
Theory and History

Epistemological Exploration of Psychodrama Therapy: History, Triad Revolution, Unconscious Dynamics, and Therapeutic Dimensions

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Psychodrama is a transformative therapeutic approach that has profoundly shaped psychotherapeutic practice. This article explores psychodrama through an epistemological lens, emphasizing its foundation in interpersonal therapy and the critical function of group dynamics. It highlights the Triad system as a revolutionary shift in the therapeutic field providing the framework for reshaping relationships and bridging the gap between the unconscious and the preconscious through targeted therapeutic techniques. Core concepts such as social representation and resonance help explain the psychological field in group therapy, illustrating how shared perceptions and emotional connections shape interpersonal dynamics. Key techniques, such as dialogical exploration, observational silence, and direct therapist engagement, are presented as reflections of the triad system, designed to foster emotional insight and conflict resolution. These techniques constitute the initial category in a broader understanding of psychodrama, with further techniques to be explored in a subsequent article. Ultimately, this exploration provides a comprehensive view of how psychodrama fosters relational understanding and promotes profound emotional growth.

KEYWORDS: Psychodrama; Interpersonal therapy; Triadic system; Social representation; Resonance; Unconscious; Preconscious; Group dynamics

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the annals of human civilization, theater has served as a profound reflection of societal dynamics and the intricate facets of the individual psyche,

transcending cultural and temporal boundaries. From the ancient amphitheaters of Greece to contemporary stages, theater has excelled at portraying roles that vividly mirror the complexities of social interactions across diverse spatio-temporal contexts. This artistic medium intricately weaves together subtle behaviors, complex relationships, emotional depths, and cognitive dimensions of human experience.

The genesis of psychodrama as a pioneering psychological concept and therapeutic approach originated in Vienna, where the visionary work of Jacob L. Moreno (1889–1974), a psychiatrist, social psychologist, and philosopher, laid its foundational groundwork (Marineau, 1989). Moreno's transformative vision redefined theater as a potent therapeutic tool, empowering individuals to explore and express their inner worlds within supportive group settings. This shift broadened access to therapeutic experiences for diverse individuals, revolutionizing our understanding of interpersonal dynamics and enhancing the efficacy of group therapy.

By seamlessly blending dramatic improvisation with profound psychological insights, psychodrama transcends conventional therapeutic methods. It offers participants a unique pathway to explore their unconscious and preconscious realms, facilitating personal growth and healing through interactive role-playing techniques and spontaneous expression. The therapeutic outcomes can be transformative; participants gain profound self-awareness, work through unresolved emotions, and build more meaningful interpersonal connections. This profound fusion of theater and psychology, epitomized in psychodrama, continues to evolve, significantly enriching therapeutic practices and deepening our understanding of human behavior.

In addition to its innovative techniques, psychodrama also draws on the concept of social representation, highlighting how individuals' perceptions of themselves and others are shaped by societal roles and group dynamics. Within the therapeutic group, participants co-construct their psychological realities and interpersonal relationships, grounded in a shared core of social representations. This shared core provides the foundation for understanding and negotiating roles, interactions, and the collective framework within the group, fostering emotional and psychological growth.

At the heart of this dynamic lies the Triadic System, a fundamental framework that structures how emotions, roles, and relationships evolve within the group. It guides participants toward deeper self-awareness and mutual understanding, facilitating the therapeutic process. Through this structure, psychodrama techniques bridge the unconscious and preconscious realms, allowing participants to engage more profoundly and achieve therapeutic breakthroughs.

Additionally, the resonance among participants further amplifies this process. As emotions and experiences reverberate across the group, a shared emotional experience is cultivated, which fosters connection, empathy, and healing. This collective resonance enhances the co-construction of meaning, facilitating transformative change in each participant's personal journey.

PSYCHODRAMA THERAPY: A SCIENTIFIC ODYSSEY

Psychodrama therapy, a synthesis of psychological insight and dramatic arts, offers a profound exploration of its scientific and therapeutic dimensions. Rooted in Moreno's (1934) sociometric experiments, as outlined in *Who Shall Survive?*, psychodrama investigates social dynamics and group relationships, establishing a structured, scientific basis for its foundational techniques.

Advancements in psychodrama emerged from experiments conducted at Beacon and New York, where Moreno demonstrated the efficacy of role-playing techniques. He noted, "The earliest experience with role-playing techniques has been made in the testing of auxiliary therapists placed within the framework of standard situations in an experimental psychodrama" (Moreno, 1959, p. 13). He further emphasized, "Experiments in our laboratories in Beacon and New York have shown the productivity of the role-playing method when applied to the more complicated situations of the group" (p. 13). These early demonstrations underscore psychodrama's scientific foundation within psychosocial therapy, validating its integration of structured methodologies with the artistry of dramatic enactment.

Central to psychodrama is Moreno's role theory, which unites psychology, sociology, and anthropology to offer a comprehensive understanding of human experience. As Moreno stated, "The theory of roles is not limited to a single dimension, the social" (Moreno, 1946/2019, p. 47). In psychodrama, roles are enacted on stage, merging psychological theory with the transformative potential of dramatic arts.

While psychodrama's scientific framework grounds it in structured therapeutic techniques, Moreno (1959) also recognized the crucial artistic dimension of therapy, categorizing theater into four archetypes: (1) the theater of conflict, (2) the immediate theater, (3) the therapeutic theater, and (4) the theater of creation. The "therapeutic theater," in particular, allows participants to express repressed emotions and explore new roles, fostering catharsis and emotional release.

Zerka L. Moreno, a key collaborator, viewed psychodrama as a fusion of science and art, distinguishing it from traditional theater by its focus on revisiting unexpressed experiences and integrating them into present and future possibilities (Moreno, 1960s). Participants embody roles with emotional depth, fostering meaningful therapeutic outcomes.

The relational dimension of psychodrama emphasizes social interaction and the integration of various forms of encounters—whether real, imagined, or symbolic. As Allport (1954) noted, the thoughts, emotions, and behaviors of individuals are influenced by the presence of others, whether real or implied. Psychodrama engages participants cognitively, allowing therapists to design tailored interventions and analyze complex relational dynamics.

Psychodrama's evolution has followed multiple trajectories, including those that remain closely aligned with Moreno's original objectives of prevention and therapeutic psychodrama, as exemplified by Schützenberger's (1998) work on transgenerational psychotherapy, exploring how unresolved issues are passed down through generations (Maciel, 2024). Another trajectory emerged in the

1950s in France, with the merger of psychoanalysis and psychodrama. Pioneers such as Serge Lebovici and Evelyne Kestemberg adapted Moreno's framework for use in psychoanalytic therapies, particularly with children and adolescents. As Bayle (2014) explains: "Under the influence of Mireille Monod, psychoanalysts adapted Moreno's framework, using it in therapies for children and adolescents and as a means of introducing psychology students to psychoanalysis".

Although analytic psychodrama is a significant advancement, psychodrama and psychoanalysis must be carefully integrated to maintain their effectiveness. Their integration must be approached with caution, as psychodrama's emphasis on spontaneity and creativity may conflict with psychoanalysis' structured and interpretive methods (Moreno, 2010). If not carefully managed, this hybridization could undermine the core principles of psychodrama. However, when practiced within its original framework, psychodrama reaches its fullest potential, offering profound therapeutic benefits.

In the following sections, we examine the means in which psychodrama's core techniques continue to evolve, highlighting their contemporary applications in clinical settings and their potential for addressing new challenges in mental health care.

THE ORCHESTRATION OF PSYCHODRAMA THERAPY

In psychodrama therapy, an orchestrated triad guides the proceedings:

1. **Warm-Up:** The preparatory phase where participants psychologically attune themselves, establishing an optimal foundation for the ensuing psychodramatic exploration. As Giacomucci (2021, p. 253) notes: "After adequate warm-up, the director facilitates the protagonist and topic selection before moving into the psychodrama enactment". This phase ensures that participants are ready to engage fully, allowing the therapeutic process to begin on a solid ground.
2. **Action:** The core phase where participants immerse themselves in role enactment, embodying diverse personas and narratives. This immersive engagement facilitates catharsis and a comprehensive understanding of underlying dynamics.
3. **Sharing:** The final phase provides a platform for participants to voice reflections on their psychodramatic journey, fostering mutual understanding, empathy, and collective growth. This phase allows the protagonist to be reintegrated into the group, and other group members express how they connected with the protagonist's experience on stage, as emphasized by Giacomucci (2019, 2021).

These phases form the structure of psychodrama therapy, providing a framework for emotional exploration and healing (Moreno, 1946/2019; Moreno, J. L., 1960s).

Central to the psychodramatic tableau are five principal roles:

- **The Protagonist:** The focal character that explores emotions, experiences, and insights within the psychodramatic framework.

- **Auxiliary Egos:** Extensions of the protagonist's psyche, representing diverse facets of the internal world and fostering nuanced explorations of conflicts.
- **The Double:** This role mirrors unspoken emotions and perspectives, facilitating profound dialogues that unveil latent realms.
- **Director:** Often the therapist, who orchestrates and guides the psychodramatic process, ensuring safety and coherence.
- **The Audience:** Engaged witnesses whose observations and reflections enrich the therapeutic exploration.

These roles and their functions are crucial for the psychodramatic process, enabling comprehensive therapeutic engagement (Miller & Klein, 2012; Moreno, 1946/2019).

Efficacious role-playing hinges on a diverse repertoire of techniques, tailored to contextual nuances and participant characteristics.

PSYCHODRAMA THERAPY TECHNIQUES: A STUDY IN HUMAN UNCONSCIOUS EXPLORATION

The origins of Moreno's (1959) psychodrama techniques are rooted in meticulous research (Moreno, 1959) aimed at unraveling intricacies of the human unconscious. This exploration draws from a comprehensive analysis of individual psychology, interwoven with paradigms expounded by therapeutic luminaries such as Freud, Jung, and Adler. Notably, Moreno's emphasis on earlier research sets the stage for his unique perspective.

At the core of Moreno's assertions is the proposition that within group therapy, the unconscious operates collaboratively, resembling a co-unconscious. This perspective posits that therapeutic interpersonal sessions achieve enhanced efficacy when set against the backdrop of the individual technique of free association, a hallmark of associative methodology. Freud's work *Le Moi et le Ça* (*The ego and the id*; 1923, p11) establishes a foundational distinction between the preconscious and the unconscious, emphasizing that while both are psychic phenomena, the unconscious contains repressed material that is "dynamically inaccessible". Moreno's stance departs from Freud's rigid compartmentalization of the unconscious, contending that such demarcations yield limited productive outcomes. While grappling with this dialectic, Moreno poses a pivotal inquiry: How can we establish a bridge between the unconscious and the preconscious?

Guided by Moreno's proposition, the quest to construct this vital bridge takes center stage. Moreno (1959, p. 48) articulates this quandary by stating the following; "How can we build a bridge between the pre-conscious (Pc) and unconscious (Uc)? There may exist innumerable transitional stages between the two systems, Pcs and Ucs". To bridge the gap between A and B, the following techniques, among numerous others, have proven instrumental.

These techniques provide a structured framework for participants to engage with their emotions, thoughts, and revelations, under the guidance of a trained therapist.

THE DANCE OF DYNAMICS: EXPLORING PSYCHODRAMA'S INTERPERSONAL TECHNIQUES

Building upon this foundation, Moreno's exploration of group dynamics enriches psychodrama's therapeutic framework, shedding light on the intricacies within group settings. Although Kurt Lewin made groundbreaking contributions to our understanding of group dynamics, it is important to note that Moreno approached group interactions from a different perspective—one that emphasizes the unconscious forces that shape human relationships. As Moreno (1934, p. 3) stated: "A true therapeutic procedure cannot have less an objective than the whole of mankind".

Kurt Lewin likened group dynamics to energy transformations and interactions, stating the following: "A dynamic approach in psychology means, first of all, that one has to take into account the whole psychological field, that is, the life space as it exists at a given time" (Cartwright, 1951, p. 47). This holistic view of psychological space provides a useful lens for conceptualizing the fluctuating yet powerful dynamics at play within a group. It suggests that group behavior is not merely the sum of individual actions but the product of a complex, interconnected system of emotional and relational exchanges. Moreno (1934, p. 3) similarly observed: "Once we had chosen this principle as our guide another idea developed of necessity. If this whole of mankind is a unity, then tendencies must emerge between the different parts of this unity drawing them at one time apart and drawing them at another time together". These subtle exchanges, though often invisible, hold immense therapeutic potential, influencing not only how individuals interact but also how they come to understand and heal within the group context.

Moreno proposed the "law of social gravity," a principle reflecting the balance of forces observed in the universe. He explained, "These tendencies may become apparent on the surface in the relation of individuals or of groups of individuals as affinities or disaffinities, as attractions and repulsions. These attractions and repulsions must be related to an index of biological, social, and psychological facts, and this index must be detectable" (Moreno, 1934, p. 4). In a similar vein, much like planets orbiting the sun, participants in group therapy must navigate their emotional and relational positions, striving for equilibrium that avoids extremes—whether overwhelming entanglement or emotional detachment. Moreno's (1934) "law of social gravity" not only guides the dynamics of group therapy but also mirrors the universal principles of human interaction, offering insights into how individuals navigate complex social structures.

Building on these insights, therapists can further enhance the therapeutic process by considering the unconscious and the relational forces that shape group dynamics. In this context, Moreno introduced the concept of the "co-unconscious," which expands on the collective unconscious, emphasizing its role in fostering empathy and mutual understanding within group settings. He argued that shared emotional resonance among participants creates a dynamic interplay of attractions and repulsions, governed by a "law of social gravity" akin to the physical universe's balance of forces (Moreno, 1934). This resonance serves

as a critical mechanism for therapeutic change, allowing participants to navigate their roles within the social organism and transform unconscious processes into conscious insights. When one participant expresses vulnerability—such as fear or desire—it reverberates within the group, prompting others to recognize and reflect on similar emotional experiences. This resonance not only nurtures an atmosphere of mutual support but also opens the door to collective healing.

These concepts underpin the emotional resonance observed in psychodrama sessions, where participants' shared vulnerability catalyzes collective healing, fostering profound interpersonal connections. In this way, the "co-unconscious" operates as a therapeutic bridge, allowing individuals to move beyond their individual experiences and enter a shared emotional space, further deepening the therapeutic process. As emotions echo across the group, they amplify each participant's capacity for empathy, creating a shared emotional field that binds the group together in a collective experience.

The concept of resonance—as it relates to social dynamics—adds another layer to this understanding. In group therapy, the emotional expressions of one individual often echo within the collective group, amplifying or refracting the emotions of others. This echo effect can create a ripple of shared emotional energy that reinforces the connection between participants. Just as echoes bounce back and forth between surfaces, emotions in a group can reverberate, becoming more pronounced as they travel through the dynamics of interpersonal exchange. This creates a social field where the emotional tone is not static but actively shaped by the interactions of all participants. Moreno (1934, p. 170) elaborated on this dynamic by explaining that emotional states such as anger, fear, or liking, and more complex states such as reflection or curiosity, are part of a larger social reality he termed "social atoms," stating the following: "Emotional states such as anger, fear, or liking, and more complex states like reflection, conviction, or curiosity, are limited realities. They do not exist as they appear to the person who is filled with them. They are part of a whole; they belong to the next larger reality, the social atoms". This dynamic, Moreno (1934, p. 6) continued, reveals that "its organization develops and distributes itself in space apparently according to a law of social gravity which seems to be valid for every kind of grouping irrespective of the membership". In this way the group itself, becomes an organism in which emotions are not only shared but magnified, intensifying the therapeutic process.

Building on Moreno's insights, therapists can further enhance the therapeutic process by considering two additional layers in group dynamics: the collective-preconscious and co-conscious layers. The collective-preconscious layer, acting as a bridge between unconscious and conscious experiences, allows shared emotions and processes to emerge within the group. This transitional space enables participants to process thoughts and feelings before they become fully conscious. Through this phase, a deeper layer of collective awareness begins to take shape, paving the way for the co-conscious, where reflective sharing fosters mutual understanding and allows for meaningful, structured exchanges. These stages represent a dynamic flow of mental experiences, moving seamlessly from

unconscious processes (Ucs) through the preconscious (Pcs), and culminating in conscious (Cs) awareness. By understanding these layers, therapists can guide the group through a deeper, and more nuanced exploration of their shared emotional landscapes.

Thus, Moreno's (1934) exploration of the "co-unconscious" and the dynamics of group resonance serves as a cornerstone for understanding how psychodrama facilitates therapeutic change on both individual and collective levels. The integration of Kurt Lewin's concept of psychological field, Moreno's exploration of the co-unconscious, and the resonance effect in social dynamics enriches our understanding of the therapeutic process in psychodrama. As participants move from unconscious resonance to collective preconscious awareness and, ultimately, to conscious reflection, the dynamics of the group evolve into a profound space for healing and growth. This continuum of awareness provides a rich framework through which individuals and groups can explore their emotions, gain insights, and create transformative change.

Building upon the intricate dynamics of group interactions and the unconscious forces at play, it is crucial to explore how societal constructs, especially social representations, further shape individual and group behavior within the framework of psychodrama. As Moreno (1934, p. 9) remind us; "Man is not only conditioned by nature's environment but also by man's society, by its social structure". This perspective underscores the profound impact of social structures on shaping human experiences and interactions.

SOCIAL ROLES AND THE CORE REPRESENTATION IN PSYCHODRAMA

Social representations, as introduced by Serge Moscovici in 1961, refer to the shared beliefs, values, and practices within a society (Lo Monaco, Delouvée, & Rateau, 2016). These representations not only shape how individuals perceive, interact, and engage with the world, influencing societal behaviors and norms. They evolve through ongoing communication, education, and social interactions, echoing across generations and deeply impacting social roles and behaviors.

In psychodrama, these social representations resonate strongly. For instance, when a participant enacts the role of a mother, the action can reflect not only their personal experiences but also the broader, culturally shared image of motherhood. This resonance enables individuals to reflect on how societal images and roles influence their emotions, relationships, and behaviors. As Moreno (1946/2019, p. 48) noted in volume 1 of *Psychodrama*, "Every individual—just as he has at all times a set of friends and a set of enemies—has a range of roles in which he sees himself and faces a range of counter-roles in which he sees others around him". Through role-playing, psychodrama allows individuals to explore these resonances, facilitating self-reflection and group connections by tapping into both personal and collective dimensions of their experiences. While the resonance of social representations actively shapes individual and collective behavior, these representations are underpinned by a central, solid core—the heart of social representation—that remains consistent

across different contexts, providing a stable foundation from which roles and identities are shaped.

UNVEILING THE CORE OF SOCIAL REPRESENTATION IN PSYCHODRAMA

Moscovici's theory suggests that social representations form the foundation of both individual and collective identities. These representations are structured around a central core (Lo Monaco, et al., 2016), which remains relatively fixed and stable across different cultures and historical contexts. This core refers to the central, and unifying element of a social role, such as "mother" or "father," which carries a consistent meaning across societies. As Jean-Claude Abric (1993, as cited in Lo Monaco et al., 2016) expanded on this, he argued that this core structure—the "core"—serves as the stabilizing component of social representations, while peripheral elements can shift more flexibly in response to cultural or historical changes. The core is both constant and firm, providing a shared cultural foundation for social roles across different societies.

Building on these insights, Claude Flament identified three layers of the core:

1. **Conditional Layer:** Aspects of the core that adjust to specific situational or environmental contexts, reflecting the dynamic interplay between the individual and their surroundings.
2. **Non-Conditional Layer:** Immutable components that remain fixed and stable, representing the enduring essence of roles and their societal significance.
3. **Normative Layer:** Elements influenced by societal norms, laws, or ethics that regulate behavior and expectations associated with roles (Lo Monaco, et al., 2016).

The core's strength lies in its non-conditional layer, which remains universal and unchanging. However, Flament emphasized that trauma is the only phenomenon capable of disturbing the core. Such an event can cause the central element to fracture, affecting its various layers, although the non-conditional layer typically endures, preserving the core meaning despite the trauma. It represents the shared, universal essence that transcends individual and cultural variations.

In psychodrama, the concept of the core provides a framework for understanding the dynamics of personal identity and role enactment within a therapeutic setting. The warm-up phase in psychodrama plays a critical role in catalyzing the core, enabling participants to access the essence of universal roles such as "mother" or "father," even in the case of a disturbed core. This process draws directly from the psychological mechanisms that govern social representations: when the core is activated, participants tap into the deeper, archetypal layers of their roles, whether those layers have been disrupted or not by trauma.

By catalyzing the core, participants activate its deep, archetypal layers, generating resonance and facilitating meaningful connections within the group. This process creates a shared emotional and psychological field where personal

experiences intersect with collective meanings, fostering deeper interpersonal connections. For instance, the role of the mother universally embodies nurturing, protection, and care—qualities rooted in the non-conditional core. Simultaneously, the normative dimension reflects societal expectations of maternal behavior, while the conditional aspect adapts to the participant's specific experiences and context.

The resonance generated through this catalysis strengthens group connections and deepens the therapeutic experience. This interplay between the individual and collective dimensions enables participants to connect with their fundamental roles, reframe their personal narratives, and engage in a process of healing and growth. In cases where trauma has disturbed the core, psychodrama provides a safe and structured space for participants to reengage with their roles and heal the fractured layers, reconnecting with the non-conditional element. Psychodrama thus becomes a powerful tool for exploring and stabilizing the intricate layers of social representations while nurturing connections that resonate deeply across personal and shared domains.

TRAUMA'S IMPACT ON THE CORE: RECONSTRUCTING THE CORE THROUGH PSYCHODRAMA

The core of social representation, as explored through the works of Moscovici, Abric, and Flamond, serves as the foundational element for both individual and collective identities. This core structure remains largely stable and resilient, with the non-conditional layer representing the universal essence of social roles such as “mother” or “father.” However, when trauma strikes—an overwhelming event that can fracture the stability of the core—it disrupts the more flexible layers, namely the conditional and normative cores. Despite this disruption, the non-conditional layer remains intact, retaining the immutable essence of the role.

In psychodrama, this disruption is often confronted directly through the action phase, where participants reenact traumatic situations or roles that have been impacted by trauma. While trauma is traditionally viewed as a phenomenon that shatters the core, psychodrama introduces a form of ‘inverse trauma.’ Rather than causing further harm, psychodramatic situations—through techniques such as role reversal or the mirror technique—evoke emotional responses in ways that stimulate healing and restoration. Similarly, on an intrapsychic level, Giacomucci (2018) identifies three types of psychodramas that reflect the therapeutic process of trauma healing and core reconstruction: (1) *Prescriptive Role Psychodramas*, which focus on building strengths and safety to face trauma; (2) *Re-Experiencing with Developmental Repair Psychodramas*, which revisit the trauma and renegotiate internalized roles with newfound strength and support; and (3) *Transformative Psychodramas*, which explore post-traumatic growth and the transformation of trauma-based roles into more adaptive and empowering roles. These reenactments act as a therapeutic form of trauma, enabling the reconstruction of the core by engaging with its deeper, archetypal layers.

During the action phase, psychodrama offers a unique opportunity to relive and reframe traumatic events in a controlled and supportive environment.

Participants may re-enact a traumatic situation, such as a loss, a conflict, or a painful experience related to a social role (e.g., mother or father). Through role-play, they actively engage with the emotions, thoughts, and physical sensations associated with the trauma, reprocessing the event in real-time. This enactment does not merely serve as a form of catharsis; but also allows participants to interact with the deeper layers of the core, especially the non-conditional layer, which holds the universal meaning and essence of roles that transcend personal experiences.

By reconnecting with the non-conditional element during these reenactments, participants tap into the archetypal aspects of their roles—such as nurturing for a mother or protection for a father—which remain stable even in the wake of trauma. This act of re-engagement with the core, unchanging essence of their social roles helps to rebuild and stabilize the core, facilitating a deeper emotional processing and cognitive reframing of the traumatic experience.

In this context, the action phase of psychodrama catalyzes a resonance between the personal experiences of trauma and the collective, universal meanings attached to these roles. The group environment amplifies this process, providing a shared emotional space that fosters empathy and connection. By actively reliving and reframing the trauma through role-play, participants can reconstruct their understanding of self and others, integrating the fractured parts of the core back into a coherent whole.

Ultimately, psychodrama's therapeutic use of role-play to reenact traumatic situations serves not only to address the emotional aftermath of trauma but also to heal the fractured core. Through this multi-layered exploration, participants can restore a sense of emotional and psychological balance, reclaiming their social roles and identity, and moving towards deeper personal growth and healing.

DISRUPTED VERSUS. DEVIANT CORE

While trauma can disturb the core, it is important to distinguish between a disrupted core and a deviant core.

- **Disrupted core:** A disrupted core arises when trauma temporarily fractures the core's stability. These disruptions are often sudden and overwhelming, creating a gap between the individual's emotional and cognitive processing capacities. The trauma overwhelms the person, leading to unresolved emotions, fragmented memories, or inability to process the experience in real-time. In psychodrama, this disruption is addressed by revisiting the trauma, enabling re-engagement with the emotional and psychological fragments. Through role-playing and reenactment, psychodrama creates a space to restore emotional coherence and reintegrate the fractured elements of the self, helping to rebuild the core to its original, stable state.

While a disrupted core arises as a sudden fracture in the core's stability, a deviant core represents a more enduring misalignment that evolves over time. In contrast

to the immediate and overwhelming impact of trauma, a deviant core is shaped by long-term external influences or internal distortions, leading to a more profound and persistent shift in identity.

- **Deviant core:** A deviant core emerges when the core becomes misaligned over time because of negative social conditioning, distorted societal roles, or harmful past experiences. This misalignment results in a maladaptive core structure that no longer serves the individual's authentic self, leading to emotional or psychological disturbances. A deviant core can also be shaped by rigid societal expectations or external forces that impose a new identity, often resulting in a pathologically distorted sense of self. For example, in the case of Schreber (1903), a German judge who documented his experiences with severe mental illnesses in the late 19th century, the societal role or "statue" imposed on him significantly altered his core identity. As Schreber ascended to a higher societal status, his identity was reshaped, pushing him further away from his authentic self. He began to see himself as a woman, reflecting the rigid and externally imposed expectations he faced. This external imposition led to a rigid confusion in roles, as described in his memoir *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* (Schreber, 1903). Schreber's case illustrates how societal pressures and expectations can lead to a deviant core, where the individual's self-concept becomes distorted by external forces, resulting in psychological tension and dysfunction. This misalignment represents a pathological shift, where the self-concept is largely dictated by external forces, intensifying psychological distress.

Psychodrama offers a therapeutic space to address and challenge these maladaptive roles, allowing individuals to confront the dissonance between their imposed identity and their true self. Through role-playing, participants can work to reconstruct a more authentic, functional core that aligns with their genuine identity.

RESTORING THE CORE: TRAUMA AND RECONSTRUCTION

While the core is typically seen as a solid and stable foundation of identity, it can become "deviant" or maladaptive over time. This can happen when the core is shaped by distorted social roles or harmful past experiences, no longer serve the individual in a healthy and functional manner, and leading to emotional or psychological disturbances.

One approach to address this misalignment is by using trauma or a triggering event to disrupt temporarily the existing core. This disruption "shakes" the solid core, opening up the possibility for a change. By creating a moment of vulnerability, trauma allows the individual to confront the deviant aspects of their identity, making space for the construction of a more authentic and balanced self.

Psychodrama, with its ability to re-enact past events, offers a unique opportunity to facilitate this process. The therapeutic journey often begins by confronting a traumatic situation or revisiting a painful event. This allows the individual to disrupt their existing deviant core, challenging old patterns and beliefs that no longer serve them. Once the disruption occurs, psychodrama offers a space for

the individual to “rebuild” or reconstruct the core in a healthier, more functional manner.

Through role-playing, participants in psychodrama can explore and challenge the social roles that have shaped their deviant core. By engaging in dramatic action, they can rework old and unhealthy patterns and replace them with more adaptive identities and roles. This reconstruction process is not about erasing the past trauma but integrating it in a way that facilitates personal growth and healing.

By revisiting trauma, psychodrama helps participants not only to disrupt a deviant core but also to rebuild it in a more coherent and authentic form, based on healthier social representations and a clearer sense of self.

RESONANCE, THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FIELD, AND GROUP THERAPY

The core of representations carries emotional and symbolic weight that transcends individual experiences. In group therapy, this shared cultural resonance creates a space where individual emotional experiences echo throughout the group. The enactment of social roles in psychodrama allows participants to connect with both personal and collective experiences, creating a feedback loop that enhances emotional understanding and connection within the group. As individuals express their emotions in therapeutic setting, these expressions reverberate through the group, deepening the collective emotional experience and reinforcing bonds between participants.

This resonance effect exemplifies Kurt Lewin’s concept of psychological field, where emotions and experiences constantly shift and influence each other within the group. Just as emotions reverberate across the group, the psychological field itself is dynamic—continually reshaping the experiences of each participant in real time. The group, as a collective emotional space, evolves with every interaction, reinforcing mutual understanding and empathy. The resonance effect in the group allows participants to experience emotions they might not have recognized in themselves, amplifying the emotional experience and encouraging deeper self-reflection and connection with others. As emotions reverberate across the group, participants gain a more integrated understanding of their experiences and relationships, creating a dynamic and evolving environment where individual and collective transformation can occur.

This dynamic requires a framework, to ensure that the process remains structured and effective. The triad system serves as this essential framework. It represents a significant shift in the therapeutic field, creating an engineered system that encompasses and organizes dynamic interactions within the group. Moreno’s (1959) introduction of the triad system marked a departure from traditional dyadic therapy models, offering a more complex and flexible structure for exploring interpersonal dynamics. By facilitating the interaction of multiple roles, the triad system enhances the group’s ability to navigate emotional dynamics, leading to more profound insights and emotional restoration.

By unraveling these dynamics, therapists can better facilitate participant engagement and therapeutic breakthroughs, ultimately enhancing the overall

efficacy of group psychodrama. This intricate dance of personal and collective roles within the triad system not only enriches the therapeutic process but also sets the stage for a deeper exploration of how these dynamics shape individual transformation. It is within this nuanced interplay that the power of resonance in psychodrama becomes evident, offering profound opportunities for emotional growth and liberation.

THE EVOLVING DYNAMICS OF RESONANCE IN PSYCHODRAMA'S THERAPEUTIC PROCESS

It is within this charged space of collective emotional energy that the triad system emerges as a revolutionary engineering. In psychodrama, the triad system harnesses the power of these shared societal roles and representations, allowing participants to explore the intricate dance of relationship dynamics—both personal and collective—through the interaction of protagonist, auxiliary egos, and the group. By engaging with these evolving dynamics, participants are invited to break free from the limitations of past representations and explore new, liberating possibilities for the self and collective transformation.

The resonance of social representations plays a crucial role in psychodrama, reinforcing the collective emotional space where participants explore societal roles and their personal experiences. This resonance amplifies the emotional dynamics within the group, fostering mutual understanding and healing. Through role enactment and the triad system, psychodrama creates a therapeutic environment where individuals can engage with both personal and collective dimensions of their experiences, facilitating profound emotional growth and transformation. In this way, resonance not only deepens individual self-reflection but also enhances the collective therapeutic process, supporting the evolving psychological field within the group.

By exploring the dynamic interplay between personal and collective roles, psychodrama offers a powerful tool for understanding and transforming social representations, enabling participants to break free from past limitations and create new and liberating narratives for their lives.

This insight led Moreno (1959) to develop techniques designed to work in harmony with these dynamics, creating powerful tools for therapeutic intervention. His innovative approach introduced psychodrama as a means of creating a space where participants could explore and resolve interpersonal conflicts through enactment and role-playing. This marked a significant advancement in therapeutic practice, shifting from the traditional dyadic model (two-person) to a triadic model (three persons): “A new therapeutic formation, a triad, is formed when a third person, an additional patient, enters the treatment situation” (Moreno, 1959, p. 45). In this model, the introduction of a third person into the therapy session allows for a deeper exploration of relationships and dynamics.

Moreno (1959) distinguished the uniqueness of this approach, which he considered distinct from both individual and standard group psychotherapy. This shift in therapeutic structure offers a flexible framework to support and contain the co-unconscious movement within group psychotherapy, creating an

environment where participants can delve deeper into emotions and interpersonal relationships while addressing complex dynamics in a safe and structured setting. Recognizing these intricate dynamics is essential, as they not only enrich the therapeutic experience but also set the stage for the specific psychodrama techniques that bridge the unconscious (Ucs) and preconscious (Pcs) realms in group therapy. By unraveling these dynamics, therapists can better facilitate participant engagement and therapeutic breakthroughs, ultimately enhancing the overall efficacy of group psychodrama.

Nevertheless, how do these dynamics, often rooted in the unconscious, manifest and shape therapeutic progress? One key way is through images—profound mental representations that bridge the conscious and unconscious realms.

THE ROLE OF IMAGES IN THERAPY: FROM INNER SYMBOLS TO LIVED EXPRESSIONS

Images play a profound role in the therapeutic process, serving as bridges to the unconscious and as pathways for deeper understanding of the self. These mental representations—emerging through dreams, memories, or fleeting thoughts—carry symbolic meanings that resonate with the intricate dynamics of the psyche. They invite exploration, offering a way to uncover layers of the self that are not accessible immediately.

In psychoanalysis, images are deeply rooted in the interplay between the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious. Freud, in *Le Moi et le Ça* (1923), describes the unconscious as a reservoir of desires and impulses that the ego seeks to mediate and control. He emphasizes that the unconscious content can only reach the ego after passing through the preconscious and being transformed into words or clear thoughts. This transformation is central to psychoanalysis, where images—manifesting as dreams or symbols—serve as starting points. Through free association, patients describe these images, translating them into language, allowing unconscious elements to emerge into conscious awareness for analysis and integration (Freud, 1923).

For example, a recurring image in a dream might symbolize a repressed longing or an unacknowledged conflict. Freud (1923) viewed such images as encoded by the unconscious, crafted to bypass the ego's defenses. Through the process of verbalizing these representations, patients engage in a transformative act, where language serves as a bridge between abstract symbols and conscious understanding. This articulation is essential in psychoanalysis, enabling unconscious material to surface and be integrated.

While psychoanalysis emphasizes verbal articulation as a means of uncovering the unconscious, psychodrama takes a more dynamic and interactive approach, allowing images to be enacted rather than merely analyzed. This distinction marks a key difference in how both modalities engage with unconscious material. Instead of prioritizing language over imagery, psychodrama integrates the two, recognizing the equal importance of non-verbal expressions. "Just as in a dream, so a psychodrama appears to be an exposition of unconscious dynamic. But it may be appropriate to point out some fundamental differences"

(Moreno, 1946/2019, p. 59). On the stage of psychodrama, mental images, emotions, and actions are brought to life, creating a space where verbal and non-verbal elements coexist. “But the characters in a psychodrama are real people. The dreamer can go on dreaming the most fantastic things without any resistance from his dream characters, his dream characters and the whole plot being his own production” (Moreno, 1946/2019, p. 60). This balance makes psychodrama particularly effective for individuals who struggle to articulate their inner experiences.

Building on this distinction, psychodrama offers a unique space where images are not just interpreted but also enacted actively, allowing individuals to engage with their unconscious elements in real time. Through its dynamic techniques, psychodrama brings mental images to life, creating a pathway for emotional release and deeper insight.

How, then, do psychodrama techniques bring these unconscious images to life, transforming them into lived expressions that foster deeper emotional truths?

BRIDGING THE GAP: PSYCHODRAMA TECHNIQUES AS PATHWAYS TO INSIGHT

In psychodrama, however, images follow a more dynamic trajectory. Instead of confining internal representations to verbal articulation, psychodrama externalizes and animates them. Through techniques such as the double and the mirror, these internal states are embodied and enacted, creating opportunities for direct interaction and transformation.

The double technique exemplifies this approach by bringing an auxiliary ego onto the stage. Acting as an extension of the protagonist, the double gives voice to thoughts or emotions that may otherwise remain unspoken. This mirrors Freud's (1923) concept of the unconscious breaking into conscious awareness but does so through physical and verbal enactment rather than linguistic introspection. The embodied expression of inner conflicts creates a “living image” that facilitates profound insight and emotional release.

Similarly, the mirror technique offers a reflective perspective where the protagonist observes their emotions, behaviors, and interactions as portrayed by another person. This externalization aligns with Freud's (1923) notion of the ego observing and reconciling its impulses, but with a tangible, immediate dimension that psychodrama provides uniquely. Witnessing their own “image” through another allows individuals to confront patterns of thought and behavior in a way that transcends verbal explanation.

In psychodrama, the stage becomes a vibrant arena where mental images are not merely translated into words but experienced holistically. Verbal and non-verbal elements merge, enabling patients to connect deeply with their internal worlds. Actions, gestures, and speech together create a transformative space where images are lived, not just interpreted.

While Freud's (1923) psychoanalysis emphasizes the importance of translating images into language as a path to conscious understanding, psychodrama treats these images as dynamic entities to be enacted and explored. Both

approaches highlight the transformative potential of images—whether through verbal articulation or embodied expression—as tools to navigate the complexities of the psyche.

As images serve as a powerful bridge to the unconscious in psychodrama, it is crucial to recognize that these are not static symbols but dynamic, lived representations of the inner world.

The process of bringing these images to life requires a structured therapeutic framework. At the heart of psychodrama lies the triad Therapeutic Situation, the dynamic model that governs the interaction between therapist and participants. This triadic structure provides the foundation for the therapeutic process, orchestrating the exchange of emotions, insights, and personal growth within the psychodramatic space.

THE TRIAD THERAPEUTIC FRAMEWORK: THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF PSYCHODRAMA TECHNIQUES

Psychodrama, a therapeutic method pioneered by Moreno, integrates the principles of theater with psychological healing. In this section, we explore the foundational techniques of psychodrama, with a particular focus on theoretical underpinnings and their practical applications. At the heart of this framework lies the triadic system, which plays a crucial role in understanding the dynamics of psychodrama.

At the core of psychodrama is the triad therapeutic situation, which governs the interaction between the therapist (TH) and the participants (A and B). In this structure, the therapist is not a passive guide but adopts multiple roles depending on the moment in the therapeutic process. At times, the therapist serves as an observer, gauging group dynamics; at other times, they step into the action as a participant or auxiliary ego. This fluidity allows the therapist to respond to the group's needs, facilitating both individual and relational healing. Through this dynamic exchange of emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal insights, the therapist's role flexibility is essential (Moreno, 1959, Figure 1).

Building on this, Moreno's early sociometric studies and theatrical experiments in Vienna laid the foundation for the psychodramatic techniques that would evolve into structured therapeutic methods in the United States. The roots of this framework trace back to Moreno's pioneering work in Vienna, where he explored the intersection of theater, psychology, and interpersonal relationships. It was in this vibrant intellectual and cultural environment that Moreno began experimenting with spontaneous theater and improvisational group dynamics. As Moreno (1934, p. 18) noted: "Our first move in the direction of sociometric planning was begun with small spontaneously formed groups of individuals in which the factors involved in their organization could be readily studied. This early research was carried out in Vienna, 1921-1925". These early efforts laid the groundwork for psychodrama's techniques, including the conceptualization of the triad Therapeutic Situation. In Vienna, Moreno used improvisational theater not just as an art form but as a medium for therapeutic expression, enabling participants to enact and resolve interpersonal conflicts in a supportive space.

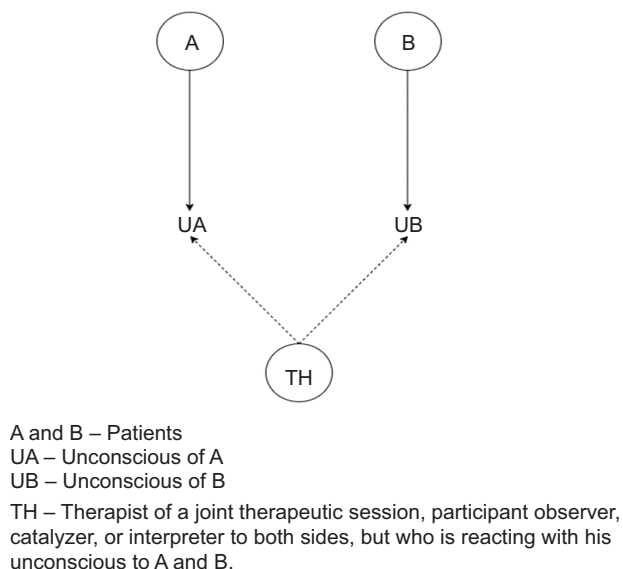


Figure 1. Technique of interpersonal therapy.

Moreover, Moreno's sociometric studies in refugee camps and various community settings provided deeper insights into interpersonal and group relations. As he explained, "The position of psychodrama within the sociometric system is therefore divided. With its major portion as an instrument which investigates the deeper structures of inter-individual and intergroup relations, it belongs to sociometry" (Moreno, 1946/2019, p. 362). Psychodrama, in this sense, occupies a two position within the sociometric system. On one hand, it serves as an investigative tool for uncovering the deeper structures of inter-individual and inter-group relations, firmly aligning it with sociometry. On the other hand, it delves into personality as a separate entity, examining individual psychological processes and connecting it to projective techniques. This duality establishes psychodrama as a unique bridge between sociometry and psychology, uniting the exploration of group dynamics with the study of personal growth (Moreno, 1946/2019).

THE EVOLUTION OF THE "SOCIAL INVESTIGATOR" ROLE: FROM SOCIOMETRIC TO PSYCHODRAMATIC DIRECTOR

The role of the director as a "sociometric investigator" is a key element in the evolution of psychodrama. Initially, in Moreno's sociometric approach, the director took on the role of an observer, analyzing the interpersonal dynamics and group structures without direct intervention. This observational stance allowed the sociometric director to understand the emotional and relational configurations within the group. The sociometric director's primary function was to identify patterns of social interaction and emotional resonance, often utilizing tools such as sociograms to map relationships.

However, as Moreno's psychodramatic methods evolved, so too did the director's role. The sociometric director's function as a "social investigator" became more deeply integrated into the psychodramatic framework. The psychodramatic director continues to act as a social investigator but with a more nuanced, interactive, and dynamic presence. While still serving as an observer of group dynamics, the psychodramatic director also steps into the therapeutic action, guiding the participants through role-playing, emotional exploration, and conflict resolution.

In this developmental shift, the psychodramatic director's role as a social investigator grows more active and versatile. As Moreno (1946/2019, p. 364) noted, The psychodramatic director has three functions: (a) he is a producer, (b) chief therapist, and (c) social analyst". This transition highlights the growing fluidity of the director's role in psychodrama, wherein they are not only a social investigator but also an active participant in the therapeutic process. The director's role extends beyond mere observation to include direct interventions, guiding the therapeutic journey by shifting between roles such as the observer, participant, and auxiliary ego. In this sense, the social investigator becomes a "super auxiliary ego," serving as a powerful tool for facilitating emotional exploration while maintaining an objective perspective on group dynamics.

This evolving concept of the psychodramatic director as a "social investigator" emphasizes a more active, engaged approach to group therapy. By carefully observing interpersonal dynamics, the director can tailor interventions that are sensitive to the emotional and relational needs of the group. This dual focus—on both relational dynamics and individual psychological processes—demonstrates the unique ability of psychodrama to integrate the principles of sociometry with therapeutic practice.

As the therapeutic process unfolds, the therapist takes on several key roles, acting as a guide and an active participant. Equally crucial is the therapist's dynamic role, which varies depending on the therapeutic context. At times, they function as an observer; at others, they may embody an auxiliary ego to facilitate the protagonist's emotional journey.

While the triad therapeutic situation provides the blueprint for psychodrama's dynamics, it is within this framework that the therapist's role becomes multifaceted and fluid. Understanding how the therapist navigates these roles is essential for grasping the depth of psychodrama's therapeutic potential.

THE THERAPIST'S ROLE IN THE TRIAD

Within the triadic system, the therapist assumes a multifaceted role that is both action-oriented and observational. Initially, the therapist takes on an observational stance, functioning as a "social investigator" (Moreno, 1946/2019). During this phase, the therapist focuses on understanding group dynamics and the two-way relationships between participants, ensuring a comprehensive awareness of the sociometric connections at play. Moreno (1946/2019, p. 362) emphasizes this by stating the following: "The therapist must first understand the group dynamics and two-way relationships before entering into participatory roles". This careful

observation allows the therapist to identify key relational patterns that influence the therapeutic process.

As the therapeutic journey progresses, the therapist transitions into more active roles, most notably that of the auxiliary ego. This shift from observer to active participant enables the therapist to foster a safe and supportive environment, which is crucial for facilitating meaningful emotional breakthroughs and behavioral changes in participants. Moreno (1946/2019, p. 371) explains, “The auxiliary ego is analyzed as a social investigator while it is in operation, functioning as both observer and acting agent”. In this role, the therapist temporarily embodies absent figures or aspects of the participants’ unconscious, facilitating the expression of unarticulated emotions and desires. This role is essential for enabling participants to confront and resolve inner conflicts through role-play and therapeutic engagement. Moreno (1946/2019, p. 364) further describes the auxiliary ego as “an extension of the primary ego”, emphasizing its importance in advancing the therapeutic process.

The auxiliary ego also acts as a bridge between participants, enhancing their ability to engage more effectively with each other. This role supports emotional expression and addresses unresolved tensions that may hinder progress. By embodying elements of the participants’ unconscious, the auxiliary ego helps the protagonist externalize and process difficult emotions, fostering deeper self-exploration and emotional resolution. Whether portrayed by the therapist or another group member, the auxiliary ego creates a space where the protagonist can witness and resolve feelings that are challenging to articulate alone.

Having explored the multifaceted roles of a psychodrama therapist, we now turn our attention to the specific techniques employed within this framework, which serve as tools for facilitating transformation and emotional healing.

THE TECHNIQUE OF DIALOGICAL EXPLORATION (TALKING IT OVER)

The technique of dialogical exploration is a cornerstone of psychodrama therapy, serving as a tool for addressing interpersonal conflicts and unexpressed emotions. In this method, the therapist facilitates an open, safe, and empathetic dialogue between participants, guiding them to explore their emotions, thoughts, and perceptions from multiple perspectives. Building on Moreno’s foundational work, this technique emerged from his theater-based experiments and therapeutic groups, where the need to resolve interpersonal conflicts through guided dialogue became increasingly evident.

In this context, dialogical exploration evolved in Moreno’s experimental sociometric settings, where verbal exchanges between participants were central to uncovering emotional truths and enhancing mutual understanding. Through this process, participants are encouraged to engage in direct communication with each other, with the therapist serving as a facilitator who promotes active listening, genuine expression, and emotional exchange. Moreover, the therapist’s role is crucial in ensuring a supportive environment that fosters vulnerability and connection.

At its core, dialogical exploration aligns with psychodrama's emphasis on relational dynamics. By creating a space for open dialogue, it enables participants to better understand themselves and others, allowing for emotional healing and growth within the therapeutic group (Moreno, 1946/2019).

While dialogical exploration encourages active communication, another core technique in psychodrama, observational silence, invites a more passive yet equally powerful form of engagement. In this phase, the therapist refrains from direct verbal intervention, allowing natural group dynamics to unfold.

OBSERVATIONAL SILENCE: A THERAPIST'S PRESENCE

Another key technique in psychodrama is observational silence, in which the therapist adopts a position of silent observation throughout the session, refraining from direct verbal intervention. By remaining unobtrusive, the therapist creates space for participants to engage more freely in the therapeutic process. This technique is especially effective in situations where unresolved tensions exist, such as in family or group dynamics, as it fosters an environment conducive to authentic emotional expression.

Building on Moreno's early work, observational silence was developed in sociometric laboratories, where the therapist's role as a non-intrusive observer became crucial for mapping group dynamics and emotional interplay. As Moreno (1934, p. 12) observed: "We have studied group formation in three ways. The first way may be called observational and interpretative. We watched the children as, free of supervision, they ran out of school to the playgrounds, the manner in which they grouped themselves spontaneously". This method highlights the power of spontaneous group interactions and the therapist's ability to let these interactions unfold naturally, without overt interference.

Moreover, this technique aligns with Moreno's broader approach to understanding relational dynamics. By stepping back and allowing group interactions to emerge organically, the therapist not only respects the participants' autonomy but also gains valuable insights into the underlying emotional and relational structures at play. This method is in harmony with Moreno's philosophy of analyzing group behavior in both natural and structured settings, further deepening our understanding of human connection and emotional exchange.

Although the technique of observational silence allows for a passive, yet insightful presence, the therapist's engagement deepens as they actively participate in the therapeutic process. This shift from observation to direct involvement is critical in enhancing the therapeutic experience for participants.

DIRECT THERAPIST ENGAGEMENT

In specific therapeutic situations, the therapist directly engages in the process by assuming roles such as theauxiliary ego or participant observer. These roles were honed during psychodramatic enactment, where the therapist embodied various personas to facilitate role reversals, empathetic exchanges, and emotional processing. This direct engagement aligns with Moreno's view of the therapist as an active participant in the therapeutic process, blending facilitation with

insight generation. As Moreno (1934, p. 12) noted: “We then approached the task from a different angle. Instead of observing the formation of groups from without, we entered into the group, became a part of it, and registered its intimate developments”.

Moreover, psychodrama therapists take on versatile roles, each designed to enhance the exploration of emotions and relationships. Through these roles, the therapist not only facilitates but actively contributes to deepening participants’ self-awareness and emotional expression. As Moreno (1934, p. 12) described: “Through this method of ‘partnership’ we arrived at a somewhat finer classification of each individual than we were able to through observation”.

However, it is important to emphasize that one of the most foundational roles that the therapist assumes is that of psychodrama director. In his work, Moreno (1946/2019) outlines the following three key dimensions of this role:

1. **Relation to Production:** The director is responsible for orchestrating the overall production of the psychodramatic session. This includes setting the stage, structuring the narrative, and guiding the flow of dramatic action through interventions such as doubling, role reversal, and scene setting.
2. **Relation to the Patient:** The director facilitates emotional exploration and insight. By actively engaging with the patient, the director helps to externalize and process unconscious material, promoting self-awareness.
3. **Relation to the Auxiliary Ego:** The director also coordinates with the auxiliary ego, which may consist of other group members or the therapist in different roles. By assigning and guiding these roles, the director ensures that the auxiliary ego supports the therapeutic aims, accurately representing internal dynamics and contributing to the enactment. Through this collaboration, the auxiliary ego plays an essential part in accurately representing internal dynamics and enhancing the therapeutic process.

This framework, as laid out by Moreno, provides the structural and dynamic basis for a successful psychodramatic intervention. The director’s active guidance, integrating these three dimensions, ensures that the therapeutic process remains focused and structured, creating a space for profound emotional exploration and healing.

Some additional key roles include the following:

- **The Auxiliary Ego:** In group settings, the therapist may temporarily step into the role of an auxiliary ego, allowing participants to project and explore unspoken feelings or conflicts in a safe environment. For instance, when exploring workplace dynamics, the therapist might portray a colleague, allowing participants to voice their feelings about conflicts or interpersonal issues in the workplace.
- **The Participant Observer:** In this role, the therapist not only participates in discussions but also observes group interactions from within. For example, in a support group for individuals dealing with anxiety, the therapist might share

personal insights and simultaneously guide conversations toward effective coping strategies.

- **The Intermediate Interpreter of A and B:** In cases of interpersonal conflict, the therapist takes on the role of intermediary, reframing and clarifying statements made by participants A and B. This interpretive role helps promote understanding between conflicting parties, ultimately contributing to conflict resolution and deeper emotional processing.

Expanding on the therapist's active engagement, the technique of Joint Interviews offers a more focused opportunity to uncover relational dynamics. In this method, the therapist guides both participants in revealing hidden conflicts or tensions through structured dialogue.

JOINT INTERVIEWS: UNVEILING UNDERLYING DYNAMICS

Joint interviews, originally developed in family therapy and group settings, serve as a powerful tool for unveiling hidden relational tensions. As Moreno (1946/2019, p. 372) states: "The motivations, as they are secured through an interview of each individual, reveal further the number of attractions and repulsions to which an individual is exposed in a group activity". This technique draws from sociometry's emphasis on uncovering unseen dynamics, aiming to address conflicts through mediated communication.

In practice, therapists use joint interviews to bring underlying relational dynamics to light. For example, in strained parent-teen relationships, the therapist facilitates a conversation where both parties are encouraged to openly express their expectations, concerns, and feelings. This process creates a space for mutual understanding, which is crucial for bridging communication gaps and fostering conflict resolution. By encouraging participants to articulate their perspectives, joint interviews help reveal the emotional currents that often lie beneath surface-level interactions.

This method not only clarifies the tensions but also paves the way for empathy and collaboration, supporting the resolution of conflicts and strengthening relational bonds.

By unveiling underlying dynamics through joint interviews, the therapist also serves as a catalyst for interpersonal growth. This role encourages participants to act spontaneously, furthering their emotional insight and relational development.

CATALYST FOR INTERPERSONAL GROWTH

The therapist's role as a catalyst for interpersonal growth likely emerged within the context of group therapy, where structured activities were designed to help participants practice new interpersonal skills under the therapist's guidance. This dynamic role reflects Moreno's focus on fostering both group cohesion and individual growth through purposeful interventions that promote spontaneity and creativity. As Moreno emphasized, the therapist's goal is to create an environment where individuals are encouraged to act spontaneously and authentically, whether in group or individual settings.

For instance, Moreno describes the spontaneity test, in which participants improvise within life-like scenarios, revealing their emotional responses and interpersonal dynamics. This technique provides participants with the opportunity to explore and express emotions freely, while also highlighting the therapist's role in facilitating such spontaneous interactions.

In therapy groups focused on enhancing interpersonal communication, the therapist guides participants through structured exercises that promote active listening, empathy, and effective communication. These activities encourage participants to step outside their habitual patterns of interaction, thus strengthening their interpersonal connections and improving relational skills.

This role as a catalyst is vital for helping individuals break through personal barriers and develop healthier and more authentic relationships within both therapeutic group and their broader lives.

As the psychodrama session progresses, the therapist evolves from a catalytic figure who sparks emotional release to a counselor and guide who provides structure, reflection, and deeper emotional insight. This shift allows the therapist not only to stimulate growth but also to help individuals make sense of their emotional experiences, offering guidance through interpretation and support.

THERAPIST AS A COUNSELOR AND GUIDE

Rooted in couples and family therapy models, the therapist's role as a counselor and guide centers on providing actionable insights and tools to help resolve conflicts and facilitate personal growth. This role is particularly evident in sections where Moreno discusses the therapist as a facilitator of sociometric tests, establishing rapport with participants, and guiding them to make meaningful choices within group settings.

For example, when the tester "tried to get into rapport with the pupils" and helped them understand the significance of their choices, it exemplifies the therapist's role in fostering self-awareness and guiding participants through the therapeutic process. Similarly, when addressing a "community population" about choosing housemates or collaborators, the therapist serves as a guide, framing the activity in a way that encourages self-reflection and conscious decision-making.

The therapist's ability to provide clear guidance is crucial for resolving relational issues and promoting growth, a key aspect of Moreno's integration of therapeutic techniques into everyday relational contexts. In couples therapy, for instance, therapists support partners by offering tools for effective communication and conflict resolution. Through insightful guidance, therapists help couples navigate challenges, empowering them to collaboratively address issues and strengthen their relationships.

It is the underlying group dynamics that infuse psychodrama with its transformative potential, facilitating healing through shared experience and collective interaction.

The core techniques of psychodrama—dialogical exploration, observational silence, direct therapist engagement, joint interviews, catalyst for interpersonal growth, and Therapist as a counselor and guide—emerged within Moreno's

groundbreaking framework of psychodramatic and sociometric systems. These techniques evolved through a blend of experimental settings that integrated group therapy dynamics, theatrical elements, and interpersonal relationship studies:

- **Sociometric Analysis:** Early research into group cohesion, role dynamics, and interpersonal relationships.
- **Psychodramatic Theater:** The use of theatrical techniques to enact and resolve inner conflicts and relational issues.
- **Therapeutic Groups:** Psychotherapy experiments that revealed deeper emotional patterns and relational insights through structured group interactions.

Dialogical exploration, grounded in Moreno's theater-based experiments, emphasizes guided dialogue to resolve interpersonal conflicts and uncover emotional truths. Similarly, observational silence was cultivated in sociometric laboratories, where the therapist assumed a non-intrusive observational role to map group dynamics and foster authentic emotional exchanges among participants. Direct therapist engagement, which includes roles like auxiliary ego and participant observer, evolved in psychodramatic performances, with therapists actively facilitating role reversals and empathetic exchanges. Joint Interviews, drawn from family therapy sessions, reveal hidden relational tensions by enabling open, mediated communication between conflicting parties. As a catalyst for interpersonal growth, psychodrama therapists guide structured group activities to enhance interpersonal skills, reflecting Moreno's emphasis on improving group cohesion and individual development. Lastly, the therapist's role as a counselor and guide in contexts such as couple's therapy, demonstrates how psychodrama extends its influence into everyday relational challenges, empowering participants to resolve conflicts and deepen connections.

At the heart of all these techniques lies the triadic therapeutic framework, consisting of the therapist and two participants. This framework enables nuanced interventions by dynamically adapting to the interplay of emotions, thoughts, and unconscious material. It underscores Moreno's vision of psychodrama as a unique confluence of psychology, sociology, and creativity, fostering profound emotional healing and interpersonal transformation.

Moreno positioned psychodrama at the intersection of sociometry and psychology, with its primary focus on group and interpersonal dynamics, and its secondary focus on individual personality structures. As Moreno (1946/2019, p. 364) wrote, "Psychodrama bridges the individual and the collective, providing a stage where the personal meets the universal". This dual focus underscores the transformative potential of the triadic framework, where the interplay of the Real, Symbolic, and Imaginary realms fosters profound emotional release and self-understanding. These realms represent different levels of human experience and cognition, allowing psychodrama to access both conscious and unconscious material, facilitating growth through emotional and cognitive processing.

While the techniques discussed form the foundation of psychodrama practice, they represent only a portion of the rich toolbox available within this modality. These core techniques lay the groundwork for emotional exploration, interpersonal dialogue, and the resolution of inner conflicts. However, psychodrama encompasses a broader spectrum of methods, each designed to address various psychological issues and deepen participants' understanding of themselves and their relationships.

In addition to the foundational techniques, psychodrama includes advanced methods such as Role Reversal and the Mirror Technique. These advanced techniques are more complex and innovative, engaging participants on heightened emotional and cognitive levels.

The integration of these advanced techniques with the foundational methods highlights the full scope and therapeutic potential of the psychodramatic process. The triadic system remains the central framework for these interventions, offering a dynamic structure in which emotions, thoughts, and unconscious material are brought to light and processed. In our forthcoming article, we explore these advanced techniques in detail, illustrating how they deepen the emotional depth and therapeutic capacity of psychodrama within the dynamic triadic system.

CONCLUSION: PSYCHODRAMA THERAPY A REVOLUTIONARY APPROACH TO UNCOVER THE DEPTHS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS AND TRANSFORMING HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Psychodrama, as a therapeutic approach and an artistic modality, offers a unique and powerful path to psychological exploration and transformation. Developed by Moreno, it integrates dramatic improvisation and psychological insight to foster self-discovery, emotional growth, and interpersonal transformation. At its core, psychodrama bridges the unconscious and the preconscious through a structured yet fluid framework of group dynamics, role-playing, and emotional expression. The triadic system serves as a vital guiding structure, enabling participants to engage meaningfully with their emotions, internal conflicts, and relational patterns.

Moreno's work reflects a deep understanding of the critical role that social dynamics play in human relationships and therapeutic processes. While he did not explicitly incorporate the modern concept of social representation, his pioneering focus on group interactions and collective dynamics laid a strong foundation for exploring these ideas in the therapeutic context. By emphasizing the relational nature of human experience, Moreno created a framework for individuals to engage with their psychological states and the group dynamics. Social representation, as a lens, allows us to examine how individuals' perceptions of themselves and their roles are deeply influenced by the social contexts in which they operate. This concept provides a valuable tool for understanding how shared meanings, societal norms, and collective emotions shape the foundational dynamics of the group, fostering interpersonal connections essential for healing.

This collective aspect of psychodrama distinguishes it from other therapeutic methods. The group becomes a microcosm where shared emotional experiences and societal roles intersect, facilitating mutual understanding and collective healing. Through the roles of the protagonist and auxiliary egos, participants explore not only personal struggles but also the broader societal constructs shaping their identities and actions. This communal approach sets psychodrama apart, providing a deeper, relational understanding of individual and collective unconscious dynamics.

Psychodrama's historical trajectory—from its roots in Moreno's sociometric experiments to its modern-day applications—demonstrates its flexibility and adaptability. Moreno's sociometry laid the groundwork for psychodrama's role theory, offering a structured framework to understand how individuals relate to one another within social groups. Over time, psychodrama has incorporated elements from various therapeutic schools, such as psychoanalysis, enriching its approach to unconscious material. The integration of psychoanalytic concepts with psychodramatic techniques, as seen in analytic psychodrama, showcases the method's ability to evolve and deepen its understanding of unconscious conflicts and relational dynamics.

The incorporation of group dynamics and social context is what truly sets psychodrama apart from other therapeutic methods. By encouraging participants to explore their internal worlds and collective societal perceptions, psychodrama provides a profound means of understanding the relational and unconscious dynamics that shape human behavior.

Core techniques of dialogical exploration, observational silence, direct therapist engagement, joint Interviews, the catalyst for interpersonal growth, and the therapist as a Counselor and Guide—are the foundational pillars of the practice. These techniques foster emotional insights, interpersonal understanding, and personal growth. Each technique reflects the triadic framework, ensuring that psychodrama functions as a dynamic form of therapy that integrates emotional exploration, relational healing, and personal development.

Dialogical exploration fosters deep emotional exchanges, resolving conflicts and enhancing relational dynamics. Observational silence allows organic group interactions, where the therapist's presence serves as an unobtrusive catalyst for introspection. Direct therapist engagement, using the role of auxiliary ego, bridges the unconscious and the conscious, guiding participants to confront unexpressed emotions. Joint Interviews uncover hidden relational tensions, paving the way for clearer communication and conflict resolution. The therapist, as a catalyst for interpersonal growth, encourages emotional authenticity, enhancing empathy and group connection. Lastly, the therapist as a counselor and guide ensures that each intervention is purposefully directed toward promoting healthier relationships and spontaneous, authentic self-expression.

In addition to these core techniques, advanced methods such as doubling, soliloquy, role reversal, and mirroring offer profound layers of emotional exploration and insight. These techniques allow participants to engage with their unconscious material in ways that transcend conventional therapeutic approaches,

facilitating repressed emotions and internal conflicts to surface. In our forthcoming article, we delve deeper into these advanced techniques and illustrate their transformative benefits within the psychodramatic framework.

These techniques, combined with the resonance between group members, create a therapeutic environment where participants can access repressed emotions, confront internal conflicts, and explore new possibilities for emotional expression. The power of these techniques lies in their ability to unlock the unconscious, enabling individuals to engage with aspects of their psyche otherwise inaccessible through traditional methods.

One of psychodrama's most profound contributions is its ability to create a dynamic bridge between the unconscious and the preconscious. While psychoanalysis often focuses on verbal discourse to explore repressed elements, psychodrama offers an embodied, experiential exploration of unconscious thoughts and feelings. By enacting roles and scenarios, participants engage directly with their internal worlds, bypassing defenses that typically obscure unconscious material. This immersive engagement provides a deeper understanding of the self and integrates unconscious dynamics in a more immediate and accessible manner.

Psychodrama's potential extends beyond individual therapy. Its relational aspect, through group dynamics, offers a unique platform to examine social interaction's role in shaping psychological development. The shared emotional resonance within the group fosters empathy, mutual understanding, and collective insight, making psychodrama an effective tool for addressing individual psychological issues as well as broader societal and relational challenges. In this way, psychodrama offers a holistic approach to psychotherapy, emphasizing the interconnectedness of individual experiences and the social context in which they unfold.

Looking forward, psychodrama holds tremendous promise as a therapeutic modality for a wide range of psychological issues—from individual trauma to complex relational dynamics. Its emphasis on creative, spontaneous expression offers a fresh approach to healing, encouraging individuals to step outside conventional roles and explore new possibilities for growth. As psychodrama continues to evolve, it contributes to the broader field of psychotherapy by offering innovative tools for emotional expression, relational healing, and self-discovery.

In conclusion, psychodrama is a revolutionary approach to understand and transform human relationships. By blending the artistic and psychological dimensions of human experience, psychodrama provides a comprehensive framework for exploring the unconscious, facilitating emotional catharsis, and fostering deeper connections between individuals. Through its dynamic techniques, psychodrama unlocks profound healing on individual and collective levels, offering a transformative path toward personal growth and relational understanding. As psychodrama continues to evolve, it promises to play a central role in the future of psychotherapy, providing invaluable insights into the complexities of human behavior and offering a creative space for individuals to rewrite their emotional narratives.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This manuscript was improved with the support of AI tools to enhance clarity, consistency, and linguistic quality. The AI was used exclusively for language refinement, while all intellectual contributions, ideas, and analyses remain the sole work of the author. The use of AI technologies has been fully disclosed in compliance with ethical standards for academic writing.

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