed with humour, repartee and practical advice; they gestured towards emotions that needed attention 'in time,' but not yet. Facilitators encouraged, validated and normalised experiences, highlighted commonalities made space for differences, re-framed, questioned, encouraged everyone to speak and held silence.

In the first year a vernacular of in-jokes developed: 'the corduroy zone' referred to the high stress chemical cortisol; 'bushfire-brain' referred to cognitive difficulties'; the 'roller-coaster ride' of the recovery journey; 'to stay or go – that is the question!' when referring to decision-making about whether to rebuild or leave; 'the new normal' referring to any 'peculiar' experience that was not part of the 'old life'; 'attending to the group in the mind', holding the group in their thoughts even when participants could not attend.

The second and third years corresponded to individual and community recovery rhythms. The group 'barracked' for its members - encouraging, suggesting, nourishing endurance for overcoming obstacles – 'this is a marathon not a sprint!' Facilitators reinforced respect and allowing people to, 'run their own race'. Someone would be a 'model' of resilience one meeting; next time they were troubled, exhausted and moody, somebody else would become 'the model'. They re-framed resilience as 'surviving the long haul, ups and downs'.

Intimate communication was disrupted, damaging relationships. Many contemplated separation. Relationships seemed 'too hard'. Conflict, misunderstanding, detachment, betrayal, alienation were not raised directly for a long time but mentioned in joking references to how men and women 'managed' recovery ("The whole community thinks he's a hero – why can't I?" or "Where is he when I need him? ... Of course, in the shed"; "If he can't fix it he doesn't want to know"; "I can trust her with my life but I just can't trust her with the money!") Gradually, they heard from opposite sex group members what they could not hear from partners. They entrusted the group with their vulnerability, enabling them to speak, feel understood and respected and then held these ideas outside the group to have greater acceptance and respect for partners.

Silence permitted reflection for others to acknowledge their fears, sadness and shame. It opened up reflective space to articulate existential questions like, "Why is this still happening?" "Who am I now?" "Why do the members of my family seem like strangers to me now?" This was different to disparaging references to distress a year earlier, ("I had sooky-la-la week last week!"). They shared fears, tears, pain and shame more openly.

Several struggled with decisions 'to stay and rebuild' or 'go.' Things previously 'shared' caused tension and confusion. One woman described how

their disrupted living arrangements almost three years later were causing a rift between her and her husband: “We wanted our children to be bush babies with an affinity with nature; now we live in an apartment, our kids are skate park kids. They don’t remember our old block and don’t want to live in the bush. This is not what we wanted for them. My husband wants to rebuild but the kids like it in town. I don’t know what I want any more. What’s happened to our family?”

Some participants were unprepared for difficulties they encountered moving into rebuilt homes. “Nobody said we’d feel worse, not better”. They yearned for old cracks in the walls and pictures that covered them, missed old crockery and looked for things ... “Oh yes! ...that’s gone”. Friends and family could not understand: “This is the dream home you’ve always wanted. What’s wrong with you? You should be grateful! Why don’t you just move on ... get over it!” They were more alone than before with new waves of loss. “So this is the new normal – they didn’t tell us about this!”

The ‘old versus new’ theme coincided with shifts in participation and fluctuations in attendance. Some participants saw a widening gap between themselves and others who remained vulnerable. Some core members left feeling ‘stronger’ with less need to attend, others took time out.

We introduced new members who were welcomed. But ‘old’ members observed differences between their recovery and where ‘new’ members were. There was frustration going over ‘old’ ground. The idealised ‘old’ group was compared with the less comfortable ‘new’ group. ‘Old versus new’ became part of the group transference. For the ‘old’ group members, it expressed their loss. We invited them to reflect on when they were ‘new.’ They adopted a ‘wise elder/mentor’ status, to share their recovery journeys and how the group assisted them. They inducted ‘new’ members into the journey, being supported to manage change and engendering hope. The group became inclusive.

There was rivalry between men, an argument between a husband and wife, participants advised others in ways that silenced, cast judgement, antagonised, caused divisions. Expressions of hurt, anger and frustration required reminders about norms, rules and boundaries. A man left following disagreements. He returned months later: “I thought I could do it on my own but I realised though this is not the old group, I still need companionship. There are things I can’t talk to anyone else about but can talk about here. I talked to you guys in my mind when I didn’t come and realised how important you are even when we have our differences”. He initiated ‘the group in the mind,’ metaphor which was invoked to hold a space, whether they attended or not. In the final session, he said to another male who frequently disagreed with him, “We’ve had our differences at times but some of my thoughts have definitely been

moderated by yours and I think we've also learned to agree to disagree with good humour", the other agreed.

The quarterly facilitators' supervision meetings provided opportunities to reflect and share experiences. We came to appreciate the value of 'feisty moments' and assisting the group to 'survive' these difficult times integrated 'old' and 'new' to strengthened group and individual identities.

In the conclusion phase, there was more hope and tolerance for the 'different places' of members in their recovery. They continued to be anxious about hot, windy days, expressed sadness around the anniversary and to questioned what lay ahead. But there was greater confidence in decision-making and communication, more optimism, capacity to look back and forward and an orientation towards the future.

They were sad about ending but most felt ready to finish. They would take 'the group in the mind' away with them. In the final session, they brought something to symbolise their experience after the fires and something to symbolise their lives now. Offerings included poems, photos, narratives of change and regeneration in their lives, paintings and salvaged remnants reforged and remodelled into creative pieces and curious art forms that invited conversations beyond the group.

We also reflect on 'the group in the mind' as a source of learning and inspiration. It was not easy and at times exhausting, just as for the participants. But it has kindled pride and a privileged close up of the strength, courage, honesty and capacity for re-generation that exists in our community.

Conclusions

These descriptions are characteristic of groups conducted after Black Saturday and other disasters. The significance of skilled facilitators enables groups to develop an efficacy unlikely in informal community groups. These groups sit between clinical groups and community networks. Membership carries responsibilities for the group and each other in return for safety and benefits. Boundaries included basic rules, which facilitators gently maintained: mutual acceptance, not judging or advising, everyone of equal importance and to be cared for.

Facilitators need flexibility and responsiveness to find a comfortable relationship to participants. Boundaries must be maintained but in a different position to clinical boundaries: a more personal, vulnerable position without losing commitment to the group's purpose. Facilitators convene the group and determine who is a member by following up those who said they would

attend but did not. Some participants put in apologies for more than a year but said their membership was an important support.

Humour and laughter help members get to know each other and maintain detachment from their sufferings while learning to trust each other. Shared enjoyment cannot be overestimated as a means of establishing social bonds to allow them to confront the depth of grief and find new meaning, which is only possible when facilitators monitor and redirect the process when there is risk of losing track and losing the goal. Their educational contributions about stress, grief, trauma, recovery and personal resilience are important through tactful, understated, informal comments and suggestions rather than talks or advice.

As they settle in, they share more and reveal specific problems and grief, confident in acceptance and respect, while their support networks beyond the fire lost patience, moved on or were unhelpful. Being misunderstood, criticised or given impossible advice by previously trusted, loving supporters damages identity and cuts people adrift from reference points that enable them to evaluate and deal with responses. The group becomes more significant as members use each other as references instead of those who do not understand. The essential process in these groups is the identification between those affected, not resting on specifics, but on the complex reality of a life-changing experience.

It requires skilled facilitators to keep opening communication up to allow detailed sharing. It is important that they keep identification with each other from fixating on tangibles, which would create subgroups of impact or hierarchies of loss and disenfranchise all but the most tragic and deprive them of support. The work needs to be based on what is shared, not on what is different. Facilitators constantly manage group dynamics to this end.

The facilitators' presence as witnesses communicates their value and the value of their experience to group members. It is an essential ingredient in allowing members to place themselves at the centre of their lives again when they feel thrown out by the disaster and lack of understanding from supporters. The other ingredient is time; for many, recovery was profound but took years.

At the risk of oversimplifying a complex process it is possible to identify a sequence. Initial engagement has an emphasis on humour and comradeship in adversity and tentative exploration of loss and trauma. If allowed time but encouraged to keep deepening, their talk widens onto current recovery problems; they share information, resources and encouragement in tackling problems and share safer emotions of anger and frustration. They help each

other and establish bonds. Then they share more; their damaged identity is supported and they begin to confront their pain in a dosed way, helping each other. As the most painful emotion is expressed, they begin to reflect on the meaning of the whole event, reconcile it with their pre-disaster life and adjust future goals. They carry a 'group in mind' that gives confidence to their experience that is beyond previous normality without losing their position. They carry the facilitators with them into a privileged encounter with the rare quality of ordinary people.

References

- McFarlane, A., van Hoof, M. and Goodhew, F. (2009) 'Anxiety Disorders and PTSD', Neria, Y., Galea, S. and Norris, F. (eds). *Mental Health and Disasters*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 47-66.
- Neria, Y., Galea, S. and Norris, F. (eds). (2009) *Mental Health and Disasters*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Teague, B., McLeod, R. and Pascoe, S. (2010) *The Fires and Fire Related Deaths, The 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission*, Volume 1. Melbourne: Government Printer Victoria.

Liminal Space and Transformative Change in Group Training in Guatemala: A Group Analytic Perspective¹

Espacio fronterizo y Cambio Transformativo en el Entrenamiento de Grupo en Guatemala: una Perspectiva Grupo Analítica

Elisabeth Rohr (Germany)



Elisabeth Rohr worked as a professor for Intercultural Education at the Philipps-University in Marburg for more than 20 years till she retired in 2013. She has been engaged as a group analyst, consultant and trainer in national and international fields of work, mainly in Guatemala and recently also in Ramallah West Bank, as coordinator for an IAGP sponsored group psychotherapy training. She has initiated several research projects about migration, especially female migration, religious fundamentalism, body mutilation and conflict resolution. She has published extensively about these topics in German and foreign language journals and editions. Currently she is the Chair of the Scientific Programme Committee for 19th International Congress of IAGP: Despair and Desire in Times of Crisis in the Cities of the World.

Abstract

This paper was given as a keynote lecture at the Second African Regional Conference, 'Groups crossing boundaries: co-creating spaces for transformative change'. Giving this paper allowed me to explain some of my Guatemalan experiences and to demonstrate the potential of group analysis as a powerful tool of transformation for individuals as well as for groups, for organizations and for societies as well.

I describe a group analytic supervision training in a post-war society that turned out to be a challenge on a personal, theoretical and procedural level. Described is not only the political context of the training, but also difficulties and conflicts that arose in the training group, mirroring unconscious cultural defences and anxieties. Focusing on the group's disturbing transgression of boundaries it was finally possible to understand these acts as manifestations of a hidden psychosocial trauma in the group. On the basis of this slowly growing process of understanding, the group managed to open up for new theoretical perspectives and unknown methodological approaches.

¹ Another version of this paper was published in *Group Analysis* 46(3) 2013.

Participants of the training finally dared to apply their newly acquired knowledge and capacities as supervisors in one of the most sensitive political institutions of the country, and as the evaluation showed, did so most successfully.

Resumen

Este documento fue impartido como una conferencia magistral en la Segunda Conferencia Regional de África: ‘Grupos que cruzan fronteras: espacios de co-creación para un cambio transformador’. Dar este trabajo me permitió explicar algunas de mis experiencias en Guatemala y demostrar el potencial del grupo análisis como una poderosa herramienta de transformación tanto para los individuos como para los grupos, las organizaciones y también las sociedades.

Describo un grupo de entrenamiento - supervisión grupo analítico en una sociedad de post-guerra que resultó ser un reto a nivel personal, teórico y procedimental. Se describe no sólo el contexto político de la formación, sino también las dificultades y conflictos que surgieron en el grupo de entrenamiento, lo que refleja las defensas y ansiedades culturales inconscientes. Entendiendo las transgresiones como los límites perturbadores de los grupos fue finalmente posible entender estos actos como manifestaciones de un trauma psicosocial latente en el grupo. Sobre la base de este proceso de comprensión progresiva de desarrollo, el grupo se las arregló para abrir nuevas perspectivas teóricas y enfoques metodológicos desconocidos. Los participantes de la capacitación, al final se atrevieron a aplicar sus conocimientos y capacidades recién adquiridas como supervisores en una de las instituciones políticas más sensibles del país, y según la evaluación mostró, lo hicieron con mucho éxito.

Guatemala

I started to get engaged in Guatemala in 2000, only four years after the end of a 36 year devastating war, during which 200 000 people died, 45 000 disappeared, and 1 million became refugees. More than 600 massacres took place.

Even though a formal peace agreement ended military confrontation, the war continues to this day in disguise, on the streets and in the families. Guatemala has to be considered one of the poorest and most violent countries in Latin America. The legacy of the war is the continued contamination of the lives and institutions of all Guatemalans.

Two Truth Commissions left no doubt that genocide took place. But until today only a few of the known human rights violators have been prosecuted. Both of these Truth Commissions, one from the Catholic Church and one from the UN, were modelled according to the South African TRC and even though they attempted to deal with the horrible past and prepare society for a better future, it has to be stated, that their political impact was reduced to zero. The government did not allow publishing of the names of the perpetrators therefore no public reconciliation process or prosecutions take place. But the testimony of the survivors of human rights atrocities was finally collected into 12

volumes of a report and published. In contrast to the South African situation the government in Guatemala had not changed and since the perpetrators sat in the government and in the military, it was obvious that they would judge themselves. Just a few months ago the government stated publicly that there was no civil war, only an armed conflict.

Therefore the suffering and the despair, the sorrow and the grief of large parts of the population are blatantly denied. Society seems to be oblivious to the pain of the victims of war who are mostly of Mayan descent. As Volkan (2001) pointed out, under these circumstances, denying the past, means not being able to construct a future. Volkan has shown in his studies that if it is not possible to mourn the losses and to remember the past, you cannot overcome trauma. It continues and symptomatically manifests itself in the high incidence of crime, impunity, corruption, and widespread insecurity and it will be transmitted transgenerationally to the next generation. Working in Guatemala, therefore, means that one cannot avoid confrontation with trauma.

On my first visit to Guatemala in 2000 I met trauma in an Indian community: I was part of a group of international consultants who were evaluating possible ways to support the peace and reconciliation process in the country. We visited an organization of victims of war in a city known for some of the most horrifying massacres that had taken place during the war.

We were taken to a cemetery where one of our guides showed us the grave of his wife and his two small daughters who had been slaughtered by the army during a massacre in the village. He had painted flowers on the gravestone and built a monument, depicting in terrifying detail the tragedy, which only few of the villagers survived. He spoke to us unemotionally, while we cried silently.

Later on, as all the consultants gathered and talked on the veranda of the organization's office, I noticed some Indian women sitting next to us. I had not noticed them before. Mute and almost shadow-like, none of them had uttered a word since the beginning of our meeting. A woman next to me kept on lifting her arm in slow motion, trying to fend off a fly. The arm finally reached her face and then slowly, ever so slowly, sank back on her lap as if she were absolutely exhausted. She kept on repeating this gesture, till a little girl came running along, leaning on her knees, looking into her face, searching for her eyes. But the woman did not even seem to notice the girl; she did not embrace her or touch her, much less talk to her. After a while the girl ran away. These experiences, which I could not even name at that time as an expression of trauma, were the beginning of my emotional and professional engagement in Guatemala.

The question for us consultants now was, what could be done in Guatemala in a society where mass trauma had taken place that was officially denied but that showed in high incidents of crime and violence.

At the beginning of our consultations in Guatemala, we had considered the possibility of organizing psychotherapeutic support. But we soon realized that this would have been an impossible task: There were not enough psychologists to offer trauma-therapy in 22 different Mayan languages to the Indian population on the large scale needed. Therefore we had to think about alternatives.

Throughout our different visits to the country, we had met many professionals who were in desperate need of psychosocial support. Psychologists, social workers, medical doctors, psychiatrists and nurses had told us about their work, including efforts to:

1. Support Indian communities and families, who were awaiting exhumations of mass graves,
2. Counsel lawyers who defended torture victims and prisoners accused of man-slaughter,
3. Organize meetings of Indian widows who had experienced gang rape, Offer advice to Indian communities that were trying to bring a case of genocide to court,
4. Counsel refugees, who were returning from Mexico.

These professionals were left alone with their experience of injustice, poverty, sorrow, and pain; they had an overwhelming feeling of never doing enough. No doubt, they were in serious danger of secondary traumatization. We eventually developed the idea of capacity building for human rights activists. By training these professionals in group supervision, we hoped to provide them with supervisory skills and the ability to provide training to others in the field, thus creating a network of people who could offer supervision to colleagues, groups, teams, and organizations as they strove for democracy, peace and reconciliation.

This would only work, if the training would be conceived as a liminal experience!

“In anthropology, liminality (from the Latin word *līmen*, meaning ‘a threshold’) is (... an experience) of ambiguity or disorientation that occurs in ... rituals, when participants no longer hold their pre-ritual status but have not yet begun the transition to the status they will hold when the ritual is complete. During a ritual’s liminal stage, participants ‘stand at the threshold’ between their previous way of structuring their identity, time, or community, and a new way, which the ritual establishes” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liminality>). The concept of liminality was first developed by the anthropologist Arnold

van Genneep (1909) and later taken up by Victor Turner (1969).

I would now like to describe some of these liminal experiences that occurred during the training. It took five years before we could initiate the first phase of our project in 2005. With the help of a very dedicated Guatemalan psychologist and friend, Dr. Vilma Duque, we started the training with 22 participants, mostly Guatemalan with a few foreign nationals. We planned 6 workshops in the course of 2 to 3 years, to be held in block-form, each workshop lasting 5 days. We offered this training again in 2009 and are about to start the third training in a few weeks.

The structure of the workshop was designed to include theory and learning exercises in the morning and life supervision every afternoon.

A. Theoretical Introduction

5. What is supervision and how does it work?
6. Historical developments of group theory and therapy
7. Essentials of Psychoanalysis and Group Analysis
8. Team Supervision and organization
9. Forms of intervention
10. Supervision and mediation - how to handle conflicts

B. Casework: Life Supervision

The focus was on casework and issues brought in for discussion by the participants. Case-based discussions were offered to explain psychological mechanisms and techniques.

C. Supervision of groups and teams:

Participants were expected to start with supervisory processes of their own after the first training.

D. Self-organized supervision groups:

Self-organized supervision groups worked occasionally, because controlled autonomous learning is not familiar in Guatemala.

E. Feedback by email:

Feed-back by email worked occasionally, but was not used as frequently as had been hoped for.

The Process of the Training

My first impression at the beginning of the training was that the participants were eager to learn and work with me. But invariably, unexpected difficulties disturbed our daily working routine:

The majority of the participants would arrive late in the morning, not just a few minutes, but sometimes half an hour, an hour or two hours. Some would not show up at all, or arrive the second or third day, or would leave in between, without announcing their absence. But then they would return and act as if nothing had happened.

Of course I was prepared to accept time flexibility. But this was far beyond any accepted cultural pattern of behaviour. But no matter, what I said, none of my interventions made any difference. With time, I started to understand what was happening. The frame of the workshop was continuously disrupted, mirroring the damages of a post-war society that had for decades known only fragmentation, annihilation, mistrust and the loss of all reliability. It seemed as if an echo of these destructive forces had reached our workshop, and were re-enacted in the here and now of the training. The dynamic of the workshop showed very clearly all signs of what Hopper called 'incohesion'. Hopper developed this theoretical concept in accordance with Bion's basic assumption model, conceiving a fourth basic assumption: 'Incohesion: aggregation and massification'. The experience in our training was over a long period of time, an experience of incohesion and more specifically of aggregation. It was not possible to create cohesion in the group, participants acted as individuals and showed no signs of attachment neither to each other, nor to me.

The fragile boundaries and the missing coherence in the group worried me constantly. I finally realized that this was an indication of counter-transference and a mirror of the group's basic matrix. My attempts to offer a protected space must have seemed like an illusion, maybe even a threat or betrayal. There simply was no trust anymore in society, or in groups or organizations, the war had destroyed all boundaries people ever knew and had believed in. I understood that the incohesion in the training was a symptom of trauma.

Added to these difficulties of keeping the boundaries, were strong cultural and social defences: During break time, participants would joke that the training was maybe just another way to colonize them, just another imperialist method to subjugate their hearts and minds. As facilitator I seemed to fit the image of a rich powerful white woman from Europe, somehow linked to the German Government, maybe a spy? I listened to these allegations, encouraging them to voice their doubts in the workshop whenever there was an opportunity.

Then, one day, a young and very softly speaking man attacked me rather aggressively: “Were there no Latin American authors to study? Why did they have to learn about Freud (1921), Lewin (1947), Balint (1957), Bion (1961), Foulkes (1948, 1964) and Cohn (1975)”, he asked? Did these authors not adhere to quite individualistic and even bourgeois theories? Well, I agreed, maybe it seemed like that. I could see that they felt uncomfortable and uneasy, somehow overwhelmed by so many new theoretical approaches. Then, out of mere intuition, I explained that these authors were Jewish refugees from Germany, Hungary, and Austria, having fled after the rise of the Nazis. The group was startled. They wondered if the refugee experience of these psychoanalysts was reflected in their theoretical explorations. We scrutinized Freud’s Mass and I-Analysis and Lewin’s theoretical ideas about authoritarian, democratic and liberal rule. We asked what type of leadership was accepted in Guatemala. Could Freud help to explain why so many Guatemalan war victims gave their vote to a man who was known to be responsible for the worst human rights violations during the armed conflict? And could they think of situations or examples highlighting Foulkes perspective, that an individual in the group always mirrors an aspect of the whole group and that conflicts of one person tell us something about the hidden conflict in the whole group? It seemed as if I had finally found a key to the group and a key to introduce group theories. The participants began to open up for new approaches and eagerly picked up new ideas. They learned a lot and I learned as well.

Still, the boundaries kept on being an irritating issue. What really drove me to my limits was the continuous use of their mobile phones. One day I began to realize that I always addressed these issues in a reproachful manner. Things started to change slowly when I asked them what had happened that they could not come on time and why they had to leave in between the sessions of the workshop and why they always had to answer their phones. They now started to tell me about robberies on the way to the workshop, gangs entering the bus in the morning, manipulated car accidents, superiors not allowing them to leave the office, imminent lynchings in Indian communities, incidents that kept them on the phone for hours. When I finally was able to allow some space to talk about these experiences in our workshop, tension vanished and a more relaxed atmosphere started to develop. I could allow their lives and worries to enter the training and I guess, they felt recognized, because I finally could accept more of whatever they brought to the training.

I noticed that participants began to announce their planned absences ahead of time and I had the feeling that we finally were able to connect to each other and establish reliable working relationships. One of the participants even said one day with great emphasis that everybody was important in the group

and that she wanted everybody to be present at all times. There was really progress now and coherence could grow and incoherence vanished slowly. This showed especially in the cases offered for supervision. A young man, who had shown a lot of suspicion, summoned all his courage and talked about difficulties he encountered in his job. He said he felt ashamed to talk about his problems and to explore the reasons why he was not able to manage his project well. He had hired friends to run the project together with him but it was always he who ended up doing the reports. He hesitated to say that he felt abused but undoubtedly he felt disappointed and his sadness could be felt.

The group showed a lot of concern. This conflict was quite familiar to many of them. We struggled to unravel the situation and he began to understand that it was his aversion to authoritarian rule that kept him from taking up the role of the manager. Having previously learned about democratic rule, the group asked him if he would consider following its precepts in his work place. He was astonished at first but then very relieved. These were new perspectives to think about. He appreciated the richness of the ideas that had been offered to him and was very grateful. During break, we talked a bit and I could see that he was still moved by this earlier experience. Later on, I noticed that he had left the training and stayed away for two days and then came back and acted as if nothing had happened.

There had been understanding and compassion in the group, even a feeling of intimacy and trust. And then he left. He seemed like a refugee, leaving whenever a dangerous situation threatened his autonomy. During the war, departure was a life-saving strategy. Now it was like a reflex, an unconscious reaction of which he was not even aware.

Now I began to understand more of the difficulties in the training group: Trauma, I realized, was an issue in the group. There was an extreme fear of closeness and attachment because this experience reproduced memories of the war. Family members, friends and neighbours had disappeared and never came back and nobody ever knew why or what had happened. It was better and safer not to get attached, not to feel dependent and not to feel any desire to relate and communicate. Feeling close to other people was just too painful reminding one of all the losses endured in the past (Rohr 2012).

I realized that boundaries and reliability, anxieties and attachment were strong issues in this group. They were connected to the experience of trauma, which was re-enacted and reproduced in the training. But even though trauma could not be dealt with on a psychotherapeutic level, there was quite an impressive transformation taking place in the group. The training did work as a liminal space transforming the existing trauma in the group. How can this be explained?

Relying on Winnicott's (1953) concept of a transitional space, "where play can take place and be used to re-establish what is objectively perceived and what is subjectively conceived of" (Segun 2001), I would like to suggest that supervision is such a liminal and therefore transitional space. Participants are encouraged to explore social and institutional realities and their intrinsic influence on their professional activities. Whenever a conflict is described, the group is asked to take up the images and 'play' with them mentally and symbolically, using free-floating associations. An exciting verbal play might develop, deliberately crossing mental boundaries, exploring new thoughts and ideas, creating new perspectives. The original perception of the conflict slowly changes. Fixations are dissolved and a separation from the old and maybe antiquated perception allows a new vision to develop. The separation and integration processes are creative activities of the group, stimulating members to join the game and to play. This happens with restricted regression because there are peers and colleagues that play and it is the facilitator's responsibility to remind them that there is always a task that has to be accomplished.

In our training group, the participants rejected at first the idea of playing and getting acquainted with new theoretical approaches. They kept on hiding behind strong, cultural defences and transferences, suspicious of this unknown but supposedly safe and protected space, attacking boundaries and the concept of the training as well as my role as facilitator. When I introduced the stories of the refugee psychotherapists, an unexpected, intermediate space opened, bridging anxieties, so that they could leave their persecutory fantasies and open up for something new and unknown. This space included a more trustful relationship with the group and with me. After all, they realized that I had come from a country that represented one of the worst tragedies of mankind and I had brought the theories of Jewish refugees to them, obviously cherishing their ideas. A different and quite warm-hearted relationship began to grow and with it, reliability and trust. As a consequence the need to disrupt boundaries diminished and attachment tendencies and containment could be experienced (Rohr 2009).

The transformation that took place was not a linear process. It was always work in progress with all the difficulties, drawbacks and euphoric moments that escort change. Transformation was possible because there was recognition of their vulnerability, giving rise to hope and new and inspiring ideas. However the real challenge, that is switching from the role of trainee to that of supervisor, was still to come. Towards the end of the training one of the politically most sensitive and vulnerable organizations of the country asked for supervision. Thirteen of our candidates volunteered to start supervising 13 teams of this organization: a national archive.

This archive was discovered about 8 years ago by chance. It contains millions of secret documents about the so-called counter-insurgency operations by the police. It is an archive of the abyss of Guatemalan history, describing in detail and with meticulous handwriting the most cruel torture practices, naming and showing photos of thousands of people who were killed because of suspicion of collaborating with the guerrillas.

After the discovery of the archive, the Human Rights Procurator made sure that an organization was established to evaluate the documents. Two hundred young people were hired to work in the archive. They were eager to have this job because most of them were the children of mothers and fathers who had disappeared during the war. After years of silence and lies, they hoped to discover what had happened to their parents and they seemed to be reliable enough to be entrusted with this highly explosive material.

However, the political pressure placed on the organization was enormous: never-ending political attacks, an extremely heavy workload, miserable working conditions and the daily confrontation with the horror in these documents, created difficult working situations and numerous conflicts. Within the first few months, about 40 employees were dismissed or decided to leave. This was reason enough for the director to look for help from our supervisory support group.

Everyone in the organization was required to participate - from the cleaning women and the guards to the top level of the management. Once a month, on a Friday afternoon, buses would arrive and take 163 workers to a safe place such as a school or a monastery, where 13 supervisors were waiting for them. Thirteen teams were formed, working for 3 hours, 12 times a year.

At the end of this process, a written evaluation of the workers and interviews with the director and two of the workers complemented the findings of a two-day supervision workshop with the supervisors. The evaluation, as well as the interviews with the director and the workers indicated that many things had changed for the better in the organization:

1. Working conditions had improved
1. There were no longer mice, rats or bugs in the offices
2. Fungi had been eradicated from the documents
3. Protective clothing was available
4. Security trainings had taken place
5. Technical equipment had improved
6. Fluctuation of workers had diminished
7. There were fewer conflicts
8. Communication and cooperation in the teams had improved.

Workers said that they now felt like a family and organized parties on Friday evenings. There was less need for protest, even though conflicts still existed, but there were now different ways to express and solve them.

The supervisors described especially one situation that had been difficult to handle. The workers were complaining for months about the lack of toilet paper, the vermin infestations, mould between the rotten documents, clouds of dust, and the failure to provide protective clothing. They thought that nobody cared for them and felt alone, miserable, and unprotected. The supervisors felt a lot of empathy and solidarity with these young people, but they were also weary of listening to these unending complaints. Was that really supervision? They had serious doubts.

Finally, the workers came up with the idea that the supervisors should write letters to their superiors, explaining the complaints and requesting that something be done. The supervisors felt caught in a trap. They really wanted to help and show solidarity with the workers. In this situation, they remembered that I most certainly would insist on keeping to the rule of abstinence and maintain the boundaries, even if this meant having to bear doubts about one's political solidarity. They started to doubt whether abstinence and boundaries were always valid in Guatemala. After all, they wanted to be loyal to the working class and to the victims of the war! They struggled until they finally found a solution: They would talk about the letters in supervision but the workers themselves would have to write them.

This plan worked well. Letters were written and weekly meetings established and a new communicative culture was created. Within a year, the divisions between the workers and the superiors diminished without vanishing altogether and trust was partially restored. All this thanks to a protected space called supervision.

There was recognition of the fact that workers had gained autonomy and that the atmosphere in the organization had changed – even though there were drawbacks at times. Whenever the political pressure increased, established communicative structures in the organization broke down again. It was still a fragile attempt to introduce a less authoritarian style of rule, backed by a strong desire for more democracy within the organization.

A transformation had taken place because supervision had provided a liminal and transitional space that was safe enough to explore new creative ways to handle conflict. Instead of organizing protests on the courtyard, the workers wrote letters, talked to the management in open meetings, and organized parties. A huge step from action to reflection had taken place. Beyond the terror that surrounded them daily, there could be dancing and laughing as well.

This process was not without pain and not without ambivalence but at the end there was hope and a glimpse of a different, more democratic world, a world that they hoped would prevail one day throughout all of Guatemala.

Bibliography

- Balint, M., (1957). *The Doctor, his Patient and the Illness*. London: Pittman.
- Bion, W., (1961). *Experiences in Groups*. London: Tavistock.
- Cohn, R., (1975). Von der Psychoanalyse zur themenzentrierten Interaktion. Von der Behandlung einzelner zu einer Pädagogik für alle. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta.
- Foulkes, S. H., (1948). *Introduction to Group Analytic Psychotherapy*. London: Heinemann. Reprinted London: Karnac 1983
- Foulkes, S. H., (1964). *Therapeutic Group Analysis*. London: Unwin.
- Freud, S., (1921). *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. S.E. XVIII, pp.67-143, London: Hogarth-Press.
- Rohr, E., (2009). 'Farewell to a Dead Horse: Group Analytic Supervision Training in Post-War Guatemala', *Group Analysis* 42(2):107-19.
- Rohr, E., (2012). 'Challenging Empathy', *Clinical Social Work Journal* 40(4): 450-6.
- Segun, S., (2001). 'Migration as a Transitional Space and Group Analysis', *Group Analysis* 34(1): 65-78.
- Turner, V., (1969). *The Ritual Process: Structure and Antistructure*. New York: PAJ Publications.
- Van Gennep, A., (1909). *Les rites de passage*. Deutsch: Übergangsriten. Frankfurt: Campus-Verlag.
- Volkan, V., (2001). 'Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity', *Group Analysis* 34(1): 79-97.
- Winnicott, D., (1971). *Playing and Reality*. London: Tavistock.

Under-age Migrants in Temporary Absence of Supportive Adults

Los Menores Migrantes en Ausencia Temporal de Referentes Adultos

Amina Bargach (Morocco and Spain)



Dr Amina Bargach is a child psychiatrist, family systems therapist and an expert in dealing with psycho-socio-educational social risk in Morocco. She has formed, supervised and consulted to groups of diverse professionals in different universities and public administrations in Morocco, Spain, France and Italy. She is international consultant of the Family Therapy Journal and the International Journal of Systemic Focus. She has spent 4 years as a frequent collaborator in the International Mediterranean Radio Programme in Tangiers, Morocco. Email: om_la@yahoo.fr.

Abstract

This article begins by setting a frame for understanding the violent effect that the temporary absence of adult support in a host country can have on young a person's mental health. This is based on the author's understanding of the Moroccan social background. In the body of the article it includes a complex discussion based on suggesting that the following components are required: 1) Families need to acquire tools to exercise their economic, social and cultural rights and to finally ensure their inclusion in the community, 2) A new form of fatherhood that goes beyond the traditional boundaries between maternal - paternal competences and skills, 3) Children's needs and rights 4) What happens in disadvantaged families. This discussion suggests that these four basic pillars are necessary to ensure support for migrant minors both for their initial trauma and for their forced exile trauma. Finally I am initially proposing a re-conceptualisation of human beings and their difficulties so that their social, historical and economic context are taken into account, and our therapeutic interventions are rebuilt by reconciling various theories to make them more effective.

Resumen

Este artículo comienza con una introducción que enmarca el efecto violento de la falta de reciprocidad en las fronteras en la salud mental de los jóvenes partiendo de la

comprensión del contexto social marroquí desde una visión compleja capaz de contemplar las interacciones de todos los factores sociales, económicos, históricos y culturales. Sirve esta introducción para enmarcar el análisis de la realidad de los Menores Migrantes en Ausencia Temporal de Referentes Adultos en el país receptor, que compone el cuerpo del artículo. Como puntos centrales para la comprensión se profundiza 1) en la familia y sus funciones dejando claro que la familia requiere la adquisición de instrumentos complejos y apropiados, tanto económicos, como sociales y culturales para asegurar su inclusión dentro de la comunidad; 2) en las ventajas de la parentalidad, como nueva expresión que supera la tradicional división entre competencias maternas y competencias paternas; 3) en las necesidades del menor y en sus derechos y 4) en las familias carenciadas. Hablamos entonces de los menores migrantes, de su trauma inicial y del trauma del exilio forzado, siendo fundamental una intervención orientada a garantizar los cuatro pilares necesarios para el equilibrio. Como propuesta de intervención, se propone cambiar el modo de conceptualizar el ser humano y sus dificultades y reconstruir unas terapias capaces de reconciliar varias teorías.

Je me sens branché sur le patrimoine, planétaire, animé par la religion de ce qui relie, le rejet de ce que rejette, une solidarité infinie. *I feel connected through a global heritage, enlivened by a religion that rejects the rejection of an infinite solidarity* (Morin, 2008).

Pour vivre, nous avons besoin d'optimisme: c'est un fait. Mais l'optimisme ne consiste pas à se cacher la réalité. Il consiste à se regarder le monde avec lucidité pour y voir des possibles se dessiner et pour les raisons d'agir et d'espérer. *To live, we need optimism: it is a fact. But optimism cannot hide reality. It is important to clearly see the possibilities for the world giving reasons to act and to hope* (Bourgeois, 1999).

Introduction

In order to make sense of the complexity of all the factors at play in this situation, not only does the social context of Morocco need to be understood but also many economic, historical and cultural factors. The history of Morocco, especially of the colonial period with its great fractures, still needs repairing. Also, Morocco's geopolitical location makes it prone to both internal and external immigration. People movements occur simultaneously both nationally and transnationally.

In addition to the migration of people from Africa to Europe, for whom Morocco is an obligatory step along the way, there are other migrations from the North to the South that are barely recognised or described. I am not referring in this case to investors, which is the result of the present neoliberal context and linked to the processes of dislocation of production, but to other

migrations constituted mainly by two different groups. First there is the group of young people who work with the non-governmental international associations (NGOs) that come to Morocco with programmes designed in the North to prevent clandestine migration, and/or to persuade those who intend migrating to desist from their migratory intentions. Retired Europeans, especially men, represent the second group. They have two principal motivations; one is economic because their salary (or pension) is not sufficient for them to live in Europe and the other is to look for a relationship as an alternative to isolation and loneliness.

For both of these groups Morocco offers opportunities. For young people, the idea of migrating starts from a series of possibilities such as work and social guarantees, without the demand to learn the language of the host country or to give up the *morés* of their native lands. In addition there are a number of advantages for this group, including stimulating curiosity and economic, social and intellectual promotion. For retirees they can count on the promise of a better quality of life thanks to the increased purchasing power of their pension. There is also something even more important, that is to have a new relationship. For instance, if they convert to Islam they can have a young wife and a new 'adopted' family. In this respect, it happens many times that these people consider their decisions under the protection of the values of Islam... the same Islam that is stigmatized in the West!

One may ask at this point, why is this information pertinent? I believe that it is relevant for a number of reasons. With such a complex social context, I could tempt you to think that Morocco, just 14 kilometres from Europe, is a model of cultural diversity and an excellent laboratory offering all kinds of possibilities to investigate this wealth of interactions. Unfortunately that is not the case. We live in a fragmented society divided by invisible frontiers. There is a pseudo-cohabitation, which I call 'folkloric' with interactions that reproduce the characteristic domination of the 'North' of the 'South' at every level and stage. It does not need to be said that those people coming from the North from the beginning enjoy greater advantages than those from the South. This is independent of the context. While some people can move through frontiers in both directions, others cannot do that or can only do so after overcoming many obstacles. 'People from the South' encounter impossible barriers and a lack of understanding even from those from the 'North' who come to 'help' and ask the young people, "Why do you want to leave?"

There are other 'invisible frontiers' that separate the different groups in Moroccan society. These are reinforced by the social myth of 'Moroccan hospitality' that 'resonates' with family myths of hospitality so much that it has become a constitutive value of our society. To question this myth is consid-

ered national disloyalty. In this sense, Neuberger indicates in his magnificent work, *le mythe familial* or the family myth, (1995) that these nationalistic sentiments are reinforced by representations from the family.

This said, the fact of maintaining groups together can be the result of a fragile social context with redundant and superficial interpersonal interactions that are folkloric in character. A pathetic example of this fragmentation can be seen in the so-called ‘intercultural’ encounters whether they take place in the country of origin or in the migrant’s new host country. It is very difficult to avoid the ‘hierarchical trap’ that exists between cultures. In fact, one can frequently observe that the person coming from the South, whether migrant or not, gets the task of ‘exhibiting’ their culture as a response to the questioning member of the representative of the Northern dominant ‘culture’. It is clear that hospitality among people and countries, constitutes a human value, as long as certain minimal conditions assure the viability of such hospitality provided that:

1. Interpersonal relations are based on equality and the reciprocity.
2. Mutual recognition exists that demonstrates a commitment to the relationship.
3. There is a capacity to choose each other freely and to have the ability for ‘meta-communication’ about the relationship, with the objective of meeting the needs of both parties.

My clinical practice has enabled me to witness how the lack of reciprocity in these intercultural frontiers violently marks the mental health of youth, whether they are candidates or not for the migration. These young people tend to perceive the rule of limited mobility as applied to them as unjust and violent. They find it difficult to understand why some people have the right to come and go freely while they cannot even leave. These prohibitions are sent from Europe through often-hidden messages within ‘programmes of help’ have a devastating effect on the mental health of these youngsters. Most of all these prohibitions reduce their self-esteem. It is difficult for anybody to confront the fact that you not wanted outside your own country even when they have never set eyes on you. In addition this prohibition is long term and perhaps definitive.

Considering the character of exclusion from a young age, it is easy to suppose the repercussions on the emotional development of these youngsters, deprived of the right to fantasize, dream and imagine themselves with a backpack following different idols, singers, football players...etc. This is in direct contrast to their European counterparts who are encouraged to discover the world and have their mobility incentivised by the possibility of future economic gain.

The Family, its Functions and Competence

The family system is the first human group in which the youngster exercises their basic human rights. These can be summarized as follows:

1. To live satisfying the child's biological and psychological needs.
2. To provide a place to take in and understand the group's specific norms and the progressive innovation of these rules.
3. To build up an identity in its double, complex, pragmatic and ontological dimension and that of the child's personal promotion.¹
4. To feel protected, to learn how to protect oneself and protect their natural and social resources.
5. To receive an education that may establish a balance between affection and tolerance to frustration.
6. To learn to balance autonomy and dependence as well as to learn to integrate differences.

The acquisition of these basic rights guarantees proper integration within the family and the community and reinforces the links with the social milieu. Nevertheless, to obtain these possibilities, the family needs to develop complex and appropriate cultural, social and/or economic tools to facilitate not only its inclusion in the community but to favourably interact with the social macro-system as well.

Family Competence

Most families given favourable social contexts are competent-enough but it is important to clarify what is needed from the mother and what can be expected from the father, otherwise rigid cultural divisions may have dire consequences. It is important that the parental couple are able to share these competences so that the usual division between maternal and paternal competences may be overcome. Unless they are shared, this division will do nothing

¹ Two inseparable facets form identity. One comprehends the set of values of the world in which we live. The other promotes our own individual values. The first facet is that of basic identity in which the child captures the social code of the social group to which the child belongs (learning the language, etc...) aiming to be recognised by their group. This identity is a defence against psychosis since by being a social entity and by integrating the rules set by the group, the child belongs to this group: the pragmatic identity. Ontological identity is the process by which the person innovates and interacts with these rules. The person is not only a passive being that receives rules but rather acts within the group to reach a place of being able to contribute to changing the group. These processes make us see that culture and identity are not fixed processes but that cultural innovation is also possible. It is an interactive process within a social context.

but create an unbalanced distribution of responsibilities that mainly falls on women. For this reason, I shall refer to ‘parentality’ as a new expression that is becoming more common today. This expression has several advantages:

1. Parentality is the expression and consequence of a democratic culture. To speak about parenthood allows us to refer to subsystems and go beyond ‘myths’ created around particular persons such as the myths created around the mother figure that strengthened unbalanced distribution. By thinking in this manner we can expect both mother and father to be involved in the process of keeping company with the youngsters.
2. Parentality defines interdependence and complementarity between both genders. The parental axis offers us interdependence within the family structure, access to family resources and its own evolution.
3. This vision offers us as therapists an opening as it frees us from a symmetrical confrontation with clients and guarantees us more rigour in our interventions. There are perspectives usually taken as therapeutic that actually trap us in a symmetrical confrontation with those requiring our intervention. This means that therapists, instead of widening their vision in order to include more participants, limit their actions to get ‘obedience’ from the client. When there is resistance on the part of the client the authoritarian tone increases. Instead of establishing a ‘helping subsystem’ in a context of cooperation, a system of symmetry is established that does not guarantee a functional resolution.

Now, to continue with developing the functional competences of the parental axis, what does a family need to know in order to function well?

1. To be able to maintain parental roles to preserve parental authority so that it may be capable of the adequate management with institutional relations such as school, leisure spaces, parental associations and so on in order that sufficient social relations are maintained in order to avoid social isolation.
2. To understand education as a way of transmitting affect, love and tolerance of frustration. To educate is also to be a guide to one’s own children through an adapting process of the parent’s expectations in relation to the age of their children. In this way requirements can be fixed and respect for them negotiated.
3. To be able to face conflicts, react in an adequate way, discuss for hours and if necessary, seek help.

This set of competences constitutes the necessary accompanying process.

The Minor's Rights and Needs

When we project ourselves into our lives, we never fall into emptiness. We embody ourselves as a link in the family and human chain. We become part of a past, present and future history as we wander through each phase of life and acquire rights and have specific needs. As to a minor's rights, these are universal but I would like to stress their specificity.

1. The right to biological, psychological and social protection.
2. The right to autonomy, understood as the acquisition of criteria as to choose their own relations of dependence.
3. The right to be heard.

It is important that a minor's needs are linked to the necessity for them to create a reliable autobiographical story through:

1. The acknowledgement of heterosexual sexual reproduction and the emotional and cognitive education given to a youngster by both people we call parents. Sometimes gender roles and parental roles do not correspond. These two roles are not the same but relate to the different cultures. The minor should know whom they are in order to build their own autobiographic story.
2. The genders offer a distinction between the identity of man and woman. A minor is born physically and psychologically in symbiosis with a woman and it is the man that will separate both parts of that symbiosis. That process makes more complicated the nature of that link, allowing the process of individuation.
3. Being things as they have been presented, we have as a need of the minor, the cognitive development and the banning of incest, since the adults living with him have the responsibility of facilitating his/her bodily and psychological individuation.

Deprived Families

Deprived families are those that have suffered multiple privations for a long time and do not have what is needed to ensure social belonging in their social context. These can be financial, social, psychological or cultural. In short they have been deprived of the right to be included.

These 'lacks' inevitably mean that these families present a blend of relationship problems that include the struggle for daily survival and emotional and psychological disorganisation. It means that any social agent is unable to distinguish whether a concrete situation is the result of the family's adaptation

to suffering is a social reality or a reflection of an intrapsychic phenomenon. Social agents often become frustrated, despairing and exhausted. We can say that they have experienced what we may call ‘contagion’. It so happens that interventions become redundant and boring mostly because we forget that these families have been able to survive by themselves and have even adopted codes opposed to those of the culture that excludes them. It happens too that these families often experience social agents as enemies.

In summary and without generalizing, we can say that these families live under the most difficult circumstances. Feeling inferior and dependent, they do not participate in the community. They also feel much anger. Indeed, these deprived families express the reciprocal failure of developing stable constructive relations without possible compromise between themselves and society. They each declare themselves enemies. The family becomes convinced that society tries to finish them off, while society often declares that these families are useless and should not be alive.

Minors migrating in the receiving country without related adults

We are dealing with minors coming from contexts of social risk, from chronically deprived families that have been unable to develop parenting skills. Without any authority and qualifications recognised in the social structure they belong to, these families experience a distortion in their function and ranking and so the children undergo a perverse process of ‘parentification’. They become the ‘parents’ in order to save the failed parental system and start a long and complex process in an effort to help their family at the expense of their own growth often missing out specific pre-adolescent and adolescent developmental tasks. They move on, driven by ‘democracy’ and ‘rights of minors’ values. Three factors precipitate the premature decision to migrate. First is the paradox of the distance from Europe. The reality is that while Spain is only 14 miles from Morocco obtaining an entry visa is very difficult. Second, the massive arrival of international agents to ‘prevent the migration of minors’ and third is the time factor, do it while you can, so it is important to depart before reaching adulthood.

Migrant minors reach Europe with an initial emotional injury as a result of the privations experienced within the family and the limitations associated to the absence of a social and family services system in the new country. The trauma of forced exile will be on top of other earlier traumas. Following the initial of period of euphoria as a result of having achieved the migration and being confirmed as a leader of their family, the minor is soon haunted by fears

and the wish to go back. The fear is triggered by the realization that they are not wanted and the sense that they are being blamed for the host country's dysfunctions, the early self-esteem evaporation.

To these two traumas, from family and forced exile, trauma associated with the bureaucratic reception process from police departments, the attorney general office, medical evaluations to determine age, reception centers, etc. needs to be added having to cope with a long list of criticisms from those expected to 'take care of him' that will stigmatize his family for allowing him to leave. We need to consider that to maintain his equilibrium the youth needs his family support. In this case it is rather weak and the family is unable to provide him with needed support and guidance.

As a consequence four pillars are needed to establish some equilibrium.

1. Family space such as the minor's family is unable to absorb the excess anxiety, or to contain it or provide with guidance, nor to teach him the new languages of the digital era. As a consequence the family needs to be helped to learn needed competencies recognizing that they are families living in risky contexts.
2. School system is important because it allows the interaction with peer groups led by shared adults. As a member of the group the minor will experience that he is a minor, at least for a brief period.
3. Social space representing being part of a new society in the common space, being visible and normalized even when he may be transferred next day.
4. Intimate space, which is a delicate dimension that requires a specific intervention aimed at repairing old wounds, searching for points of resilience and reactivating positive memories. Empathic support is needed to bring points of resilience into focus to be reinforced by a supportive context. The points of resilience are like footprints of stars still shining in his memory.

There is a presupposition that once they are admitted at a reception centre, the young people will be taken through different venues, living in the centre, attending a normal school, having access to social spaces, participating in recreation activities and psychotherapeutic follow-ups. Sadly, once in the receiving country such movements and spaces become reduced, everything happens at the centre with no alternatives.

Finally, the worst trauma suffered by these minors is based on a painful paradox. While possessing rights and receiving protection, they are rendered invisible because they are illegal migrants with an 'alienating visibility' and are objects of control. All the symptoms presented by these minors are mostly related to this paradox and not so much to the culture.

Intervention with Minors in the absence of adult family relative in host country

Michel Crozier (1964) proposes as a sine qua non condition that real and significant change is only achieved when there is a common agreement in the social network on behalf of the recipient's self interest to change. That is, the intervener needs to change their perception of the other, since it is important to change how the human being and his difficulties are conceptualised either by changing one's behaviour or by changing the way we operate. It is necessary to change how we see the other, the way of being is conceptualized and the resistance to changes. As a plan we can propose:

1. Having a strong faith in the capacity of human to overcome adversity and this applies to migrant minors too, along with the real vocation we have chosen.
2. Guiding ourselves on the principle of complexity, which besides allowing the inclusion of the many contexts at play, enables the reintroduction of participants, despite their barriers, cognitive limitations, ideologies, etc... and allows consideration of the internal climate of teams and of time as a factor.
3. Collecting and analysing data, ongoing training and supervision, leading to the creation of transnational networks such as the Association Alkhaima in Tangier, Morocco, where they have managed to connect families into international networks. This approach avoids paternalistic interventions that camouflage prejudice and promotes the maintenance of family bonds while building a therapeutic system.
4. Encouraging participative interventions that avoid paternalistic interventions that often camouflage rejection.
5. As much as possible, avoid making negative value judgments about the minor's family. Even better, encourage a close alliance to facilitate maintaining a stable therapeutic system.

These pre-formulations reflect my intention to create a discussion among professionals from different orientations so that we could try to deconstruct and rebuild therapies that would integrate various theories. No one theory is able to encompass such complex phenomenon.

References

- Bourgeois, M., (1999). 'La violence du Capitalisme' *Revue Thérapie Familiale*, vol 20, No. 4, pp. 335.

Crozier, M., (1964). *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Morin, E., Préface: *La Méthode* (Collection Seuil, Opus 2008. Paris).

Neuberger, R., (1995) *Le Mythe Familial* ESF Editeur: Paris

Psychotherapy for Women avoiding Intercourse in a Traditional Culture

Terapia para Mujeres que evitan las Relaciones Sexuales en una Cultura Tradicional

Arşaluys Kayir, Sevda P. Bikmaz, Banu Aslantaş Ertekin (Turkey)



Arşaluys Kayir (MSc. Dr.) was a pioneer in Turkey, working towards establishing the mentality that sexuality and sexual problems are mental health concerns. She is an Emeritus Professor at Istanbul University, where she works as a group therapist, sexual therapist and psychodramatist, and is a faculty member at Haliç University and senior trainer and supervisor at Dr. Abdülkadir Özbek Psychodrama Institute and CETAD (Sexual Education, Therapy and Research Society). She writes mainly about sexuality and group therapy for vaginismic women.

Pervin Sevda Bikmaz (MD) is an Assistant Professor at Haliç University Faculty of Arts and Sciences. She is a physiologist and psychiatrist. She is a sexual therapist and psychodrama co-leader and worked with Arşaluys Kayır in the treatment of women with vaginismus during her residency. She continues to develop psychoanalytic approaches at the İstanbul Psychoanalytic Education Research and Development Society under the auspices of the International Psychoanalytic Association.



Banu Aslantaş Ertekin (MD) is a psychiatrist in private practice. She worked as a psychiatry trainee at İstanbul Medical School Psychiatry Department from 2002 to 2007. During her residency she worked with Arşaluys Kayır in the treatment of women with vaginismus through group therapy combined with psychodrama and sex therapy. She is a psychodramaist and sexual therapist. Her special areas of interest are psychodrama, psychodynamic psychotherapies, sexual disorders and eating disorders.

Abstract

Vaginismus is the fear of pain associated with the involuntary contraction of the outer third part of vagina upon entry. These women are usually phobic about intercourse and avoid penetration. Although rare in western cultures, vaginismus is the most common clinical reason for referral for female sexual dysfunction in Turkey where sex therapy is the usual psychotherapy approach used. This article focuses on the treatment of vaginismus through combining homogeneous group therapy and psychodrama with sex therapy techniques for treating women referred with vaginismus. It also headlines those characteristics of women and men that mainly arise from cultural factors.

Resumen

El vaginismo es el miedo al dolor asociado a la contracción involuntaria del tercio externo de la vagina después de la entrada. Estas mujeres suelen ser fóbicas a las relaciones sexuales y evitan la penetración. Aunque es poco frecuente en las culturas occidentales, el vaginismo es la razón clínica más común para la remisión de la disfunción sexual femenina en Turquía, donde la terapia sexual es el enfoque psicoterapéutico habitual utilizado. El artículo se centra en el tratamiento del vaginismo a través de la combinación de la terapia de un grupo homogéneo y psicodrama con técnicas de terapia sexual para tratar a las mujeres afectadas de vaginismo. También subraya las características de las mujeres y los hombres que surgen principalmente de los factores culturales.

Introduction

Vaginismus is a woman's psychological protection of herself. It is associated with fear of pain and results in an involuntary repetitive spasm of the muscles surrounding the vaginal entrance whenever an attempt is made for intercourse or physical examination. This phobic avoidance makes attempts at intercourse frustrating and painful. Many women who seek treatment for vaginismus are sexually responsive. They enjoy sexual play and seek sexual contact, are highly orgasmic - as long as this does not lead to intercourse. This condition is frustrating not only for the woman but also for her partner, often the husband. The woman is usually caught in the dilemma of wanting to be helped but also being frightened of cure.

Despite the lack of accurate data on the prevalence of vaginismus it is suggested that higher rates are seen in eastern countries compared to western countries. In Turkey, it is the most common reason for application to sexual dysfunction treatment units. We do not have the information about the exact rates of vaginismic women in the general population but it is thought that religion, social and cultural issues may underlie the higher rates in eastern countries. In a traditional culture social attitudes relating to virginity, virtue,

moral issues, praising attributions about sexual experience in ‘improper’ time and ‘improper’ conditions are important factors.

Before 1975 sexual problems tended to be treated with psychoanalytic therapies but both the high cost on low incomes and a long therapy process gave way to new sexual psychotherapy approaches. In 1975 Masters and Johnson developed behavioural desensitizing programmes such as Kegel exercises, vaginal systematic dilatations, sensate focus exercises and were included in sexual therapies. These new approaches were widely acknowledged because of the advantages of a shorter therapy process and higher efficacy.

We first had contact with these women in 1979 after the foundation of the Psychotherapy and Medical Psychology Section at the Department of Psychiatry in Istanbul University Medical School, where sexual therapy also started. For the first 10 years, vaginismus was treated with couple therapy. As our section became more visible and accessible, referrals for sexual problems increased but due to a lack of therapists, we started group psychotherapy combined with cognitive-behavioral sex therapy in 1988. Despite the high success of our treatment protocol, four years later we started using psychodrama in these groups. We found it was effective for resistant patients and worked well.

First we formed homogeneous sexual disorder groups separating men and women. These were for erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation for men and orgasmic, sexual desire and vaginismic problems for women. As the hidden secret among vaginismic patients became visible the numbers increased to include other sexual dysfunctions. Our experience with this group of patients also increased. We now have a waiting list for patients referred to us from the outpatient clinic.

Some Common Causes of Vaginismus

Psychoanalytic approaches consider vaginismus as an hysterical or conversion symptom that is a symbolic expression of a specific unconscious intrapsychic conflict. Some authorities contend that women with vaginismus have ‘penis envy’ harbouring an unconscious wish to castrate men in revenge for their own castration. Today most professionals working in this area recognise that vaginismus is a multifactorial phenomenon. In fact it is a culturally bound, dysfunctional link. For example a restrictive and traditional upbringing has an important role in developing vaginismus. Authoritarian fathers may also play a role. Most of the vaginismic women describe their husbands as ‘passive’ and ‘very gentle’ in contrast to their fathers. We also notice these women tend to have weak or controlling mothers who keep their daughters

dependent maintaining them in the 'daughter role' rather than giving them permission to become grown up partners. Strict religious and moral values and devaluation of sexuality in the family helped by sexual myths such as, "If a woman shows her sexual desire or enjoys having sex that means she is experienced with other men before marriage" may also play a role in the aetiology. Inadequate and sexual misinformation is very common for women in traditional cultures such as Turkey. These contribute to dysfunctional beliefs about the first intercourse or the fear of losing virginity. In some traditional families mothers of both the men and women ask about the first intercourse. They are eager to know if the 'first night' happened as it should have, which means that the groom saw blood and the bride proved that she was a virgin. So, as well as 'fear of bleeding', 'fear of not bleeding' may be an unconscious cause of vaginismus. This controlling and restrictive context, predispose women to complex trauma related to sexuality. As in most psychiatric conditions, a history of sexual abuse or trauma may be an aetiological factor.

When vaginismus is left untreated it may become a lifelong condition. In our 35 years of experience the problem could have been around for as long as 25 years but recently due to increased communication the duration of treatment has decreased to one to two years. Partners of vaginismic patients who are also highly inexperienced in intercourse may develop a sexual dysfunction eventually and the condition can become more complex. Most of the time the motivation for treatment is the wish to have a child, which often results from pressure from significant others.

Women with vaginismus have a good level of sexual desire especially when intercourse is not expected. They are avoidant of their genitals probably so they will not harm their hymen. We see high levels of aversion to sperm and oral sex. In general these women are immature who are seeking love and tenderness. Their partners also have almost no experience of intercourse before marriage. They are also avoidant of attempting intercourse for fear of hurting, giving pain and spoiling the marriage. Mostly they are satisfied with the form of their sexual life. They are 'kind', 'tolerant' and 'full of compassion'. When they begin to talk about their complaints, they indicate that they have loving and dependable marriages. They indicate that they love each other very much. Mostly their marriages are arranged.

Vaginismic women have common characteristics although there are different kinds of vaginismus. Their husbands are 'tolerant', avoidant, sexually inexperienced, with inhibited aggression and women are immature, non-assertive, phobic, obsessive and dependent on their mothers. We have learnt that the group process enables the couples to realise that they are two grown up people.

Cultural-Traditional Aspects

Our clinical experience of 35 years shows us that vaginismus can be viewed as a culturally bound syndrome (Man-Lun Ng), a dysfunctional link (Gindin and Resnicoff), or as an unconsummated or white marriage (Abraham and Passini). It is a reality that these couples come mostly from eastern cultures, where virginity is expected until marriage. Often traditionally negative attitudes for pre-marital sexual intercourse and praising attitudes for virginity come to the fore during the group psychotherapy process. Some of the participants even share their experiences of being harshly punished by their parents (especially fathers) because of their premarital friendships or flirting with men. Participants also describe how their mothers sometimes threaten them to share their secrets with fathers. These reports suggest that being with a man, either in a social realm or in a more close relationship before marriage was naturally bad and dangerous. Young girls often hear such things as, “Men always want sex and are dangerous” or, “Be careful that the neighbours won’t say something bad about your moral behaviour”. Thus, involuntary spasm of the muscles surrounding the vaginal entrance superficially seems to have a rich and complicated background. This is both conscious and unconscious and arises from individual and cultural grounds. One of the women stated, “Before marriage we were named ‘women with virtue. After marriage we were called ‘patient’”.

Why Group Therapy?

In sessions we apply a combined protocol consisting of group therapy, sex therapy and psychodrama. Is it difficult to talk about sexuality (in group therapy) in a traditional and religious society? No it is not because of silence about sexuality in the family brings the need for talking aloud in a family-like medium. It is more economic for the patient and the treatment team. Patients discover, “I am not the only one with this problem”. The main curative factors of group therapy are instillation of hope and universality, interpersonal learning, catharsis, cohesiveness, self-understanding and altruism.

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Homogeneous Groups

Problem-focused groups are homogeneous by definition because they are composed of clients with similar problems. The vaginismic patients group is

homogeneous in this way as they share issues in common about sexual problems.

A homogeneous group tends to develop trust and cohesiveness quickly because the members can easily identify with each other (Yalom). When a patient joins a homogeneous group she is often moved to encounter a whole group of people who have similar problems who really can understand her feelings and conditions. This facilitates rapid self-disclosure and bonding, often moving the group quickly into deep feelings and explorations, which can be very helpful for a time-limited group. For us one of the main advantages is the women's freedom to talk about their life stories without the presence of partner. Because of their similarities, group members often have comparable emotional reactions, so they can support each other in expressing and processing them. As for sexual matters, even a repressed patient gets in touch with her feelings after seeing other group members express theirs. The main disadvantage of homogeneous groups is that we have less time to the partners. But already, they prefer learning from their partners rather than from the therapy team.

Chosen Sessions from Different Group Sessions

The group therapy process consists of 14 to 20 sessions, twice a week, each lasting for 2 hours. The treatment team consists of the female therapist (AK) and the co-therapists being the psychiatry residents both women and men. Partners are invited to join the group and we perform 2 sessions for couple's group. Usually we begin with an active psychodramatic and sociometric action. Pre-group assessment consists of individual interviews of patients, interview of the couple together by the treatment team and individual interview of the husbands. Psychodrama is applied along with the sex therapy from the beginning to the end of the group.

For the first session members come together in a group for an intimate problem without knowing each other. They usually have some concerns about how they will disclose their problems in the group. Group cohesion is the most important factor for members to continue to treatment and for its success. So we use psychodramatic techniques for warming up and to achieve group cohesion. Both group dramas and protagonist dramas are conducted. Role reversals, mirror techniques are used as an instrument for confronting avoidance of situations and persons. To illustrate how the sessions proceed we will give some examples from different group sessions, which also gives an idea about the culture and the traditions.

In the first session we always begin with psychodrama. Each member is asked to find a partner and introduce herself. After that each patient shares what she has heard by speaking in the role of her partner. They are all surprised and delighted to hear the same sentences from each other, **“I am married for five years and I am still virgin”**. Later they are asked for their first impressions and they all agree on the following, “I felt like she was talking about me”. “It is bizarre but I am happy that I am not the only one”.

In the second session, we explain the treatment protocol, which includes homework assignments. These consist of Kegel exercises, relaxation techniques, Sensate Focus I-II and vaginal deconditioning by gradually inserting their fingers into the vagina, which would be followed by their partner’s fingers. Patients are informed about male and female genital anatomy and physiology. Mostly their concerns are that the penis is big and vagina is small and tight and, there is a thick piece of tissue at the entrance of the vagina (hymen). Most of the group members state that they believe there will be a great bleeding during intercourse and it will be painful. They receive this misinformation from their families and friends. Although we explain about the hymen throughout the treatment process they always have questions in their minds about how the hymen will ‘tear’. As homework they are encouraged to look at and touch and discover their genitals. Sex therapy techniques are gradually followed through all the sessions. In each session we begin with patient’s experiences about homework exercises. Then we add new homework assignments.

In the sessions we generally work either psychodramatically or in an interactional way on the protection of virginity, the hymen and the first night of marriage, ignorance and misinformation about women’s sexuality, avoidance of touching genitals, sexual aversion, abuse, sexual trauma, fear of men, fear of intercourse, arranged marriage, dependent relations with the family, close relations with relatives, hidden flirting, intimate love relations, family honour rules, marriage problems, reproductive health problems, childlessness, contraception, vaginismus dyspareunia, orgasm and sexual desire problems. Several other small protagonist dramas are conducted about wedding and prewedding ceremonies.

We also enact some group dramas. One was, “Play a scene from a marriage decision”. That group played their family’s permission ceremony for marriage. The family’s permission and confirmation of the marriage is essential in Turkey. They took the roles of their mothers, fathers and brothers who were proud of their daughter’s or sister’s virtue. As her brother was putting the red strap around her waist to signify her virtue, the woman got anxious and confused, “What if there is no blood at the first night to signify my vir-

tue?” And then, on the first night of their marriage, which means the first intercourse, her husband realized her fear and asked, “Why are you anxious, is there something that you hide from me? (Are you virgin or not?) The answer then emerges as vaginismus and an unconsummated marriage. To be a virgin is the main issue and a triggering cause of vaginismus.

In every group we ask the patients to form into two groups and perform a Turkish proverb and to ask the other group to guess what it is. Proverbs for group plays unroll their upbringing conditions, family and society rules and expectations. Some examples are, ‘One who wakes up early, forges ahead’. ‘People throw stones to fruitful trees’. ‘Looking at each other, grapes become black’.

One group chose the proverb meaning, ‘One gains at the end if he/she has the patience to wait’.

They took the roles of mother-in-law, sister-in-law and bride. In the drama there was a newly married bride whose mother-in-law and sister-in-law treated her badly. They were living in the same house, the bride was unhappy. She was told by her mother to be patient, “Everything is going to be alright”. At that moment the group member who took the sister-in-law role fainted. She woke up after a few minutes and shared that the role she took, reminded her of the days that she was living with her husband’s family. Actually her sister-in-law treated her as badly as she was in the role. She said that like her husband’s family her own father did not show his love for her.

A Drama

In the following sessions parental relations are talked about. They were all virgin daughters and all in the process of leaving the parental home. One of the group members tells us that her father had died when she was 10 years old. As a protagonist she enacted a drama about a day with her father from her childhood. She chose one of the male co-therapists as her father. In the drama, it was at the end of the day with her father. She said goodbye to him and went to her wedding ceremony. While she was dancing she noticed that the scarf that she was wearing knotted in her hands. She was surprised and shouted, “Look there is a knot in my hand”. The therapist asked the group members, “Who is going to untie the knotted scarf?” All of the group members gathered to untie it with enthusiasm. After this session there was progress in all the group members.

In another session about sexuality between parents, one of the group members said that she heard her parent’s voices when she was a child. She shared

this secret and the feeling of shame with group members. The following session she had good news, she had recovered!

They are afraid of infertility and giving birth to a child. Within this fear frame, statements of the participant's thoughts about the first night of their marriage, which is at the same time the first 'official' or 'socially approved' time for sexual intercourse, are significant, **"If it does not bleed, my husband will think that I'm not virgin and can send me back to my parents"**. It is not rare for patients to be uncomfortable about finger exercises and frequently ask whether they could make them lose their virginity. Usually they talk about such concerns among themselves and then somebody gives voice to them in the group when we ask why homework has not been done.

Involving Husbands

As we know how important partners' attitudes and contributions are to the treatment process we involve them by offering at least two special group sessions with them. After the fourth or fifth session with the women, we invite in the partners of vaginismic women, telling that they will meet only with other men first and then as a couples group. We always have a male therapist so the group session is only men. It lasts about two hours. The content of this session is about how they feel about the therapy, what kind of changes they see with their wives and whether they have some questions. We also give them some information about male and female genitals, sexual physiology mainly including erection and ejaculation, and pathophysiology of vaginismus. Giving this kind of information in a homogeneous group makes it easier for them to listen and comprehend. We also tell them about our therapy approach.

Before they come together in a couples group we ask them what issues they would like to talk about connected with relationships, family relations (in traditional culture) and other pains and sorrows besides vaginismus. We promise them that we will not talk about sexuality and keep their bedroom relationship intimate in these sessions.

In the first session of the couple's groups, we ask them to create a map of Turkey or abroad and stand where they were born and to say a few words about what they liked or missed there. Then they move to where they got married. This makes an enjoyable and warm interaction among all the group members. First we emphasize their individuality and then being couples. We learn small but important emotional hints from this warm up. They talk about some tastes, beauties, losts grief. They go back and sit as couples (they choose sitting as couples) in a big circle, and some hold hands. Then it becomes eas-

ier for us to talk about the pain and pleasure in their lives, their interrelations and family bonds.

During these sessions it is easy to see the role of partners in postponing treatment in contrast to many gynaecologists, vaginismic women, partners, family members and some therapists, who don't know much about the psychological dynamics of the individual and the relationships, think that the responsible person of this problem is the woman.

After the seventh or eighth session we encourage patients to talk about their trauma and the sexual abuse they have suffered. The group provides a safe place for such disclosures. Different kinds of abuse are shared in sessions. Sexual traumas are not always a distinctive feature for vaginismus. Disclosing this second secret besides the hidden secret vaginismus often brings them great relief.

A Sociometric Evaluation

We make a sociometric evaluation about their fear of intercourse about three times during sessions. Eight stands for strong fear with their words, "It can never happen, impossible" and zero stands for "No problem, no fear at all". Often three to four sessions later the degree of fear decreases quickly. Such a measurement done on the scene all together one by one makes it possible to observe the changes more clearly. This is how they follow up their anxiety. They live happy moments when they lower their level of fear.

What the Women Say

My father is bound up with his children but he is more bound to his honour.

When I saw him walking, he was not looking around. So I thought he will be a faithful husband to me.

The doctors also get excited when talking. We are not the only ones who have fears. I chose students for the roles in order to make them feel our feelings.

Usually I keep inside myself. After I spoke here I go home feeling free like a bird.

My husband does not stand in my way to come here but does not encourage me to come either.

My virginity made my husband very happy when we got married.

I was hurt, I cried and it was difficult that my family did not approve my partner and did not come to the wedding.

Now I have a community. I love being with my friends here. We share so

much before you, therapists arrive. We benefit from each other very much. We trust you, but without these friends I don't think I could proceed so quickly. You make us laugh at ourselves and this is very relaxing.

Some Group Work

The group was divided into three; pain, pleasure and fear. They changed roles and got into interaction by asking questions and giving answers. It was good for them to be able to self-disclose feelings such as anger, sorrow, joy, sexuality and fears.

The group used three chairs; one for vaginismus, one for sexuality and the other for the protagonist.

Vaginismus! You entered my life and destroyed my life. I will get rid of you in a short time with the help of this therapy. My life would be more beautiful without you. At least I would have a child. In reality I both hate you and am thankful to you. Because of you I came here to therapy and I liked my sexuality. I realised that intercourse is something nice.

Sexuality! I did not like you when I was single. I wouldn't even look at the places where you existed. I understood that you are good after the therapy. Marriage without you would be meaningless.

Sexuality! I call for vaginismus because I don't like you. I am getting mad at you because you are weak.

Group Evaluation

- Self-reliance, I grew up, developed, I started to grow anew. I took models from others in the group, and lived warmth. I got rid of fear and sexual aversion.
- Increase in self-esteem and self-confidence. "I am able." "I can be successful."
- Hopelessness gave place to the hope of recovery
- Those who had social avoidance became more socially assertive.
- Relationships with their partners became closer and warmer.
- Family relations (own and husband's) improved.
- Giving birth to a child became possible.
- They became more independent women than being daughters of their parents.
- Psychological symptoms such as irritability, anxiety and unhappiness almost disappeared.
- They gained altruism, which had been missing.

Conclusion

Applying a combined protocol of sex therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy and psychodrama in the group therapy of vaginismus may bring further benefits besides symptomatic relief. Talking about sexuality in a family-like medium, learning the right things together is unbelievable for them in a large group where authorities are there but are not authoritarian, giving the chance for disclosure of other members who seek help. They indicate that this is what they needed in their childhood and adolescence.

Learning about others having similar problems and listening to them talking about them increases the normalization of the symptoms. Group psychotherapy is especially important in normalizing sexuality and sexual pleasure. Psychodrama increases flexibility, spontaneity and creativity, which contribute to sex free from the pressure of anxiety.

The opportunity to experience and observe role changes in psychodrama helps patients to understand and deal with their problems. The deep underlying causes were better understood within the framework of psychodrama's spontaneous and creative freedom. They gain spontaneity and creativity in the psychotherapy sessions. Obviously it helped the couples to enjoy their close relations.

By using psychodrama in group psychotherapy the main issue in treating vaginismus occurs when women are given the essential opportunity to express themselves as much as possible by talking, listening and mostly acting. Instead of silence about sexuality they are having the chance to talk about sexual pleasure in a family like group. Laughing, crying, enjoying, making up stories, becoming a member of an active group and the elevation of their hopes are the main gains from psychodrama. Pain and sorrow give way to the place for joy and pleasure in sharing their homes with their husbands.

References

- Karp, M., (1994). 'The river of freedom'. Holmes, P., Karp, M. & Watson, M., (Ed.), *Psychodrama since Moreno: innovations in theory in practice* (39-60). New York: Routledge.
- Kayir, A. (1995). 'Women and their sexual problems in Turkey'. Tekeli, S., (Ed.), *Women in Modern Turkish Society* (288-305). London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd.
- Kayir, A & Sahin, D., (1997). 'Roles of the partners in delaying the treatment of vaginismus'. *Archives of Neuropsychiatry*, 33: 51-66.
- Kaplan, S., (1974). *The New Sex Therapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Kayir, A., (1998). Group psychotherapy and psychodrama in the treatment of vag-

- inismus. Unpublished psychodrama thesis, Dr. A. Özbek Psychodrama Institute, Istanbul.
- Gindin, L., & Resnicoff, D., (2002). 'Unconsummated marriages: a separate and different clinical entity'. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*; 28: 85-99.
- Man-Lun Ng., (1999). 'Vaginismus - a disease, symptom or culture bound syndrome Sexual and marital therapy', *Journal of the Association of Sexual and Marital Therapists* Vol 14, No: 1.
- Yalom I., (1975). *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*. New York: Basic Books.

Del diván y del escenario a la pantalla

From the Therapist's Couch and from the Stage to the Screen

Raúl Vaimberg (Mexico)



Nacido en la ciudad de Buenos Aires. Médico (1979), Psiquiatra (1985). Psicodramatista, Psicoterapeuta de grupo y Psicoanalista. Máster en Sociedad de la Información por la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (2006). Doctor en Psicología por la Universidad de Barcelona (2010). Miembro de la International Association for Group Psychotherapy and Group Processes. Miembro de la Federación Española de Asociaciones de psicoterapeutas (FEAP). Director de GRUP, espai de psicoteràpia, treball corporal, comunicació y creativitat, Institución destinada a la atención la docencia y la investigación en salud mental. Email: rvaimberg@gmail.com.

Resumen

Del diván y del escenario a la pantalla es el recorrido que intentamos hacer en este artículo para comprender los cambios que se producen en la comunicación humana y en el encuadre de la psicoterapia en general y de las psicoterapias psicoanalíticas y psicodramáticas en particular.

El pasaje de la palabra a la acción y del escenario teatral a la reproductibilidad tecnológica nos induce a temores y riesgos de desobjetivización, banalización y aislamiento. Por otro lado se abren nuevas esperanzas en la difusión de la psicoterapia; en la posibilidad de nuevas dimensiones en las transformaciones inconscientes individuales y colectivas y en la dramatización de escenas que recorriendo el mundo a través del ciberespacio permitan encontrar nuevos sentidos constructivos. Para alcanzar estos objetivos en el campo de la psicoterapia es necesario que haya, del otro lado de la pantalla, interlocutores especializados que faciliten encontrar estos nuevos sentidos.

Abstract

From the therapist's couch and the stage to the screen. This is the path we take in this article, in order to understand the changes that are taking place in human communication and in the therapeutic setting in general, and within psychoanalytical and psycho-dramatic psychotherapies in particular.

Transferring word to action and moving from the theatrical stage to technological reproducibility can lead to an increase in fear, triviality and isolation, as well as to a decreased sense of subjectivity. This being said, new possibilities have become available to broadcast psychotherapy, as well. New doors are open to individual and collective unconscious transformations and to the dramatization of scenes that travel within cyberspace, helping us build meaning that is constructive. To reach these objectives in the field of psychotherapy it is necessary for there to be, on the other side of the screen, a specialized listener that can aid us in this search for broader meaning.

Introducción

En los últimos 30 años se han producido grandes transformaciones en los medios de comunicación, en las modalidades de comunicación humana, de las relaciones intersubjetivas y de las representaciones que tenemos de nuestra relación con los otros y con nosotros mismos.

En estas nuevas configuraciones comunicacionales se hace evidente el permanente flujo entre los escenarios virtuales y los presenciales o físicos. Podemos estar conectando con *skype* (videollamada), recibir un *whats app* (foro asincrónico), un *e-mail*, participar en foros o en diferentes redes sociales estando presentes en diferentes pantallas. Los jóvenes son capaces de estar conectados en múltiples pantallas al mismo tiempo y simultáneamente relacionarse presencialmente. En los nuevos encuadres psicoterapéuticos, hemos aprendido a combinar sesiones presenciales con: sesiones de psicoterapias online individuales o grupales, sincrónicas y asincrónicas, textuales, con imágenes, con sonido y con plataformas de creación colaborativa.

La experiencia de familias repartidas por el mundo en las cuales abuelos, hijos y nietos se comunican por *skype* desde tres continentes comienza a ser habitual. Son experiencias frecuentes las de los pacientes que se trasladan durante semanas o meses por cuestiones profesionales, de estudio o familiares. Hay bastante experiencia con seguimientos o psicoterapias por *e-mail* o por teléfono. Comienzan a ser más comunes de lo que se publica las psicoterapias de dos sesiones semanales una por *skype* y otra presencial o diferente combinación con pacientes que tienen dificultades en su capacidad de trasladarse físicamente o con el tiempo que pueden requerir para llegar al despacho del psicoterapeuta. Últimamente hemos desarrollado psicoterapias grupales online de corta y de larga duración con excelentes resultados. También se han realizado tratamientos de pareja y de familias completas o con alguno de sus integrantes desplazados geográficamente. Hay extensas experiencias con grupos de formación, grupos de trabajo, supervisiones y en el desarrollo de investigaciones que pueden fácilmente integrar equipos y bases de datos provenientes de diferentes instituciones o países.

Ya desde hace un tiempo venimos observando claros avances en los resultados obtenidos con pacientes diagnosticados de patologías *borderline* o trastornos de personalidad, cuando utilizamos encuadres mixtos virtual-presenciales.

Psicoterapia, psicoanálisis, neurofisiología, sociología, nuevas tecnologías y arte son los conocimientos que dan fundamento a las Psicoterapias e Intervenciones mediadas tecnológicamente¹ (PMT e IMT). A partir de la extensión del sistema nervioso por las redes tecnológicas esparcidas por el planeta (idea fundamental de Marshal McLuhan²), se produce una continuidad de las redes neuronales a través de las redes sociales y una internalización de las nuevas modalidades de comunicación mediada por tecnologías (CMO) en la configuración y arquitectura de las redes neuronales del presente y del futuro.

En cuanto a las nuevas tecnologías de la información y la comunicación aparecen críticas sobre su capacidad de producir desubjetivización, banalización, hiperconexión y aislamiento. Nos preguntamos si ¿podemos encaminar o enriquecer estos nuevos fenómenos de comunicación mediada tecnológicamente en la línea de la intersubjetivización, de la transformación social y de nuevos paradigmas sobre el poder? También si ¿estamos frente al desarrollo de una nueva modalidad de totemismo, en el cual el tótem es sustituido por los soportes tecnológicos de la comunicación online y el grupo tribal por la vivencia del continuum experiencial de la vida en el espacio físico y la vida en la pantalla?

El cambio fundamental en el mundo de las comunicaciones ha sido el nacimiento de lo que Manuel Castells³ ha llamado ‘autocomunicación de masas’. Es autocomunicación porque el emisor decide el mensaje de forma autónoma, designa a los posibles receptores y selecciona a los mensajes de las redes que quiere recuperar. La autocomunicación de masas se basa en redes horizontales de comunicación interactiva que proporcionan la plataforma tecnológica para la construcción de la autonomía del actor social, ya sea individual o colectivo.

¿Qué es lo nuevo? pensamos que la velocidad y simultaneidad en la transmisión de información a través del planeta genera una nueva fisiología y geografías deslocalizadas espacialmente. En la psicología de las masas freudiana la comunicación de masas se organiza en torno a la figura de un líder narcisista y autoritario, aunque aparece la fratria como la forma natural de

1 Vaimberg, R., (2012). *Psicoterapia de grupo, psicoterapia de grupo online: teoría, técnica e investigación*. Barcelona: Octaedro.

2 McLuhan, M., (1983). *El Medio es el mensaje*, Barcelona: Paidós.
—, 1996. *Comprender los medios de comunicación*, Buenos Aires: Paidós.

3 Castells, M., (2012). *Redes de indignación y esperanza*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

evolución de la figura de padre todopoderoso. La instalación de la fratria en la estructura social sustituyendo al padre-tótem con el soporte de una infraestructura tecnológica horizontal y facilitadora de autonomía, constituirían las bases de un nuevo totemismo informacional.

Las nuevas transformaciones sociales se producen en un híbrido de ciberespacio y espacio urbano, es lo que Castells denomina el espacio de la autonomía (movimientos sociales iniciados en el ciberespacio y cristalizados en plazas urbanas de alto contenido simbólico como la Plaza Catalunya o la Plaza del Sol en el reciente movimiento de los indignados o la plaza Tahrir en el Cairo). En las plazas públicas ubicadas en los nuevos ombligos de la ciudad confluyen virtualmente las aldeas globalizadas.

En las transformaciones producidas en psicoterapia, el ciberespacio es un híbrido virtual-presencial. Los movimientos suelen comenzar en las redes virtuales, pero se convierten en momentos transformadores al ocupar el espacio físico de la relación terapéutica presencial. Y viceversa, los movimientos iniciados en la relación terapéutica presencial, se internalizan en el espacio virtual, cercano al espacio interior, siempre que no esté saturado de información.

¿Porque el interés en las psicoterapias e intervenciones mediadas tecnológicamente?

Definimos como psicoterapias o intervenciones mediadas tecnológicamente aquellas que respondiendo a los objetivos de la psicoterapias o de las diferentes intervenciones en salud mental lo hacen utilizando las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TICs)⁴. Son los pacientes los que nos han ido llevando por este apasionante camino, enseñándonos lo que había que hacer, cómo y cuándo. Vivimos en un espacio mixto online presencial, los más jóvenes lo viven con mayor implicación, probablemente con mayor habilidad para discriminar la pertinencia de cada uno de los encuadres posibles, aunque también con mayores riesgos agregados. Actualmente en salud mental pública, creo que las intervenciones mediadas tecnológicamente en el campo de la prevención, la atención y la organización, constituyen los recursos con mayor capacidad de acceso y menor coste económico con los que podemos contar.

4 Vaimberg, R., (2005). Psicoanálisis y sociedad de la información. *Intercambios*, 14, 63-7.
—, (2010). Psicoterapias tecnológicamente mediadas (PMT). Estudio de procesos y microprocesos a partir de participación online (Tesis doctoral). *Archivos TDX*. <http://www.tesisenxarxa.net/TDX-1019110-140640/>
—, (2012). Bases de la psicoterapia e intervenciones online. *Intercambios*, 28, 63-79.

Me pregunto cómo serán las psicoterapias dentro de 10 años y creo identificar en estas nuevas modalidades de intervención los reflejos del futuro. Los niños y los jóvenes viven activamente en las pantallas ¿será parte de nuestra responsabilidad acompañar estos procesos de transformación, cuidando, aportando y aprendiendo de ellos?

¿Cuáles son las transformaciones en el encuadre de las psicoterapias online?

La redefinición del encuadre espacio temporal que requiere el traslado del diván y del escenario a las pantallas merece algunas reflexiones. En primer lugar, vivimos un proceso de fuga del diván y de la palabra a la acción, una acción contra el cuerpo, destructiva o tóxica. Por otro lado la reproductibilidad tecnológica y la fragmentación y saturación de información, desobjetivizan y restan sentido a los escenarios que sufren una pérdida de espesor de significado y de capacidad representacional. Un buen ejemplo de ello nos lo relata en esta pequeña viñeta el director de cine Steven Soderbergh⁵

“En un vuelo entre New York y Burbank que duraba cinco horas y media, mi vecino de asiento estuvo mirando en una pantalla media docena de acciones a las cuales les había eliminado todo tipo de diálogos y narraciones. Repetía indefinidamente esta secuencia sobre temas extravagantes, mutilaciones y pornografía”.

Las psicoterapias e intervenciones mediadas tecnológicamente intentan recuperar en la pantalla el discurso, la intersubjetividad y la capacidad de transformación y si el discurso ha sido eliminado intentan crearlo. Decía hace unos días un paciente joven, aislado e hiperconectado a la pantalla:

Para mí la experiencia es vivida en múltiples fragmentos, que cambian rápidamente como a golpes y siento un tremendo desgano”. Se le propuso además de una sesión semanal presencial, publicar un post diario en un foro textual bipersonal creado específicamente para tal situación terapéutica.

Observamos el ‘sentimiento de extrañeza’ delante del aparato, tal como lo describe Pirandello, hablando del actor, este sentimiento de extrañeza es en sí del mismo tipo que la extrañeza del hombre delante del espejo, aunque

5 Steven Soderbergh, April 2013 at the 56th San Francisco International Film Festival. <http://www.deadline.com/2013/04/steven-soderbergh-state-of-cinema-address/>.

ahora el espejo puede ser trasladado al público. El que ahora denominamos ‘espejo tecnológico’ es el producido por las pantallas conectadas por Internet y con unas características especiales: reproductibilidad tecnológica de texto, imagen y sonido, capacidad de memoria y autoedición, funcionamiento como hipertexto y en red a nivel global.

En cuanto a la ‘reproductibilidad técnica’ Walter Benjamin⁶, en 1936, analiza las transformaciones sufridas en el arte a partir de la reproductibilidad tecnológica de la obra y especialmente en las transformaciones acontecidas en el pasaje del teatro al cine. Comenta que uno de los riesgos que genera es el de la estéril copia del mundo exterior. En la psicoterapia online, uno de nuestros desafíos es que las producciones e intercambios de producciones adquieran características de intersubjetividad, intimidad y creatividad.

Antiguamente, en la era preinternet, el que la obra fuera mostrada por un aparato, resaltaba la importancia del montador de la obra y que el actor perdiera en parte la posibilidad de adecuar su interpretación al público. En la era de Internet es posible realizar una autoedición o montaje de la obra y la comunicación persona a persona recupera la posibilidad de que el discurso sea regulado por la presencia del otro. Sin embargo la reproductibilidad tiene sus peculiaridades, por ejemplo en las sesiones por skype, la presencia del punto de vista de la cámara produce un montaje visual que quita relieve a las posibilidades de comunicación (para que el otro perciba nuestra mirada, debemos mirar a la cámara del ordenador en lugar de mirar a los ojos del interlocutor en la pantalla), por otro lado la posibilidad de la presencia de la propia imagen en la pantalla altera de una manera extraña la comunicación.

Como dice Walter Benjamin hablando de cine, el público es un examinador, pero un examinador distraído, así también podríamos describir a algunos de nuestros jóvenes pacientes hiperconectados a las pantallas, llevemos a este público, en la psicoterapia online, a una posición de actor participante atento a las emociones.

Describamos alguna de las transformaciones acontecidas en el espacio y el tiempo en el ciberespacio. Si estudiamos la percepción del espacio a través del análisis de la arquitectura de las ciudades a lo largo de la historia podemos observar que: en época de los griegos el amor discurre por la superficie del cuerpo, cuyo valor es paralelo a las superficies del espacio urbano. Postulaban la existencia de un vínculo erótico entre el ciudadano y la ciudad y una analogía directa entre cuerpo y edificio. En Roma las ciudades se estructura-

6 Benjamin, W., (2011). *L'obra d'art a l'època de la seva reproductibilitat tècnica*. Barcelona: Llibres a l'Abast. *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit (La obra de arte en la época de su reproductibilidad técnica, 1936)*.

ban por relaciones geométricas, principalmente las simetrías bilaterales, una ingeniería lineal, una orientación clara y precisa del espacio (probablemente motivado por la necesidad de control de un gran imperio de difícil estabilidad). Del 500 al 1000 d.C. abadías y monasterios aislados y provistos de murallas ofrecían refugio, los señores feudales ofrecían protección a cambio de una servidumbre perpetua.

Williams Harvey en 1628, realiza una serie de descubrimientos sobre la ‘circulación de la sangre’, inaugurando una revolución en la concepción del cuerpo. Las nuevas ideas coincidieron con el nacimiento del capitalismo moderno. Adam Smith supuso que el mercado libre de trabajo y de bienes operaba de una manera muy semejante que la circulación de la sangre por el cuerpo y con unas consecuencias revitalizadoras muy similares. Los planificadores urbanos trataban de convertir a la ciudad en un lugar con arterias y venas fluidas en las que las personas circularan cómo saludables corpúsculos sanguíneos.

A partir de la revolución francesa, la visión de la fraternidad en las relaciones humanas, se expresaba como carne que toca carne; la visión de la libertad en el espacio y el tiempo se expresaba como un volumen vacío. En lugar de la pesadilla de una masa de cuerpos corriendo juntos sin control por un espacio sin límites, como temía Le Bon, la revolución mostró como las multitudes de ciudadanos se apaciguaban cada vez más en los grandes volúmenes abiertos donde la revolución escenificaba sus acontecimientos públicos más importantes.

Sin embargo, cuanto más cómodo se encontraba el cuerpo en movimiento, tanto más se aislaba socialmente, viajando solo y en silencio. La silla y el café constituían un nuevo espacio de pasividad, individualidad y comodidad. La calle, el ferrocarril, el metro y el autobús se convirtieron en lugares en los cuales predominó la mirada sobre el discurso. Calefacción central, iluminación interior, aire acondicionado, eliminación de desperdicios, aíslan a los edificios del entorno (Richard Sennett, discípulo de Michel Foucault, 1997⁷).

El ciberespacio, recoge estas características de un *espacio vacío y de libertad*, pero también de un cuerpo cómoda y estáticamente ubicado delante de la pantalla, aislado del espacio físico. Creo que esta es la contradicción con la cual nos toca trabajar en las PMT. Aunque siempre se reactivan, tal vez más en las sesiones presenciales, las estructuras inconscientes del cuerpo y del espacio que hemos recorrido a lo largo de la historia de la cultura.

Necesitamos crear un espacio fluido que se traslada permanentemente entre el espacio físico y el ciberespacio generando procesos diferentes de elabo-

7 Sennett, R., (1997). *Carne y Piedra. El cuerpo y la ciudad en la civilización occidental*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

ración, estos procesos requieren espacios-tiempos holgados y prolongados. En los intersticios de la nueva situación virtual presencial conseguimos encontrar momentos, a veces efímeros, otras que requieren un trabajo prolongado para construir un discurso intersubjetivo.

Los nuevos espacios terapéuticos de pacientes que se desplazan geográficamente o de pacientes con modalidades psicopatológicas específicas o de edades juveniles, requieren sesiones de psicoterapia presenciales combinadas con otras con skype, foros, chats o whats app y plataformas de creación colaborativa, tanto en las modalidades individual como grupal o familiar.

El espacio ‘deslocalizado’ permite coincidir en la pantalla estando ubicados en diferentes espacios del planeta y también en diferentes tiempos (asincronía y sincronía en la comunicación).

El espacio ‘fluido’ que utilizamos en los entornos virtual-presenciales requiere una conceptualización de un espacio que se traslada de la virtualidad a la presencia y de la presencia a la virtualidad atravesando diferentes pantallas y escenarios. En la pantalla se produce un continuo entre el espacio interior y el espacio exterior (la pantalla es un espacio transicional interior-exterior, realidad-fantasia, yo-otro). Gabbard⁸ (2001) escribe que el espacio virtual tiene mucho en común con el espacio transicional, en el sentido de que no es verdaderamente interno, pero vincula algo entre la realidad exterior y el mundo interno. Cuando nos sentamos frente al ordenador somos ambos, real y no real (p. 734).

El tiempo es ‘atemporal’ en el texto y en la imagen digitalizados y registrados en la memoria del ordenador. Pasado presente y futuro pueden editarse o re-editarse de diferentes maneras.

En resumen, las características de este nuevo encuadre son: tiempo atemporal y espacio deslocalizado y fluido que implican un diferente tipo de conciencia y de mecanismos de elaboración. Espacio vacío y de libertad, cuerpo cómoda y estáticamente ubicado, sentimiento de extrañeza y características de espejo tecnológico.

¿La psicoterapia online tiene indicaciones de elección?

Consideramos indicaciones de elección de la psicoterapia online cuando los pacientes requieren realizar desplazamientos geográficos durante tiempos moderadamente prolongados, o cuando presentan problemas para el despla-

8 Gabbard, G., (2001). Cyberpassion. E-rotic transference on the Internet. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 70: 719-737.

zamiento físico o geográfico que impiden o dificultan el desarrollo de una psicoterapia presencial. En limitaciones sensoriales como la sordera o la ceguera. En ciertos diagnósticos particulares y con diferentes encuadres como en algunos cuadros fóbicos, patologías fronterizas, problemáticas adictivas, trastornos alimentarios, o situaciones de extrema dependencia. En la prevención y particularmente en la adolescencia y problemas de la infancia.

En general en las diversas indicaciones de la psicoterapia presencial pueden estudiarse específicamente los beneficios de diferentes combinaciones de psicoterapia presencial y diversas modalidades de abordaje mediado por tecnologías.

Sobre la importancia del inconsciente en el ciberespacio

Entendemos que el aparato psíquico, en su dimensión somática, es el resultado de la compleja organización anatómico-químico-eléctrica del sistema nervioso y el ciberespacio lo es de la compleja organización electrónica de la red de ordenadores conectada en el planeta. El ciberespacio es un espacio virtual en el cual pueden registrarse y procesarse objetos y sus relaciones. El ciberespacio, de manera similar al aparato psíquico, es capaz de trabajar con representaciones, a través de imágenes, de sonidos y de secuencia de acciones, y de las relaciones que existen entre ellas junto con los recuerdos de representaciones pasadas. En cuanto a sus diferencias con el espacio mental, en el ciberespacio no es posible, de momento, trabajar con representaciones que incluyan el tacto o el olfato, en cambio, el sistema nervioso sin asistencia tecnológica no puede ir más allá de los límites espaciales de la percepción humana.

El sistema nervioso es un sistema biológico y los ordenadores conectados en red son aparatos operados por humanos. Esta situación nos ubica en el problema de la reproductibilidad tecnológica. Un paso fundamental en esta evolución fueron la aparición de la imprenta, de la radio, del cine y últimamente de Internet (una red de ordenadores con capacidad de interacción directa y multidireccional a diferencia de la televisión).

El inconsciente humano se expresa a través de estos diferentes artefactos en la medida en que y de la manera en la cual estos diferentes artefactos son capaces de registrar las manifestaciones del inconsciente. En el caso de Internet, dada su arquitectura, se muestran particularmente sensible para captar las manifestaciones del inconsciente social, revisamos algunos conceptos que nos sirven de base teórica para estudiar estos procesos inconscientes sociales en el ciberespacio.

En su teoría de las dos conciencias Durkheim presupone que los grupos elaboran y comparten de manera involuntaria modelos o representaciones, que asimilan y reproducen a partir de los comportamientos de sus respectivos miembros. Una vez conformada, la representación colectiva actúa constriñendo el desenvolvimiento de los sujetos como una fuerza externa, es decir, como una estructura omnipotente y omnipresente que se coloca por encima de las personas aun en contra de su voluntad.

La representación de Moscovici es un proceso en el cual los individuos juegan un papel activo y creador de sentido. Para este autor, las representaciones se originan o emergen en la dialéctica que se establece entre las interacciones cotidianas de los sujetos, su universo de experiencias previas y las condiciones del entorno (Moscovici, 1979).

Bion describe la mentalidad grupal constituida a través de las aportaciones inconscientes de los sujetos del grupo. Un grupo humano funciona en la tensión y los conflictos engendrados por las polaridades contradictorias de las representaciones sociales, de las representaciones inconscientes y de las estructuras de tarea. Jung pone en evidencia la “sincronía” en lo que él denomina el “inconsciente colectivo”. J. L. Moreno postula los conceptos de “coconsciente” y de “coinconsciente familiar y grupal”. Kaës considera que en el psiquismo existen formaciones grupales inconscientes, más aun, que el inconsciente está estructurado como un grupo. Al decir de Freud, en la estructura nuclear del inconsciente humano alberga un pueblo primitivo.

De cualquier manera en el proceso psicoanalítico el trabajo de hacer consciente lo inconsciente depende de la interpretación o análisis que los participantes del proceso analítico puedan hacer del material volcado en el análisis. Lo que vemos en la pantalla del ordenador sería equivalente a la producción onírica, la elaboración que realizamos con el paciente sería equivalente al proceso de análisis del sueño.

Para Freud (Lo inconsciente, cap. V) los procesos pertenecientes al sistema inconsciente (Inc.) poseen las características del proceso primario (condensación y desplazamiento). Los procesos no sufren modificación ninguna por el transcurso del tiempo y carecen de toda relación con él. Los procesos del sistema carecen también de toda relación con la realidad exterior sustituida por la realidad psíquica. Se hallan sometidos al principio del placer y su destino depende exclusivamente de su fuerza y de la medida en que satisfacen las aspiraciones comenzadas por el placer y el displacer. Estas características del aparato mental inconsciente no difieren significativamente de las del ciberespacio.

La Transferencia en este Tipo de Comunicación Terapéutica

En los entornos online la noción del analista como pantalla en blanco, sobre la cual el paciente proyecta contenidos de su pasado, es sustituida parcialmente por la pantalla del ordenador. La pantalla de ordenador se erige como un espacio transicional que dará lugar a diversidad de proyecciones determinadas por las características de personalidad de los participantes conectados, así como las características de los grupos conectados online.

La pantalla en blanco es capaz de funcionar inconscientemente como un espacio materno, se observaron dos grandes modalidades: 1) espacio materno nutricional, un espacio que acoge, está presente y alienta la fantasía de que con seguridad alguien aparecerá allí y dará respuesta a nuestro mensaje, 2) espacio materno indiscriminado que impedirá la conexión con el ciberespacio ya que será vivido como una experiencia de abandono, agorafóbica o claustrofóbica, generando la inmediata desconexión del espacio o por el contrario la impulsiva depositación de contenidos que permitan comprobar que deja de estar vacío.

La pantalla ocupada suele funcionar como espacio paterno, observándose dos grandes grupos de modalidades: 1) espacio paterno proveedor o protector que permite vivenciar el espacio de comunicación como aquel en el cual se abren posibilidades de generar encuentros, intercambios de información, producciones en colaboración, 2) espacio paterno hipercrítico o agresivo generador de la vivencia de imposibilidad de escribir o de imposibilidad de leer los contenidos del espacio virtual, la posibilidad de recibir una crítica desmesurada o la peligrosidad de que el registro de la información volcada quede fuera de control y con la imposibilidad de ser borrada. La lectura de los contenidos puede generar un colapso frente a la dificultad de la responsabilidad de tener que dar respuesta a todos los mensajes recibidos, ya que el valor de la palabra escrita adquiere fuerza de ley y de hiperresponsabilidad.

Sobre la pantalla en blanco y la pantalla ocupada también podrán funcionar las proyecciones inconscientes de una fraternidad: 1) una fraternidad que genera la posibilidad de un encuentro solidario y de apoyo mutuo, 2) una fraternidad peligrosa en la cual se produce una paranoidización del espacio virtual, con competitividad extrema, denigración, manipulación o exclusión del otro, divulgación de contenidos personales y utilización de los aspectos vulnerables para generar dolor; apropiación y sustitución de la identidad del otro.

Los fenómenos transferenciales observados en los foros terapéuticos grupales presentan características similares a los observados presencialmente y algunas características particulares vinculadas a que, en general, los foros

psicoterapéuticos online presentan una mayor intensidad de fenómenos transferenciales laterales y una menor intensidad de fenómenos transferenciales sobre la figura del terapeuta que son desplazados sobre el grupo y particularmente sobre las características inconscientes proyectadas sobre el espacio virtual anteriormente descritas. Estos fenómenos se observan especialmente si los encuadres de trabajo terapéuticos son de características mixtas (online-presenciales) y duraderos.

En pacientes diagnosticados de psicosis los foros online adquieren con cierta facilidad características delirantes o con alteraciones significativas de la cohesión de la identidad. En los foros online mixtos (online-presenciales) en los cuales se presenta una oscilación entre entorno presencial y entorno virtual hemos observado complejidades en ambas direcciones, espacios transferenciales presenciales que estabilizan y reparan los fenómenos transferenciales online y viceversa fenómenos transferenciales online que estabilizan y reparan fenómenos transferenciales presenciales.

En los entornos online presenciales el concepto de pantalla evoluciona hacia el de ‘espejo tecnológico’, que definimos como aquel “formado por una variedad de artefactos tecnológicos distribuidos por todo el planeta e interconectados a través de redes electrónicas, capaz de reflejar todo aquello que es capaz de registrar, memorizar e hipertextualizar”.

El hipertexto es un documento electrónico leído en una pantalla que permite crear asociaciones entre diferentes autores, instancias y formas de texto como: oral, escrito, imagen, video, fotografía, sonidos, gráficos. Diversos textos pueden aparecer en la pantalla simultáneamente, pudiendo el lector realizar una edición propia o una interpretación activa y personal del hipertexto.

El espejo tecnológico a partir de sus características de hipertextualidad y dependiendo del uso que se haga de él, puede favorecer el tránsito desde el narcisismo hacia la relación con el otro y la conexión entre el mundo interno y el mundo externo, permitiendo nuevas formas de construcción y creación colectivas.

Si consideramos la experiencia emocional como una de las manifestaciones fundamentales del fenómeno empático, sin duda, en la comunicación online se producen experiencias emocionales de características e intensidad diversas. La ausencia de contacto es una, si no la más importante, de las limitaciones de la comunicación online. Esta ausencia de contacto directo requiere cierto aprendizaje para atenuar las posibles ambigüedades del lenguaje desprovisto de su connotación gestual y no verbal y de la modulación permanente que la copresencia ejerce en la cadena comunicacional. Sin embargo, esta ausencia de presencia directa, la simplificación de la multimodalidad del lenguaje y el retardo en el intercambio comunicacional entre un mensaje y otro, pueden

ser de gran utilidad para facilitar la comunicación en situaciones de gran contenido emocional, como por ejemplo, en la emergencia de la sexualidad o de la violencia, favoreciendo los mecanismos de elaboración y de sublimación.

Las características de virtualidad de los foros permiten que las personas proyecten en él sus miedos o problemáticas aunque de una manera fragmentada; existe la posibilidad de desarrollar distintos yoes o fragmentos del yo en el ciberespacio, en diferentes foros o utilizando diferentes nicks. Las diferentes modalidades del espacio tecnosocial en cuanto a las características sensorio-perceptivas del dispositivo facilitan la expresión de diferentes posibilidades del yo. Esta fragmentación puede significar nuevos aspectos defensivos protectores o enriquecedores del yo o bien el levantamiento de la represión y la expresión de aspectos agresivos, destructivos y desintegradores del mundo interno.

La experiencia emocional en los foros virtuales incluye momentos de gran intensidad emocional, requiere aprendizajes nuevos para evitar los efectos nocivos de la fragmentación del yo. Por ejemplo, ha sido beneficioso el utilizar un lenguaje escrito preciso y explicativo, a veces recurriendo a la espontaneidad y otras a una lectura y relectura de los mensajes antes de ser enviados. Ha sido de gran utilidad el comunicar con palabras lo que se ha sentido en el foro, igualmente, aprovechar los espacios presenciales para elaborar las vivencias del foro.

Concluimos el presente artículo considerando que a pesar de la rapidez de las transformaciones descritas y del desconcierto que generan en los profesionales de la salud mental, tenemos grandes esperanzas en el futuro de las psicoterapias mediadas tecnológicamente y de las nuevas generaciones que crecen en medio de estas profundas transformaciones psico-socio-tecnológicas. Los psicoterapeutas en general y particularmente los psicoanalistas y psicodramatistas no deberíamos quedarnos fuera de estas transformaciones, por un lado porque los niños y jóvenes que ahora están creciendo utilizan las tecnologías como forma habitual de comunicación y por el otro lado porque el ciberespacio, como intentamos mostrar, forma parte de las bases epistémicas del psicoanálisis, el *inconsciente* se expresa a través suyo; y del psicodrama, la *escena* encuentra un lugar privilegiado en el ciberespacio para desarrollarse y para llegar a insospechadas dimensiones de la humanidad. Pero es necesario que haya un interlocutor especializado del otro lado de la pantalla para que los sentidos profundos que allí se manifiestan puedan formar parte de las transformaciones constructivas de nuestro mundo.

Bibliografía

- Baudrillard, J., (2005). *Cultura y simulacro*. (7.^a ed.). Barcelona: Editorial Kairós.
- Bauman, Z., (2005). *Amor líquido. Acerca de la fragilidad de los vínculos humanos*. Madrid: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Castells, M., (2000). 'La era de la información', *La Sociedad Red*. Vol. 1. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
- Freud, S., (1921). *Psicología de las masas y análisis del yo. Obras Completas* (2.^a ed. en castellano), vol. 18. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu.
- Kerckhove, D., (2005). Els biaixos de l'electricitat. Lección inaugural del curso académico 2005-2006 de la UOC. Recuperado en marzo 2006, en <http://www.uoc.edu/inaugural05/esp/kerckhove.pdf>
- Lévy, P. (1995). *¿Qué es lo virtual?* Barcelona: Paidós.
- Lévy, P., (2004). Inteligencia colectiva. Por una antropología del ciberespacio <http://inteligenciacolectiva.bvsalud.org>. Washington, DC. Marzo de 2004.
- McLuhan, M., (1983). *El Medio es el mensaje*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Riva, G. (2003). 'Virtual environments in clinical psychology', *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 40 (1-2), 68-76.
- Riva, G., (2005). 'Virtual Reality in Psychotherapy', *Review Cyberpsychology and Behavior*. 8, 3, 220-223.
- Turkle, S., (1997). *La Vida en la Pantalla. La construcción de la identidad en la era de Internet*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Vaimberg, R., (2005a). 'Usos y sentidos de la utilización de las TICs por pacientes diagnosticados de TMS, Trastorno mental severo', *Trabajo de investigación presentado para la obtención del Diploma de Estudios Avanzados (DEA)*. Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). Barcelona, España.
- Vaimberg, R., (2005b). 'Psicoanálisis y sociedad de la información', *Jornadas de investigación en salud mental*. Facultad de Psicología de la ciudad de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Vaimberg, R., (2005c). 'Psicoanálisis y sociedad de la información', *Intercambios*, 14, 63-7.
- Vaimberg, R., (2010). 'Psicoterapias tecnológicamente mediadas (PMT)', *Estudio de procesos y microprocesos a partir de participación online* (Tesis doctoral). Archivos TDX. <http://www.tesisenxarxa.net/TDX-1019110-140640>
- Vaimberg, R., (2012). *Psicoterapia de grupo, psicoterapia de grupo online: teoría, técnica e investigación*. Barcelona: Octaedro.

‘Christmas Cleaning’: Are we able to heal the Culture?

Limpieza de Navidad: Somos capaces de curar la Cultura?

Ekaterina Mikhailova (Russia)



Ekaterina Mikhailova, PhD, is Director of educational programs at the Institute of Group and family psychotherapy (Moscow), an internationally certified psychodrama-therapist since 1996 and a co-founder of the Federation of training psychodrama institutes in Russia since 2007 and a Vice-president of the Russian Psychodrama association. She is lecturing in the Moscow State University and American institute of business and economics (Moscow) and also teaches and trains psychodrama practitioners in Russia and abroad. She has edited and written books on psychodrama and group psychotherapy and numerous articles. Other professional activities are organizational consultancy, coaching, time-limited individual and group psychotherapy. Vice-president of Psychodrama Association (Russia). Member IAGP Board of Directors. Email: e_1_mikhailova@mail.ru.

Abstract

This article is an exploration of traumatized tradition, late December stress and brief sociodrama based interventions. It describes a crossroads: a place where therapeutic group work meets other sociocultural practices. I describe an example taken from my 16 year’s experience when a special format of group work was introduced during the time of severe national financial crisis. The intention was to help people face the psychological and cultural challenges of late December. The title ‘Christmas Cleaning’ is a metaphor for this form of group work. Examples of brief interventions are given, processes and some results are described to discuss the main question: “Can we as group therapists help a traumatized culture to use its own symbolic remedies?”

Resumen

Este artículo es una exploración de la tradición traumatizada, del estrés del último diciembre y las intervenciones basadas en el sociodrama breve. En él se describe una encrucijada: un lugar donde el trabajo de grupo terapéutico cumple otras prácticas socioculturales. Describe un ejemplo tomado de mi experiencia de 16 años cuando introduje un formato especial de trabajo en grupo durante el tiempo de la crisis financiera nacional grave. La intención era ayudar a las personas a hacer frente a los

desafíos psicológicos y culturales de finales de diciembre. ‘Limpieza de Navidad es “El título de una metáfora de esta forma de trabajo en grupo. Se dan ejemplos de intervenciones breves, procesos y se describen algunos resultados para discutir la principal cuestión: “¿Podemos como terapeutas de grupo ayudar a una cultura traumatizada a utilizar sus propios recursos simbólicos?”’

Introduction

Many of us all over the world look for new formats that could meet some unspoken needs and expectations of groups and clients of today. Not that the old ones are insufficient – nothing gratifies more than a good old therapy group! But, there is a whole area of human need that lies in a different dimension and therefore makes us think of new kinds of group work. Sometimes there are clear indications for healing not people but their culture of everyday – and a lot of questions arise. Is this group psychotherapy or we should use other words for these ‘cultural projects’? Who gains if it works, especially if we deal with societies with a long history of unresolved cultural trauma?

Even if we, as professionals, believe in benefits of this type of group work and do not care about names, there is a serious question: how can people recognize their own needs and what can be their reasons to participate?

There could be dozens of different answers and they certainly depend upon the cultural context. The Russian context could be too specific to make a good example but the language of psychodrama and sociodrama is more universal than any other language. And, so I am tempted to share a piece of my experience and to tell a story about a very modest project of this kind. I hope that some colleagues who look for wider range of brief interventions may find something useful in it.

Beginning our Story

... A small team of psychodramatists, usually there are three of us, run a very special group once a year, a few days before New Year. We started this in December 1998, the year of a severe local financial crisis when people were so disappointed and depressed as their future seemed so unclear that the usual anxiety-diverting mental devices had failed. The next year seemed even less promising and the atmosphere of that December was rather gloomy - that could be easily traced in groups and in individual sessions with clients. Something had to be done to finish the year emotionally, to renew hope and meet the unknown future with more resilience and, perhaps, humour. The best metaphor we could think of was ‘Christmas cleaning’ – an old village tradition

and a ritual used by our grandparents. In many cultures people prepare for important holidays by putting things in order, throwing away old rags and other objects that cannot be used anymore, washing the floors, getting rid of any kind of dirt. Only after cleaning is there space for re-creation, for a new start.

The small universe of one's home represents the inner world (and vice versa). We offered a special 'Christmas cleaning' where people could say goodbye to some moments of the Old Year in a gentle or angry way, throw away useless or hostile 'objects' but also remember what was good, find a new way to 'survive Christmas' and be more aware of their wishes and hopes.

We planned it to be just a psychodrama support group – the last Sunday of a difficult year seemed the right time for action. However, this unambitious and simple project elucidated much more than a need for personal support: that day helped us to understand a deep collective need to re-create personal meaning of the symbolic aspects of the New Year. The participants, there were former clients, colleagues, strangers who had never heard of psychodrama, gave us an astonishing feedback. The main idea was, "I had no idea that I needed this so much, but I did". And, somehow it was obvious that the difficult year of 1998 was not the main point, it was rather a good pretext to work on something else. Since then we run 'Christmas Cleaning' every year and usually have about 30-40 people. Some of them come and go, some join the 'cleaners' regularly. The last Sunday before the New Year is always scheduled for this specific event. It is psychodrama-based but also uses elements of sociodrama and creative arts. Psychodrama can serve as a one-session or a brief intervention (Naar, 1990). To say more about this particular brief intervention we have to think more about specific stress of winter holidays.

'To Survive Christmas...'

To re-create – or, perhaps, just to remember - the prevailing context of the season we have to admit that December is stressful all over the world. Social pressure increases together with social anxiety, achievement-oriented cultures encourage all sorts of competition, commercially provoked excitement seems excessive, travelling becomes difficult and behind the lights and music there is a lot of tension that is acted out in addictive shopping, family conflicts, eating and drinking too much etc.

The symbolic meaning of the winter holidays goes far beyond Christian tradition: cold and darkness are still powerful but the sun will soon rise a few minutes earlier and then the inevitable life cycle will bring spring. Solar symbols were widely used in winter rituals in many cultures. In the twentieth

century we still feel connected with the deepest collective symbols of inevitable change, circular processes and revival.

Winter holidays make us face other liminal experiences as well: eternity and futility, ends and beginnings, hope and fear take different shapes but their dynamics is represented in many traditional procedures and public or family rituals. Magical thinking goes hand in hand with age regression that is not only permitted but encouraged culturally: people tend to behave 'like children' when they celebrate. As group psychotherapists we may think that holidays give an opportunity to be more in contact with one's 'inner child'. There are psychological disadvantages as well: children, as we know, are not only playful, creative, curious but also greedy, envious, jealous... Conflicts in families and couples 'near a fir-tree' sometimes are about nothing and a reminder of the quarrels between children when they unwrapped their presents and did not find what they hoped for.

Other 'December complaints' are about negative feelings of having no control, not being good enough, having no resources, being a failure – and very often about not being able to enjoy winter holidays. Why? People talk about tiredness, lack of sincerity in their social interactions, repressed irritation, loss of personal and collective meaning. In the days of winter holidays we may see interwoven levels of collective and individual existence in transition, if we are curious enough to do so. But, groups usually go on vacations, psychotherapists and their clients as a rule 'survive Christmas' separately, visiting families, travelling or doing something else that helps to make a symbolic fresh start in January. We all try to enjoy holidays and not only for reasons of our own. Culturally conditioned feelings and behaviour help people to go through this 'rite of passage' safely.

Rituals are much older than psychotherapy. The same can be said about poetry. Long ago Walter Scott wrote, "Heap on the wood! The wind is chill/ But let it whistle as it will/ We'll keep our Christmas merry still". It is amazing how in these simple lines the spirit of collective protective action, physical and symbolic at the same time, is grasped. However, there are cultures where the stability of old traditions do not protect anymore.

There are certain facts and dates concerning Russian history that are mixed with our culture of the everyday. These are universally shared anxieties, pressures and temptations: the shadows of the past century. Our story would be incomplete without them. Let us have a look at some historical facts.

1918: Christmas celebrations are prohibited. The calendar is changed and the order of the holidays since then becomes confused. In Russia New Year's Eve comes first, a week before Christmas, which since then is celebrated by the Russian Orthodox Church on 7 January.

1928: Decorated fir-trees and any other traditional Christmas symbols are not allowed anymore because 'they support old superstitions' and are 'remnants of the dark past'.

1935: Most Christmas symbols are distorted and re-used by the officially sanctioned Soviet New Year. The fir-tree returns with a red star, instead of the Star of Bethlehem, on top. New and ideologically controlled meanings are prescribed for the New Year rituals (as if no one remembered the traditional ones). Symbols of the Soviet New Year since then are 'stolen' from Christmas and put in opposition to 'the old superstitions'.

1937: Public celebrations of the New Year are established all over the country, which by that time is multinational. For many people in the 'Soviet republics' the new meanings are the only meanings they know (mostly from newspapers and radio). 1937 is known also as 'The Year of Terror': thousands are killed or sent to concentration camps. Prescribed optimism and grandiosity of celebrations have to conceal the unspoken. 'New Year celebrations' mostly are staged and performed for children who get presents and take part in well-organized interactive show headed by Father Frost, an atheistic version of Santa Claus. Scripts are carefully edited and usually praise 'our achievements', leaders and heroic deeds.

1947: for the first time 1 January becomes an official holiday: from now on not only children but adults too can celebrate the New Year and drink champagne at midnight.

After Stalin songs and plays for children and adults became less and less politicized but 'the main holiday of the country' remained a state holiday. It acquired a lot of people's habits, feelings and spontaneous rituals. It even acknowledged its connection with Christmas but it remains an official holiday.

Even now at ten minutes to midnight the President congratulates the people and after his 'Happy New Year' greeting all the country hears the sound of the Kremlin clock tower as if family gatherings and corporate parties were still under the 'paternal' care of the State.

The procedures of celebration – place, entertainment, clothes, food – are supposed to be more important than in any other case, and not only because of magical thinking.

Svetlana Adonyeva, a philologist and folklorist, draws from anthropology to explain how the mass symbolic practices of modern Russia can be both openly sanctioned as well as concealed, dissolved into routine acts. In her lecture 'Spontaneous Rituals in Contemporary Russia' given in the 'Strelka' Institute on 5 September 2014 she said, "Spontaneous symbolic activities are symptoms of stress of the social body. By deciphering the language of metaphors and mass gestures we can start to understand the conflict within the

society. The social body (that is a community within given time and space) lives: it ages, it gets sick, it adapts to change, it heals etc. A particular stress can be removed but the social body can never return to its original condition” (Adonyeva, 2014).

Moreno wrote in his article ‘Spontaneity and Catharsis’, “Conserving cultural rituals serves two purposes: they were of assistance in threatening situations and they made secure the continuity of a cultural heritage” (Moreno, 1940). We know that Moreno considered spontaneity to be opposed to cultural conservatism, even rescued. But in Russia of the twentieth century cultural memories sometimes suffered as much as spontaneity.

No wonder that our ‘Christmas Cleaning’ groups are motivated to change something in their uneasy attitude towards the ‘routine acts’ of meeting the New Year Eve. But what do we do to heal the culture of everyday?

Cleaning Technique: Ecology of Intervention

Let us introduce our ‘stage’ that adds a lot to the process. Our Institute occupies a former living apartment in an old house (D.O.B. -1911), located in the ‘old city’*. An ingenious designer used a certain amount of authentic lamps and door handles – and not only for aesthetic reasons: they were less expensive in the beginning of 1998. Our ‘Large Hall’ is just a large room with high ceiling, shabby floor and some pieces of old furniture mixed with more functional new chairs. The room is a usual place for training groups and group psychotherapy, lectures and presentations and even staff meetings: the place itself has long memories of its ‘former lives’ and different functions of today. One can easily imagine a tall fir-tree with hand-made Christmas decorations and candles in the middle – there is a place straight under an old lamp with coloured glass mosaics, where you can almost see a ‘fir-tree’s ghost’. And this empty space speaks for itself: the lifestyle of pre-war Moscow of the 1910’s has ‘gone with the wind’ a century ago. But two old armchairs and the lamp survived all the storms of the Russian XX century: they are so fragile, they could be destroyed many times, but here they are to help us.

So we have a powerful support from the room itself: the place seems strange but fascinating to many of our visitors, some even call it ‘magical’. Of course in a strange place like this there is a lot of ‘friendly spirits’: memories, associations and fantasies of the participants are easily evoked.

A team of directors usually starts by designing the event in November and the first meeting gives space for observations and vague (or clear) images of a year. What was new or special in our on-going and short-term groups, what

new facts, processes or words came to life, what collective feelings stayed unexpressed in the social world – these are the questions to be discussed? And then, little by little a script comes to life.

The very idea of 'Christmas Cleaning' needs special balance of the new and the old. Warm-ups, creative experiences, structured vignettes and sociodramatic suggestions are always new – some are really invented, some are borrowed from other practices and just restyled. There were dozens of them: as examples of special use of creative arts we can mention transformation of surgical masks into art objects (the year of bird-flu panic) or making a Dark Snowman – it will be introduced later – of old newspapers, or using pieces of fishing-line and old buttons to make a symbolic sequence of significant personal events of the year.

But some structural features and processes never change.

There are always three sessions with two coffee breaks. We start at 11am and finish at 5pm because people are really very busy and very exhausted – but also to avoid traditional 10-18 frame.

The event is non-commercial: the Institute charges much less than usual.

We never introduce participants so that they can stay anonymous if they like and there is no protagonist-centered psychodrama.

There are no Christmas or New Year decorations unless they are used ironically. In 2008 we made a flat Christmas tree of garbage sacks that are pale green in Russia, it looked wonderful but people recognized mockery immediately.

Directors are always in the roles of *cleaning women* that are in Russia usually loud, tough and intrusive (old aprons, rubber gloves, mops and ridiculous clothes help a lot). These roles help us to add some 'salt and pepper' to instructions, but the more important meaning of our masquerade is grotesque devaluation of power and authority: our participants understand it very well. They know also that any cleaning woman with a mop resembles Baba-Yaga, an old witch from Russian fairy tales.

Postcards - season's greetings - are used in the same way every year.

We collect them carefully to offer all sorts of them: old and new, cheap and hand-made, strange and usual – so that each participant can choose the special one in the end of the first session. And then there are two minutes of absolute silence: one can begin to write a short letter to oneself, which is personal and confidential, and then there are two more occasions to continue and to finish the letter. Here contrast is used: triviality of a postcard is opposed to personal message to oneself, collective playful action ends with solitude and silence.

The first session is focused on the personal and collective events of the year. The questions it activates are about inner world (memories, unfinished

business, changes) of the year as well as simple practical things and shared experiences.

Culture of everyday has its own symbolic means to deal with important matters. Should something be kept or thrown away? Remembered or ignored? Repaired or replaced?

An Example of a Brief Intervention (Session 1, 2006)

A group was offered to think of objects – be it a piece of furniture or a book – that were many times ‘sentenced’ to be thrown away but still take their place in the houses. Next step was an invitation to say a few words from the roles of these objects to their owners. Here are some of the messages:

- I am a Hand-Made Dress. You will never put me on again: maybe I am out of fashion or maybe you are not as slim as you were. Do you remember how impressive we were together? Now you buy clothes and I look strange. Your daughter refused even to make a summer bag out of me... well, I understand... And still I tell you: don't get rid of me. I remind of your clever hands and of your younger days. Do you remember how much you worked and still had time for laughter, dance – and me? Your energy and creativity are still with you. Find a way to make new beautiful hand-made things, you miss it. And who knows? Maybe a small piece of my embroidery will fit...
- I am a Pile of Bricks on your balcony. You folks were going to renovate the kitchen and you needed bricks. Five years passed and you, Yuri, still stumble over me. Alone. Divorces happen, eh? You don't need that damned kitchen anymore, that's what I tell you.
- Speaking of balconies... I am an oak bookshelf used for all unnecessary items you don't dare to get rid of. I live in exile on your balcony. You keep them as if you don't believe in stability or safety: what if I lose my job? What if prices go up and I need that old grinder again? Look, that's crazy. Whatever happens you find solutions. You will never use that old stuff. Please, think of a new job for me. I don't want to hide your fears.

This piece of action took 17 minutes only, 12 participants spoke. People did not know each other's names or social status and there were deep feelings, laughter, tears and a lot of spontaneity. A collective ‘poetic reflection’ upon changes and good-byes could do without names.

We usually offer a lot of exercises in pairs, groups of three or five but it is important to introduce some activities so that one could withdraw or just look

and listen – so that people could choose level of involvement. This particular intervention had a special subtext too: one could decide whether to speak or not, “togetherness” was not forced. Those who did not act were involved emotionally and really amazed by their own feelings: important things, touching and even philosophical, could be easily expressed through such a simple role play! There was a good mixture of magic and sobriety and a lot of energy to move the session further, to other contents and activities.

More than once we offered ‘A dialogue with one’s Daily Planner’ – when a few days are left it is time to say goodbye...in a short vignette. Daily Planners usually represented criticizing and controlling parts of the protagonists’ personalities. In a series of 4-6 vignettes one could observe transformation of the group attitude towards these figures: from obedience and guilt to riot and resistance and then to change of balance between the whole and a part. As one of protagonists said, - “I am not your instrument, you are mine. I gave you too much power, you control my life. Thank you for your help but now I change the rules”.

Sometimes we offer a piece of sharing in the end of the first session, more often there are short sharing experiences in small groups of three or in pairs: it is important to maintain balance between the collective and the personal. Usually in the end of the first session people just select a postcard and start their letter. It is the best way to contain and signify a lot of feelings and ideas that are too personal to be discussed.

The second session is usually focused on the boundaries between the collective and the personal. “Should I join the rituals, is it really important for me to share atmosphere, ambitions or hopes of other people? Or, I can create something for my family and friends and begin a new tradition? Is it really necessary to eat and drink so much or we just try to avoid fear or sadness or something else?”

An example of brief intervention (session 2, 2002)

It’s time to introduce our Dark Snowman. The scene described below started with a short sociodrama ‘New Year Trivialities’ Fair’: a group spontaneously staged a metaphoric Marketplace with ‘special offers’: illusions, fake feelings, socially desirable achievements and other ‘New Year Musts’. It was artistic, rather wicked, full of grotesque and exaggerations and a group roared with laughter.

The Dark Snowman was created at the beginning of the session – a big puppet made of old newspapers. It stood in the corner. The ‘Fair’ was over,

people de-rolled themselves and a simple question was asked, “What is beyond all this noise and inflated excitement? What else can be felt in the air?” People answered the question from the role of Dark Snowman (they could stand behind the puppet). Here are some of their answers.

- I am here, just behind your fake enthusiasm. I am your fear of emptiness and isolation. Do you really hope to forget it with loud music and vodka?
- When you are so agitated, you can ignore a simple truth: all your magic wands are made in China. Real magic can be created only, you cannot just buy it.
- Who taught you that holidays produce pleasure only? Everything in this world has a shadow. I am this shadow.
- Joy and hope need sadness and fear. If you do not see me, you lie to yourself. The more you do so the more disappointed and lost you are. “Where is joy?” you ask yourself if you dare to. Mourn your losses and face your fears, only then you will find pure joy and new hope. And then you can feel what is there to celebrate.
- I am here to remind that time passes and life is short. Maybe it could be wiser not to spend so much time in a marketplace.

And then people could come back to the circle and say something to Dark Snowman to end this scene. Mostly they wanted to thank. This character brought back the existential dimension of transition and reminded of culturally conditioned limitations, disowned feelings and deeper aspects of holidays.

Messages that seemed ‘dark’ added meaning and awareness. To make a symbolic integration we suggested a spontaneous group nonverbal action with our puppet. Some participants gave it a hug, a young lady added colour with green and red markers and finally after a collective slow dance they found a place where Dark Snowman could be together with a group ‘to tell us the truth if necessary’.

Some activities of the second session give an opportunity to express negative feelings in a non-destructive way (like ‘Ugly Artificial Fur-Trees’ Contest’, ‘Classical Family Fights: Much Ado About Nothing’ or ‘How to Add Stress to Celebration’). When anxiety and aggression can be expressed in an artistic, creative way they lose some of their ‘poison’ and seem much more tolerable. For instance, when a group enacts in a short spontaneous sociodrama ‘The New Year Rules’ with, ‘You have to look happy’, ‘You have to over-eat’, ‘You have to wear high heels at any cost, even if tomorrow you cannot walk’ there is a lot of anger and resistance. The Rules usually look awfully stupid and people do a lot to make these characters as repulsive as possible. But in the end the roles are taken off and there is a chair in the middle and a

question, "What do I do with the Rules this year?" The answers go far beyond resistance as the social meaning of the rules is grasped with curiosity and surprise. The main insight on a personal level is about freedom to choose the rules and to transform them. In the end people have to be a little tired as emotional tension is discharged; there is space for new feelings. It is time to continue with a letter and after some writing to have a last coffee break.

It is almost impossible to plan the third session beforehand, there are some rough 'sketches' only and usually we change a lot according to real process. Still the main themes are hopes, unexpected findings of the year that have future, continuity of life, emotional resource. Once we enacted a collective First Dream of a Year, sometimes the 'dreamers' were not people but streets, lampstands and other city objects. It seems important that here some ancient or even eternal voices appear naturally. Stars and moon, a city or a night snowfall look at people – at least in our third session - with non-judgmental understanding, patience and compassion. The deep roots of 'rites of passage' are represented by voices and images that are old enough to give evidence.

Sometimes there are short meditations, once we even used an element of aromatherapy (fir-tree and tangerine oils, of course). It would be unwise to direct the whole session in a 'hypnodramatic' style: there are more vivid episodes and experiences (like 'Lost and Found of the Year' or a short enactment of the first day of next spring). But as a rule the third session is more quiet and contemplative than the previous ones. In the end our 'cleaning team' finishes the letters and takes postcards home. But before saying good-bye there is sharing. Usually there are a lot of subtle and well-differentiated feelings, some are more related to content and some are reflections of a process. People usually are amazed by the universality of the unspoken and, of course, by the creative power of a group.

Conclusions: Healing the Holiday

- 'Christmas Cleaning' attracts people of different backgrounds; usually they are united by their need to 'repair' or regain personal meaning of winter holidays' collective experience.
- A dialogue of cultural conserve and spontaneity/creativity gives birth to a complex unity that meets this need. Group work design represents this unity: well-known images and symbols are explored and redefined in a personal way, culture of everyday may be viewed as mysterious and deep, personal attitudes and feelings are rediscovered as internalization of the collective etc. Surplus reality helps

to add unexpected dimensions to familiar actions, roles and objects. The same is with metaphors, subtexts, humour, and use of prompts: they help to discover other meanings.

- This type of group work should maintain balance between the personal and the collective; sociodrama and psychodrama together with expressive arts are adequate tools. Flexible structure is essential: the balance mentioned above should be found in the group itself. The energy of a group can be channeled by relevant content, timing, subgrouping, sharing and many other well-known tools. However there should be clear messages that this is not group psychotherapy but rather an experiential exploration of thoughts and feelings so that people can be prepared for the New Year. For example, individual insights are contained in written form and usually not shared with a group of strangers.
- People do understand and can discuss the objective of group work of this kind. The idea of ‘healing the holiday’ was discovered by participants in several groups: they tried to describe their experience and give a definition. However it could not be offered before the experience itself and in many ways was its result. Direct motivation for those who joined the project were still ‘December distresses’, so we tried to know more about typical complaints and their dynamics after ‘Christmas Cleaning’.
- An informal survey of 200 participants showed that there were significant improvements in their functioning (‘less anxiety’ 60%, ‘taking more care of one’s emotional needs’ 50%, ‘less conflicts’ 40%, ‘finding a spiritual dimension of a holiday’ 30%, ‘doing something new and creative’ 20%). Still these figures should not be overestimated: people gave their answers in January and could feel better about winter holidays only. So perhaps the idea of ‘healing the holiday’ is the most relevant to the potential group members.

As one of our participants said: “I like the idea: meaning is not destroyed, it can be born again, re-created. If we can do it with our winter holidays, there is hope. Maybe other burnt or frozen segments of our life can be re-created as well...”

We agree wholeheartedly. And this is why ‘Christmas Cleaning’ is presented in this article: there are other places in the world where culture needs healing and here only one path was described. But sometimes one path is better than nothing.

References

- Михайлова Е., (2009). *Вчера наступает внезапно. Психодрама и культура повседневности*. Москва: Изд-во «Класс» [Mikhailova, E., (2009). *Yesterday comes unexpected. Psychodrama and culture of everyday life*. Moscow: Klass.]
- Киппер, Д., (1993). *Клинические ролевые игры и психодрама*. Москва: Изд-во «Класс». [Kipper, D. (1993). *Psychotherapy through clinical role playing*. Moscow: Klass.]
- Adonyeva, Svetlana (2014). 'Spontaneous Rituals in Contemporary Russia'. <http://www.strelka.com/ru/summer/event/2014/09/05/spontaneous-rituals-in-contemporary-russia>
- Fox, J., (1987). *The Essential Moreno*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.
- Naar, R., (1990). 'Psychodrama in Short-term Psychotherapy', Wells, R. & Gianetti, V., (Eds). *Handbook of brief psychotherapies, applied clinical psychology*. New York: Plenum

Figure and Ground in Group Analytic Theory and Training

Figura y fondo en la Teoría y Entrenamiento Grupo Analítica

Malcolm Pines (UK)



Malcolm Pines is a Past President of IAGP. He was a Founder Member of IGA (London) and former Consultant at the Tavistock and the Maudsley Hospital. He recently turned ninety and is in the process of collecting his papers together for the Archives at the Wellcome Trust in London. His book of collected papers is currently being prepared for publication by Routledge. Email: malcpines@btinternet.com

Abstract

This paper was resulted from rethinking the work of the Training Committee of the Institute of Group Analysis in the late eighties. We had spent many years devising a new curriculum, visualising what it could do if it did not have an already existing curriculum and could start from scratch. What was done over previous years was to put together a curriculum based on growing experience, inevitably it represented the accretion of the years and so we played with ideas of what we could do if we could start from scratch. What we were trying to do was to grasp the totality of what we were trying to teach. This paper simply stretches out my own view of the phenomenon of group analysis, how it comes to be and its position in the context of human sciences and the history of ideas.

Resumen

Este documento fue el resultado de repensar el trabajo del Comité de Formación del Instituto de Análisis de Grupo a finales de los años ochenta. Habíamos pasado muchos años ideando la elaboración de un nuevo plan de estudios, la visualización de lo que se podría hacer si no se tenía un plan de estudios y cómo se podría empezar de cero. Lo que se hizo a partir de lo recogido de los años anteriores fue unir un curriculum basado en la experiencia desarrollada, inevitablemente representó la acumulación de los años y consideramos las ideas de lo que podríamos hacer si pudiéramos empezar de cero. Lo que tratábamos de hacer era captar la totalidad de lo que estábamos intentando enseñar. Este documento simplemente explica mi propia visión del

fenómeno del grupo análisis, cómo se trata y su posición en el contexto de las ciencias humanas y la historia de las ideas.

The Place of Group Analysis in the History of Ideas

Group Analysts regard Foulkes' ideas as being a significant contribution to the history of ideas, a unique amalgam of psychology, which includes psychoanalysis, a psychology that also includes ideas from Gestalt psychology. It has a significant contribution from neurology, as a result of Foulkes' involvement with Kurt Goldstein. Goldstein's neurology, a Gestalt neurology, is a very significant development in the history of physiology and neurology. Lastly there is a very significant contribution from social psychology, from sociology and from history, from the idea of an evolution of man in a social context.

I shall try to put together a sketch of the origin and development of these different ideas, of psychology, of neurology, and of the human sciences of culture and of history. We have to go back not only to the nineteenth century, but a long way further back to see some of the ways in which ideas of human development and human society have evolved over the ages. Principally, we do have to be concerned with the nineteenth century, because it is towards the end of the nineteenth century that psychoanalysis begins to emerge as the psychology of unconsciousness, in contrast to the psychology of consciousness. In the nineteenth century, when psychology developed itself as a separate discipline from philosophy, it was concerned with the psychology of consciousness, with the faculties, with attention, perception, and all the things for which an actual experimental science of psychology was set up. This was an atomistic reductive form of psychology set up for the first time in psychological laboratories and psychologists were quite triumphant that they had separated themselves from philosophers and were dealing with an empirical science.

The attempt to develop an exact science of psychology which was the psychology of consciousness, set aside, ignored or saw as redundant, many of the issues that concerned philosophers and psychologists previously, which were the broad sweep of human ideas, human nature, human feeling, human emotions, the nature of man in society; all these were put aside. What developed was an individual form of psychology; at the same time appeared sociology, an attempt to look at society without having to think about individuals, and in the gap between them, between the atomistic individual psychology and the sociology there began to emerge a social psychology in which the individual and society is meshed together rather than being separated into the individual and society, and that is where some of our ideas in group analysis emerge.

The psychology of consciousness was concerned with measurements and the idea of an association psychology, in which everything could be reduced to its elements. Gradually around about the 1890's people began to realise that it was not possible to go on reducing psychology to elements and an attempt to synthesise ideas came together. With this attempt at synthesis, we can see the beginnings of a Gestalt psychology of holisms; feelings, and the analysis of feelings and the understanding of feelings, begin to come back into psychology. This is connected with the work of Wilhelm Wundt in Germany, who was the first psychologist to set up a psychological laboratory and from whom a great deal of modern psychology begins. What tends to be forgotten about Wundt, is that he saw psychology as an attempt to grasp the totality of the human being, so that as well as setting up a psychological laboratory to study faculties, associations and memories, he devoted the last 20 years of his life to developing what was called Folk Psychology, in German: Volk Psychologie. It is translated as Folk Psychology, which is really the psychology of culture, myths, legends, language, all the ways in which the human being in society can be understood through his cultural products. Wundt set the stage for the study of a much broader dimension of psychology in terms of myths, legends, language, and the historical development of the individual. He studied different societies, different myths, different legends, the different ways in which the human culture, the human family developed.

At the same time as Wundt was developing his ideas, which are in contrast to isolationism and the attempt to reduce psychology to its smallest elements, there were also in the 1890's people who spoke for a completely different approach to the study of mankind, an attempt to study, to restudy the soul, the mind, the total personality; in France, the ideas of Bergson 'elan vital', the stream of consciousness that cannot be reduced to its elements, which has to be studied in a totality. The changes in the intensity of feelings and ideas are not quantitative, they are qualitative, and therefore are not measurable. One has to find another way to approach and to grasp the nature of feelings, the nature of the mind, the continuity and the flow of ideas; we see this in literature, in Proust, in Joyce, in modern literature that looks at flow and continuity rather than the breakdown into isolated events. In America, William James whose study of the self, the person and the stream of consciousness, grasping the paradox of how we have continuity within change so that even though there is a stream of thoughts or feelings or attitudes that can vary so much, there is still an identity theme, there is something that holds the whole self together. James wrote so well about the self, as the personal self, the social self and the spiritual self, the basic building blocks for the psychology of self and identity that we still need today.

The Social Self

Studying the personal self and the social self, is where group analysis is, understanding the relationship and interpenetration of the personal self and the social self, the ‘I’ and the ‘me’ as he called them; the ‘I’ as the knower of the self and the ‘me’ as that which the ‘I’ knows about: “I know myself”. Much of the ‘me’ side of the self is the introjection, the internalisation of society that makes up the me, but also there is my own individuality, the uniqueness of the self that knows the self. James’ work continued into the work of Dewey and George Herbert Mead in the Chicago School of Symbolic Interaction, which I find relevant to the theory of group analysis. So here we have psychology that was atomistic, then synthetic, and then holistic, an attempt to grasp the nature of the whole rather than to reduce things into parts.

Within psychology the development of Gestalt psychology that comes about the period 1910, Wertheimer, Kohler and Koffka, come together significantly. Their fourth meeting, when they tried to develop this new school of psychology, Gestalt psychology, occurred in Frankfurt. Frankfurt is a nodal point for a great deal of group analysis, because it is there where Foulkes worked. It is at Frankfurt where the study of Marxism and psychoanalysis, of economic forces and psychological forces, came together, influencing the synthesis that Foulkes attempted to evolve. It is where Eric Fromm and Freda Fromm-Reichman started and where modern sociology and psychoanalysis starts to come together.

The Whole Person

In Gestalt psychology, which is an attempt to grasp the whole of the thing rather than to study the parts, the Gestaltians study perceptions, how it is we can recognise a tune whatever key it is put into; how is it we can follow themes and wholes, how perception is always a totality of an act and not a part of an act. Ingenious work was done in the field of perception to show that we always actively attempt to grasp the whole of things; this is an important element in modern psychology and is eventually what contributes to group analysis.

Within the field of Gestalt psychology originate concepts such as figure and ground in the work of Rubin, the Danish psychologist, who developed the famous two vases that become a face picture, which shows that perception is always actively working between figure and ground; Gestalt comes into neurology through the work of Kurt Goldstein. Goldstein, best known as a neurologist, was also deeply interested in psychotherapy; a critic of psychoanalysis

but knowledgeable about it, Goldstein saw neurology as an aspect of biology. It was not a separate science, it was an aspect of biology, of the human organism and his most significant work, the book 'The Organism' written in 1924 is devoted to this theme. In Frankfurt he set up an institute for the study of brain injuries, which during the First World War became significant as a place for the study of brain damage, for active treatment and rehabilitation. Goldstein was not simply interested in diagnosis, he was concerned with how does the human person react to such significant traumata as brain damage, how does the person attempt to compensate, to cope and to integrate the damage into the function of the whole personality? Goldstein's work was concerned with both the most-minute study of cerebral and psychological function. He studied how the aphasic patient struggles with the brain deficit that does not enable him to communicate; how does the person adapt to all the difficulties he has. His study of the damaged CNS showed that it is the function of the whole organism, not simply of a restricted part of the central nervous system, but of the whole person and of the whole organism, all the reflexes, the balancing reflexes, tonic reflexes, all these things are altered if you minutely examine the person; everything is different, everything is concerned both with the damage that the organism has suffered and the attempt to adapt to the damage, so that the person functions as well as possible within the capacity of recovery of the central nervous system. His emphasis was on the organism trying to find the best possible adaptation to its circumstances; its circumstances are both the situation which it is in, figure-ground, organism in the environment, but also adaptation to its own inner condition, its damage, the functioning.

The Contribution of Neurology

Neurology has been very important both in the development of psychoanalysis and of group analysis, but there are two different neurological models. The British work of Hughlings Jackson had a very considerable influence on Freud. Hughlings Jackson had shown how the central nervous system functioned in levels; there is always the primitive level of functioning, inhibited by the function of the spinal centres, which are inhibited by the functions of the brain stem, then the cortex, so there is constantly a system of levels. In a symptom, the function of a lower level that had been inhibited by a higher level has now come into prominence, therefore the spasticity, the tremors, or whatever, emerges as a result of the damage of the higher level which is now released from the inhibitory action, so that the lower level show through. Freud, who was very well aware of Jackson's work, and who, like Jackson,

worked on aphasia, where his most considerable work in neurology was, took over Jackson's ideas; the id represents the basic levels, the primitive levels of functioning of the mind, corresponding to the primitive levels of the nervous system; the ego and the superego represent the higher levels, culture taken into the personality, that blocks the primitive. When the primitive is released in the individual as a result of illness the id pressures overwhelm the ego, in group psychology the mass, the group, releases a person from the inhibitions at the higher level so we see the primitive function in mass crowd group situations.

Goldstein's model was a different one. Goldstein said we cannot understand aphasia, the damaged person's functioning by studying the levels of the nervous system, because we have to study language, psychology, the adaptation of the individual; that will tell us what is happening to the brain damaged person. What we see is the function of the whole person adapting to the damage and to the environment. So here we have a different form of neurology, a psychodynamic neurology, significantly different to Jackson's neurology. Jackson's neurology influences Freud's psychoanalytic theory of the individual; Goldstein's neurology sees the individual functioning as totality in relationship to the environment; Foulkes took that approach into his model of the functioning of the individual and of the group. Goldstein's model is a model of adaptation and actualisation; it is the struggle of the person to find the best possible adaptation to their circumstances. Within psychiatry this led directly to the work of Freda Fromm-Reichman working with psychotic people in Chestnut Lodge. The Sullivanian group were also working in that field and Sullivan was the first person to work with groups of psychotics and to examine the environment of the psychotic, to look at the ward situation rather than the treatment of the individual. Goldstein's work led to work like Maslow's ideas of self-actualisation and to a considerable input into the latest schools of humanistic psychology, so Goldstein's influence was very strong in that direction.

Situating the Individual in Historical Time

Significant about Goldstein's work is that it is an adaptational psychology, which means that as the environment changes, so individuals have to change in their adaptation to the environment. In what way is that different to the basic Freudian psychoanalytic model? The thesis that I put forward is that looking at psychoanalysis in terms of the history of ideas, what you see is that psychoanalysis is developed at a certain era in European history by a particular set of persons, who have a need to struggle with their own social environ-

ment, to find a way of adapting to this environment and psychoanalysis is the theory which represents their adaptation to that environment.

Very briefly, the theory is that Freud, a member of a particular social class, the emerging middle class, a Jew in a difficult anti-Semitic environment, blocked in his progress, moving from neurology to psychology, incorporating a number of neurological ideas into this, developed psychoanalysis as what has been called an 'a-historical and counter-political psychology'. What does this mean? Firstly, that Freud does not see psychoanalysis as an historical phenomenon; he sees psychoanalysis as applicable right back to the early history of mankind; the struggle with the impulses, the gradual development of ego, inhibition of impulses and slow development of culture. Basically the same model would apply over historical time because Freud does not take into account developments in history and society. A 'counter-political psychology' means that the individual, any one person, be they peasant, plebian, capitalist, aristocrat, monarchist, governor, slave or master, has much the same internal structure; they all have id impulses, struggle with internalised parental figures, particularly in Freud's early psychology, with father figures who we have all internalised into our superegos. Basically it is an Oedipal level struggle of the individual against the internalised parental images. Whosoever you be, you have the same internal structure; you have the same struggles, be you a member of the ruling class or a member of the oppressed classes. In that sense it can be described as a counter-political psychology, one that flattens the hierarchy of society and presents a universalistic psychology, which can discount social psychology.

There is much research into the politics of the time and into Freud's individual development to show how he developed this particular unique psychology. Now if that is so, and it is a contestable thesis, what is missing in a psychoanalytic psychology, what we need to bring in is a more comprehensive psychology of the individual in society, to bring back history, philosophy, the history of ideas, to see how to situate the individual in historical times. Much of the history of psychology is the history of the individual, but there is also a branch of psychology called that of the 'supra individual', a term that we are not very familiar with in English, which I came across in an interesting book on the history of psychology written by Muller-Frienfels, a German, in 1935.

The 'supra individual' is that which has been beyond and above the individual: culture, history, language, all those things which the individual is born into and is totally unconscious of, because we are simply born into that situation and we have no idea that it would be possible to be immersed in a different sort of society; our language is the language, our family structure is the family structure. In group analysis there is a history of the supra-individu-

al which we call ‘the social unconscious’, because we are unaware of it until something happens to make us conscious of it; like figure-ground, it is the ground in which we are immersed until suddenly we come up against an event which makes us aware of it as the figure rather than the ground.

Foulkes’ ideas about the individual as a nodal point in a network begin to emerge in the history of ideas; through Goldstein in the form of psychodynamic neurology in which the central nervous system always functions as a whole, where any neurone or system within the central nervous system is part of the total whole and it is that network of the whole that we have to study. It comes out clearly in the German philosopher and historian Dilthey; a turn of the century person who died in the 1920’s, he was a considerable contributor to modern philosophy. Dilthey describes the person as being immersed in human networks. He made a famous distinction between the cultural sciences and the natural sciences; the natural sciences are based upon material, cognitive structures and association; then we study nature as external to the individual, foreign, outside ourselves.

In the cultural sciences, the study is of the facts of inner experience, emotions and the will. The individual is inter-penetrated by objective, socio-cultural reality, the society, which is our world. Foulkes uses similar words, that we are penetrated to our very core by the colossal forces of society and raises this as a counter argument to psychoanalytic instinct theory. Psychoanalytic instinct theory, now undergoing radical revision, postulates that the mind is a mental apparatus driven by instincts, basically biological. Though this has been largely replaced by a more motivational psychology there is the idea that there are driving forces within the individual, the primary drives of sexuality and aggression. Foulkes says we are penetrated to our basic core by the colossal forces of society, by which he means history, language, culture; the situation in which we are immersed. Dilthey said the same: the cultural systems of religion, art, justice, science, language and morality are the enduring systems embodied in individuals, each individual is the crossing point of several systems. Here too we have the idea of the nodal point and the crossing of systems. Dilthey was concerned with the issues of what is the nature of inner perceptions, the *erleben*, the direct experience. A great interest in the late 19th/early 20th century psychology was how to separate the act of perception from the content of perception, act psychology, originating with Brentano, the idea that psychology is always the active grasping of something by the will, a direct experience which we can separate from the content of what has actually be understood and grasped. The experience that Dilthey called *erleben* was the phenomenon of the entire mind altogether: a single occurrence born into the totality of mental life by connections, which cannot be explained, they

can only be understood. He negates the reductive attempt to explain everything but turns towards the grasping of an understanding within psychology and the different cultural sciences, the difference between explaining and understanding is important; some psychologies attempt to explain everything, others attempt not to explain things but attempt to understand them. What is the definition of understanding? Understanding is of the nexus, a word that Foulkes uses — plexus and nexus — a nexus of meaningful relationships, grasping the inner meaningful nexus in the life and actions of an individual, to penetrate into the specific system of values of a mental nexus. Dilthey sees psychology as a cultural science, an attempt to grasp a complexity of things and to bring them together into the grasp of formal understanding. In that he follows some aspects of German romantic psychology, the 19th century psychology exemplified by Goethe, who coined the word ‘Anschauung’ that leads to ‘Weltanschauung.’

Society and History

Foulkes was influenced by the sociologist, Norbert Elias, who lived to the age of 90. Elias’ classic works were related to the study of what he called ‘The Civilising Process’. Elias’ first volume on the civilising process is well worth reading because of the different viewpoint that psychoanalysis leaves out, the psycho-historical perspective. Foulkes’ two reviews of Elias’ works appeared in the *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* before the Second World War. Elias had studied the evolution of social structures such as manners, etiquette, the way in which we handle the most basic aspects of our organic living. Looking back, say to the 13th century, how do people regard their bodies? How did they regard the nature of the functions of eating, excreting, sexuality, living together in society? How did they arrange their living arrangements, how did they live together, how did they sleep? He studied the books of etiquette which tell people what is the right way to eat, for instance, moving from the way in which everybody had their food together in the same pot, putting their hands in and grabbing a bit, to the introduction of separate plates, the introduction of knives, forks and spoons, how these things develop over time. There is a point at which people do not do these things and then they gradually do them. What at one time was completely acceptable as the norm of human functioning became unacceptable; one develops separate places for spitting into, whereas in the past one spat anywhere, or threw the bones over one’s back and didn’t mind if the dog ate them up. Gradually people get ideas about cleanliness, of hygiene, that you don’t have intercourse in public,

you have a private room for that. Privacy develops before the public and the private sphere begin to differentiate, we internalise those ideas so we begin to develop a different psychic structure, with private parts of the self and other parts which are exposed to the public. These boundaries are constantly shifting, so that ideas of social morality, of things, which are sanctioned, guarded by the social defences of shame, guilt, inhibition, disgust, constantly shift and develop with the centuries. This is why Foulkes said that the individual is permeated to his very core by the colossal forces of society, because were we born several centuries ago, things, which are totally unacceptable to us now, were then normal and we would have behaved accordingly. The norm is always shifting, therefore the individual's drives are always changing; the sexual drives, the aggressive drives, the appetitive norms are always changing, because society is changing the way in which these things are handled.

The Influence of Erik Erikson and Others

When Foulkes was first developing his ideas he referred to the work of Erik Erikson, one of the principal people to introduce the social into psychoanalysis. Erikson, instead of writing about psycho-sexual development, writes about psycho-social development, in which he integrates the psychoanalytic drives and zones into ways of behaviour which are part of a particular society and which differ from one culture to another. Erikson's definition of the drives and of the instinctual nature of the human being is that, opposed to the animal, which is born with instincts which adapt them to nature, the human being is born with instincts which relate to a restricted segment of nature; that restricted segment he defines as the maternal environment, so the human individual is born adapted to relate to a maternal caregiving figure, not to be self fulfilling, but related to a particular segment of nature which is the caregiving environment. As we go up the evolutionary ladder we see this developing, so that as we reach the human being we find that the instinctual drives are constructed by the individual maternal infant relationship, that it is not simply a given drive but it is a drive which mother and infant fashion for themselves out of a particular individual interaction. Other theoreticians such as Heinz Lichtenstejn and Hans Loewald, whose work is also significant in this direction, have also built up the idea of a matrix relationship of the individual to the environment, which is close to group analytic ideas.

Conclusion

I have attempted to draw an impressionistic sketch of the way in which biology, psychology, the history of ideas, the history of society, come together as strands, as intersecting segments into what we then try to fashion into the background theory of group analysis. That theory gives us the capacity to construct new situations, the small therapy group, the median and the large group, to understand groups in society. We can then feel we have a valid tool for working with the individual because we have the tools to see the individual and the group as figure against ground; we have the ideas that the group functions as a whole, that the group tries to adapt itself, that the function of the conductor of the group is to enable to group to adapt itself to function as well as possible as a whole group in relationship to the environment, external and internal. The internal environment of the group is formed by the pathology that people bring into the group, so the group has actively to strive to adapt and to adapt optimally to the stresses that each individual brings to the group, but they also bring into the group the healthy adaptive functions of the individual within the group, so we have the balance between the group adapting both to its psychopathology and to its intrinsic capacity for developing as a healthy group.

References

- Dilthey, W., (1988). *Introduction to the Human Sciences*. Wayne State University Press.
- Elias, N., (2000). *Civilizing Process: The History of Manners*. Wiley: London
- Erikson, E., (1995). *Childhood and Society*. Vintage: London.
- Goldstein, K., (1939). *The Organism*. New York: American Book

Porque Psicodrama?

Why Psychodrama?

Dalmiro Bustos (Argentina)



Dalmiro Bustos (MD) Director del Instituto de Psicodrama de Buenos Aires (Argentina) y San Pablo (Brasil), medico psiquiatra., psicodramatista formado en el Psychodrama Institute Beacon, New York y Fellow de la IAGP. Profesor supervisor de la Federación Brasileña de Psicodrama e Autor de 21 libros sobre psicodrama y temas afines, además de numerosas colaboraciones y artículos.

Resumen

En este artículo doy espuesta a este interrogante planteé mi camino hasta llegar a identificarme con los postulados de Moreno, de su mano y la de su mujer Zerka fui conociendo el valor de las técnicas y pude comprender la vida desde un ángulo interpersonal. La comprensión del ser humano a partir del vértigo de la acción, me permitió acceder al mundo interno sabiendo que mi visión es subjetiva y cambiante a partir del vínculo establecido. La sociometría me abrió una comprensión dinámica de los grupos humanos y la palabra compartir (*sharing*) alcanzó todos los ámbitos de mi vida. Termino por compartir un sueño que estamos realizando en Argentina: la formación de grupos de pares en todos los lugares donde vivimos, partiendo del deseo y no de la obligación. Lo llamamos *llamada* y no tiene condicionantes económicas. El modelo ya lo han adoptado diversos países y puede ser un camino que confluya hacia la IAGP, la que se encargaría de la organización de los Congresos mas numerosos, a los que solo una mínima parte puede asistir constitución actualmente.

Abstract

In this paper I answer the first question I asked on my way to understanding Moreno ideas. In his and his wife Zerka's hands, I learnt the value of technique so I could understand life from an interpersonal angle. Moving from the whirl of action allowed me to access the internal world, knowing that my vision is always subjective and changes. Sociometry opened up an understanding of the dynamics in human groups and the word *sharing* reached all areas of my life. I conclude by sharing a dream

we are realising in Argentina: the formation of peer groups in every place where we live based on desire, not on obligation. We call it ‘The request’ (la llamada). It has no economic constraints. The model has already been adopted by several countries and could create a path towards IAGP, which is responsible for organizing numerous congresses, to which only a fraction of IAGP members can now attend.

Introducción

Mi experiencia en el campo de trabajo grupal desde 1957. Mi formación se desarrollaba como residente en Psiquiatría y la muy querida casualidad me puso inesperadamente frente a un grupo de pacientes. Navegué por varios mares en busca de ‘LA’ verdadera esencia de mi quehacer. Buceé en diagnósticos desde diferentes perspectivas y técnicas variadas. Viajé por el mundo en busca de ‘LA’ verdad. De todas las búsquedas fue quedando un buen aprendizaje. Mi querida casualidad me enfrentó con el Psicodrama. Me conmovió. Soy Latinoamericano aunque de raíz vasca y francesa y algo solo germina en mí si estimula mis afectos. Siento luego existo. Si lo que viene es sólo via racional, es probable que lo olvide rápidamente, números por ejemplo.

Las Fuentes

Me fui a las fuentes y conocí a Jacov y Levi y Zerka Moreno. Mi espontaneidad tuvo las alas y el permiso para adueñarme de absolutamente todo lo aprendido, desde el útero en adelante, y darle mi propia forma. Aprendí que los dogmatismos mecanizan y cierran, el conocimiento que surge desde adentro como convicción ofrecida, autoriza a una transformación de cada tema. Nadie escucha lo que se dice, sino que al incorporarlo lo transforma. Hacerlo no era un pecado, era vitalizarlo. Nietzsche, Espinoza, Sartre, Freud, y tantos otros maestros encontraron un canal por donde circular libremente transformándose continuamente. Recuperar la espontaneidad comenzó a ser un objetivo terapéutico. Participar en plena interacción me dio una gran libertad creativa. La señal concreta de que estaba llegando ya que felizmente solo se llega cuando la vida ya no nos puebla fue la desaparición sin cirugías de un problema de columna.

El alma humana dejó de ser patrimonio de las religiones. Nunca fui religioso. El “opio de los pueblos” nunca me trajo respuestas, así como ninguna otra droga. Respeto y a veces envidia, a aquellos que encuentran su sentido de vida en la religión. Pero no es mi caso.

Configuraciones

La nueva vibración que comencé a tolerar lentamente me llevaba a entrar en contacto con el caleidoscopio que es el ser humano: los mismos elementos pero en interminables configuraciones. . El alma no es algo lejano y misterioso, es esto que me hace querer compartir mi camino, es mi sonrisa al ver mis nietos, es mi enojo frente a los abusos de poder de cualquier índole. Si no se está a pleno frente a un paciente o alumno, nada positivo puede pasar. Es la cualidad indispensable para que la materia se humanice. El aliento vital, cualidad inherente al ser vivo.

Moreno y Zerka me hicieron sentir persona, no observado sino en un vínculo real y concreto. El encuentro solo se produce cuando un alma entra en contacto con la otra. El sufrimiento genera miedo al contacto, al juicio de valor que señala que el camino al amor y al soñado éxito, es incorporar modelos fijos de conducta a los que hay que obedecer, ajustarse. Como el alma no es tonta, se esconde. Y se comparte la vida a través de estereotipos “aceptables”. Es como si la vida creara una *pausa*, que muchas veces se convierte en *stop*. Moreno se decía delirante para desde allí decir sus verdades. Muchas instituciones creadas para albergar, terminan convirtiéndose en prisiones en las que predomina la lucha por el poder. Poder como verbo es indispensable en todas sus conjugaciones, yo puedo, tu puedes...Pero generalmente la lucha por aferrar el poder lo sustantiva, convirtiéndolo en algo en si que hay que poseer. Y el verbo al sustantivarse se congela.

El modelo soñado por Moreno en su manifiesto de Mittendorf, diseña su modelo de sociedad. Esta sociedad se encuentra conformada por afinidad. No hay buenos o malos, está el derecho de elegir. La democracia lo postula, lástima que sean los hombres los que la ejercen y por nuestra eterna fantasía de detención del tiempo, la tratan de aprisionan convirtiéndola en tiranía. La xenofobia nace de este conflicto entre el singular y el plural. El yo contra el nosotros. Sin pensar que en el nosotros el yo está incluido. El individualismo salvaje no percibe que el yo está exaltado en el nosotros, no negado. No es la eterna polaridad entre egoísmo o altruismo. Estas falsas opciones nos llevan a no comprender que el alma humana no sabe de estas dicotomías. Y las personas más veneradas en el mundo son justamente Martin Luther King, Gandhi, Mandela, y tantos otros cuya vida se realizó en la lucha por un ideal. La religión lo llama renunciamiento. Es lo contrario, es la exaltación del yo en el nosotros. Es ir más allá de las fronteras individuales.

Procesos

Moreno creó con otros la IAGP. Su sueño era superar las divisiones y las vanas luchas por el poder, donde el predominio de una corriente frente a la otra fuera sustituido por el respeto y el aprendizaje. En la etapa en la que participé, y fueron 9 años, la descalificación de las ideas de otros superó siempre a la posibilidad respetuosa de la postura de cada uno. Moreno lo sabía. Personalmente en los años que pertencí al Board, no lo conseguí. Me sentí bastante inútil en el afán de invitar a compartir. Esa palabra es la clave de la comunicación propuesta por Moreno. En el compartir cabe la disidencia, no hay que pensar lo mismo, ni pelear por quién tiene razón. Compartir el decir lo suyo, no contra nadie, sino afirmando lo propio abierto a otra visión enriquecedora o no. Felizmente se pudo crear células en las que se reúnen grupoanalistas, psicoanalistas, terapeutas de familia etc.

Respeto y apoyo a los que siguen luchando por crear esta casa para todos. Pero como buen Vasco que soy, insistí en mi *sueño* y fundé en Buenos Aires un modelo institucional. Lo llamé *Llamada por una forma de Carnaval* que en Uruguay busca que cada barrio cree una danza o conjunto y visite a otros al son de los tambores, van juntándose y confluyendo en una creación conjunta espontánea. Convidé a los psicodramatistas de todas las corrientes a que nos juntemos un sábado por mes, sin condicionamientos económicos ni de grado de experiencia, para ir compartiendo cada uno su forma de hacer psicodrama. Creamos un grupo de mail para que aquellos que no pudieran concurrir, tuvieran la oportunidad de participar. Las puertas son de libre entrada y salida, no hay líderes que no sean los elegidos cada vez en forma natural. La expansión ha sido progresiva y surgió la Red de Psicodramatista de Argentina, que nos representa frente al Foro Iberoamericano. Pertenece por deseo y no por obligación o deber.

Sueños

To dream again es el título del último y bellissimo libro de Zerka. Y esto es también un legado de Moreno. Personalmente me permitió dar fuerza a mis sueños. Por esto invito a través de este medio a soñar juntos. Sabemos que la IAGP cumple hoy la función de congregar a terapeutas del mundo, organizando congresos. También lo hacen los subgrupos de las diferentes modalidades de trabajo. Pero no nos engañemos, esto llega a una pequeña parte de psicoterapeutas, que pueden pagar pasajes de avión y las inscripciones a los congresos. Sobrevivir en nuestra profesión es azaroso. Y ahí viene mi propuesta.

En cada lugar del mundo, convocar a los psicoterapeutas a reunirse sin mediar el pago de dinero. Sin líderes formales. Sin banderismos. *Compartir* experiencias, saberes e ignorancias. Actualmente los terapeutas trabajan y acuden a supervisiones caras, cursos, actualizaciones etc. Cuya importancia no niego, pero este espacio, no compite con los otros. Grupos de pares convocados localmente, auspiciados y estimulados por la IAGP. De estos grupos pueden surgir canales de integración a la entidad central, la que no quedaría restringida a aquellos que pueden pagar. Claramente estoy apuntando al más ignorado de los postulados Morenianos: la Sociometría.

Respuestas

Con el fin de no prolongar más este artículo, deseo terminar intentando responder a la pregunta que postulo en el título: Porqué psicodrama? Por qué me permitió comprender al ser humano siempre en su contexto social. Me ofreció canales metodológicos coherentes para rescatar la perdida espontaneidad. Me permitió ser yo mismo, llorar, reír, saber, ignorar, tener certezas, dudas, miedos...No estancarme en un nihilismo pesimista, animarme a equivocarme y aprender de los errores. Compartir y evitar juicios de valor, opiniones, Huir de dogmatismos y fundamentalismos, buscar la gran verdad sabiendo que solo existe en la suma de pequeñas verdades de los grupos humanos. No temer el caleidoscopio en el que somos una parte minúscula. Y nunca dejar de soñar.

Máscaras, cuerpo, y escena en un grupo

Mario J. Buchbinder (Argentina)



Médico, Psicoanalista y Psicodramatista, escritor, poeta. Fundador de la Sociedad Argentina de Psicodrama y fundador y director del Instituto de la Máscara. Ha publicado numerosos ensayos y libros sobre psicoterapia, psicodrama, lo corporal, las máscaras, así como poemas y obras de teatro, algunas de ellas han sido estrenadas en teatros de Buenos Aires da conferencias y talleres en el Norte y Sur de América y Europa. Email: mario@buchbinder.com.ar

Resumen

En este artículo se describen cuatro sesiones de un grupo terapéutico, se destacan fenómenos de identificación y desidentificación, estructuración y desestructuración y algunas técnicas relacionadas con la presencia de máscaras, cuerpo y escenas.

Introducción

En la primera sesión, varios miembros del grupo participan en la dramatización de una de las entrevistas a las que concurre Antonio para conseguir trabajo. se escenifica el momento en que es entrevistado por tres personas en una empresa, representados por los compañeros del grupo.

En la segunda sesión, los integrantes del grupo usan máscaras para construir personajes ficticiales que los descentran de sus recurrentes historias personales a la par de conectarlos con las mismas.

1. Juana elije una máscara que la lleva a caracterizarse como una bruja que vuela y vuela por distintos lugares realizando “buenas” acciones y también “maldades” con su varita mágica.
2. Pedro se viste como Superman con una máscara que lo ayuda en esa caracterización y juega con lo invencible.

3. Antonio es un linyera que pide limosna a los otros integrantes del grupo.
4. María es una profesora de gimnasia que trata de dar clases a sus compañeros.
5. Cecilia usa una máscara con la boca cerrada, lo que le impide expresar lo que le pasa, siente, ni el cuerpo ni con la palabra.

En la tercera sesión, surge una vertiente que denomino del *no-saber*. Emerge cuando al usar las máscaras y los disfraces, tanto el coordinador como los compañeros del grupo construyen imágenes caracterizaciones y, como resultado, nadie sabe quién es quién en el escenario de la sesión.

Estos distintos personajes son recuperados en la última sesión, la cuarta, que es sólo verbal. Allí, finalmente, se entrelazan relatos de la vida actual e histórica de cada uno de los integrantes del grupo junto con las construcciones ficcionales. Estas dos vertientes - por un lado, la realidad y la historia real de cada uno y por el otro, lo ficcional - se entretajan y generan condiciones para la elaboración y la sublimación. La dinámica tiene que ver con la palabra, la escena, el silencio y la expresión. Los pacientes más que referirse a un solo tema hacen asociaciones con aquello que le resulta importante a cada uno y la comunicación ahonda en lo personal y en aquello que queda por fuera de la persona, lo inmanente. Me refiero a aquello que es lo más humano que está por fuera de la conciencia y del encierro subjetivo, aquello que Deleuze denomina como *inmanencia absoluta* y que relaciona con el concepto de vida.

1. Juana cuenta que está por mudarse, que en poco tiempo ya se mudó 12 veces de casa y que está muy contenta con este nuevo lugar que encontró.
2. Pedro dice que le encontraron indicios de una enfermedad y que está haciéndose los análisis clínicos correspondientes.
3. Cecilia habla de su gran angustia y su dificultad para comer y transmitir con la palabra lo que le sucede.
4. Antonio dice que consiguió un nuevo trabajo luego de buscar mucho.
5. María dice que se siente tranquila y ya repuesta de un accidente que tuvo.
6. El intercambio ahonda en las significaciones y los entrelazados de las problemática individuales. Se va gestando una temática común que tiene que ver con el compartir. Es el pasaje entre lo personal y aquello que trasciende la entidad de cada uno.
7. Considero que es altamente terapéutico el entrelazado por esas vertientes. Se generan las condiciones para que, al final de la sesión cuando la retórica de la interacción es sólo un relato, éste alcance tal

intensidad de interrelación parece integrar todos los ejercicios realizados en las otras vertientes. Algo del ser y de la existencia surge de la tranquilidad de la interacción.

8. Cuatro vertientes
9. Hablo de cuatro vertientes que coinciden con las cuatro sesiones [programadas]:
10. la representación dramática de lo acontecido en la realidad de un paciente;
11. la construcción ficcional;
12. la construcción ficcional del *no-saber*;
13. la del relato, de lo discursivo.

La última sesión resignifica aquello que sucedió previamente en las sesiones anteriores. Pero en cada una de las vertientes se tejen distintos aspectos de lo vivencial y de lo reflexivo.

En la 1ª sesión, la representación de la realidad acentúa la identificación de la problemática de la falta y la búsqueda de trabajo, de Antonio, al ser dramatizado por algunos integrantes del grupo mientras otros hacen de ‘público presente’ hacen evidente la temática para todos los participantes.

En la 2ª sesión, a través de la vertiente de la construcción de lo ficcional, sucede que, al tomar distancia de la identidad, se resaltan otros aspectos de cada uno de los integrantes, como si fueran otros quienes se hacen presente en la sesión. Esto amplía el campo de significación y la posibilidad de expresión. Por ejemplo, cuando Antonio hace de linyera, por un lado, manifiesta la significación y el dramatismo que tiene para él estar sin trabajo y por el otro, su aspecto de nómada que se enlaza con el personaje de María -la bruja que recorre las diferentes comarcas con su varita mágica- evidencia el goce de no instalarse en un solo lugar. El personaje de ficción enriquece y amplía el relato.

En la 3ª sesión, la construcción ficcional del *no-saber* se da también en quien protagoniza esa significación ya sea como un personaje con una identidad clara o como un aspecto que toma vida, emerge en la sesión más allá de si tiene la estructuración de un personaje o no. Las fantasías inconscientes, incluso para quien las representa, tienen espacio en la sesión.

En la 4ª sesión, está solo la palabra, sin ninguna otra técnica; la palabra y el silencio; la posibilidad de dejarse llevar por ella, en este contexto, en el relato que articulo con los otros y donde confluyen las otras vertientes. No siempre se da así ya que cualquiera de las otras modalidades puede formular aspectos significativos, pero la palabra juega un “papel” muy importante.

Momentos paradigmáticos

Esta secuencia ocurrida en un GT, puede entenderse también como momentos paradigmáticos de un proceso grupal, no necesariamente concatenados, en los que cada una de las vertientes puede desempeñar un paso significativo en el camino de la cura.

En la vertiente 1, aparece la identidad y la definición de un conflicto o problemática. Son los aspectos de la identidad de un sujeto y de un grupo. Ocurre un decir y un hacer, en este caso, psicodramático, que podría también ser corporal, de máscaras, expresivo o de juego.

En la vertiente 2, la construcción ficcional propicia un distanciamiento de la propia identidad mediante la construcción de otra identidad que denominamos ficcional. Quien está atado a un conflicto comprueba que, en la sesión, puede transformarlo en otro de personaje que se relaciona con aspectos de la vida manifiestos por el propio paciente.

En la vertiente 3, el poder recorrer grados mayores de desestructuración a veces posibilita la deconstrucción de la versión única de una problemática. Requiere haber alcanzado por nivel del *no-saber* para que la reconstrucción de los recorridos fantasmáticos realizados se manifiesten como camino de la elaboración. La dialéctica y la oscilación entre deconstrucción y reconstrucción son altamente terapéuticas.

En la vertiente 4, el diálogo desde lo significativo de cada uno de los integrantes del grupo permite la creación de algo relacionado con la comunidad.

El diálogo surge no desde la indicación de lo que el otro debe hacer sino desde las resonancias de lo desconocido en cada uno.

En toda operatoria se deben tener en cuenta los pasajes entre la estructuración y la desestructuración

Cuando Antonio en la dramatización se inserta en el mundo laboral, relata los prejuicios que tenía para poder aceptar un trabajo. El poder elaborar estos prejuicios le permitió incorporarse a lo laboral en la vida real. La explicitación que realiza Juana en las sesiones acerca del conflicto entre el nomadismo y el sedentarismo le permite la búsqueda y la concreción de una nueva vivienda. A Pedro los análisis clínicos lo llevan a acelerar la necesidad de actuar ante el diagnóstico recibido pero las pausas entre las sesiones le permite encarar los estudios médicos con menos angustia. A María las elaboraciones de los duelos sobre su accidente a través de ejercicios corporales y dramáticos le da una cierta paz y la ayuda a superar lo post traumático.

Momentos de un proceso terapéutico grupal

	Fenómenos	Acontecimientos	Operatorias
Vertiente 1	Dramatización y realidad	Identidad del acontecer	Definición de la Identidad
Vertiente 2	Construcción ficcional	Nuevas identidades	Distanciamiento y transformación
Vertiente 3	Ficcional del no saber	Deconstrucción de identidad	Reconstrucción
Vertiente 4	Relato y discursividad	Nuevo acto psíquico	Resonancia y comunidad

Debo decir que al incorporar el no saber paradójicamente abre a otros saberes. Me sumo a Bachelard (1965) cuando afirma que “el no saber no es una ignorancia sino un difícil acto de superación del conocimiento”.

Heterogeneidad

Inscribo mi práctica clínica en lo que denomino, “Clínica de la heterogeneidad” y en la “Poética del desenmascaramiento y de la cura”. Creo que algunos aspectos de esta modalidad que describo pueden ser útiles en las diferentes aproximaciones a lo grupal, especialmente, la heterogeneidad y la poética. El sujeto que no es un individuo indiviso. Al hablar de la heterogeneidad incluyo la complejidad de los sujetos y de la subjetividad en general. No es extraño que en los grupos haya tendencias a uniformar los conflictos y los modos de ser. La clínica de la heterogeneidad marca como principio la protección de las diferencias y el derecho a éstas por parte del coordinador y de los integrantes del grupo. Heterogeneidad, también, respecto de los modos de expresión (palabra, gesto, lo corporal, escena, sonidos, etc.) de cada uno de los integrantes así como del coordinador.

Un grupo es por definición heterogéneo. Si no fuera así, equivaldría a ‘cero’ o a ‘uno’ cuando en realidad equivale a ‘n’ componentes más allá del hecho que algunos de ellos sean similares u homogéneos. En la situación clínica mencionada del GT surge (queda claro) la heterogeneidad del grupo y eso luego les permite construir un espacio común de diálogo y expresión ya descritas.

Poéticas

Defino mi práctica alrededor de lo grupal desde la *Poética del desenmascaramiento y la Poética de la cura*, Buchbinder, (2008, 2005) títulos, a su vez, de dos de mis libros. La palabra poética (del griego *poiesis*) remite a la creación en general y a la creación de imágenes en particular, la creación en la subjetividad. No existe el ser humano si no es en creación. Poética se relaciona con estética, con los estudios literarios y también se refiere al estilo, estilo de un terapeuta, de un paciente, de un artista etc.

Mi poética la defino a partir de la práctica y la teoría tanto en la cultura y el arte como en el campo de la salud. Desde 1975 como fundador del Instituto de la Mascara con Elina Matoso, he practicado clínica psicoanalítica, lo psicodramático, el trabajo corporal y expresivo, la investigación con la escena y la máscara, las puestas en escena y la escritura teatral, la poética y la ensayística. Con la denominación de poética, al modo de una máscara, juegue la utopía de querer unir aquello que está desunido en Occidente: el cuerpo y la palabra, la reflexión y la acción, el afecto y el entendimiento, lo uno y lo múltiple.

Considero que para un psicoanalista es imprescindible la definición de una poética así también como para psicoterapeutas, docentes, trabajadores de lo corporal y de lo social, de la escena, musicoterapeutas, arteterapeutas, psicomotricistas y para todo aquel que desarrolla su acción en el campo de lo humano en general.

Una poética implica una política de y en la subjetividad. La subjetividad entendida como política se refiere no sólo a las luchas por el poder sino también al poder implícito en la poética y en el lenguaje. Implica no desconocer el doble aspecto de experiencia e historia, Agamben (2001); del entrecruzado entre lenguaje y cuerpo, de la subjetividad individual y social.

La poética, entendida como la relación entre la subjetividad, el lenguaje, la ética y la política, es una prevención frente al logocentrismo y al empirismo.

A continuación, pretendo explicitar cómo las “técnicas y sus aplicaciones” que practico se me fueron revelando como modos del ser, pensar y sentir. Son técnicas y al mismo tiempo evidencian modos de la presencia y comprensión del ser y la existencia.

Al trazar el esquema de las “fuentes” o “destinos” de mi práctica, quiero destacar: las máscaras que revelan, al ser como semblante y como mito; el poema y el cuerpo al límite y plenitud del lenguaje; el ensayo como pensamiento entre lo general y lo particular; la práctica clínica, a la escucha en acto (teatral, psicoanalítica, psicodramática) como organizadora de la fantasía y de la realidad, que abre a la escena ontológica.

Conceptos interrelacionados con la práctica

Me refiero en este apartado a algunos aspectos (la escena, el cuerpo, el juego, la máscara, la palabra) de la práctica que realizo.

Escena

Lo escénico se refiere a un modo de análisis y de estructuración de la realidad. La sociedad del espectáculo representa la versión posmoderna. Lo escénico tiene que ver con el psicoanálisis, el psicodrama y lo teatral pero no únicamente. Es abrir a la escena, como espacialización y contundencia de lo real y de la fantasía. Con abrir a la escena, me refiero a su visibilización frente a la denegación de esta en muchas situaciones. Hablo de la escena primaria, secundaria, de la fantasía, de la realidad, de la historia de un sujeto, de un personaje; de un grupo, de una institución, escena histórica, mítica, cultural. La mirada sobre lo escénico tiene en cuenta el decir en situación, en un espacio particular (el escenario), donde el cuerpo, el sujeto y el otro son iluminados por esa mirada particular.

Hay una verdad producida por la acción dramática que es un revelar la subjetividad y la relación con el otro. Iluminación de un decir y un hacer que trasciende el hecho en sí, aunque debe contar con éste.

Las escenas sincrónicas (como las explicitadas en la vertiente 2 y 3) ocurren en un determinado tiempo en simultaneidad; en las diacrónicas, se destacan la diferenciación en el tiempo en el que van ocurriendo: presente, pasado y/o futuro (vertiente 1). Aunque la temporalidad es compleja y el presente puede actuar sobre el pasado (retroacción).

Las escenas pueden tener distintos orígenes y grados de estructuración. Podemos denominarlas: originarias (vertiente 3), primarias y secundarias (vertiente 4), en relación con conceptualizaciones de Piera Aulagnier.

Pueden tener la estructura clásica o la estructura de lo semiótico o protoescenas. En las primeras (vertiente 1) es posible diferenciar: conflicto, roles, protagonista, texto, desarrollo de la acción dramática y escenario. En la estructura semiótica o protoescena (vertiente 3), hay un cuerpo parcial o fragmentado. Las lógicas del desarrollo escénico tienen que ver con la lógica del proceso primario (por ejemplo, una cosa puede ser de una manera y, al mismo tiempo, ser su opuesto: hombre-mujer, vivo-muerto, actor-espectador, etc.) y establecer una relación particular entre la palabra, los objetos y el cuerpo.

Cuerpo

Lo corporal: da cuenta de un cuerpo presente y ausente, conocido y desconocido, erótico y alimentario. De lo interrogante del cuerpo. Tiene que ver con aquello que Freud define como el ombligo del sueño, tanto en su acepción metafórica como literal. El ombligo es el lugar de lo desconocido, el origen y también el punto corporal residual de unión con la madre.

Diferencio, junto a Doltó,(1986) esquema e imagen corporal. Esquema (como lo explicita Antonio en cuanto a la problemática de su cuerpo) se refiere a la estructura biológica transmitida por la especie, genéticamente, e imagen corporal, a aquella que se va constituyendo a lo largo de la historia de un sujeto, atravesada por el deseo, el lenguaje y la cultura. La imagen del cuerpo está tensada, a lo largo de su historia, entre la percepción de ella como unidad y la percepción de su fragmentación. La madre de los primeros años de vida es la garante de la posibilidad de la unidad. Es al mismo tiempo un cuerpo erótico (pulsión), histórico y de la cultura.

Hay una fluidez en su recorrido y a su vez están las corazas neuromusculares, descritas por Reich, que son detenciones de energía y significación en determinadas zonas, por ejemplo, la torácica. La incorporación del cuerpo al grupo (también en particular a la psicoterapia) se da desde distintos puntos de vista. La primera actitud es la escucha, o sea su no desconocimiento. El psicoanálisis es creado en diálogo con el cuerpo, encontrando los jeroglíficos del cuerpo y del sueño, dándole voz al cuerpo, especialmente al de la histeria. La contemporaneidad lleva a que el encuentro de los sentidos del cuerpo y su transformación requiera, junto con la escucha, “algo más”.

Los “agujeros” en las redes de significación social y cultural marcan determinadas situaciones existenciales y estructuras de la subjetividad, y el advenimiento y/o predominio de “otras” patologías que exigen correspondientes actitudes del terapeuta.

Mi práctica clínica, que resalta lo corporal, lleva a una relación particular con la acción, la representación, los afectos y la significación.

Máscaras

Acompañan al ser humano desde los orígenes de la humanidad y hacen presente lo actual, lo histórico y lo mítico. Diferenciamos las máscaras cotidianas que se constituyen en el transcurso de la historia de un sujeto, de aquellas máscaras construidas de diferentes materiales: éstas permiten revelar las primeras.

La máscara es el órgano de superficie del conjunto de las relaciones sociales. En la práctica clínica la máscara interroga la imagen del sujeto y de lo social. Establece puentes entre la imagen, los afectos y lo discursivo. Entre lo individual y lo social. (Cuando en el grupo se colocan máscaras los llevan a otros personajes que interrogan la identidad de cada uno y las relaciones entre sí.)

Oculto y revela, simultáneamente. Entre las múltiples y complejas posibilidades de incluir máscaras en la tarea psicoterapéutica distingo cinco funciones:

1. **Desenmascarante y reestructurante:** Cuando alguien se coloca y oculta detrás de una máscara se produce un efecto de desenmascaramiento. Hay posibilidad de desprenderse de máscaras repetitivas, conflictivas para la persona. También permite la reestructuración en otras máscaras, historias y significaciones frente a aquéllas en las cuales la persona está apresada.
2. **Balizadora:** permite marcar, balizar los puntos de conflicto a nivel del cuerpo o de la relación personal y familiar. La máscara marca una parte del cuerpo, un personaje, un momento particular.
3. **Metabolismo de la fantasía:** Permite salir de una determinada fantasía y producir su transformación.
4. **Construcción del mapa fantasmático corporal.**
5. **Metabolismo de la imagen:** hace presente la imagen predominante de un sujeto y promueve su conexión con otras imágenes. Lleva a un trabajo sobre la identidad.

Juego

La relación psicoterapéutica genera un campo de juego. Juego comunicacional, representacional. Frente al juego repetitivo, del destino, existe la posibilidad de ensayar otros juegos; esto nos conecta con los efectos terapéuticos del juego. La transferencia y la contratransferencia son analizadores de la calidad del juego.

El campo de juego es un campo de fuerzas del cual es difícil sustraerse. Los actores (actantes) en el presente son determinados y a su vez determinantes del campo.

El juego es un campo transicional entre el mundo interno y externo, entre yo y otro.

Las máscaras permiten entrar en el mundo de juego, llevan a la representación de aspectos y personajes de una persona y un grupo. Dan

la posibilidad de jugar otros juegos que los habituales de un sujeto. Las dramatizaciones y los diálogos explicitados en el grupo son modos de juego.

La palabra

Al decir de Heidegger (1960), “el lenguaje es la casa del ser”. Junto con el lenguaje y lo simbólico, está aquello que queda por fuera de éste, lo semiótico. Nuestra práctica clínica ha tenido siempre en cuenta esta doble vertiente de la relación humana. La palabra como acto en el cual está implicado el otro en los juegos del lenguaje, en una escena que lo determina al mismo tiempo que es determinada o creada en el proceso de su transcurrir.

Técnicas

Desde el psicoanálisis se trata de la escucha del inconsciente y de lo otro que hace síntoma, que genera dolor y sufrimiento. Junto con lo verbal se tiene en cuenta el cuerpo, la acción, el afecto que son esenciales para la comprensión de lo grupal. El psicodrama trabaja especialmente con el conflicto de la escena puesto en el escenario de la sesión. Se realza el valor del juego y la creatividad.

Estas prácticas pueden clasificarse en estructurantes y desestructurantes, con uso literal y metafórico de la máscara. Desarrollan las funciones terapéuticas de las máscaras, según han sido descritas anteriormente.

Fundamentos teóricos

Los distintos recursos técnicos, más que estar en contradicción con el psicoanálisis, lo recrean, interrogan y ponen a trabajar sus fundamentos. Las poéticas del desenmascaramiento y de la cura son el fundamento teórico de mi praxis.

Notas para concluir

El grupo es el entrecruzado entre la singularidad de lo individual y lo social en el que destacamos la comunidad. Son instancias distintas pero que se interrelacionan. Es importante poder diferenciar las particularidades de cada una de las instancias y los aspectos comunes.

La utopía del fenómeno grupal es llegar a las puertas de la subjetividad individual, asentarse en ésta y poder sobrepasarla para llegar, advenir a un lugar común que ya no es individual sino, común a lo humano, un espacio vacío, singular, particular y universal, comunitario. Es el lugar del umbral de la puerta, el de Jano, el dios de la mitología griega, de dos máscaras que custodiaba las puertas, la entrada y la salida. Es aquel que está definido por el deseo. Es la dialéctica del encuentro con lo continuo y lo discontinuo, la eroticidad y lo sagrado de la que hablaba Bataille. En la literatura se dice que si alguien pinta su aldea estará pintando el mundo de esta manera se da la relación entre, la música folklórica y lo universal, la particularidad de la sintomatología de cada uno y poder sobrepasar el goce narcisista y acceder a ese lugar vacío del ser.

La máscara de por sí exige un vaciamiento para acceder a un estadio de superación de lo humano que no es ni universal ni singular. El grupo deja de ser el lugar del fenómeno de masa para definirlo como un conjunto vacío, donde se genera ese ente denominado ser humano.

Las tareas de lo grupal tienen que ver, desde mi punto de vista, con el cuidado de la vida y con los cuidados ante la sociedad del espectáculo. Se replantea la relación de lo íntimo con lo público, la libertad de la vida frente al biopoder y la posibilidad de la escena al margen de la presión de la sociedad del espectáculo y la mercancía. Enunciaciones que menciono y que se relacionan con otros desarrollos que exceden los límites de este escrito.

Bibliografía

Por favor, consulte la versión en Inglés.

Group Work with Masks, the Body and Scenes

Mario J. Buchbinder (Argentina)



Dr Mario Buchbinder is a founding member of the Argentine Society of Psychodrama and Founder and Director of the Institute of the Mask, Mario Buchbinder is a psychoanalyst and psychodramatist, physician, writer and poet. He has published a number of books and essays on his work, as well as poems and plays. Some have been staged in theatres in Buenos Aires. He currently gives talks and runs workshops in North, Latin and South America and Europe. Email: mario@buchbinder.com.ar.

Abstract

In this paper, I describe the clinical experience of one therapeutic group and outline the implications for groups in general. This group had five participants who met over four therapeutic group sessions. I highlight the phenomena of identification and dis-identification, structuring and de-structuring using scene, body and mask work.

Introduction

In the first session, several members of the group participated in the dramatization of a job interview that Antonio attended in his search for work when he was interviewed by a group of three. He chose three people from the group to represent them.

In the second session, the participants used masks to construct fictional characters to de-centre them from their recurring personal histories and yet at the same time connect to them.

1. Juana chooses a mask that leads her to take on the character of a witch who flies to different places carrying out both good and bad deeds with her magic wand.
2. Pedro dresses as Superman, employing a mask that aids this characterisation, and plays at being invincible.

3. Antonio becomes a tramp and begs for alms from other participants in the group.
4. María is a gym teacher who tries to give classes to her companions.
5. Cecilia uses a mask with a closed mouth so she can neither use her body nor her words to express what she's going through.

In the third session, an aspect appears that I refer to as the 'non-knowing'. It appears when, through the use of masks and disguises, the group creates images that result in no one knowing who the others are on the stage.

These different characters are recovered in the last session, the fourth, which only uses words and no action. Here, finally, stories of each group member's past and present lives entwine together with the fictional creations. These two aspects – reality and each member's true history and fiction weave together and generate the conditions for elaboration. The dynamic of this last session is connected to the word, the scene, silence and expression. Rather than refer to only one topic, patients make associations with whatever they feel is important to them and communication expands on both the personal and what is beyond – the immanent¹.

1. Juana says she is about to move house. She has already moved twelve times within a short period and she is very happy with the new place she has found.
2. Pedro says doctors have told him that he has symptoms suggestive of an illness and he is going through the relevant clinical tests.
3. Cecilia speaks of her great anguish and her difficulty in both eating and verbalizing what happens to her.
4. Antonio says he has found a new job following a great deal of searching.
5. María says she feels calm and has recovered from an accident she had.

The exchange delves into the significance and connections between individual problems. A common theme begins to develop related to this sharing. This is the passageway through the personal that transcends the individual.

Making connections between these aspects is highly therapeutic. It generates conditions so that by the end of the session the rhetoric of interaction, which at this point is just a story, has reached such an intensity of inter-relation that it appears to integrate all the work undertaken in the other stages. Something of being and existence emerges in the tranquillity of interaction.

1 (Deleuze, 1995) 'That which is beyond the conscience and the confines of the subjective and relates to the concept of life, calls it absolute immanence.'

Four Strands

1. There are four strands that correspond to the four sessions:
2. The dramatic representation of real events from a patient's life;
3. The fictional construction;
4. The fictional construction of the 'non-knowing'
5. The discursive aspect – the story.

The last session redefines what happened in the previous sessions but each of these interweaves different experiential and reflexive aspects.

In the first session, the representation of reality accentuates identification of the problem of unemployment and the search for work, as in the case of Antonio, through its dramatization by several members of the group while others perform the role of the public. In different ways, the theme is made evident for all participants.

In the second session, through the fictional construction strand, taking a distance from individual identity highlights other facets of each member's character as if they were other people attending the session. This expands the field of significance and the possibilities of expression. For example, when Antonio takes on the character of a beggar, he manifests the significance and turmoil that being out of work has for him while at the same time his nomadic appearance, which links with the character taken on by María, the witch who travels about with her magic wand, demonstrates the pleasure of not settling in one place. The fictional character enriches and expands the story.

In the third session, the fictional construction of the 'non-knowing' also appears in whoever represents it, be that a character with a clearly defined identity or an emerging aspect in the session beyond the question of whether it has the structure of a character or not. Unconscious fantasies have a space in the session, even for those who portray them.

In the fourth session, only words are used. No other technique other than words and silence; the possibility of being carried along by them in the context of the story, where the strands of the previous sessions converge. It does not always happen this way since any of the other methods can formulate significant aspects but words always play an important role.

Paradigmatic Moments

The sequence I have just described can also be understood in terms of paradigmatic moments, not necessarily linked together, in a group process in which each strand performs an important role en route to the therapy.

In Strand 1, the identity, or aspects of the identity, of a subject or group and definition of a conflict or problem appear.² A saying and a doing occur, psychodramatic in this case, which could also be corporeal, mask-based, expressive, or playful.

In Strand 2, the fictional construction fosters a distancing from personal identity through the construction of another identity that we call ‘fictional’. Patients burdened with a problem find that they are able to transform this problem into a character that relates to aspects of their lives.

In Strand 3, the ability to explore higher degrees of ‘de-structuring’ sometimes allows the deconstruction of the belief that there is only one version of a problem. It is necessary to first reach the level of ‘non-knowing’ so that through reconstruction, the phantasmatic journeys undertaken manifest as the path of elaboration. The dialectic oscillation between deconstruction and reconstruction is highly therapeutic.

In Strand 4, the dialogue arising from the significance attributed by each group member allows the creation of something related to the community. The dialogue arises not from the indication of what the other must do but rather from the resonance of the unknown in each member. Throughout the whole process, the link between structuring and ‘de-structuring’ is taken into account.

As Antonio enters the world of work, he describes the prejudices he felt at the moment of accepting a job. The ability to work out these prejudices enabled him to go back to work. Juana’s elucidation in the sessions of the conflict between opposing nomadic and sedentary natures allows her to search for and find a new home. For Pedro, clinical analysis has prompted him to act in light of the diagnosis he received but the time elapsed between sessions allows him to face the medical tests with less anguish. For María, elaboration of the pain of her accident through drama and physical exercises gives her a certain peace and helps her to overcome her post-traumatic stress.

² I use the term ‘subject’ rather than ‘individual’ because the etymology of ‘individual’ refers to its unity and indivisibility, whereas ‘subject’ refers to a dichotomy, submission/subjection and autonomy/agency, and allows for a multiplicity of aspects and splits within its nature.

Key Moments in a Therapeutic Group Process

	henomena	Events	Processes
Strand 1	Dramatization and reality	identity of the event	Definition of identity
Strand 2	Fictional construction	New identities	Distancing and transformation
Strand 3	The fiction of the 'non-knowing'	Deconstruction of identity	Reconstruction
Strand 4	Story and discourse	New psychic act	Resonance and community

I should say that incorporating the 'non-knowing' paradoxically opens up other knowledge. I am with Bachelard (1965) when he states that, "non-knowing is not a form of ignorance but a difficult transcendence of knowledge".

Heterogeneity

Using concepts such as heterogeneity and poetics can be helpful in understanding that a heterogeneous individual is not an undivided individual but one that encompasses complexity. The tendency to standardise conflicts and ways of behaving is not unusual in groups. Heterogeneity is an approach that encourages the protection of differences. Both the coordinator and each group member have rights to have differences. Their heterogeneity methods of expression (words, gestures, body language, scenes, sounds, etc.) are also protected. A group is by definition heterogeneous although some groups may be more similar or homogeneous as in the clinical scenario just described.

Poetics

I define my approach to groups from the standpoint of 'The Poetics of Unmasking' and 'The Poetics of the Healing Process' (Buchbinder 2008, 2005). The word poetics (from the Greek poiesis) refers to creation in general and, in particular, to the creation of images; the subjectivity of creation. It relates to aesthetics, literary studies and also refers to style – the style of a therapist, of a patient and of an artist, etc. Every human being is 'in creation' and so it is essential for psychotherapists, teachers, social workers, body-workers or

for music therapists, art therapists, psycho-mobility therapists and for anyone who works with people.

My poetics come from a basis of practice and theory, based as much in culture and arts as in the field of health. In my clinical practice, in fact in all my work, I think about poetics. It makes it possible, as in the manner of a mask, to glimpse the utopia of wanting to unite that which is fragmented in the West, at play: the body and the word; reflection and action; affection and understanding, the one and the multiple.

Poetics implies ‘a poetics of’ and ‘subjectivity’. Subjectivity understood as policy refers not only to the battles for power but also the implicit power in poetics and language. It implies not failing to recognise the twofold nature of experience and history (Agamben, 2001); the crossover between language and the body and the individual and social subjectivity. Poetics, understood as the relationship between subjectivity, language, ethics and politics.

I now intend to outline how the ‘techniques and corresponding applications’ that I practise as ways of being, thinking and feeling. Although techniques they also denote types of presence and the understanding of being and of existence.

As I trace a schema of the ‘sources’ or ‘destinations’ of my practice, I want to highlight: masks that reveal the self as countenance and myth; the poem and the body at the limits and at the height of language; rehearsal as thinking between the general and the specific; clinical practice, listening in action (theatrical, psychoanalytic, psychodramatic), as the organiser of fantasy and reality that opens to the ontological scene.

Since 1975, as founding director of the Institute of the Mask with Elina Matoso, we have practised psychoanalytic psychotherapy and psychodrama with masks, bodywork, drama, movement etc. My background in theatre and poetry have also influenced my working methods and thinking.

Interrelated Concepts in Practice

In this section I refer to specific aspects: the Scene, the Body, the Mask, the Play and the Word.

The Scene

The scene refers to a way of analysing and structuring reality. The scene relates to psychoanalysis, psychodrama and theatre but not exclusively. It implies opening oneself to a drama in space that reinforces what is reality and fantasy. I refer to the primary and secondary scene, fantasy, reality, an

individual's history, a character, a group, an institution, or a historic, mythical or cultural scene. Looking at the scene takes account of what has been said in context, in a specific space (the stage), where the body, the individual and the other are illuminated by a new gaze.

Dramatic action produces a truth that reveals subjectivity and the relationship with the other; an illumination of a saying and a doing that transcends the event itself, although it requires its existence.

Synchronous scenes (such as those specified in strands two and three) occur simultaneously in a determined period of time. What stands out in the diachronic scenes is the differentiation in the time in which they occur: present, past and/or future (strand 1), although the timing is complex and the present can act on the past (retroaction).

The scenes may have different origins and different degrees of structuration. We can term these primal (strand 3), and primary and secondary (strand 4), in relation to the conceptualisations of Aulagnier (1977).

They may have a classical structure, or the structure of the semiotic. In the first (Strand 1), it is possible to differentiate conflict, roles, protagonists, text, the development of the dramatic action and the stage. In the semiotic structure (Strand 3), there is a partial or fragmented body. The logic of dramatic development is related to the logic of the primary process (For example, something can be one way and, at the same time, its opposite: man-woman, living-dead, actor-spectator, etc.) and establishes a specific relationship between the word, objects and the body.

The Body

The corporeal encompasses the present and absent body, the known and unknown, erogenous and alimentary; the question mark of the body. This relates to what Freud (2000) defines as the navel of the dream, as much in the metaphoric as in the literal sense. The navel is the place of the unknown, the origin and also the corporeal point of residue of the union with the mother.

I differentiate, together with Dolto (1986), between the body schema and the body image. Schema (as Antonio exemplifies with respect to his body conflict) refers to the biological structure transmitted genetically by the species. The body image is stretched throughout its history between the perception of its unity and its fragmentation. The mother in the first years of life is the guarantor of the possibility of unity. It is at the same time an erogenous body (drive) and a product of history and culture.

There is fluidity in its journey and there is also the neuromuscular armour described by Reich – blockages of energy and significance in determined places, for example in the area of the thorax. The incorporation of the body into the group (and also, in particular, into psychotherapy) occurs from various standpoints. The first attitude is that of listening, that is, of not being unaware of the body. Psychoanalysis is created in dialogue with the body, through uncovering the hieroglyphics of the body and dreams and through giving voice to the body, especially to hysteria. Contemporaneity causes the meeting of bodily sensations and their transformation to require ‘something else’ alongside listening.

The ‘holes’ in networks of social and cultural significance mark determined existential situations and structures of subjectivity and the advent and/or predominance of ‘other’ pathologies that demand corresponding attitudes on the part of the therapist.

My clinical practice, which highlights the corporal, leads to a particular relationship with action, representation and the effects of signification.

The Mask

Masks have been with us since the origins of humanity and manifest the contemporary, the historical and the mythical.

We differentiate between the everyday masks that form over the course of an individual’s history and those that are constructed from different materials that allow us to reveal who we really are.

In life, the mask is the superficial organ of all social relations. In clinical practice, it examines the image of the individual and of society. It simultaneously hides and reveals. Bridges are built between image, affect and discourse, and between the individual and the social. When members of the group put on masks, characters emerge that examine each group member’s identity and the relationships between them.

Among the multiple and complex possibilities that exist for the inclusion of masks in psychotherapeutic practice, I distinguish five functions:

1. Unmasking and restructuring: when people put on a mask and hide themselves behind it, an effect of unmasking takes place. This grants the possibility of casting off repetitive masks that are conflictual for the individual. It also allows the restructuring of other masks, histories and significations opposing those that have hold of the individual.
2. Way-marking: masks allow one to use beacons to mark points of conflict at the level of the body, or those of personal and family rela-

tionships. In this case the mask indicates part of the body, a character or a particular moment.

3. The metabolism of fantasy: masks allow one to leave a determined fantasy and produce its transformation.
4. Construction of a phantasmatic body map.
5. The metabolism of the image: masks make present the predominant image of an individual and promote connection with other images. This leads to work on identity.

The Play

The psychotherapeutic relationship generates a playing field for communicative and representational play. Opposing the repetitive play of destiny it gives the possibility of rehearsing other forms of play, which is what generates its therapeutic qualities. Transference and countertransference help us to understand the quality of the play.

The playing field is a field of forces from which it is difficult to withdraw. It is a transitional field between the internal and external word; between the One and the Other.

The actors in the present are determined by, and at the same time determine, the field. Masks allow entry into the world of play and lead to the representation of aspects and characters from an individual or group. They offer the chance to play new games different to those habitual to the individual. The dramatization and dialogue set out in the group become modes of play.

The Word

To quote Heidegger, "language is the house of being". Alongside language and the symbolic is that which lies beyond: the semiotic. Our clinical practice has always taken into account this double aspect of the human relationship: the word as an act in which the other is implicated in language play, in a scene that determines it at the same time as it is determined or created in the process of its passing.

Techniques

Psychoanalysis contributes the technique of listening to the unconscious to hear what becomes a symptom and generates pain and suffering. Together with verbal expression, we take into account the body, action and affect, which are essential for the comprehension of the group phenomenon. Psychodrama works in particular with the conflict in the scene put on stage. The

value of play and creativity is highlighted. These practices can be classified as structuring and de-structuring, with literal and metaphoric use of the mask. They develop the therapeutic functions of the masks, as previously described.

These different technical resources, rather than contradicting psychoanalysis, recreate it, examine it and put its principles to work. The poetics of unmasking (*Poética del Desenmascaramiento*, 2008) and the Poetics of healing (*Poética de la Cura*, 2008) set out the fundamental theories on which my practice is based.

Concluding Notes

The group weaves together the singularity of the individual and society within which we highlight the community. These are different but interrelated instances. It is important to be able to differentiate the particular and common aspects of each of these instances.

The utopia of group work is to arrive at the doors of individual subjectivity, settle there and be able to pass beyond to arrive at a place that is no longer just individual but related to humankind – an empty, singular, particular, universal and community place. This is the place of the threshold – that of Janus, the two-masked god of Greek mythology who guarded the door that led in or out. Defined by desire, it is the dialectic between the continuous and the discontinuous; the erotic and the sacred that Bataille (2008). A quote attributed to Tolstoy suggests that if you paint your village, you will paint the whole world. Folk music also suggests both the universal and the particularity of the symptomatology of each us, which grants one the ability to surpass narcissistic pleasure and access this empty place of being.

Wearing the mask demands an emptying in order to enter a state of overcoming being human that is neither universal nor singular. The group ceases to be the place of mass phenomenon in order to define itself as an empty ensemble wherein this entity termed the human being is generated. I am also concerned about the relationship between the intimate and the public, the liberty of life in the face of bio-power and the social pressures of the spectacle and merchandise. These exceed the boundaries of this text.

Bibliography

- Agamben, G., (2001). *Infancia e historia. Ensayo sobre la destrucción de la historia*. Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo. Agamben, G. (2007) *Infancy and History: On the Destruction of Experience*. London: Verso,.

- Aulagnier, P., (1977), *La violencia de la interpretación. Del pictograma al enunciado*. Amorrortu: Buenos Aires.
- Bachelard, G., (1965). *Poética del espacio*. FCE, México D. F. *The Poetics of Space*. FCE, Mexico D.F. 1965.
- Bataille, G., (2008) 'La conjuración sagrada', *Ensayos 1929 -1939*. Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo.
- Buchbinder, M. y Matoso, E., (1998). 'Las Máscaras de las Máscaras. Experiencia Expresiva Corporal Terapéutica'. *Letra Viva, Bs. As, 1980*. Buenos Aires: EUDEBA.
- Buchbinder, M., (2008) 'Poética del Desenmascaramiento', Letra Viva- Instituto de la Máscara 2° edición. (2005) Poética de la Cura, Letra Viva- Instituto de la Máscara 2° edición 2008. Mapas del cuerpo. Mapa Fantasmático corporal, Letra Viva - Instituto de la Máscara; Buenos Aires, 2011.
- Dolto F., (1986). *La imagen inconsciente del cuerpo*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.
- Deleuze, G.(2005): Giorgi, G., Rodríguez F., (Compiladores) (2007). Deleuze G., Foucault M., Negri A., Žižek S., Agamben G., 'Ensayos sobre Biopolítica', *Excesos de vida*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.
- Freud, S., (2000). *La interpretación de los sueños*. Vol. IV y V. O.C. Amorrortu, Buenos Aires, 1979
- Heidegger, M., (1960). *Carta sobre el humanismo*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sur.
- Giorgi, G., Rodríguez F., (Compiladores) (2007). Deleuze G., Foucault M., Negri A., Žižek S., Agamben G., *Ensayos sobre Biopolítica*. Excesos de vida; Buenos Aires: Paidós.
- Kristeva, J., (1997). *Sol Negro. Depresión y Melancolía*. Caracas: Monte Ávila.
- Reich, W., (1974). *La función del orgasmo*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.
- Winnicott, D., (1996). *Realidad y Juego*. Buenos Aires: Gedisa.

The Concept of Sociatry Beyond Moreno - Designing and Crafting Societies that Value the Collective Good: What IAGP and EAGT Might Bring to the World!¹

Kate Bradshaw Tauvon (Sweden)



Kate Bradshaw Tauvon MA, GA, Dip, TEP, is currently the President of IAGP. She grew up in the UK and now lives in Sweden. She is a psychotherapist, supervisor and teacher of psychotherapy, psychodramatist, group analyst and EMDR therapist, integrating theories and methodologies. She works trans-generationally and includes facilitating reconciliation between war veterans. She is Co-Editor/Author of *The Handbook of Psychodrama* 1998 Ed. Karp, Holmes & Bradshaw Tauvon (Routledge) and Co-Author of *Empowering Therapeutic Practice* Ed. Holmes, Farrall & Kirk. 2014. (JKP)

Abstract

We can take inspiration from the arts, poets, writers and musicians to tune our senses to each other. JL Moreno, a founder of IAGP, who together with his wife Zerka and others, developed Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy, considered the intermediary parts of the self to be body, psyche and society. This article describes Sociatry, the study of the ways we interweave our co-existence, which can be measured through the instrument of sociometry. According to Moreno, we are born to the role of Creative Genius, which we can use to rouse the autonomic healing centre in each one of us. In this paper the author gives some examples of how this can be used and focuses on our connection with our biosphere, our zone of life on Earth. She asks how we can together, within all our networks, use our skills and knowledge to

¹ Keynote to 3rd IAGP African Regional Conference & 2nd EAGT/IAGP Egyptian Regional Conference 13-16 January 2016, 'From Hope to Action'.

the best effect to address the fundamental questions for humanity concerning resilience - the capacity to live, persist and develop with changing conditions in a globally intertwined world of humans, societies and nature.



Fig. 1 Reconciliation work 50 years after the battle of Kohima

Being in Tune

The session was to have started with a characteristic song of the Sámi, the nomadic people of northern Scandinavia, showing slides of the landscape, Ole sin Joik, which can be seen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15HEXS11e7c&feature=youtube>.

The final image is of a man holding a rifle.

It signals something about the force of destruction and demarcation in the management of creative processes. A force which we need to be able to handle but which seems to repeatedly spin out of control, where psychological and physical violence take precedence over dialogue and the hard work of building and maintaining lasting relationships which can bear difficulties.

This presentation is about human beings living in relation to our environment. We can do well to listen to the wisdom of a people who are so closely connected to our basic living conditions and who see the signs of environmental change. The nomadic peoples of the world are often finely tuned to reading such non-verbal communications.



Fig. 2 Destruction and demarcation in the service of creative processes

Taking Inspiration

We can take inspiration from the arts, poets, writers and musicians to tune our senses to each other and to our environment as through this poem, *From March '79*, by Swedish folk hero Tomas Tranströmer.

Tired of all who come with words, words but no language
I went to the snow-covered island.
The wild does not have words.
The unwritten pages spread themselves out in all directions!
I come across the marks of roe-deer's hooves in the snow.
Language but no words.

Tranströmer, who sadly died in 2015, was a psychologist, poet and musician, friend of Robert Bly and the Syrian poet Adunis (Ali Ahmad Said Esber) who helped spread Tranströmer's fame in the Arab world, accompanying him on reading tours. This poem was shared when he received the Nobel prize in literature 2011. He suffered a stroke in 1990 that left him partially paralyzed and unable to speak. This did not prevent him from writing and publishing poetry through the early 2000s continuing to inspire and connect a nation to the world of nature and what could be called spiritual dimensions of integra-

tion. This latter may be what Daniel Siegel, American pioneer in the field of interpersonal neurobiology, refers to as Transpirational Integration “in which people begin to feel a different connection both to themselves and the world beyond their previously skin-defined sense of self”.

Sociatry

Moreno considered the intermediary parts of the self to be body, psyche and society. From the moment we are born, in every moment, we stand between life and death. Death can be final or a kind of living death – the fear of being vital. To be or not to be! What connects a society together is the weave of infinite sociometric choices each of us are constantly making throughout our daily lives. Each of us plays a significant role in building a healthier global society.

Creative Genius

Moreno told us that we are each the therapeutic agent of the other, and that we are born to the role of Creative Genius. He would walk around in a group and say, “Hello I’m Doctor. I’m a Creative Genius”, and ask you to say the same back! He called all his patients Doctor, as he aimed to call forth the highest level of functioning in each one. He roused what Zerka Moreno later referred to as the autonomic healing centre in each one of us. A world in which each of us is interacting from our most highly functioning self must be a better world don’t you think? You could just try on the thought and feeling, “Hello I’m Doctor and I’m a Creative Genius” to see how that feels. Take five minutes and greet your neighbour that way and feel the feeling. You might need to explain a bit what you’re doing!

It’s the Dream

It’s the dream we carry in secret
that something miraculous will happen
that it must happen --
that time will open
that the heart will open
that doors will open
that the mountains will open
that springs will gush --
that the dream will open

that one morning we will glide into
some harbour we didn't know was there.

Olav H Hauge translated from Norwegian by Robin Fulton

Citizens of the World

Moreno wanted to empower us as citizens to take responsibility for our world. His hypothesis was, “A truly therapeutic procedure cannot have less of an objective than the whole of mankind”. At its height this means being totally present and engaged in creative and spontaneous relationship with ‘the other’. His philosophy was built on four pillars—time, space, reality and the cosmos. He emphasised “the importance of living one’s truth in action, the validity of subjective reality, the premise of living a here-and-now encounter between individuals (including client and therapist) and a deep egalitarianism”.²

Time

In psychotherapy he asked us to focus on what we now refer to as a dual awareness of there-and-then, past or future, in the here-and-now. To speak on the psychodrama stage in the present moment, of past or future events, as though they are happening now, being an actor (one who enacts one’s own life) rather than using the distancing mechanism of describing events being a narrator of one’s life. He emphasised the dynamics of the moment, the warming up to the moment, in preparation for the encounter between people who are maximally present.

Space

In psychodrama the stage represents a person’s life space and the therapeutic space is explored in a particular moment. We insist on a description, a delineation and concretisation of the people and objects in it and their distance in relationship to one another. In life we are involved in many processes simultaneously and this might prevent us from being able to explore in depth a particular aspect. On stage a person can bring just that which he or she wants to reflect upon now, leaving other aspects aside for the moment to be reintegrated at the closure of the work.

² Fox, J., Ed., (1987). *The Essential Moreno: Writings on Psychodrama, Group Method, and Spontaneity*. New York: Springer.

Reality

When a person describes their life situation, it is what Moreno saw as a kind of reduced reality, not a genuine dialogue. By having a person show, rather than describe the events in their mind's eye, the therapist facilitates the concretisation of intangible, invisible dimensions of a person's intra- and extra-psychic life in what Moreno called surplus reality. This enables one to explore the events that have not, cannot or will not happen, but which are influencing a person's life in just as real a way as events, which have happened or will happen. Role reversal is one of the techniques of surplus reality - being able to see oneself through the eyes of another.

Cosmos

Moreno considered that Freud emphasized the individual psyche, suggesting that the group was an epiphenomenon, whilst Marx emphasised the concept of social man and socio-economics, as if that were all there was in the world. Moreno described the larger world beyond the psychodynamics and sociodynamics of human society - what he termed cosmodynamics. Man is a cosmic man, not only a social man or an individual man. Life is about being totally engaged both in relation to self and to 'the other'. He framed that we are in an active relationship to everything within our environment - that is our society, our world, our biosphere, our universe.

I name these four pillars to be clear that a therapeutic procedure is not just a collection of nine-to-five techniques to be cut and pasted into life, but is a way of relating, which is rooted in a sense of connectedness to all that is. You are a Cosmic man or woman and bear responsibility for what you co-create.

Figure 1 exemplifies an intense engagement in the facilitation of social change drawn in 1932 by O. and L. Osi, under the supervision of JL Moreno and described by Moreno in his book, *Who Shall Survive*.

This is a map noting the lines of connection (Moreno called it tele - a term used to describe a feeling of individuals into one another, a kind of two-way empathy - the cement that holds groups together) between 435 inhabitants. The large circles are houses. The small circles are individuals. Each of the 4,350 lines connect two individuals. The chart portrays the houses in which they actually live and the houses in which they would like to live.

Sociometry

This is the study of the actual psychological structure of human society consisting of complex inter-personal patterns studied by quantitative and qualitative procedures. The affinities of individuals for one another in the various

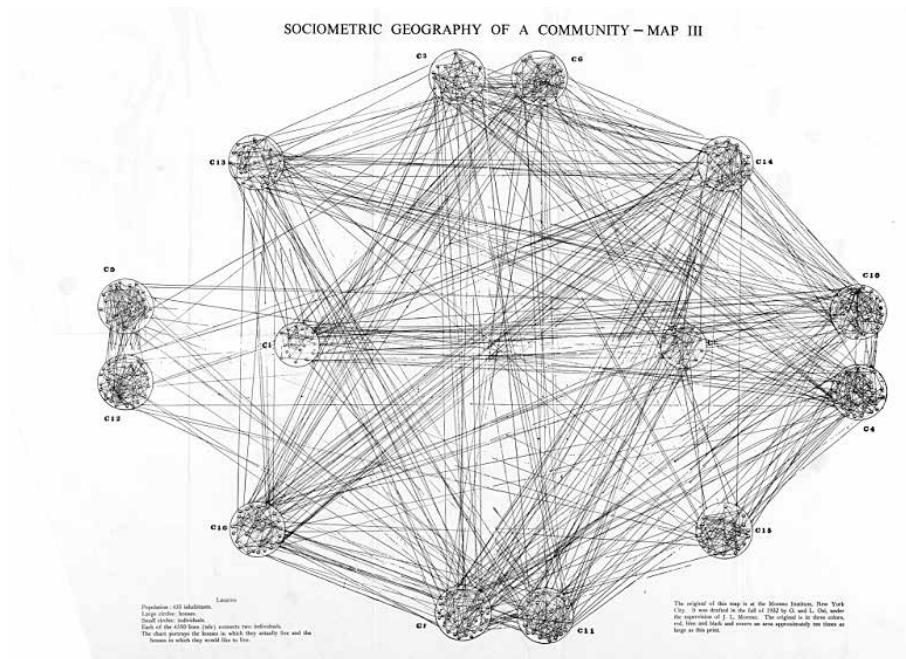


Fig. 3 The illustration Sociometric Geography of a Community—Map III

groups to which they belong can be made apparent e.g. through sociometric testing.

Sociatry is Applied Sociometry

What is Sociometric choice?

Based on a certain stated criterion that the group decides and agrees upon, the conductor of the research asks:

- who do you choose most positively based on this criterion?
- who do you least choose based on this criterion?
- who do you react neutrally toward based on this criterion?

By charting this we can see the cooperative state of the group. Of course exploring this requires a skilled sociometrist since the dynamics which the procedure elicits can otherwise be damaging to participants.

Integration

As I mentioned earlier Moreno considered the intermediary parts of the self to be body, psyche and society. Key to well-being of a system—an individual, family, organisation or society—are the concepts of diversity, differentiation, linkage and integration. All separate parts remain different and intact but are linked. Integration is not fusion. The “catharsis of integration” is a state achieved when the parts of self are linked, consciously, emotionally and physically through experiencing events—past, present or future—with new insight in relation to the present context.

Recently a Swedish photographer, Caroline Tönnies, in connection with a planned exhibition, asked me these two questions:

How do I understand my power?

Where and how do I find courage?

She asked me to answer each question in a very few sentences. It is an impossible task but what it did was to kick-start a journeying thought process. If we are to be resilient, active, cohesive world citizens, we need to ask ourselves these questions and to keep searching and asking again and again. Well-being and harmony are fresh products. So far I answered this way:

How I understand my power?

We live between life and death. I was born, just after World War II, healthy and strong, both loved and hated, and soon became aware that power has many faces. As both creator and created I am continuously revitalized in my context through my choices to promote creativity and spontaneity and my selected principles and values. The small degree of power I have can be given or taken away from me. I use my power to promote the life-giving force of all. I am aware that my power can only be orchestrated in concert with others.

Where and how I find courage?

I am grateful to everyone who has ‘en-couraged’ me throughout my life and those who have worked-through conflicts with me, as they have *given* me courage. I *take* courage when I struggle against injustices and destructive forces. Such threaten the very sense of existence.

I engage in my life and other’s lives, and am empowered by the company of nature—a small flower that grows despite unpromising circumstances reminds me of what I need to do.

I’d love to hear how all of you would answer these questions!

Japanese/British Experience—WWII—Masao and Graham

Masao Hirakubo and my father, Graham Bradshaw, met in the mid-1980s, 50 years after WWII to discuss ways of making reconciliation between two countries that had been at war. Masao invited my father as part of a group of ten veterans to visit Japan to promote reconciliation. The British would then host a return visit of ten Japanese veterans to the UK.

Both men had been involved in the Battle of Kohima in North East India between April and June 1944. They both were part of the renowned Battle of the Tennis Court where perhaps the most bitter fighting of the whole Burma campaign took place. The fighting was harsh and the cost was severe for both sides. It can be regarded as one of the turning points of WWII.

Both agreed that they had just been young men serving their countries as required. There was no personal enmity between them, just a pervasive jarring tone running through life's music.

Journey of Reconciliation

Although they could agree that they had just been young men serving their countries as required, there was a difficulty for ex-servicemen on both sides to meet 'the enemy'. It was hard in a different way for those who hadn't been involved in active combat but who had lost their dear ones through the war. To befriend the enemy was tantamount to betraying the dead. It demanded a great deal of soul searching. During this phase I planned with my father ways of facilitating dialogue and using psychodrama to create a path leading to the exchange meetings between the veterans.

One meeting in this initial phase entailed Masao and Graham visiting a man who had been ensconced in a London psychiatric hospital since the war. He had experienced nightmares every night for 50 years. During the meeting he was able to pour out his torturous war experiences at the hands of Masao's countrymen and his pain. Masao, with Grahams support, listened respectfully without interrupting. After several hours, Masao stood up and unreservedly personally apologised, asking forgiveness for the terrible things the man had experienced. Then they left.

Several days later my father received a letter from the man saying how relieved he had felt after the visit. For the first time since the war he could sleep peacefully and let go of the hate and the terror. He could engage in life in a new way.

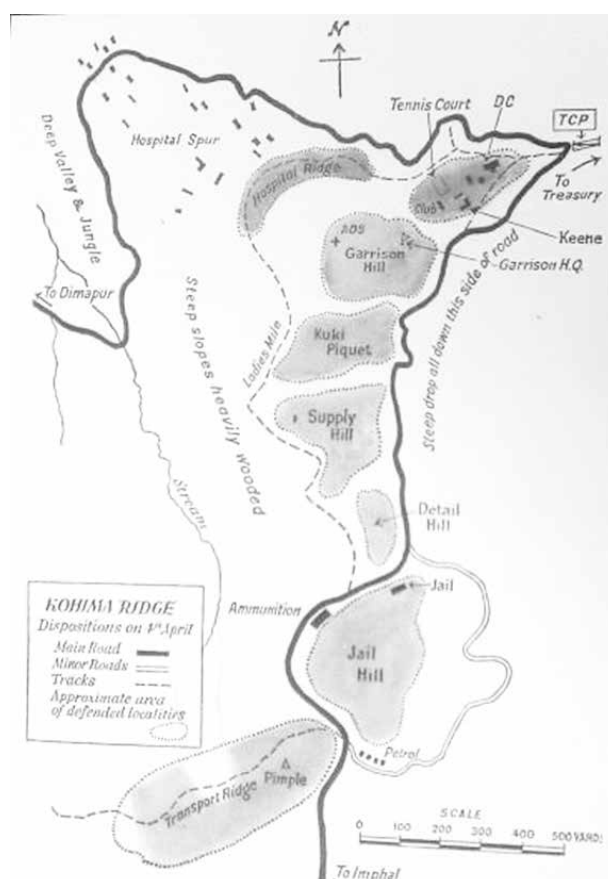


Fig. 4 Map of Kohima Ridge

There were two group exchange visits of ten British ex-servicemen to Japan and two visits of ten Japanese ex-servicemen to UK sponsored by the GB. Sasakawa Foundation. My father visited in 1990 and told me these older men in their 70s and 80s were received at the Sasakawa Hall in Tokyo by hundreds of young people. Each man told his story and explained why they wanted to reconcile with ‘the enemy’. The audience were screaming and applauding as though they were rock stars. Then the men shook hands and exchanged toys with each other so that when they came home the grandchildren could shake hands and through the toys become friends.

A few years later at my father’s funeral I became aware of an unfamiliar presence by my left side. I looked to see who it was. It was Masao Hirakubo quietly and unassumingly paying his last respects to his valued friend—offering his support in a tender moment.

Nelson Mandela—Invictus—Embracing the Enemy

In 2014, Assie Gildenhuys and his colleagues at the Pretoria University most generously hosted the 1st IAGP South African Conference/the 2nd IAGP African Regional Conference and the accompanying IAGP Board Meeting. Experiencing a post-apartheid South Africa moved me deeply. This nation in transition had, and has, so much to struggle with in becoming a more integrated society, and is showing us how difficult that is to achieve. The courageous story told by Albie Sachs leading to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and that of Nelson Mandela as described in the film *Invictus* further endorsed my belief that to promote social integration it is absolutely necessary to find a way to embrace the enemy. There is no way to build a healthy society or organisation by ‘sticking to your own kind’.

We can only aim toward a harmonious societal state, as it is a continuous work. What touched me most from the poem, which is said to have inspired Mandela during his 27-year imprisonment, and eventually enabled him to go out to head the transformational process toward a rainbow nation, were the lines:

I thank whatever gods may be/ for my unconquerable soul. ...

I am the master of my fate/ I am the captain of my soul.

Invictus

Out of the night that covers me,

Black as the pit from pole to pole,

I thank whatever gods may be

For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance

I have not winced nor cried aloud.

Under the bludgeonings of chance

My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears

Looms but the Horror of the shade,

And yet the menace of the years

Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

William Ernest Henley

We Need to Use our Systems Thinking

We are strongly dependent on a healthy and functioning planet and biosphere for our own development. Nature is not a sector of our society, it's a prerequisite for it. Surrounding society is the biosphere, that thin layer of the earth and the atmosphere where life is possible—our ultimate ecosystem. It can also be termed as the zone of life on Earth. We humans do not exist outside the biosphere, we're part of it. We are dependent on the biosphere and our actions—with their oversized scope and speed—have an impact on the planet's capacity to sustain us. "We have to reconnect with our planet..... There is no business to be done on a dead planet."



Fig. 5 From the exhibition 'Reflections about man and the biosphere'; photographer Lars Hall and leading scientist and pioneer in research on social-ecological systems, resilience thinking and sustainability science, Carl Folke

Lars Hall and Carl Folke point to these **Fundamental** questions for humanity: poverty, security, democracy, power, health, human rights, equality, peace, resting on the life-maintaining power and resilience of the biosphere. The biosphere provides the basic conditions for maintaining the dignity of human relationships. Their work reflects resilience - the capacity to live, persist and develop with changing conditions in a globally intertwined world of humans, societies and nature.

So what can one human being achieve?

How can we together in IAGP, EAGT, and within all our networks, use our skills and knowledge to the best effect to address these questions? JL Moreno and SH Foulkes together with others founded IAGP from a shared vision that, with our group psychotherapy and group process methods, we could make significant changes in the world by meeting ‘the other’. We are citizens of the world.

Finally, some music for you again—a song to commemorate the hope and resilience that exists within us all—*Imagine* touched by other cultures and sung by Gagan Singh and friends available on: <https://www.facebook.com/gagan.singh.56863/videos/10156510824750727/>

References

- Folke, C. & Hall, L., (2014) *Reflections On People and the Biosphere*. Stockholm: Langenskiöld.
- Fox, J., Ed., (1987). *The Essential Moreno: Writings on Psychodrama, Group Method, and Spontaneity*. New York: Springer
- Hauge, O. H., Trans. Bly, R., & Hedin, R., (2008) *The Dream We Carry: Selected and Last Poems of Olav Hauge*. Washington, US: Copper Canyon.
- Moreno, J. L., *Who Shall Survive: Foundations of Sociometry, Group Psychotherapy and Sociodrama*. Third Edition 1978 Beacon, NY: Beacon House Inc.
- Peckham, A., (2009). *Invictus*. Screenplay based on Carlin, J., *Invictus*, Warner Bros: available from <http://scripts-onscreen.com/tag/invictus-screenplay/>
- Siegel, D., (2007). *Mindfulness, Psychotherapy and the Brain*. Interview with Dan Siegel available from: <http://www.ithou.org/node/2730>
- Tranströmer, T., Trans. Fulton, R. (1997). *New Collected Poems*. Hexham, UK: Bloodaxe.

El concepto de sociedad más allá de Moreno. Diseñando y creando sociedades que valoren el bien colectivo: lo que la IAGP y la EAGT pueden traer al mundo

Kate Bradshaw Tauvon (Suecia)



Kate Bradshaw Tauvon MA, GA, Dip, TEP, es actualmente presidente de la IAGP. Creció en el Reino Unido y ahora vive en Suecia. Es psicoterapeuta, supervisora y profesora de psicoterapia, psicodramatista, grupoanalista y terapeuta EMDR, integrando teorías y metodologías. Trabaja transgeneracionalmente y también facilitando la reconciliación entre veteranos de guerra. Es autora /coeditora del Manual de psicodrama (*The handbook of psychodrama*) 1998 Ed. Karp, Holmes & Bradshaw Tauvon (Routledge) y coautora del libro Empoderando la práctica terapéutica (*Empowering Therapeutic Practice*) Ed. Holmes, Farral & Kirk. 2014. (JKP)

Resumen

Podemos inspirarnos en las artes, los poetas, escritores y músicos para sintonizar nuestros sentidos a cada uno de los demás. JL Moreno, uno de los fundadores de la IAGP, junto con su esposa Zerka y otros, desarrolló el psicodrama, la sociometría y la psicoterapia de grupo, consideradas partes intermediarias entre el yo y el cuerpo, entre la psique y la sociedad. Este artículo describe la Sociatría (Sociatry), el estudio del modo en el que entrelazamos nuestra co-existencia, la cual puede ser medida a través de los instrumentos de la sociometría. De acuerdo con Moreno, nacemos al papel de genios creativos, el cual podemos usar para despertar el centro de curación autónomo en cada uno de nosotros. En este artículo la autora da algunos ejemplos de cómo esto puede ser usado y se centra en nuestra conexión con la biosfera, nuestra zona de vida en la tierra. Ella pregunta cómo podemos, juntos, dentro de todas nuestras redes, usar nuestras habilidades y conocimiento para lograr responder la pregunta fundamental de la humanidad concerniente a la resiliencia: la capacidad de vivir, persistir y desarrollarse en condiciones cambiantes en un mundo globalmente interconectado entre individuos, sociedades y naturaleza.



Fig. I: Trabajo de reconciliación 50 años después de la batalla de Kohima

Estar en sintonía

La sesión tendría que haber comenzado con la característica canción de los Sámi, pueblo nómada del norte de Escandinavia, mostrando diapositivas de paisajes, o al viejo Sin Joik, que puede ser visto en <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15HEXS11e7c&feature=youtube>.

La imagen final es la de un hombre sosteniendo un rifle.

Esto señala algo acerca de la fuerza de destrucción y demarcación en el manejo del proceso creativo. Una fuerza que necesitamos ser capaces de manejar pero que pareciera salirse de control repetidamente, en donde la violencia física y psicológica preceden al dialogo y el trabajo fuerte de construir y mantener relaciones duraderas que puede lidiar con dificultades.

Esta presentación es acerca de seres humanos viviendo en relación con nuestro medio ambiente. Haríamos bien en escuchar la sabiduría de las personas que están íntimamente conectadas a nuestras condiciones básicas de vida y que ven los signos de los cambios medioambientales. Los pueblos nómadas del mundo están finamente sintonizados para leer tales comunicaciones no verbales.



Fig II: Destrucción y demarcación al servicio de procesos creativos

Inspirándonos

Podemos inspirarnos de las artes, poetas, escritores y músicos para sintonizar nuestros sentidos unos con los otros y con el medio ambiente, así como a través de este poema de marzo del 79 escrito por el héroe popular sueco Tomas Tranströmer:

Cansado de todos quienes vienen con palabras, palabras, pero no
lenguaje
Fui a la isla cubierta de nieve
La naturaleza no tiene palabras
¡Las paginas no escritas se esparcen en todas direcciones!
Me encuentro con las huellas de un ciervo en la nieve
Lenguaje, pero no palabras.

Tranströmer, quien tristemente murió el año pasado, fue un psicólogo, poeta y músico, amigo de Robert Bly y del poeta Sirio Adunis (Ali Ahmad Said Esber) quien ayudó a popularizar a Tranströmer en el mundo árabe, acompañándolo en sus giras de lectura. Compartió este poema cuando recibió el premio nobel de literatura en 2011. Sufrió un ACV en 1990 que le dejó parcialmente paralizado e incapaz de hablar. Ésto no impidió que escribiera y

publicara poesía a principios del año 2000, continuó inspirando y conectando la nación al mundo de la naturaleza y lo que podría ser llamada la dimensión espiritual de la integración.

Esto último puede ser a lo que Daniel Siegel, pionero americano en el campo de la neurobiología interpersonal, se refiere con “Integración transpiracional” en la cual las personas empiezan a sentirse en una conexión diferente tanto consigo mismos como con el mundo, más allá de su sentido del yo previamente definido.

Sociatria

Moreno consideraba al cuerpo, la psique y la sociedad como partes intermedias del yo. En todo momento, desde el momento en el que nacemos, nos encontramos entre la vida y la muerte. La muerte puede ser perentoria o una forma de vida en muerte: el miedo de ser vital. ¡El ser o no ser! Lo que conecta nuestra sociedad es la ola de infinitas decisiones sociométricas que estamos tomando constantemente en nuestras vidas diarias. Cada uno de nosotros juega un papel significativo en la construcción de una sociedad global más sana.

Genio creativo

Moreno nos dice que cada uno de nosotros es el agente terapéutico del otro y que nacemos al rol de genios creativos. Él caminaría alrededor de un grupo y diría “Hola, soy un doctor. Soy un genio creativo”, ¡y te pediría que dijeras lo mismo! - Él llamaba a sus pacientes de doctor, en tanto que intentaba que surgiera el más alto nivel de funcionamiento en cada uno. Él promovía el despertar de aquello que Zerka Moreno posteriormente llamaría el centro de sanación autónomo en cada uno de nosotros. Un mundo en el cual cada uno de nosotros interactúe desde nuestro más alto nivel de funcionamiento debe ser un mundo mejor, ¿no creen? Cada uno de stedes podría intentarlo cognitiva y emocionalmente “Hola soy un doctor y un genio creativo” para ver cómo se siente. Tómese cinco minutos y salude a su vecino de esta manera y esté atento a cómo se siente ¡Usted podría tener que explicar lo que está haciendo!

Este es el sueño

Este es el sueño que cargamos en secreto
Que algo milagroso va a suceder
Que deberá suceder

Que el tiempo se abrirá
Que el corazón se abrirá
Que las puertas se abrirán
Que las montañas se abrirán
Que brotarán manantiales--
Que el sueño se abrirá
Que una mañana nos deslizaremos dentro de
algún puerto que no sabíamos que estaba ahí

Olav H Hauge traducido del noruego por Robin Fulton

Ciudadanos del mundo

Moreno quería empoderarnos como ciudadanos para asumir la responsabilidad por nuestro mundo. Su hipótesis era “un verdadero proceder terapéutico no puede plantearse como objetivo nada menos que toda la humanidad”. En su máxima expresión esto puede significar estar totalmente presente y comprometido en una relación creativa y espontánea con “el otro”. Su filosofía fue construida sobre cuatro pilares- tiempo, espacio, realidad y cosmos.

Él enfatizó “la importancia de vivir la propia verdad en acción, la validez de la realidad subjetiva, la premisa de vivir en el aquí y el ahora en el encuentro entre individuos (incluyendo al cliente y al terapeuta) y un profundo igualitarismo”

Tiempo

En psicoterapia él nos convocaba a enfocarnos en lo que ahora llamaríamos conciencia dual del ahí-y-entonces, pasado o futuro, en el aquí y ahora. Para hablar en el escenario del psicodrama en su estado actual, del pasado o los eventos futuros, como si estuviesen sucediendo ahora, siendo un actor (uno que actúa su propia vida) en vez de usar el mecanismo del distanciamiento para describir eventos siendo un narrador de la propia vida. Hizo énfasis en las dinámicas del momento, el calor del momento, en la preparación del encuentro entre personas que se encuentran presentes al máximo.

Espacio

En el psicodrama el escenario representa el espacio de vida de la persona y el espacio terapéutico es explorado en un momento en particular. Insistimos en la descripción, delimitación y concretización de las personas y los objetos dentro de ella, así como en la distancia en la relación entre unos y otros. En la vida estamos involucrados en muchos procesos simultáneamente y esto puede

impedir que seamos capaces de explorar en profundidad un aspecto en particular. En el escenario la persona puede traer sólo aquello sobre lo que quiere reflexionar en ese momento, dejando otros aspectos aparte por el momento, para ser reintegrados en el cierre del trabajo.

Según su perspectiva, el terapeuta facilita que se concreten las dimensiones, invisibles e intangibles, de la vida intra y extra psíquica de una persona en lo que Moreno llamó realidad suplementaria (surplus reality). Esto permite explorar acontecimientos que no han ocurrido, no pueden ocurrir o no ocurrirán, pero que están influyendo la vida de una persona de una manera tan real como los acontecimientos, que han sucedido o va a suceder. La inversión de roles es una de las técnicas de “surplus reality” poder verse a través de los ojos de otro.

Cosmos

Moreno consideraba que Freud enfatizaba la psique individual, sugiriendo que el grupo era un epifenómeno, mientras que Marx enfatizaba el concepto del hombre social y la socio-economía, como si eso fuera todo lo que había en el mundo. Moreno describió el mundo más allá de la psicodinámica y sociodinámica de la sociedad humana - lo que él llamó cosmodinámica. El hombre es un hombre cósmico, no sólo un hombre social o un hombre individual. La vida consiste en estar totalmente comprometidos tanto con relación al yo como al ‘otro’. Resaltó que estamos en una relación activa con todo lo que existe en nuestro entorno, es decir, nuestra sociedad, nuestro mundo, nuestra biosfera, nuestro universo.

Cito estos cuatro pilares para dejar claro que un procedimiento terapéutico no es sólo una colección de nueve a cinco técnicas para cortar y pegar en la vida, sino una manera de relacionarse, enraizada en un sentido de conexión con todo lo que existe. Tú eres un hombre o una mujer cósmicos y tienes responsabilidad de lo que co-creas.

La Figura 1 ejemplifica un compromiso intenso en la facilitación del cambio social realizado en 1932 por O. y L. Osi, bajo la supervisión de JL Moreno y descrito por Moreno en su libro, *Who Shall Survive*.

Es un mapa que representa las líneas de conexión (Moreno lo llamó tele - un término utilizado para describir un sentimiento de estar mutuamente uno en el otro, una especie de Empatía - el cemento que mantiene a los grupos juntos- entre 435 habitantes. Los grandes círculos son casas. Los pequeños círculos son individuos. Cada una de las 4.350 líneas conecta a dos individuos. El cuadro retrata las casas en las que viven y las casas en las que les gustaría vivir.

Sociometría

Es el estudio de la estructura psicológica real de la sociedad humana que consiste en complejos patrones interpersonales estudiados a través de procedimientos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Las afinidades mutuas de los individuos en sus grupos se pueden hacer evidentes, por ejemplo mediante pruebas sociométricas.

La Sociatría es Sociometría Aplicada

¿Qué es la elección Sociométrica?

Sobre la base de determinado criterio que el grupo decide y acuerda, el conductor de la investigación pregunta:

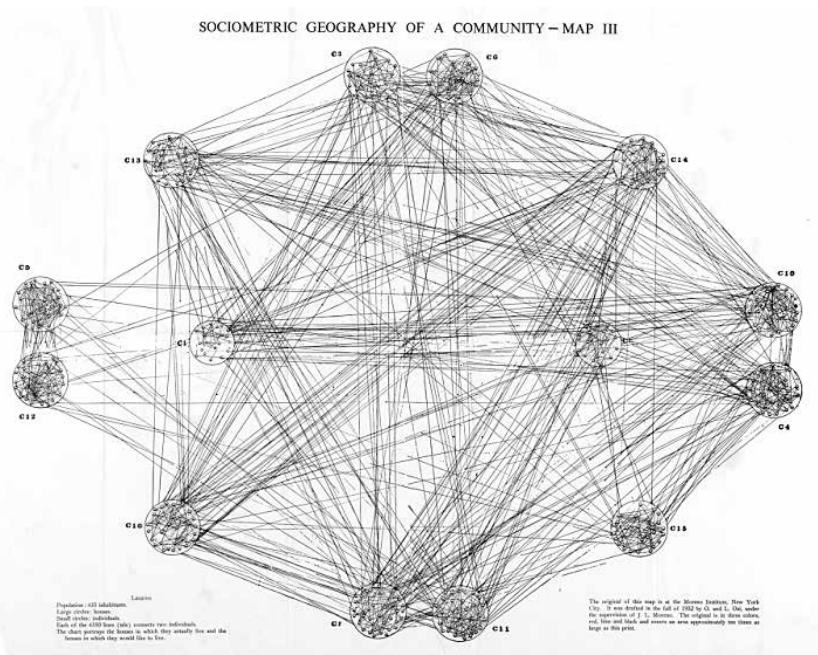


Fig. III: Ilustración sociométrica: Geografía de una comunidad.

¿A quién/es elegirías de modo preferente sobre la base de ese criterio?

¿A quién no escogerías basándote en ese criterio?

¿Quién/es te resultan neutros en función de este criterio?

Al trazar esto podemos ver el estado cooperativo del grupo. Por supuesto

explorarlo requiere de un experto cualificado, dado que las dinámicas que el procedimiento elicitado pueden ser perjudiciales para los participantes

Integración

Como mencioné anteriormente Moreno consideró como partes intermediarias del ser al cuerpo, la psique y la sociedad. Las claves para el bienestar de un sistema -un individuo, familia, organización o sociedad- son los conceptos de diversidad, diferenciación, vinculación e integración. Todas las partes separadas permanecen diferentes e intactas pero están vinculadas. La integración no es fusión. La “catarsis de la integración” es un estado que se alcanza cuando las partes del self están vinculadas, conscientemente, emocionalmente y físicamente a través de experimentar eventos –del pasado, presente o futuro- con un nuevo insight en relación al contexto actual.

Recientemente una fotógrafa sueca, Caroline Tönnies, en relación con la planificación de una exposición, me hizo estas dos preguntas:

“¿Cómo entiendo mi poder?”

“¿Dónde y cómo encuentro valor?”

Me pidió que contestara cada una de las preguntas en pocas frases. Es una tarea imposible, pero lo que hizo fue disparar un proceso de pensamiento. Si vamos a ser ciudadanos del mundo resilientes, activos y cohesivos, debemos hacernos estas preguntas y seguir buscando y preguntándonos una y otra vez. Bienestar y armonía son los preciados resultados. Por el momento esta es mi respuesta:

¿Cómo entiendo mi poder?

Vivimos entre la vida y la muerte. Nací, justo después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, sana y fuerte, querida y odiada, y pronto fui consciente de que el poder tiene muchas caras. Como creadora y creada estoy continuamente revitalizada en mi contexto a través de las elecciones que hago que promueven mi creatividad y espontaneidad y los principios y valores que escojo. El pequeño grado de poder que tengo me puede ser dado o quitado. Utilizo mi poder para promover la fuerza vivificante de todos. Soy consciente de que mi poder sólo puede ser orquestado en concierto con otros.

¿Dónde y cómo encuentro coraje?

Estoy agradecida a todos los que a lo largo de mi vida han contribuido a que haya incrementado mi coraje y a quienes han elaborado conflictos conmigo, porque me han dado coraje. Me envalentono cuando lucho contra las

injusticias y las fuerzas destructivas. Éstas amenazan el sentido mismo de la existencia.

Me comprometo en mi vida y en la de los demás, y me fortalezco por la compañía de la naturaleza -una pequeña flor que crece a pesar de circunstancias no prometedoras me recuerda lo que tengo que hacer.

¡Me encantaría saber cómo responderían ustedes a estas preguntas!

Experiencia japonesa / británica-WWII-Masao y Graham

Masao Hirakubo y mi padre, Graham Bradshaw, se reunieron a mediados de los años ochenta, 50 años después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial para discutir sobre el modo de hacer la reconciliación entre dos países que habían estado en guerra. Masao invitó a mi padre como parte de un grupo de diez veteranos a visitar Japón para promover la reconciliación. Los británicos después acogieron a otros diez veteranos japoneses en el Reino Unido.

Ambos habían participado en la batalla de Kohima, en el noreste de la India, entre abril y junio de 1944. Ambos tomaron parte de la famosa Batalla de “La pista de tenis” donde tuvo lugar la tal vez lucha más amarga de toda la campaña de Birmania. Los combates fueron duros y el coste fue muy elevado para ambos lados. Se puede considerar como uno de los puntos de inflexión de la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Ambos coincidieron en que sólo habían sido jóvenes sirviendo a sus países como se requería. No hubo enemistad personal entre ellos, sólo un penetrante tono desacorde que impregnó la música de la vida.

Viaje de Reconciliación

Aunque podían estar de acuerdo en que habían sido jóvenes sirviendo a sus países, según lo requerido, los ex militares de ambos lados tuvieron dificultades para encontrarse con ‘el enemigo’. Fue difícil de una manera diferente para aquellos que no habían estado involucrados en combate activo pero que habían perdido a sus seres queridos durante la guerra. Ofrecer amistad al enemigo equivaldría a traicionar a los muertos. Exigía un gran cuestionamiento de alma. Durante esta fase planeé con mi padre formas de facilitar el diálogo y utilizar el psicodrama para crear caminos que condujeran al intercambio en reuniones de veteranos.

Una de las reuniones de esta fase inicial implicó que Masao y Graham visitaran a un hombre que había estado ingresado en un hospital psiquiátrico de Londres desde la guerra. Había sufrido pesadillas todas las noches durante

50 años. Durante el encuentro fue capaz de derramar sus torturantes experiencias de guerra a manos de los compatriotas de Masao y su dolor. Masao, con el apoyo de Graham, escuchó respetuosamente sin interrumpir. Después de varias horas, Masao se levantó y sin reservas personalmente pidió disculpas, pidiendo perdón por las cosas terribles que el hombre había experimentado. Luego se fueron.

Varios días después mi padre recibió una carta del hombre diciendo lo aliviado que se había sentido después de la visita. Por primera vez desde la guerra, pudo dormir tranquilo y dejar ir el odio y el terror. Pudo participar en la vida de un modo diferente.

Hubo dos visitas de intercambio de grupos de diez excombatientes británicos a Japón y dos visitas de diez ex-militares japoneses al Reino Unido patrocinadas por la Fundación Británica Sasakawa. Mi padre fue en 1990 y me contó que estos hombres mayores, entre 70 y 80 años, fueron recibidos en el

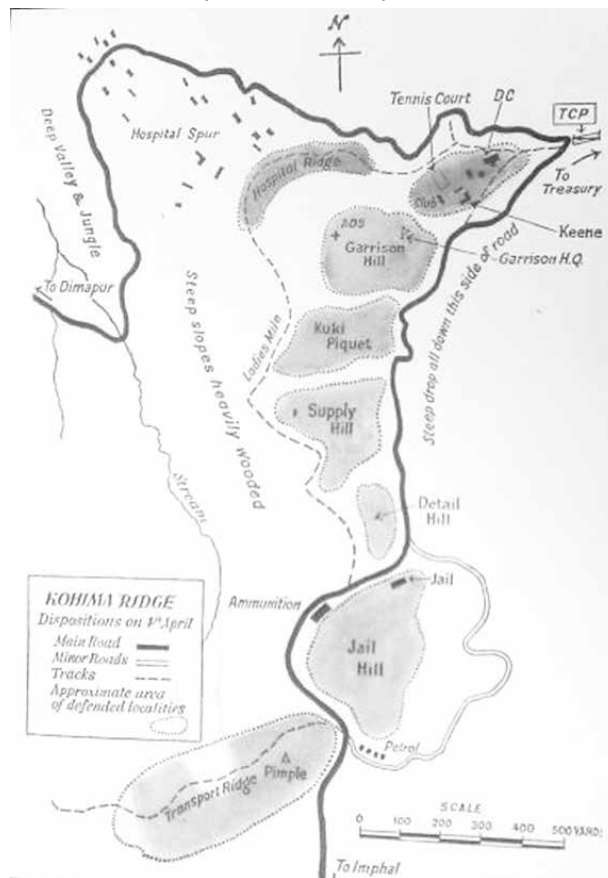


Fig. IV Mapa

Salón Sasakawa en Tokio por cientos de jóvenes. Cada uno de los hombres contó su historia y explicó por qué quería reconciliarse con “el enemigo”. El público gritaba y aplaudía como si fueran estrellas de rock. Entonces los hombres se dieron la mano e intercambiaron juguetes para que cuando llegaran a casa los nietos pudieran estrecharse las manos a través de los juguetes y hacerse amigos.

Unos años más tarde, en el funeral de mi padre, me di cuenta de una presencia no familiar sentada a mi izquierda. Miré para ver quién era. Era Masao Hirakubo. Silenciosa y modestamente ofreciendo su respeto a su estimado amigo por última vez. –ofreciendo apoyo en un momento de ternura.

Nelson Mandela-Invictus-Abrazando al enemigo

El año pasado, Assie Gildenhuys y sus colegas de la Universidad de Pretoria se hicieron cargo del modo más generoso, de la Primera Conferencia de la IAGP en Sudáfrica / 2ª Conferencia Regional Africana de la IAGP, y de la consiguiente reunión del Board. Me emocionó profundamente la experiencia de la Sudáfrica post-apartheid. Esta nación en transición ha tenido y tiene tanto con lo que luchar para convertirse en una sociedad más integrada, y nos muestra lo difícil que es lograrlo. La valiente Historia contada por Albie Sachs que condujo a la Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación y la de Nelson Mandela, como se describe en la película “Invictus”, respaldaron mi creencia de que para promover la integración social es absolutamente necesario encontrar una manera de abrazar al enemigo. No hay manera de construir una sociedad u organización sana e integrada “apegándose a lo propio”.

Sólo podemos aspirar a un estado social armonioso a través de un trabajo constante. Los versos que más me emocionaron del poema que, se dice, inspiró a Mandela durante sus 27 años de prisión, y finalmente le permitió salir para dirigir el proceso de transformación hacia la nación del arco iris, fueron éstos:

...Doy gracias a los dioses si existen
Por mi alma invicta...
Yo soy el amo de mi destino:
Soy el capitán de mi alma.

Invictus

Fuera de la noche que me cubre,
Negro como el hoyo de polo a polo,

Doy gracias a los dioses si existen
Por mi alma invicta.

En la garras de las circunstancias
No he llorado ni pestañado.
Bajo los golpes del destino
Mi cabeza ensangrentada sigue erguida.

Más allá de este lugar de cólera y lágrimas
Yacen los horrores de la sombra,
Sin embargo, la amenaza de los años
Encuentra, y me encontrará sin miedo.

No importa cuán estrecho sea el camino,
Cuán cargada de castigos la sentencia,

Yo soy el amo de mi destino:
Soy el capitán de mi alma.

William Ernes Henley

Necesitamos usar nuestros sistemas de pensamiento.

Somos fuertemente dependientes de un planeta saludable y funcional y de la biosfera para nuestro propio desarrollo. La naturaleza no es un sector de nuestra sociedad, es un requisito previo. La sociedad circundante es la biosfera, esa fina capa de tierra y atmósfera donde la vida es posible, nuestro ecosistema último. También se puede denominar como la zona de la vida en la Tierra. Nosotros los seres humanos no existimos fuera de la biosfera, somos parte de ella. Dependemos de la biosfera y nuestras acciones -con su alcance y rapidez desmesurados- tienen un impacto en la capacidad del planeta de sostenernos. “Tenemos que volver a conectar con nuestro planeta.... No hay negocio posible en un planeta muerto”.

Lars Hall y Carl Folke apuntan a estas cuestiones **fundamentales** para la humanidad: Pobreza, seguridad, democracia, poder, salud, derechos humanos, igualdad, paz, detenimiento sobre el poder de conservación de la vida y resiliencia de la biosfera. La biosfera proporciona las condiciones básicas para mantener la dignidad de las relaciones humanas. Su trabajo refleja la resiliencia - la capacidad de vivir, y desarrollarse con condiciones cambiantes en un mundo globalmente entrelazado de seres humanos, sociedades y naturaleza.



Fig. V De la exposición 'Reflexiones sobre el hombre y la biosfera'; El fotógrafo Lars Hall y el científico líder y pionero en la investigación sobre sistemas socio-ecológicos, el pensamiento de la resiliencia y la ciencia de la sostenibilidad, Carl Folke

Entonces, ¿qué puede lograr un ser humano?

¿Cómo podemos entre todos en IAGP, EAGT, y en nuestras redes utilizar nuestras habilidades y conocimientos para abordar estas cuestiones del mejor modo? JL Moreno y SH Foulkes junto con otros fundaron la IAGP a partir de la visión compartida de que con nuestros métodos de psicoterapia y procesos de grupo, podríamos cambios significativos en el mundo al encontrarnos con 'el otro'. Somos ciudadanos del mundo.

Finalmente, un poco de música de nuevo-una canción para conmemorar la esperanza y resiliencia que existe dentro de todos nosotros -Imagine tocado por otras culturas y cantado por Gagan Singh y amigos. Disponible en: [https://www.facebook.com/Gagan.singh.56863 / videos / 10156510824750727 /](https://www.facebook.com/Gagan.singh.56863/videos/10156510824750727/)

Referencias

- Folke, C. & Hall, L., (2014) *Reflexiones sobre la gente y la biosfera*. Estocolmo: Langenskiöld
- Fox, J., Ed., (1987). *Moreno Esencial: Escritos sobre Psicodrama, Método de Grupo y Espontaneidad*. Nueva York: Springer.

- Hauge, O. H., Trans. Bly, R., & Hedin, R., (2008) *El sueño que llevamos: Poemas Seleccionado y Últimos poemas de Olav Hauge*. Washington, EEUU: Cañón del cobre.
- Moreno, J. L., *Quién Sobrevivirá: Fundamentos de Sociometría, Psicoterapia de Grupo y Sociodrama*. Tercera Edición 1978 Beacon, NY: Beacon House Inc.
- Peckham, A., (2009). *Invictus*. Guión basado en Carlin, J., *Invictus*, Warner Bross. Disponible en <http://scripts-onscreen.com/tag/invictus-screenplay/>
- Siegel, D., (2007). *Mindfulness, la psicoterapia y el cerebro. Entrevista con Dan Siegel disponible en: <http://www.ithou.org/node/2730>*
- Tranströmer, T., Trans. Fulton, R. (1997). *Nueva Colección de Poemas*. Hexhan. Uk: Bllodaxe

forum

Journal of the International Association for Group Psychotherapy
and Group Processes

President's Introduction / Introducción del Presidente

Kate Bradshaw Tavon (Sweden)

Editorial Introduction / Editorial Introducción

Lars Tavon (Sweden), Ray Haddock (UK) and Teresa von Sommaruga Howard (UK)

Conducting Support Groups for Bereaved People after Disaster / Realización de grupos de apoyo para personas en duelo después de un Desastre

Rob Gordon, Sharon des Landes and Salli Trathen, (Australia)

Liminal Space and Transformative Change in Group Training in Guatemala: A Group Analytic Perspective / Espacio fronterizo y Cambio Transformativo en el Entrenamiento de Grupo en Guatemala: una Perspectiva Grupo Analítica

Elisabeth Rohr (Germany)

Under-age Migrants in Temporary Absence of Supportive Adults/Los Menores Migrantes en Ausencia Temporal de Referentes Adultos

Amina Bargach (Morocco and Spain)

Psychotherapy for Women avoiding Intercourse in a Traditional Culture / Terapia para Mujeres que evitan las Relaciones Sexuales en una Cultura Tradicional

Arşaluys Kayır, Sevda P. Bikmaz, Banu Aslantaş Ertekin (Turkey)

Del diván y del escenario a la pantalla / From the Therapist's Couch and from the Stage to the Screen

Raúl Vaimberg (Mexico)

'Christmas Cleaning': Are we able to heal the Culture? / Limpieza de Navidad: Somos capaces de curar la Cultura?

Ekaterina Mikhailova (Russia)

Figure and Ground in Group Analytic Theory and Training / Figura y fondo en la Teoría y Entrenamiento Grupo Analítica

Malcolm Pines (UK)

Porque Psicodrama? / Why Psychodrama?

Dalmiro Bustos (Argentina)

Máscaras, cuerpo, y escena en un grupo / Group Work with Masks, the Body and Scenes

Mario J. Buchbinder (Argentina)

The Concept of Society Beyond Moreno - Designing and Crafting Societies that Value the Collective Good: What IAGP and EAGT Might Bring to the World!

Kate Bradshaw Tavon (Sweden)

El concepto de sociedad más allá de Moreno. Diseñando y creando sociedades que valoren el bien colectivo: lo que la IAGP y la EAGT pueden traer al mundo

Kate Bradshaw Tavon (Suecia)

www.iagp.com