EXPERIENCE OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE
FOR PSYCHODRAMA AUDIENCE MEMBERS

by

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ABSTRACT

Psychodrama is an action focused group therapy that works with psychological conflict through enacting the problem. Based on the theory of J.L. Moreno, this therapy is comprised of an extensive repertoire of therapeutic techniques. Audience members play a crucial role in the integration phase following an enactment and Moreno believed that therapeutic benefits occurred for both protagonists and audience members. Although the audience is one of Moreno's five instruments, almost no research has focused exclusively on the experience of audience members. This study explored the experience of significant change for six psychodrama audience members. Transcripts of interviews were analyzed employing Giorgi's (1985) existential-phenomenological method resulting in the emergence of five themes regarding the experience of change, three themes regarding the way in which audience members made meaning of their experience, and one theme each regarding evidence of change in daily life, perception of the way in which the experience evolves across several workshops, and the identification of factors influencing change. Results indicated that the experience was intense, cathartic, and a source of significant change and personal learning. Implications regarding audiences in general and psychodrama audiences specifically are discussed, and suggestions for further research are provided.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide background to the research question being addressed in this study. This will consist of an overview of psychodrama, including: context, theoretical framework, phases of psychodrama, psychodramatic techniques and roles, and a definition of terms. The rationale for this study will be given, the research question will be identified and the approach to the research question will be outlined.

Context

The immense influence a group exerts in shaping its members is both culturally and historically well established. Many ancient religious rituals, including efforts to bring forth rain, good harvests, good crops, and fertility, occurred in a group context (Siroka, 1978). Later, religious rituals such as the naming of children, rights of passage, burials and holiday celebrations were also community events. Rabbis, priests, imams, and spiritual teachers are respected leaders of congregations, and values and attitudes of the collective congregation shapes the thinking of its individual members.

On a more secular level, the intimate interaction between self identity and the group has been a subject of contemplation for philosophers such as William James (1964), and Charles Cooley (1902). Social psychologists such as
Burnstein, Fiedler, Pruitt, Zajonc, Zimbardo and Sherif (Baron & Byrne, 1987) have examined how a group influences the behaviour and attitudes of an individual or other groups. Personality theorists, particularly Ericson and Adler, have examined the many factors, including social influences, involved in the shaping of personality (Monte, 1987; Rychlak, 1981).

The influence of actors upon their audience is yet another example of the way that one group can sway or inspire another. Aristotle recognized the powerful cathartic effect of drama and saw the role of the theatre as one of healing (Siroka, 1978). S.H. Butcher translates Aristotle as follows:

Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions (cited in Greenberg, 1968).

The audience's part in drama continues to be an important topic today. "The study of the drama is the study of how the stage compels its audience to be involved in its actual processes. The spectator interprets and so contributes to and finally becomes the play" (Styan, 1975, p.4).

Group psychotherapy is yet another arena where the beneficial influence of a group upon the individual is important. Beginning in the early 1900's, psychotherapy
began to be practised in a group setting. Some controversy about the founder of group psychotherapy exists; many attribute the beginning to Joseph Hersey Pratt, a Boston internist who worked with groups of tuberculosis patients (Bloch & Crouch, 1985; Mullan & Rosenbaum, 1978). Others, particularly people working with psychodrama, attribute the origin to J.L. Moreno (Greenberg, 1968; Moreno, 1966). Gazda (1975) reconciles these differences by stating that "much of the disagreement over the historical development of group psychotherapy apparently stems from variations in the definition given to group psychotherapy" (p. 7). Regardless of who the actual founder was, the names associated with its early development include J.H. Pratt, E.W. Lazell, L.C. Marsh, T. Burrow, Alfred Adler, and J.L. Moreno (Gazda, 1975; Moreno, 1966). In 1932 Joseph L. Moreno coined the term group psychotherapy and psychodrama was his particular method of practice.

The latter two issues, i.e. "audience" and "group psychotherapy" are two crucial components in this study. Specifically, the aim of this study is to investigate the experience of significant change for psychodrama audience members. "Significant change" denotes an internal shift considered to be important for the person experiencing it. The person perceiving this change was leaving the experience in some way different than when they came. This could include a combination of cognitive shifts or different
perspective; affective shifts or re-integration of feelings which had been suppressed or repressed; or a fundamental shift in self-definition. How is that change experienced? What leads up to the experience, is there a triggering event, and what happens afterwards?

**Introduction to Psychodrama**

**Overview**

Psychodrama is an action modality in group therapy that involves the enactment of a person's conflict for the purpose of emotional problem solving (Blatner & Blatner, 1988b). Problem solving is facilitated through increasing awareness, spontaneity and creativity. Moreno defines spontaneity as the response a person makes that contains "some degree of adequacy to a new situation or a degree of novelty to an old situation" (cited in Greenberg, 1974). Blatner (1985) describes the quality of response as "an openness of mind, a freshness of approach, a willingness to take initiative, and an integration of the external realities and the internal intuitions, emotions, and rational functions".

Although not an "all or nothing" phenomenon, spontaneity can be further understood by exploring the dialectic between spontaneity and robopathy, its' opposite. "Behaviour that is automatic, habitual, fixated, compulsive, rigid, stereotyped, or practiced to the point of sterility is the opposite of spontaneity" (Blatner & Blatner, 1988a, p. 66).
Attitudes of curiosity, playfulness, excitement, and willingness to take action help spontaneity develop and grow. Blatner & Blatner (1988a) propose that Moreno would have reworked Freud's therapeutic goal of "where there is id, let there be ego" (where there are pockets of the unconscious, let there be consciousness) to "where there is a constriction of spontaneity, let there be spontaneity". Fine (1978) concurs and states that "the primary goal of therapy is to reclaim one's innate ability to meet each moment in a fresh, optimally adaptive way - in short, to be spontaneous" (p. 429).

Increased spontaneity and creativity are nurtured in an atmosphere of shared "encounter", an individual's encounter with his or her real self and the real selves of others (Martins, 1990). Encounter denotes an authentic quality of meeting, devoid of our daily mask or persona. This idea is similar to the "I-Thou" relationship described by Martin Buber, a contemporary of Moreno's. Buber describes the I-Thou relationship as one in which the "I" treats the "thou" as a subject rather than an object. In other words, the I sees the other from the other's frame or reference:

A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face. And when you are near I will tear your eyes out and place them instead of mine, and you will tear my eyes out and will place them instead of yours, then I will look at you with your eyes and you will look at me with mine. (Moreno, 1964)
Moreno founded psychodrama in 1921, a period when Freud's psychodynamic approach was strongly entrenched in psychiatry. Moreno believed that the unconscious can be better accessed through action as opposed to "the talking cure" and that the interpersonal field, where difficulties most often arise, can be better explored in a group context. By enacting scenes from the past, present or future which have been, are or may be problematic, the protagonist, (person playing the principle role in an enactment) has an opportunity to redefine, renegotiate, revise and actively manipulate their role(s) (Blatner, 1991). Role distance, or the ability to separate from one's role, facilitates this process and is developed through psychodramatic techniques such as role reversal, where the protagonist steps out of their ordinary role into the part of the other person. Role reversal enables the protagonist to experience a new perspective and it is from the vantage of this new perspective that redefinition, renegotiation and revision occur.

The notion of role is an important psychodramatic concept. Moreno saw the self as emerging from roles. "Role playing is prior to the emergence of the self. Roles do not emerge from the self, but the self may emerge from roles" (Moreno, 1964, p. 157). Given this view of the "self", it would make sense that therapeutic change can best be
facilitated through enacting roles and interacting with others, affording new perspectives and new self-definitions.

In the psychodrama process, enacted scenes are made as real as possible through the use of props and briefing the "actors" about the roles they are playing, including physical and verbal mannerisms. In addition to the largely cognitive changes that can occur through role distance, an emotional release or catharsis may also occur (Blatner 1991, Kellermann, 1984). In as much as the difficulties in a particular enactment are personally relevant to other group members, cathartic experiences and the reworking of role often extend to them as well (Blatner, 1985; Greenberg, 1968, Moreno, 1964). Audience members in Baum's study (1994) said "There are insights gathered from the experience and the universality of themes witnessed in the psychodrama" (p. 44).

Psychodrama Roles

To better understand the process of psychodrama, a review of key roles is required. The various roles in psychodrama include: director, protagonist, auxiliary, double, and audience member. Briefly, the director, a trained therapist, orchestrates the enactment. The director is responsible for the production of the psychodrama including the facilitation of the protagonist's expression of confused or inhibited impulses and feelings (Davies, 1987). The protagonist or "patient" in more clinical settings, is
the principal character around whom an enactment revolves. The **protagonist** is often chosen through group sociometric techniques so that the issue to be worked on is one which is important to audience members as well (Casey, personal communication; Treadwell, personal communication)

**Auxiliaries** are members of the group who are asked to take on roles relevant to the enactment, for example the mother, sister and uncle of the protagonist. **Auxiliaries** are carefully put into role by the director guiding the protagonist to show the auxiliary how the person they are enacting would move, speak and behave. The director is mindful about not imposing their own or the auxiliary's projections onto the scenario, ensuring as much as possible that the auxiliary role is true to life for the protagonist. **Auxiliary** egos in classical psychodrama are often trained therapeutic aides (Davies, 1987).

**Doubles** are members of the group who take their place alongside the protagonist expressing thoughts or feelings which they perceive as being present but unexpressed by the protagonist. These auxiliaries "establish identity with the patient" and move, act and behave like them. The protagonist and their double(s) are generally together during the action part of the enactment.

Finally, **audience members** are the participants of the group who are not playing an active role during the enactment phase. Although they are often inwardly very
active, their external involvement occurs mainly during the integration, or latter phase when they share their experiences which are relevant to the protagonist. Greenberg (1974) describes the role that audience members play:

When the stage action is concluded, the audience members are in a position to help the protagonist gain insight into his problem, not by analyzing the protagonist in the manner of the stereotyped psychologist diagnosing a case but by sharing incidents from their own experiences that may in part resemble those of the protagonist. By doing this they are aiding the protagonist in another way, through providing him with the support of knowing that he is not alone with his problems, that others have like problems, and because of this mutuality are able to empathize with him and understand his situation.

Phases of Psychodrama

The process of psychodrama begins with a warm up, proceeds with an enactment and ends with a sharing, or integration period. The purpose of the warm up phase is to psychologically prepare psychodrama participants for the therapeutic work which will take place. Various techniques are used to "develop a sense of safety, a working alliance, and some increasing involvement with the issues at hand" (Blatner, A. & Blatner, A., 1988a). The group warm-up culminates in the identification of a particular scenario which will be enacted and the setting of the scene for the enactment. Setting the scene means bringing the protagonist's issue into the present moment and identifying the time, place and people. Part of identifying the characters involves putting them into role by showing them
how to behave. Greenberg describes the psychodramatic situation as one where the "natural barriers of time, space, and states of existence are obliterated so that everything on the psychodramatic stage occurs in the present, or in situ, in the here and now" (Greenberg, 1974, p. 17)

The middle phase, or enactment involves a series of techniques (refer to the following section) and generally culminates in various forms of catharsis, or "emotional, cognitive and actional releases" (Kellermann, 1984). The final sharing phase, is an opportunity for the group as a whole to integrate the experience in a meaningful way through discussion.

All three phases are crucial to the psychodramatic process. The depth of the experience is enhanced through appropriate warm-up or preparation and the therapeutic value of the experience is enhanced through its synthesis and integration. "Directors who strive for both release and integration will be more effective than those who emphasize release alone" (Kellermann 1984, p. 9)

Therapeutic Techniques

Moreno and Moreno (1969, p. 239) enumerate psychodrama techniques which may be introduced by the director to facilitate the process as follows:

1. **Soliloquy** - monologue of the protagonist of thoughts and feelings related to a particular event.
2. **Therapeutic Soliloquy** - soliloquy that takes place in conjunction with an enactment in which the private thoughts of the protagonist are expressed together with the overt action of the enactment

3. **Self-Presentation** - protagonist acts out the role of others as he/she perceived them. This could include the protagonist playing the part of their mother, father, sister, or brother.

4. **Self-Realization** - with the aid of auxiliaries, the protagonist enacts his/her life plans. These life plans may be quite unrealistic, as is the case with psychotics. This technique can "make it possible for (the protagonist) to bring his/her psychodramatic pregnancy to fulfilment and, once the psychotic baby has been completed, to be delivered of it" (p.88).

4. **Hallucinatory psychodrama** - protagonists (usually psychotic) act out their delusions and hallucinations. In a similar fashion, non-psychotic protagonists sometime act out their dreams. (Martins, 1991).

5. **Double** - an auxiliary ego portrays an aspect/idea/feeling of the protagonist that they perceive to be unexpressed.

6. **Multiple Double** - several auxiliary egos portray aspects of the protagonists. This can include auxiliaries portraying different aspects of the protagonist in the current enactment or portrayal of the protagonist in
different time periods, eg. protagonist as a child, teenager, adult, and elder. In work with psychotic patients, multiple double auxiliaries have acted as various body parts of the protagonist.

7. **Mirror** - when the protagonist is unable to represent themselves, or wishes to see themselves through the eyes of anothers, an auxiliary ego steps in and takes their place. This can occur because the protagonist is overcome with emotion, or with more clinical cases when the patient is catatonic or has just finished a psychotic episode or shock therapy. In this situation the mirror is "sitting in for" rather than "sitting alongside" the protagonist.

8. **Role Reversal** - the protagonist switches roles with one of the people with whom they are interacting.

9. **Future Projection** - protagonist portrays in action how s/he thinks his/her future will shape itself.

10. **Dream Presentation and Re-training of the Dream** - protagonists enacts a dream and/or makes any changes so that the dream turns out as he/she would have liked.

Adjunctive methods are also noted (Moreno & Moreno, 1969):

11. **Hypnodrama** - the merging of hypnotherapy with psychodrama where the protagonist does an enactment while hypnotized.
12. Didactic Psychodrama and Role Playing - as a learning tool during supervision, students portray their clients/patients so the cases may be discussed.

In addition to these descriptions of therapeutic benefits, a more complete list of definitions may be found in Appendix D.

Background to the Research Problem

Psychodramatic theory is clear in its assertion that audience members: a) are an important component of psychodrama; and b) receive therapeutic benefits from their participation in the form of catharsis and insight (Greenberg, 1974). Although both personal and/or professional insight may occur from watching all enactments, catharsis is engendered through enactments where greater identification occurs. Through identification, unresolved feelings which may engender a cathartic experience can be triggered and provide therapeutic benefits to audience members. In this way, audience members can at various times be seen as "patients" receiving therapeutic benefits, or "audience members" providing support and insight to protagonist during the sharing phase of the enactment.

There appears to be an implied or implicit differentiation in the emphasis placed upon audience cathartic experience in comparison with that of the protagonist. Moreno (1964) is inconsistent in his reference to catharsis for audience members. For example, he notes
that the audience can be helped in psychodrama: "The Fifth instrument is the audience. The audience itself has a double purpose. It may serve to help the patient, or, being itself helped by the subject on the stage, the audience becomes the patient" (cited in Pitzele, 1980) and yet he also notes that "Catharsis moved from the spectator to the actor." (Moreno, 1964 p. 15). Moreno has perhaps been inconsistent in his description of catharsis as it relates to audience members because the permeable boundaries between audience members and the action is one of the defining features of psychodrama.

Yet a lack of clarity with regard to audience member experience of catharsis can be seen throughout the literature. Descriptions of catharsis fall along a continuum from being described only in terms of the protagonist (Blomkvist and Rutzel, 1994; Kellermann, 1984) to being conceptualized as less intense or secondary for audiences in comparison with the experience of the protagonist (Hofrichter, 1973; Shaffer and Galinsky, 1984) to being described in process terms without differentiating between the various psychodrama roles (Blatner & Blatner, 1988a, Blatner, 1985).

It is this lack of clarity, or ambivalence about audience member experience of catharsis and change that seems worthy of clarification. Further, clarification is best obtained by looking at audience members actual
experience; it is difficult to glean the depth and breadth of the experience without sharing in the description of those who are experiencing it. Hearing that audience members may have cathartic experiences is different from hearing words like "I was overcome by my sadness; I felt my grief to the depths of my being, I truly understood that the relationship couldn't continue the way it was".

Although Ira Greenberg has examined audience attitude change, Hoffrichter has explored audience experience of community, and Widlocher and Tellier have described the mutual effects of audience upon group and directors; no studies have been done which focus on the totality of the lived experience of audience members; specifically their experience of significant change. It is this particular gap in psychodrama research that this study addresses.

Research Question

Audience members who perceived significant personal change which they attributed to their participation as an audience member in a psychodrama workshop were asked to describe their experience. Specifically, "What is the experience of significant change for psychodrama audience members?" Significant change was defined as a clearly felt internal shift which was considered important to the person experiencing it. In other words, they were leaving the workshop in some way a different person than when they came.
Approach to the Question

Because this study explored the lived experience of significant change for psychodrama audience members, a qualitative method of investigation was chosen. Specifically, an existential-phenomenological method (Colaizzi, 1978; Giorgi, 1985) was chosen because of its emphasis on drawing out a rich description of the experience, including the personal meaning made by audience members. Colaizzi (1978) describes this method as one which "seeks to explicate the essence, structure, or form of both human experience and human behaviour as revealed through essentially descriptive techniques including disciplined reflection"

Summary

Psychodrama is both a theoretical framework and the practice of a dynamic form of group therapy. Originated in 1921 by Jacob L. Moreno, M.D., this therapeutic modality engenders cathartic experiences for both protagonists and audience members. The experience of significant change for audience members is a topic which has not been previously investigated and this study, employing an existential-phenomenological methodology, has taken a step towards filling this gap.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The central task of this chapter is to review the literature relevant to this study. "Audience" and "change" are the two primary relevant concepts. Although little research has focussed upon the audience specifically, an overview of relevant studies is presented. This is followed by an overview of the therapeutic benefits of psychodrama with particular attention to the concept of catharsis. Previous psychodrama outcome research not specific to audience members is also reviewed.

Previous Psychodrama Audience Member Research

Greenberg's Study

Ira Greenberg conducted a study in 1966 examining audience member attitude change following a psychodrama enactment. Greenberg employed a pre-test/post-test design comparing attitude change of a control group with that of an experimental group witnessing a psychodrama enactment. Results of this study were inconclusive in supporting the hypothesis that following an enactment favourably portraying the U.S. Draft and participation in the Vietnam war, audience members would assume a more favourable attitude than the generally oppositional stance taken before the enactment.
Greenberg (1966) postulated that audience members would experience high levels of anxiety from watching an enactment concerning a young girl contemplating suicide after discovering that she was pregnant and that her lover had lied to her about his marital status and had no intention of carrying through on a former promise of marriage. He further postulated that the audience would wish to reduce their level of anxiety and that this would occur through "cognitive consistency", or agreeing with a credible protagonist supporting attitudes which ran counter to those held by the audience.

Although this study is related to audience members, it is of little value to the current study for a number of reasons. Firstly, the way in which "audience" and "protagonist" are chosen and involved in a drama bears little resemblance to classical psychodrama. The protagonist and auxiliaries had a pre-set, practiced, plot to enact and the audience were assigned their role as audience members. This, in effect, was not a study about psychodrama.

Secondly, the way that concepts such as anxiety and catharsis were operationalized is questionable. Greenberg assumed that anxiety and catharsis would ensue given the nature of the enacted drama and did not devise a means to measure whether or not this had in fact occurred. Finally, this study provides little relevant information about the
experience of change for audience members. In other words, although this is one of the few studies which has specifically focussed upon psychodrama audiences, it bears little relevance to the current study.

Hofrichter's Study

In 1973 David Hofrichter conducted a study exploring the experience of community during the sharing phase of a psychodrama enactment with hospitalized patients at Somerset State Hospital. Five audience members as well as the protagonist were interviewed in this phenomenological study exploring the experience of community during the sharing phase of psychodrama. The results of this study specifically relate to the current study in as much as they are a description of the lived experience of audience members. A brief outline of the themes which emerged in this study follows:

Expanded Horizon and Phenomenal Population refers to the experience of having one's private world opened up and entered into by another. Hofrichter describes the sense of liberation that is experienced as people find "co-inhabiters in what had been isolation" (p. 96). Unconditional Acceptance refers to the experience by the protagonist of being "welcomed back home after being away" (p. 93), and the experience of the audience member of "going out toward the wandering other". The quality of this welcoming/returning is one of non-judgemental and non-critical unconditional
acceptance, where both the shadow and light sides of the protagonist are embraced. This process was described by Hofrichter as "a period of transition or modulation back into the group" (p. 93).

The third theme **Oneness within Individuality** was experienced by 4/6 of the co-researchers and involved the "communal feeling of somehow all sharing the same things even though we experience them in different ways" (p. 94). Hofrichter suspects that this theme is contingent upon the experience of unconditional acceptance and elaborates upon the experience as a group experience of shared humanity.

The final theme **Existential Giving** was experienced by four co-researchers and refers to a perception of "greater knowing and feeling for another in a deeper way because they have given of themselves" (p. 94). Following along with the theme of reducing shame through sharing, decreasing isolation through self-disclosure, this theme alludes to a sense that through receiving the pain of another, one's own pain is shared and lessened.

In many ways, this study appears to be a description of the catharsis of inclusion and the spiritual catharsis which Blatner (1985) described. It is difficult to comment upon the study; as outlined by Osborne (1994), generalization to others occurs through a perception of whether the experience "fits" for the reader.
Widlocher et al

This 1966 study was written in French and concern about the accuracy of my understanding of the article precludes an in-depth description. This study is only partially relevant in as much as the audience was more separated from the group than is normally the case in psychodrama and some of the benefits of participation would therefore not apply to this group. The "audience" was composed of a number of doctors and psychologists who were learning about psychodrama and generally did not take an active part. Nonetheless, the study does report the fact that a group of 10 professionals observing the enactments of the moderately disturbed group of 10 - 18 year old boys over a three year period experienced strong feelings at times; sufficiently strong to require personal processing by the professionals involved.

Baum's Study

Susan Baum (1994) investigated the psychodrama experience for four protagonists and two audience members of a psychodrama workshop conducted at U.B.C by the same directors as those in this study. Although the audience experience described in her study only related to two people, with themes sometimes only fitting one persons experience, her study is nonetheless relevant to this one. The focus of these two studies is similar; consequently
convergence or divergence of themes will be an important means of ascribing validity to both studies.

Although the current study is similar to Baum's, the differences between the two are noteworthy. Baum describes the significant experience of audience members; however, audience experience is partially described in relationship to their decision not to become a protagonist. In other words, although Baum's study explores audience experience, the experience is partially viewed dialectically with "audience" as one pole and "protagonist" as another. This study will extend Baum's study by looking in-depth at the audience change process itself.

In order to discuss the convergence and divergence of these two studies, an enumeration of the themes which emerged in her study is required. These themes are as follows:

1. There is an intellectual understanding of what psychodrama is.
2. Participants have a relationship with the director before the psychodrama.
3. There is a need for trust and safety in the director.
4. There is a need to feel trust with the group which is not yet experienced.
5. There is a focus on observing the psychodramas to better understand one's own issue and develop it into a psychodrama.
6. There is a focus on planning what one would do as a protagonist.

7. There is a building of emotional intensity and an anxiety about that.

8. There is a feeling of not being ready to be a protagonist if safety factors are ensured.

9. There is an intermittent awareness of the group and of the psychodrama.

10. There is a feeling of emotional exhaustion at the end of the psychodrama due to the intensity of the experience.

11. There are insights gathered from the experience and the universality of themes witnessed in the psychodrama.

Summary of Audience Member Research

Although some research has been conducted into audience member experience, two of the four studies, Greenberg and Tellier et al, are less relevant to this study in as much as the psychodramatic situation was quite artificial in Greenberg's (1966) study, and somewhat artificial in Tellier et al (1966). The audiences in these studies were psychologically separate from the psychodramatic action. In other words, the usual natural interchange between audience and protagonist which is a hallmark of psychodrama did not occur in these studies. The reported results therefore are not entirely relevant to psychodrama. What is of interest, is the emotional intensity reported despite the separation of audience and action. In addition, the goal for those
audiences was not therapeutic as it is for psychodrama audiences.

Of the two qualitative studies reviewed, one provided rich information related to the therapeutic value for audience members in the sharing phase of the enactment and the other provided an interesting starting point for examining the change process for psychodrama audiences. This study will contribute to psychodrama outcome research by exploring the change process for audience members who experience a significant personal change at a psychodrama workshop. What are the therapeutic benefits for psychodrama audience members?

**Therapeutic Benefits**

Therapeutic benefits from psychodrama can be conceptualized in a number of different ways. From a psychodynamic perspective, Blatner and Blatner (1988a) enumerate ways in which the ego is strengthened:

1. **Reality Testing** - during the integration phase of an enactment, feedback which requires protagonists to check out their perceptions is provided. Also, "by allowing for a full expression of fantasy and dreams, they are thereby helped to become consciously differentiated" (p. 95).

2. **Judgement** - is exercised through practising potentially difficult situations in a safe environment.
3. Sense of Reality - enactments occur in the here and now and can counter defensive mechanisms such as denial, depersonalization and derealization.

4. Regulation and control of drives, affects and impulse - can be modified to more mature forms particularly following a cathartic experience.

5. Object relations - can be explored through enactments. Idealization or devaluation can also be reduced, particularly through the use of role reversal where a more complete picture of the "other" can emerge.

6. Thought processes are exercised, particularly in the integration phase of an enactment.

7. Adaptive regression in the service of the ego.

8. Defensive functioning usually is a result of unconscious conflict. Through making the conflict conscious a more mature repertoire of behaviour is possible and defensive functioning can be reduced.

9. Stimulus barriers can be strengthened "through exploration of a variety of distancing, buffering and soothing techniques" (p. 98) Participants can allow mild lapses of attention, ignore certain stimuli and reframe mistakes that were formally seen as catastrophic. In other words, an element of choice and objectivity can moderate emotional reactivity.

10. Autonomous functions are increased through working with creativity and spontaneity.
11. Synthetic-integrative functioning - a "choosing self" develops through role distance. This, in turn, increases the integrative capacities of the individual.

12. Mastery-competence can be enhanced through role play and behavioral practice.

The above noted benefits are particularly true for protagonists. However, in as much as psychodrama is a form of group therapy, these benefits may be relevant to all members of the group; protagonists, auxiliaries and audience members. The benefits to protagonists are much more visible and clearly definable; protagonists are actively restructuring their reality and are the overt focus of the session. Does the audience benefit therapeutically, and if so, how?

There are a number of ways audience members can benefit from psychodrama. Empathy or the ability to understand the experience of another is an important concept in Carl Roger's client-centred approach to therapy (Rogers, 1961). Perhaps benefit to audience members occurs because of their ability to empathize; through feeling the feelings of the protagonist, audience members are able to rework their own feelings. Literature related to drama audiences cite empathy as a crucial part of the reciprocity between audience and actor (Bennett, 1990; Styan, 1975). Empathy is also seen as an important part in Stanislavski's work in as much as actors are encouraged to develop empathy for the
character they are portraying by inwardly experiencing feelings from their own past which are similar to those they are portraying (Bennett, 1990; Ginn, 1974; Jennings, 1987).

The idea of empathy is taken a step further by transpersonal psychologists who view the boundaries between people as partially artificial; human beings cannot help but be deeply affected by others because on one level, we are all connected. Rumi, a 13th century Persian Sufi mystic wrote: "Happy the moment when we are seated in the palace, thou and I, With two forms and with two figures but with one soul, thou and I" (Rumi, Nicholson 1973 translation). Perhaps the filters between the experience of the protagonist and the experience of audience members becomes quite permeable so that through encounter, the experience of the protagonist becomes real for audience members. In a similar fashion, Grotowski has attempted through encounter to remove the separation between actors and audience (Jennings, 1987).

One school of thought which integrates both personal and transpersonal philosophies is Jungian psychology. According to Jung, internal archetypal patterns would be triggered as a result of being an audience member and this triggering would result in the release of affect. The connectedness of human life is described by Jung through his notion of the collective unconscious which he considers to
work in tandem with the personal unconscious (Rychlak, 1981; Monte, 1987).

In addition to considering philosophical and metatheoretical issues with regard to how audience members are affected by the experience of another; intra-psychic mechanisms of change are also important. What is it that changes? Is there a shift in cognitive understanding? Is the shift more affective? Does one's self-definition change? Do these shifts result in different behaviour? Is it a combination of factors? Clearly some form of learning occurs, the nature of that learning is worthy of examination.

Social Learning Theory provides one explanation of how learning occurs. According to Bandura (cited in Rychlak, 1981) new responses are learned vicariously through observing role models. Bandura writes:

psychological functioning is explained in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction of personal and environmental determinants . . . In actuality, virtually all learning phenomena resulting from direct experience occur on a vicarious basis by observing other people's behaviour and its consequences for them (cited in Rychlak, p. 483).

Weiner (1982) describes the relationship between Bandura's notion of learning with Freud's idea of identification and describes how identification facilitates learning through modelling. In other words, more learning occurs when the model is someone who is strongly identified with, respected and seen as an important figure.
Implicit in Bandura's theory is the idea that learning is primarily a cognitive process. While it may be the case that the integration of information is primarily cognitive, a more affective experience - catharsis (the emotional release of pent up feelings) - often precedes this process. In addition to catharsis, Blatner (1985) has outlined some other therapeutic benefits that may occur as a result of participation in a psychodrama. These include:

a) a kind of transcendence that comes from identifying with the observing self as opposed to the myriad reactive selves.
b) symbolic resolution of conflict so that injury to self-esteem from the original defeat may be reduced.
c) reduced cognitive dissonance through finding imaginative solutions.

The benefits of group psychotherapy in general would also apply to psychodrama. Initial identification of group therapeutic benefit was in the form of therapist impressionistic accounts (Kellermann, 1985). Corsini and Rosenberg (cited in Kellermann, 1985) reviewed 300 of these accounts and found three broad categories which subsumed the nine classes of therapeutic benefits reported by therapists. These include: 1) emotional: acceptance, altruism and transference; 2) cognitive: spectator therapy, universalization, and intellectualization; and 3) actional: reality testing, ventilation, and interaction.
More systematic research began in the sixties where the assessment of group psychotherapy members rather than therapists formed the basis for the determination of therapeutic benefits. From this literature, Yalom (cited in Kellermann, 1985) formulated a list of 12 factors including: self-understanding (insight), interpersonal learning (both input and output), universality, instillation of hope, altruism, recapitulation of primary family group (family reenactment), catharsis, cohesiveness, identification, guidance, and existential issues. These factors formed the basis for a 60-item Q-sort measure constructed by Yalom, Tinklenberg and Gilula in 1970 (cited in Kellermann) and subsequent use of the measure indicated that the factors most highly valued by group participants were interpersonal learning, catharsis and self-understanding.

Wanting to examine the benefits of psychodrama as a specific form of group therapy, Kellermann (1985) formulated a questionnaire based upon Yalom's Q-sort and administered his questionnaire to a group of thirty, relatively well-functioning, Israeli psychodrama participants who were part of long-term group therapy led by experienced psychodrama practitioners. The results of his study indicated that self-understanding, catharsis and interpersonal learning were the three most highly ranked items.
Catharsis

The concept of catharsis, one particular form of change, is pivotal to this study and a review of the literature with regard to catharsis follows. Aristotle coined the term "catharsis" in his objection to Plato's contention that drama was subversive and should be eliminated. Aristotle thought that drama engendered catharsis, or the release of emotion, helping audience members vicariously purge feelings of pity and terror (Scheff & Bushnell, 1984).

Although ancient in its origins, the idea of catharsis re-emerged in the work of several individuals after Aristotle. In the 1700's Father Johann Gassner performed a type of exorcism involving the casting out of demons through convulsions and emotional manifestations of an induced "crisis". Mesmer performed similar cures; however in his view it was through the shifting of body fluids and "magnetism" rather than exorcism, that the crisis and subsequent cure was achieved (Straton, 1990). Mesmer maintained that the cathartic effect of experiencing the crisis was healing.

A shift in the way in which catharsis was conceptualized had occurred. The original idea of a vicarious experience resulting in the purging of feelings had changed. Cathartic experiences were now conceptualized as the purging of feelings resulting from direct personal experience.
One of Mesmer's students, Puysegur, found what he considered to be the "perfect crisis". Foreshadowing the body/mind split of some forms of contemporary psychotherapy, Puysegur did not produce convulsions in his patients. Rather, he found that somnambulism "the ability to talk lucidly about delicate matters, and subsequent amnesia", (Straton, 1990, p. 544) produced a healing affect. Mesmer believed that the magnetic sleep which produced this effect was a result of the "psychological force between magnetizer and patient" (p.544). Two strands - catharsis and hypnosis -were weaving themselves together.

Near the end of the nineteenth century Charcot, an important influence for both Breuer and Freud, again brought hypnosis forward as an important area of study. Joseph Breuer found that his patients generally displayed a great deal of emotion when they spoke freely under hypnosis. Because of regular discharge of emotions, the method was called the cathartic method (Moreno, 1964).

Freud's work focused initially upon hypnosis; however, eventually he shifted away from cathartic therapy to free association and analysis. The mind/body split was becoming more firmly entrenched in psychoanalytic therapy. Other theorists, however, continued to see the therapeutic importance of maintaining mind/body integrity. Reich and Moreno, the fathers of experiential psychotherapies, are two such theorists (Straton, 1990).
Reich primarily worked individually and Moreno saw the value of experiential group work. Shafer and Galinsky, 1984) note:

"In its purest form, psychodrama consists of the therapy group or workshop that focuses on acting out emotionally significant scenes from the past, present, or anticipated future for the purposes of catharsis and acquiring new behaviours" (p. 98).

Moreno recognized the importance of memories of both the mind and the body and believed that through action, the two types of memory - content (mind) and action (body) could be most completely accessed (Fine, 1979). Following from his notion of two types of memories, Moreno described two types of catharsis: somatic and mental. Moreno defines somatic catharsis as "purging or cleansing of any locus of the body" (Moreno, 1964, p. 16). With regard to mental catharsis, he wrote:

Mental catharsis is here defined as a process which accompanies every type of learning, not only finding of resolution from conflict, but also of realization of self, not only a release and relief but also equilibrium and peace. It is not a catharsis of abreaction but a catharsis of integration. (Moreno, 1953, p. 546).

Moreno's view of catharsis includes an element of integration which situates catharsis in a different context than is usually the case. Moreno conceived of catharsis as including both an emotional release as well as a cognitive integration.

The notion that integration is a vital component of the cathartic experience has been further elaborated by subsequent psychodramatists. For example, Kellermann (1984)
is clear about the importance of integration. "...catharsis in itself is not curative" (p. 1) "Directors who strive for both release (id) and integration (ego), will be more effective than those who emphasize release alone" (p. 9).

Blatner (1985) extends Moreno's idea of integration even further by conceptualizing catharsis as both the integration as well as the "emotional purging" usually associated with the term. "The concept of catharsis may be understood as a shift of the psyche into a new level of integration" (p. 160), "an expansion of the self" (p. 163). The idea of psychic reordering is also described by Davies (1987): "Catharsis is the moment in which the existing structure of roles finally yields to reform itself" (Davies, 1987).

Blatner (1985) expands the view of catharsis to include four interpenetrating categories: abreaction, integration, inclusion and spiritual. The catharsis of abreaction is the sort of emotional expression which is most readily associated with the idea of catharsis. However Blatner (1985) notes that it is not the purging of emotions itself that constitutes the cathartic experience, rather it is the experience of emotions that accompany recognizing previously disowned feelings. In other words, expansion of the psyche occurs from welcoming home feelings which have been adrift. It would appear that there are two levels of emotional processes occurring in this situation: a) the recognition of cut off feelings, for example experiencing unacknowledged
grief; as well as: b) the feelings connected with that experience, for example feeling a sense of relief from experiencing unacknowledged grief. Inherent in this conceptualization of the catharsis of abreaction is the notion of bringing into awareness something which was previously hidden from awareness.

The next category of catharsis outlined by Blatner is the catharsis of integration. The integration, or psychic expansion relates to the feelings, beliefs, or memories released in the catharsis of abreaction. In other words, the individual both redisCOVERS and finds a meaningful way to incorporate previously disowned material. Otherwise, "one is aware of the previously disowned element, but it still sticks like an arrow in the soul rather than functions as a directional sign" (Blatner, personal communication). In this way one's identity is expanded to include something which previously seemed incompatible with one's identity, or alternatively the integration of two facets of one's personality which were not previously experienced as operating together. Mastery of a new skill, or an expanded sense of competence is also a way in which the catharsis of integration may occur (Blatner, 1985).

As well as adding to one's sense of self, letting go of coping skills which have become maladaptive, or negative feelings which have become burdensome is also considered part of this category. In short "the process of re-
evaluating and deciding in the present moment which parts of the self to keep and which to relinquish is part of this catharsis of integration". (Blatner, 1985, p. 162).

The catharsis of inclusion relates to a feeling of belonging, something which Alfred Adler, one of the psychoanalytic theorist who extended Freud's theory into the social realm, identifies as a core human need (Rychlak, 1981). Finally, spiritual catharsis, the fourth category occurs when one experiences a feeling of integration with the universe, or God. These four categories describe the ways in which the psyche may shift into a new level of integration.

Although Blatner (1985) eloquently delineates four categories of catharsis, and describes the psychodynamic process involved in integration, his definition "shift of the psyche into a new level of integration," (p. 160), "an expansion of the self" (p. 163) appears to be more a description of the therapeutic outcome of the cathartic experience than of the process itself. Lewis and Bucher (1992) provide a more process oriented definition when they describe catharsis as "the release of usual restraints on the expression of emotion, often with the expression of a great deal of anger" (p. 385) Restraint implies the conscious suppression, as opposed to unconscious repression, of emotion. Lewis and Bucher's definition of catharsis is consistent with the idea of "letting it out", the "it" being
something which is known but not usually expressed. A good deal of research into the usefulness of catharsis is based upon this idea of "letting it out", or the hydraulic model of catharsis (Kellermann, 1984; Straton, 1990).

Lewis & Bucher (1992) review studies based upon this model of catharsis which asserts that emotions or energy may become blocked or obstructed and that the goal of therapy is to unblock the obstruction. An assumption of this model is that aggression or anger will be lessened by expressing it. This hypothesis, the frustration-aggression hypothesis, has mainly been unsupported in research studies. Studies by Bohart; Ebbeson, Duncan & Konecni; Geen, Stonner, & Shope; and Lieberman et al (cited in Lewis & Bucher, 1992) testing this hypothesis have generally found it to be erroneous. Kellermann (1984) cites further studies which belie the frustration-aggression hypothesis including those of Berkowitz et al; Feshbach, Hokanson; Kahn; and Mallick and McCandles; Tavris; and Warren and Kurlychek.

Perhaps this model of catharsis has not proven itself to be therapeutic because it is lacking the element of integration which is considered crucial by psychodramatists (Blatner, 1985, Kellermann, 1984, Moreno, 1953). The unmodulated expression of primarily regressive feelings, without incorporating the "adult" into the experience is simply regression, as opposed to regression in the service of the ego (Blatner, personal communication). In other
words, the hydraulic model of catharsis is too small a piece of the picture to adequately make sense of the cathartic experience. Other theorists have been more all-encompassing in their delineation of catharsis.

For example, as previously noted, Blatner (1985) outlines four categories of catharsis. Kellermann (1984) sees catharsis as having three component parts. He defines catharsis as "an experience of release that occurs when a longstanding state of inner immobilization finds its outlet in action" (p. 1) and describes the component parts as: an affective expression which he characterizes as intense and primitive; a cognitive release of an idea from the unconscious, and an actional release where "inner tensions are transformed into overt behaviour" (p. 4).

Scheff and Bushnell (1984) provide yet another model of catharsis. They note that in order for emotional expression to be cathartic, three interacting systems come into play: biological, psychological and social. Briefly, the biological system is the physical response which corresponds to the "course" emotions such as anger, grief, fear and shame. The psychological system, based upon George Mead's philosophy of the "self", involves movement between "I", the experiencing self, and "me" the witnessing self. The social system is the generally repressive internalized attitudes towards emotional expression.
Scheff and Bushnell (1984) postulate that in order for catharsis to occur: a) internal permission to experience the emotion must be given; b) the emotions must reach a biological climax, such as crying for grief; and c) an optimal aesthetic distance must be in operation. Scheff and Bushnell describe aesthetic distance as a balance between the experiencing and witnessing self; one is neither hysterically experiencing nor dispassionately observing their feelings.

All of the theoretical viewpoints and models of catharsis which have been outlined can be seen as important pieces of a puzzle; together they create a bigger picture. Scheff and Bushnell (1984) describe the systems involved in and the pre-requisite conditions for a cathartic experience; Kellermann (1984) and Lewis & Bucher (1992) describe the process, and Moreno (1953, 1964) and Blatner (1985) describe the results. Perhaps an all-encompassing definition needs to include components of both process and outcome. Davies (1987) provides this sort of encompassing definition:

The undergoing of emotionally evocative interactions previously avoided because the feelings aroused might be intolerable within the existing pattern of role-expectations or personal constructs. When met and survived, the emotions excited by such situations even if unpleasant are associated with a sense of release, and an altered expectation of future events. Catharsis is the moment in which the existing structure of roles finally yields to reform itself. Internally, this means a change of constructs and an altered perceptual gestalt of one's own and others' activity. Before it occurs, there is inevitably a build up of tension as the system strives to maintain the existing equilibrium and is often associated with powerful but contradictory
emotions — anger, grief and elation — all the affects of
the avoided interaction and the relief of the effort
required to avoid it (p. 116).

A summary of the conditions delineated as optimal for a
cathartic experience include: (1) internal permission to
experience feelings (Scheff and Bushnell, 1984); (2) a
therapeutic alliance with the therapist (Blatner, 1985);
(3) replication of the psychophysiological state which
occurred at the time of a restrictive life decision
(Straton, 1990);
(4) the experience of a safe and secure environment
(Blatner, 1985; Scheff and Bushnell, 1984); (5) an
integration and re-ordering period (Blatner, 1985,
Kellermann, 1984); and (6) a group setting (Moreno, 1953,

The final aspect of catharsis which is pertinent to this
study relates to the way in which catharsis is experienced
by audience members. Moreno notes that "psychodramatic
theory has developed the idea of catharsis along four lines:
the somatic, the mental, the individual and the group
(Moreno, 1964). In as much as the protagonist is the
creator, actor and audience of his own enactment, his
catharsis may be seen as more complete than that of the
audience member.

Blatner elaborates upon this point when he notes that
the protagonist discovers their own complexes, complexes
which are attuned to their inner symbol system, their
schema, their inner sense of self, and that although the symbolization portrayed may resonate with the audience member, it is not a representation of their experience. What is true for audiences is the reconnection they may experience in the "re-owning of something which connects with their cognitive, conscious system", or the connection with others that occurs in sensing the sharing of a personal and intimate issue (Blatner, personal communication). Blatner also describes the cosmic or existential integration which can occur for audience members when they are reminded of their mortality, or aloneness, or spiritual quest or other existential issues.

Some authors refer to the cathartic experience of audience members as secondary. For example, Shaffer and Galinsky (1984) distinguish between sociodrama, where the focus is the collective group experience with psychodrama, where the focus is the individual as follows:

Another distinction between the two (psychodrama and sociodrama) is the fact that participation of the whole audience is much greater in sociodrama than in psychodrama. In the latter, members of the audience may share personal concerns with the protagonist and achieve a secondary catharsis through involvement in the protagonist's role experience (p. 115).

Hofrichter (1973) describes the quality of the secondary catharsis experienced by audience members as less intense and occurring as a result of living "the realization that they share with others common problems of living and through
their reproduction are liberating themselves from them together as a community" (p. 98).

Whether catharsis is primary or secondary for audience members perhaps depends upon the way in which it is defined. If catharsis is seen as an emotional purge, audience members who are emotionally overcome during an enactment would be having a cathartic experience. If catharsis is seen, as Kellermann (1984) notes as "an experience of release that occurs when a longstanding state of inner mobilization finds its outlet in action" (p. 1), then their cathartic experience would be vicarious since the action is primarily with the enactment. Finally, if catharsis is seen as an integration of the psyche as Blatner (1985), and to some extent Moreno (1964) note, then whether their experience is primary or secondary is a non-issue. Protagonists and audience members alike would be experiencing catharsis, although perhaps different categories of it.

Outcome Research

Outcome research in psychodrama has grown steadily in the last two decades. Kellermann (1987b) notes that only 14 studies were included in an overview of psychodrama research until 1971. This is compared with the 39 studies Schramski and Feldman include in their unpublished manuscript of psychodrama outcome research until 1983 (cited in Kellermann, 1987b).
Although the quantity of outcome research is increasing, quantity does not guarantee quality (Kipper, 1978). The majority of studies are published in the Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama and Sociometry, a journal that is not subject to peer review. While peer review does not necessarily ensure quality, the advantage of increased collaboration, consultation and peer questioning lends itself to higher standards in both research and publication.

Another shortcoming with psychodrama outcome research is the lack of consistent definitions, particularly for practitioners who are not classically trained (Kipper, 1978). Psychodrama outcome research may in fact be comparing "apples with oranges." The ambiguous way in which the term psychodrama is used is clear in an overview of dissertation abstracts from the last decade. Some researchers (Brown, 1987; Nevens, 1984; Sheets, 1989) have incorporated psychodrama techniques into their particular group therapy resulting in outcome research that, however useful, is not purely about psychodrama (D'Amato & Dean, 1988; Kipper, 1978).

Many methodological problems have been noted with regards to experimental outcome research (D'Amato & Dean, 1988; Kellermann, 1987b; Kipper, 1978). These include: the lack of a control group in some studies, the need for more complex factorial designs, and the need to use measures that are more directly related to psychodrama theory. Kellermann
(1987b) notes that research using tests designed by Moreno to measure variables such as spontaneity and creativity is almost nonexistent.

Although there are limitations, it would not be prudent or wise to "throw the baby out with the bath water." What can be learned from previous research? Kipper (1987) divides psychodrama effectiveness studies into three categories: 1) therapeutic strategies, 2) case illustration reports and 3) research studies. Kipper does not include qualitative studies in his category called "research studies" and since qualitative studies have also been undertaken (Baum, 1994; Del Nuovo et al, 1978; Hofrichter, 1973; Martens, 1991; Neuman, 1990), the addition of qualitative studies as a 4th category would be appropriate.

Therapeutic strategies include practitioners' experience and opinions regarding the effective administration of a particular psychodrama method. Case illustration reports include therapist accounts of effective treatment with a particular individual. Research studies include experimental and quasi-experimental studies and attempt to work within an empirical framework (Kipper, 1987). Qualitative studies examine the experience of participants.

A wide range of subjects, issues and independent variables have been examined. Subjects have ranged in age from 4th graders (Shearon, cited in Kellermann, 1987b) to seniors (Boone, 1986; Goral, 1992); from juvenile homicidal

Empirical support for the efficacy of psychodrama is inconsistent. Eighteen of the twenty three studies reviewed by Kellermann (1987b) found psychodrama to be effective in terms of the particular measures used. These measures included behaviour rating scales, feeling and attitude scales, anxiety measures, locus of control scales, defense mechanism inventory, personality scales, group environment scale, and a scale measuring attitudes towards supervision.

The studies that did not support the efficacy of psychodrama measured variables such as personality change as measured by the MMPI and 16 personality factor questionnaire, self-esteem inventory, locus of control scale, and test of creative thinking. Without exception, studies that incorporate a qualitative research design have found psychodrama to be effective. Baum (1994) and Martens (1990) explored the change process in their co-researchers. Del Nuovo et al (1974) explored the experience of spontaneity, Hofrichter (1973) explored the experience of community, and Neuman (1990) explored changes in self perception.
How can the discrepant findings with regards to the efficacy of psychodrama be reconciled? As previously noted, inappropriate measures may have been used. Problems with inappropriate measures may arise from the theoretical assumptions upon which measures are based - theoretical assumptions which conflict with those held by Moreno. The MMPI and other personality scales are based upon the assumption that a relatively enduring innate personality exists. Moreno, on the other hand maintained that "role playing is prior to the emergence of the self. Roles do not emerge from the self, but the self may emerge from roles" (Moreno, 1964, p. 157). Measures which examine the extent to which creativity, spontaneity and role repertoire have changed would be more appropriate.

On the other hand, qualitative research has been typically based upon the assumption that psychodrama is effective, or that there is an experience of community in the sharing phase of an enactment. For example, Martins (1990), and Baum (1994) both interviewed people who considered their psychodrama experience to be significant, and Hofrichter asked people to describe their experience of sharing. The way in which these interviews were structured did not examine whether or not psychodrama was effective but rather when it is effective, how was that experienced. A more neutral qualitative examination of the process could potentially result in less unequivocal results.
Although methodological problems exist in efficacy research, substantial support for the utility of psychodrama can be found. With an increase in the number of qualitative studies, a greater sense of the experience of participants is available. By combining information available from these two different methodologies, a more wholistic picture of psychodrama efficacy can be obtained.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research design of this study and provide the rationale for its use. Information relevant to the selection, recruitment and demographics of co-researcher is provided and the personal biases of the principle investigator is also included.

Research Question and Methodology

The primary focus of this study was to explore the experience of significant change for psychodrama audience members and understand the meaning they made of their experience. Several variables need to be considered in choosing the methodology which is most appropriate to this study. The first question concerns the nature of the question being asked: is the question concerned primarily with natural laws and how they relate to the human experience, or is it concerned with the human experience explored from within the context of the human experience? In other words, is a natural science or a human science approach to the question most appropriate?

Natural science has typically focussed upon "incremental additions to established research" (Osborne, 1994). The primary function of natural science is to predict, control and measure under conditions which eliminate as many confounding variables as possible (Valle and King, 1978).
Quantitative research is highly structured and most often verification oriented (Stainback, 1988). Based on British empiricism, quantitative research focuses on what is clearly observable and scientifically provable. Underlying this ideology is a Lockean epistemological model.

Rychlak (1981) identifies the assumptions underlying the Lockean model as follows:

a) **Reductionism** - ideas are built up from simple to complex in a unidirectional way. In other words everything is reducible to its simplest constituent parts.

b) **Realism** - the contents of our minds exist independently of our mind. Combined with the notion of "tabula rasa", the blank slate condition of the human mind at birth, we can say that what is in our mind is an accurate reflection of external reality.

c) **Linear** - meaning relations between ideas are unipolar and can be demonstrated. Cause and effect are seen in a linear fashion.

Human science, on the other hand, attempts to understand the dynamic and highly personal subjective experience of individuals (Osborne, 1994). The focus is upon understanding as opposed to prediction and control. Assumptions informing this theoretical framework are based upon a Kantean epistemological model, which Rychlak (1981) identifies as follows:
a) **Nonreductionistic** - ideas are based upon dialectical reasoning. Complexity and abstraction do not necessarily proceed together; complexity is related to the number of relational ties between ideas.

b) **Rationalism** - only through the use of our understanding can we arrive at knowledge. Further, noumenal (absolute) reality is unknowable. What is knowable is phenomenal (interpreted) reality.

These two views of how knowledge is gained form an important basis for different schools of psychology, e.g. existentialism vs. behaviourism (Rychlak, 1981). Furthermore, research methodology is informed by these two theories of epistemology; natural science more by a Lockean perspective, and human science more by a Kantean perspective.

Given the fact that the topic for this study is the experience of change, and given the fact that experience is best described from a Kantean perspective, i.e. a non-linear dialectic approach, a human sciences or qualitative approach would be most appropriate. Osborne (1990) notes that scientific objectivity "has been achieved by restricting the focus of inquiry to that which has been amenable to natural science" (p. 79) In shifting the focus of inquiry outside of this realm, a concurrent shift in methodology to a more human science approach is required.
Further support for the use of a qualitative approach arises from the fact that although the audience is a crucial component in psychodrama (Moreno, 1966; Pitzele, 1983), almost no research has been done that exclusively examines the experience of audience members (exceptions have been noted in the previous chapter). The current study explored a more complete picture of the change experience for psychodrama audience members. Since this work was largely exploratory, a qualitative study was deemed the most appropriate methodology. Stainback and Stainback (1988) note that "qualitative research procedures are flexible, exploratory and discovery oriented" (p. 6).

Clearly a human science or qualitative approach is the most suited to the research question being addressed. The question then becomes: what particular qualitative approach is most appropriate? The philosophical underpinnings of all qualitative approaches is similar, falling under the Kantian epistemological umbrella just outlined. However there are subtle differences to be found between ethnography, existential phenomenology, and grounded theory - to name a few of the major streams within qualitative research.

Briefly, the focus of ethnography is upon encountering alien worlds and making sense of them, and the focus of existential phenomenology is upon the individual and illumination of a specific phenomenon (Osborne, 1994). Although there are more similarities than differences
between these two approaches (Osborne, 1994), rather than relying on interviews alone, ethnography tends to include overt behaviour, document analysis and interviewing as relevant data (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993).

Grounded theory shares a focus upon description and understanding; however the primary goal is the inductive development of theory to explain the phenomenon of interest. Both methods are exploratory; however the intention of researchers utilizing these two methods would differ (Osborne, 1994).

Existential-phenomenology combines existential philosophy with the method of phenomenology (Valle & King, 1978). Husserl, father of phenomenology, reasoned that since consciousness is our primordial window on the world, an understanding of human knowledge should be based upon understanding consciousness (Osborne, 1990). Arising from this premise, existentialism may be defined as "a formal philosophical school which seeks to understand the human condition as it manifests itself in our concrete, lived situations" (Valle & King, 1978, p. 8).

Valle & King (1978) describe phenomenology as "a method which allows us to contact phenomena as we actually live them out and experience them" (p. 9). Osborne (1990) sees phenomenology more as an orientation than a method, where the researcher endeavours not to "lead the witness" but rather explores the meaning made of an experience through
open-ended dialogue, minimally structured interviews, and the use of active listening skills (Osborne, 1990). A thorough elaboration of the specifics of this style of interviewing may be found in Weiss (1994).

Because the goal of this study is to understand the experience of significant change, an existential issue which is best explored through a phenomenological approach, the existential-phenomenological approach of Giorgi (1985), with its rigorous treatment of the data, was chosen.

Co-researchers

Introduction

Osborne (1990) notes that the term "co-researcher" or "participant" is the primary way in which "subjects" are referred in qualitative studies, denoting the co-operative nature of this research approach (cited in Bartlett, 1991). The way in which this study was carried out was highly co-operative with no power differential between myself and the audience members who participated, particularly since we were peers in a counselling psychology graduate program. While it is crucial to uphold the spirit of equality and cooperation, I found the continual use of "co-researcher" and "participant" to be language which distances people from their experience and have therefore referred to the audience members who participated in this study primarily as "audience members" and sometimes as "participants".
Selection of Participants

The directors involved in this study hold psychodrama workshops two or three times a year, and the 20 participants from a workshop which coincided with this study formed the pool from which volunteers would be recruited. This group was selected because their workshop experience was close enough to the time the research interviews were conducted to be clearly remembered and far enough away to have some perspective upon and integration of the experience. This group clearly met the criteria requirements outlined by Colaizzi (1978): "experience with the investigated topic and articulateness" (p. 58).

Recruitment of Participants

At the end of a three day psychodrama workshop held in December, 1994, workshop participants were told about the nature of this study and further told that a letter inviting their participation would follow. The letter was sent out in time to slightly precede the follow-up workshop held six weeks after the workshop so that participants would have the opportunity to volunteer at the follow-up evening if they choose to do so. Co-researchers contacted either the principal investigator or her supervisor by telephone or in person at the follow-up evening. A total of seven people volunteered; however after an initial discussion it became clear that one person did not meet the criteria. Although
he felt that he learned a lot from his experience, he did not see it as pivotal in instigating personal change.

Demographic Information

Audience members who participated in this study were all either graduate students or recent graduates in Counselling Psychology. The notice advertising the workshop included the following description:

**ADVANCED GROUP AND PSYCHODRAMA**

This workshop is for professional counsellors who are interested in developing their understanding and use of advanced group & psychodrama techniques and group skills in their professional work. Participants will have an opportunity to learn the psychodrama process, as well as practice adapting aspects of this approach to their own counselling work contexts. Relevant materials for training and theoretical background will be provided to the participants. This workshop is designed for both those new to psychodrama and those seeking advanced training. Preference given to applicants with an appropriate academic and professional background in counselling. Participation is subject to interview with one of the instructors.

In total, five men and 13 women participated in the workshop. Eleven of these participants were counselling psychology graduate students and with the exception of one woman who was professionally employed in a field other than counselling, the remaining six people are professional counsellors. Five of these six people had graduated within the last 3 years from the Counselling Psychology program at U.B.C. and one was a physician working in an administrative capacity in the helping profession. The average age of workshop participants is approximated at 38. 15 participants were Caucasian, and two were Asian.
Eight of the 17 were participating for the first time.

Co-researchers participating in this study were generally representative of the larger group. Because co-researchers wishes to maintain anonymity, an in-depth biographical sketch is not provided. In light of the fact that participants were mainly counselling psychology graduates and would be easily recognizable by others in the department, information relevant to professional status rather than personal details is provided.

Co-researcher #1: a 39 year old woman with two previous experiences as a protagonist in the four psychodrama groups in which she had participated. Co-researcher #1 was close to graduating with her M.A. in Counselling Psychology at the time of this study and was not employed.

Co-researcher #2: a 43 year old graduate student in the Counselling Psychology program with one experience as a protagonist and several experiences as an auxiliary in the four psychodramas in which she had participated. Co-researcher #2 was not employed at the time of this study.

Co-researcher #3: a 55 year old women engaged in graduate work in Counselling psychology. This participant had no protagonist experience although she had participated as an auxiliary several times during the three workshops which she had attended. This audience member has been a health care professional for many years.
Co-researcher #4: a 30 year old male with seven years experience as a child care counsellor for deaf children. This participant was a new graduate in Counselling Psychology at the time of the study. This participant was a protagonist in the workshop, his first psychodrama experience.

Co-researcher #5: a 40 year old male who had recently graduated with his M.A. in Counselling Psychology. This participant has been involved with employment counselling for the past 10 years. He has been a protagonist once and has participated in four workshops.

Co-researcher #6: a 49 year old woman who was close to graduating in Counselling Psychology at the time of the workshop. This participant has been a health care professional for many years and more recently is involved in counselling in the health care profession. This was the first workshop for co-researcher #6.

Procedure

In order to share the context which would form the basis of their significant experience of change, I attended a three day psychodrama workshop. The workshop was co-directed by two therapists with Ph.D's in Counselling Psychology and extensive group experience, although not specifically certified as psychodramaticians. At the end of the workshop, people were told that this study would take place. Three weeks later, the principle psychodrama
director arranged for a letter to be mailed to workshop participants inviting them to participate in this study, (refer to Appendix A) and participants volunteered either by telephone or at a follow-up evening which occurred three weeks after the recruitment letters were mailed.

A pilot interview was held before the study participants were interviewed. The person interviewed for the pilot was familiar with the methodology employed in this study as well as having experience as an audience member in psychodrama. The interview was transcribed and ways of improving the quality of interviewing so it would be more open-ended was considered and practiced.

Arrangements to meet at a mutually convenient time and place were then made by telephone with the audience members who participated in this study. Six interviews were subsequently conducted, tape-recorded and transcribed. Interviews were held in my home, or the home of the participant, or in my office, depending upon the preference of the co-researchers. Interviews began by welcoming the co-researcher and asking them to sign the Consent Form (refer to Appendix B). After a few minutes of casual conversation to help the co-researchers feel more comfortable, the following questions were asked:

1. Tell me about your experience of change as if you were telling me a story that had a beginning, middle, and
end. What led up to this shift, what happened during the experience and what happened afterwards?

2. What did you learn about yourself?

3. The learning that you spoke about, do you see evidence of that in your life now? If so, what is the evidence? How is your life different?

4. Are there other factors in your life that you think may have contributed to the change or shift that you described?

5. Is there anything you would like to add that would help me more fully understand your experience?

(Refer to Appendix C for the complete interview protocol)

Data Analysis

Giorgi (1985) outlines a rigorous method of exploring the phenomenal world of co-researchers. His method was followed and is outlined below:

1. Read the verbatim transcription of interviews to get a sense of the whole description.

2. Read these transcriptions more thoroughly in order to delineate each time a transition in meaning is perceived. A series of meaning units is thus obtained.

3. Eliminate redundancies in meaning units; clarify and elaborate the meaning of these constituents by relating them to the whole and to each other.

4. Reflect on the psychological meaning of these constituent parts and transform each one from the
language of the co-researcher into psychological language.

5. Synthesize the transformed meaning units into a consistent description of the structure of the experience.

The identified structure of the shared experience was then reviewed with each co-researcher to ensure that their experience was accurately reflected and any changes were incorporated into the results.

**Personal Biases**

A fundamental principle of phenomenology is the mutual relationship between the researcher and participant. In some ways it is the researcher him/herself which is the "measure" upon which results of the study depend. In order to be true to this form of research, Husserl describes the need to assume a "transcendental attitude" (cited in Valle & King, 1978) or to return "unto the things themselves" (Osborne, 1990).

Existential-phenomenology recognizes the unavoidable participation of the researcher in formulating the research question and collecting and interpreting the data. Rather than attempting to remove the "human element" through experimental design, the phenomenologist articulates their predispositions and biases so that their perspective may be taken into account (Osborne, 1990). Husserlian phenomenology contends that bracketing and reduction allows
the researcher to "see things as they are". This view is in contrast to hermeneutic phenomenology which asserts that interpretation is unavoidable (Osborne, 1994).

Whether the metatheoretical frame of the researcher is Husserlian or hermeneutic, bracketing remains an important pre-requisite to phenomenological data analysis. This researcher was deeply affected by personal experience with psychodrama and true to form, a rendering of my personal experience follows. This rendering serves two purposes -- initially it was done to help me be aware of potential personal biases so that I might more fully "see things as they are" as opposed to "see things as they confirm my beliefs and experience". It is also included so that the reader may take into consideration my biases and consider for themselves the degree to which the results are colored by my personal lenses.

In a previous psychodrama workshop I was both a protagonist and an audience member and had a more profound experience as an audience member. Based on my understanding of psychodrama and my experience, I have formulated the following beliefs:

1. Significant change can occur for psychodrama audience members.
2. A cognitive shift, or change in understanding may be preceded by a cathartic emotional experience.
3. Through identification with the scene they are watching, audience members are simultaneously participating in the drama before their eyes as well as their own internal drama.

4. The directors' part in the process is crucial. Through building trust and group cohesion, psychodrama participants become more open to being touched by the experience of others. It is through this openness that greater access to their own internal drama is possible.

My personal experience is as follows:

a) I feel open to the experience of others and am watching an enactment;

b) I began to be aware of ways in which what I was watching made me think about my own situation. I am now watching someone else's drama while being aware of my own feelings and circumstances;

c) I became overwhelmed with the feelings which were triggered for me and had to leave as I felt like I could no longer contain the depth of what I was experiencing and remain calmly in the room. I felt completely consumed by my own experience, and I did not want to disturb the group. The kitchen adjoining the room where the action was occurring provided a safe haven to allow the outpouring of grief which was occurring;

d) In the quiet of the adjoining room, I began to sob (I never sob!) and understood that the cut-off relationship I
had been maintaining with a family member was not what I really wanted. I was feeling intense guilt, frustration, powerlessness and longing for connection;
e) I became aware that the end of the group was happening and wanted to join the group without bringing the depth of my feelings into light - the time for that was past. I attempted to be present with the group but still felt quite overwhelmed with feelings. This slowly subsided, particularly as the director connected with me personally and brought my attention elsewhere.
f) The following day I felt quite shattered and needed some time to put the pieces back together again. I did this with the help of a friend and later felt like an important shift had occurred in how I position myself with one particular family member.
g) In contemplating the experience I wonder whether my experience is not more consistent with that of a protagonist than of other audience members and consider this to be an interesting topic to pursue.

As Osborne (1990) described, validity, the truth value of a qualitative study, can be improved through explicitly stating the researchers biases. Other issues related to both validity and reliability and limitations in general comprise the remaining sections of this chapter.
Limitations of the Study

Because of the highly subjective and interactive nature of this type of methodology, some problems with both validity and reliability exist. Is the principal investigator being true to the methodology and facilitating the emergence of meaning without directing the co-researchers? In other words, are the results valid? In order to increase validity, a pilot interview was held with a co-researcher who was both familiar with psychodrama and familiar with this type of methodology. Feedback from this interview was given and incorporated into the interviewing style of the principal investigator.

Another consideration in terms of validity concerns the degree to which this workshop follows psychodramatic theory and practice. Although the directors involved have not gone through the training process involved in formal accreditation as psychodrama trainers and practitioners, they do follow the conventional process of classic psychodrama and have extensive experience. The depth of experience noted by audience members in this study and protagonists in previous studies speaks for itself. Since no attempt is being made to generalize beyond the co-researchers in this study, this limitation is minimal.

Reliability can be particularly problematic when design, data collection and analysis are carried out in isolation, with only one researcher. This precludes both the
possibility of inter-rater reliability, and feedback about the way the researcher may be influencing interview outcome. (Achilles, 1994).

In order to maximize reliability, follow-up interviews were held with each co-researcher. The purpose of the validation interviews was to ensure that the way in which the principal researcher had made meaning of audience member experiences matched the co-researchers experience. The validation interviews were carried out in a highly collaborative and interactional way. The principal investigator rigorously examined study results with co-researchers -- both major themes and all of the sub-themes included in the results. Co-researcher feedback was incorporated into the results.

Heppner et al (1992) note that a limitation of this methodology is the fact that the sample size is small and there are few comparison groups. Would these six audience participants have a similar experience of change as six male inmates participating as audience members in a psychodrama under the direction of different directors? Also, is the quality of the psychodrama under study similar to other psychodrama groups? Although this limitation is worthy of note, it is important to also note that generalizability is not an aim of phenomenological research. Not wanting to predict, control or measure, the depth and breadth of information emerging from this methodology focuses more upon
discovery, description and meaning (Osborne, 1994), and not upon generalizability. Concerns about generalizability are more appropriate to discussions of the external validity of quantitative research. This issue will be more fully addressed under the next heading in this chapter.

Another limitation in this study specifically relates to the nature of the research question. Audience members who experienced a significant personal change were asked to describe their experience. This provided no information about whether or not all audience members experience significant change, nor does it provide information about the experience of audience members who did not experience significant personal change. A more comprehensive design would be to examine the experience of audience members in general.

Finally, the number of co-researchers who volunteered for this study may not have been adequate. Ideally sampling is terminated when a saturation point is reached, or when interviews stop providing new information. Osborne (1990) cites Wertz (1984): "the researcher needs as many participants as it takes to illuminate the phenomenon". Six co-researchers were interviewed for this study, and although this is often the number of participants in this type of study, ideally the number of participants would have been dictated by saturation of information rather than by the number of people who volunteered to participate.
Reliability and Validity

The issue of reliability and validity in qualitative research is deserving of special attention in as much as these concepts are generally more applicable to quantitative research (Kefting, 1991). Although it may be inappropriate to import quantitative concepts to evaluate qualitative studies, the evaluation process itself is crucial. Krefting (1990) suggests that Guba's Model be adopted for evaluating qualitative research. Guba (cited in Krefting, 1990) delineates four aspects of trustworthiness that are relevant to both qualitative and quantitative research: a) truth value; b) applicability; c) consistency; and d) neutrality.

Truth value relates to the confidence in the truth of the findings. In quantitative research this is associated with how well threats to internal validity have been controlled and how appropriate the measures are. In qualitative research this refers to the accuracy with which participants' experiences have been described and/or interpreted (Krefting, 1990). Careful validation interviews, which were carried out in this study, would increase the truth value.

Osborne (1990) notes other ways in which the truth value (which he refers to as validity) can be assessed. These include: explicit bracketing and thorough descriptions of the procedure and data analysis; checking researcher's interpretations with participants during interviews and
after analysis has been done; presentation of coherent and convincing arguments to a research committee; and the extent to which other people who have experienced the same phenomenon feel a resonance with the reported results.

Guba's second assessment criteria is applicability which refers to external validity or generalizability in quantitative studies and the degree to which the findings fit into contexts which are outside the study situation in qualitative studies (cited in Krefting, 1991). This criteria appears to contradict the idea that qualitative research is not concerned with generalizability. Guba (cited in Krefting, 1991) maintains that as long as sufficient descriptive data to allow comparisons is provided by the researcher, he or she has addressed the issue of applicability.

The third criterion relates to the consistency of the data - reliability in quantitative terms and dependability in qualitative terms. Dependability denotes "trackable variability" or the degree to which variability can be ascribed to identified sources (Krefting, 1991). This would require a thorough description of research methods. Since variability is to be expected in qualitative research, it is important to be able to integrate it rather than try to "control for it".

Neutrality is Guba's final criteria and can be described as objectivity in quantitative terms and confirmability in
qualitative terms. In other words, the "scientific distance" which is aimed for by quantitative researchers is shifted from the researcher to the data in qualitative studies. In this way the neutrality of the data, in terms of being accurately descriptive, is more important than neutrality of the researcher. Guba notes that neutrality is achieved when applicability and truth value have been established (cited in Krefting, 1991).

In summary, some of the criteria for increasing reliability and validity as outlined by Osborne (1990) and Guba (cited in Krefting, 1991) have been met in this study. Specifically, bracketing of researcher biases, checking interpretation during initial interviews, rigorous data analysis and careful validation interviews were undertaken. In other words, efforts to enhance the truth value of this study were undertaken.

Applicability of this study is partially supported and will be further discussed in the last chapter of this thesis. However, further qualitative studies regarding audience member experience will need to be undertaken to truly assess the applicability of this study. Neutrality, which can only be determined after truth value and applicability are clearly in evidence, has yet to be determined.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results found in this study. A list of emergent themes is provided followed by an exhaustive description of the experience of significant change for psychodrama audience members. The shared essential structure of the experience completes this chapter.

Introduction

The 11 themes which emerged in this study have been organized into five categories that provide an overriding organizational structure for audience members experience. This structure emerged through careful reviewing of the data rather than a desire to superimpose a structure upon the information obtained. Included in each category are the themes which emerged from the clustering of related psychological meaning units.

The exhaustive description includes the variations within themes, or sub-themes described by the audience members in this study. Sub-themes were not necessarily all true for each audience member; however together they form the themes which were representative of co-researchers experience.

Two themes were representative of most, but not all audience members. Theme #4, "A sense of vulnerability and embarrassment" was not acknowledged by one audience member,
although it is my opinion that underneath a sense of obligation, which was within the awareness of this individual, lay a sense of vulnerability and embarrassment. Theme #10, "Sense of evolution of psychodrama experience" was also not representative of all audience members experience since two people were participating for their first time. These themes have nonetheless been included because of the richness of information provided.

In order that the reader may have some context in which to situate audience members descriptions, a brief description of the relevant enactments is provided.

1. An enactment which was done in the August '95 psychodrama workshop which was relevant for one audience member involved a protagonist creating a scene from the future in which she confronts her brother about his responsibility to another brother. Of significance to the audience member is the loving nature of the sibling relationship.

2. An enactment done in the December '95 workshop which was of particular relevance to three of the audience members in this study involved a protagonist expressing her rage to a doctor for his lack of due care and consideration. This scene was followed by a funeral scene involving the burial of babies lost through miscarriage. The enactment ended with the protagonist bringing the audience together and
recognizing the unique and individual characteristics of each person present.

3. An enactment done in December '94 was of relevance to one of the audience members interviewed and involved a protagonist addressing his feelings about the psychiatric label which he had been given which culminated in the separation of the men and women in the group and the men joining together on one side of the room.

4. An enactment done in the December '95 workshop which was relevant to one audience member involved a man sorting out and assuming his position in his blended family. Of particular concern was a segment in which the protagonist took from each family member a quality which he wanted for himself.

Themes

A. Psychodrama Experience for Audience Members

1. Sense of being fully present
2. Shift from thinking to feeling
3. Experience of highly intense, all-encompassing feelings
4. Sense of vulnerability and embarrassment
5. Shift out of intense personal experience back to role as audience member

B. Making Meaning of the Experience

6. Perceived need to integrate experience
7. Emergence of personal themes for future work
8. Experience of fundamental change

C. Evidence of Change in Daily Life

9. Awareness of changed style of interaction

D. Psychodrama Progression

10. Sense of evolution of psychodrama experiences

E. Additional Contributing Factors

11. Assessment of other factors influencing experience of change.

Exhaustive Descriptions

Experience of Significant Change for Psychodrama Audience Members

Sense of Being Fully Present

For all of the audience members in this study, a sense of being fully present was found to be the starting point to the experience of being emotionally drawn into an enactment. Being fully present meant that they were not distracted by other thoughts or responsibilities and felt fully engaged as an audience member. Expressions used by audience members included: "I felt very connected", "I was fully present without any burning issues that were interfering", "I felt quite neutral and yet not dispassionate, not uninvolved, just open and ready to see what would happen."

Shift from Thinking to Feeling

Being fully present allowed audience members to shift their focus to the protagonist and the enactment they were witnessing. With the focus of attention on the
protagonist's experience, a further shift from observing fairly dispassionately, to observing and feeling strong personal emotions also took place, at least for enactments which were perceived as pivotal in instigating personal change. This sense of movement from thinking to feeling was triggered primarily through various combinations of four processes. These processes included: empathy for the protagonist, identification with the protagonist, becoming aware of a lack or loss in their own life and a desire for something they were watching.

The empathic process in a counselling sense includes both the perception of another's feelings as well as an element of detachment which allows the clinician to "move back from the merged inner relationship to a position of separate identity that permits a response to be made that reflects both understanding of the other as well as separateness from them" (Marcia, p. 83). For most audience members, empathy, in the context in which it was used here, did not include an element of detachment. Rather, it was a deep perception of the feelings of the protagonist. "I felt what he was going through and I think at the same time it brought up what I was going through."

This profound experience of another's feelings was described differently by various audience members. One person described her empathic experience as occurring "on a cellular level." Another considered the experience of the
protagonist's feelings to be a group transcendent experience
"It was a group critical experience. I felt that we were all just connected in that single experience in that time."

All of the co-researchers experienced a sense of identification with the protagonist. Something witnessed in the enactment triggered feelings that linked the experience of the protagonist to something the audience member had personally experienced in their own past. In other words, in a symbolic way they were watching a piece of their own personal history to which there were strong feelings attached. "the grief around a funeral tapped into my own grief around losing my own man who died."

... it wasn't like they were acting out my life. But what they were doing was like bits were so, occasionally there would be a really significant part and I would think "Oh, how that relates to me is this". Not thinking that consciously, but feeling it.

The one audience member who shifted from thinking to feeling through empathy without having an initial sense of identification was aware later, after she was fully immersed in her feelings, of a piece in her life which was similar to what she was witnessing. "I thought, oh, that could be me, one of those children could be me practically ... ."

Some audience member described their experience of identifying with the protagonist in terms of enjoying seeing them have or do something they would like to have or do themselves:

... the whole idea of having a brother like Andrea's brother that you could sit her down and say "Now look,
this is what I need. I really love you and you know you've been a great brother, but you have to start treating me this way." I mean I loved it. I loved watching that and of course at the same time I also felt the sadness because I would never have that.

Feelings of loss were triggered for five audience members as they witnessed protagonists enacting situations involving loss and grief, or as they witnessed something which was lacking in their own life. For most people feelings of loss were accompanied by yearning for something which was missing.

I felt choked up because those words are really ones that I have really been wanting to hear for a long time and then to actually hear them and have them played out in front of me was provoking of feelings of losses from the past, that perhaps I hadn't identified because they were acts of omission as opposed to commission so they are harder to identify.

One audience member discovered a sense of joy from having acknowledged and experienced her loss: "When I had a chance to be by myself in my car, that's when it all came back together without tears. It was almost a joy."

The entrance into an emotional realm was a process which occurred at an unconscious level and was experienced differently in terms of initial intensity. One person experienced this shift as gradual and gentle: "I don't think it was a sudden shift, I think it was like a gradual shift. I think my empathy for Rose and what she was going through put me into a certain emotional state." The rest felt that it was more instantaneous:

I was in my head as Jenny was talking about her brother and I'm going "yes, yes, I'm in my head, I'm in my head"
and then when she talked about love it was almost as if all that fell away. It was as if this concrete wall that I had built up in my relationship with my brother just sort of collapsed.

Experience of Highly Intense, All-Encompassing Feelings

Although the initial shift from thinking to feeling varied in its original intensity, the feeling realm became highly experiential, intense, and to some degree all encompassing. Highly experiential denotes a "here and now" quality to the feelings. Audience members were no longer watching the enactment but were rather experiencing it personally.

It was as if Jenny was speaking to me directly . . . I mean I found that I was listening intently to what she had to say to each individual and I was taking it in like she was saying it to me.

"With Daniel's I was experiencing it from the inside. I wasn't looking at it, I was right in there and I was going through it, you know, as an audience member."

Feelings were experienced as intense (profound and powerful), and for most, there was also a turbulent, or stormy quality "kind of like a roller coaster of isolation and anger", "Well intense, I think it was, there was so much emotion." One audience member who was primarily experiencing positive emotions did not feel that his emotions were turbulent.

The tone of emotions ranged from positive: "I just felt really overwhelmed by the experience in a really positive way"; to a combination of emotions including "nervous . . .
choked up . . ., and happy to hear those things" to very distressing: "it was strong, and painful."

For all audience members the emotional experience became all-encompassing. In other words, the experience occurred with a limited sense of objective reality. Some entered into what they experienced as a transcendant reality "time stood still . . . when it came time to talk about it, it was almost indescribable." For others the experience was less spiritual; however for everyone the inner experience had become the focus of attention with at least a partial loss of the outward gestalt of the scene they were witnessing.

When I think of that experience I was aware of Liz and Peter and Penny and the babies, and I've no idea where anybody else was. So the room became very small, and it was dark if I remember rightly. And I don't remember thinking, I don't remember anybody else. So no, I became very focussed I think, like you are when you watch a movie at some level, and you don't feel all the people around you. I was totally oblivious to anything else.

Some audience members wanted to move out of the emotional experience and for them this altered state lasted very briefly: "I lived in that mental, emotional, physical kind of response for a relatively short time." The rest remained in their inner experience for much longer:

I was doing (what the protagonist was doing) with my family members. I was standing behind them and I was putting my hand on their shoulders and I was saying "this is what I wanted" (as I moved from one family member to the next repeating the process). (Note: parenthesis added to clarify details not contained in one specific quote).
For many the experience included a physical component: "I slumped a little bit in my seat and my sigh, it wasn't just my breath, it was all of my body. I had to lift myself up and slide into my seat"; "I recall a kind of heart pounding, like a feeling of heightened tension I suppose"; "like physically I . . . ached . . . kind of holding my breath." For others the experience was more visual: "I tend not to be so aware of my body . . . It's the vision that I have in my mind . . . I have a picture, . . . that was such an emotional experience for me . . . those images are burned in my memory."

This theme has generally characterized audience members experience of intense feelings which were originating from within. Several audience members also expressed concern about intense feelings which were being directed at an auxiliary: "I sort of had some concern for him because he was taking all women's rage to all men at that point." "I was, am worried about people taking it personally too, even though they are in the role, because I would probably take it a bit personally." One audience member considered an enactment to be a safe place to express raw rage:

I think that when one feels that kind of rage, one is also concerned about the consequences of unloading that rage, and the consequences being that you alienate men around you because what you are doing is projecting your anger towards men that may have treated you (badly) in the past on to men that are in the group that were no part of that. So because of the setting, the setting had been already set, it was o.k. . . . for Miranda to experience her rage and it wasn't meant to alienate any particular group . . . I couldn't have done it if the
stage hadn't been set. Respect for everybody that was there; an understanding that this wasn't directed towards any man there.

One audience member talked about receiving intense rage during his experience as an auxiliary. Because of his understanding of the "projective screen" quality of the auxiliary role, he was quite comfortable with the rage of the protagonist: "I was aware of how intense and explosive her feelings were and I knew that I needed to receive her anger".

**Sense of Vulnerability and Embarrassment**

Most audience members were caught off guard by the intensity of their feelings and experienced a sense of vulnerability and embarrassment connected with these strong feelings. Vulnerability was associated with a sense of exposure "I don't have my shell on . . . I feel like a crab with no skin." Embarrassment was associated with either receiving unaccustomed to validation "Sometimes it is hard to stand up and hear someone say things to you in a direct manner the way Marina did" (this particular audience member was taking in the appreciation being expressed individually to each person present as if it were being expressed to her directly) or the public expression of private feelings, especially crying: "I didn't feel comfortable about that. I don't cry."

One audience member's experience of vulnerability and embarrassment was less intense. He described the feeling as
self-conscious although for him, his tears were also perceived as a symbol of joining with the protagonist.

Several audience members perceived a desire to tone down the intensity of, or control their experience in some way. Some wondered if they could weather the storm: "I had also a bit of concern -- how strong were these feelings? As they started I didn't know where it was going to take me . . ." "The one thing was my trying to think of ways to resist this sliding down, to get hold of it and back it up a little."

The primary ways in which audience members attempted to control their feelings was through self talk: "calm down, put this in perspective . . . don't let this thing slide away on you", physical changes: "I took some deep breaths", "sometimes I bite my lip", "I kind of stepped away" and through a decision to deal with their feelings later: " . . . it was not my time to get into that grief. I could do that later." One person also noted an almost meditative approach of allowing recurring thoughts to enter and exit:

... it was more letting a couple of thoughts go by, and then letting them go through and out. I had a couple of flashbacks as I was watching, but I just kept leaving the door open so they would exit and I spent, worked to get back in focus . . .

Some audience members wanted to put their feelings on hold because of a felt sense of responsibility towards the protagonist: "right now I have another role . . . I have another role and that is I want to be here for Genevieve, I don't want to be preoccupied with myself." Others felt
unencumbered by responsibility and welcomed the opportunity to stay with their own experience: "I didn't feel that I had to take a certain role. I felt free to, free to do whatever . . . ."

The audience members who successfully put their feelings aside experienced an uncontrollable re-emergence of intense feelings either during the integration phase of the enactment or during the workshop closure. "I didn't want to get into it . . . although the next day I couldn't stop crying. I realized that because I hadn't let it out, it just poured out of me."

One audience member who experienced a re-emergence of feelings preferred not to work through her feelings with the group:

Once I got the sense that they were going to leave me alone, it made it comfortable for me to stay there. But if they had started to say "do you want to talk about that", I think maybe they made some reference to it and I just said "I was fine" and then they left me entirely alone. Once I knew that, I could stay there and that was really helpful to me.

The other felt more ambivalent:

I really didn't believe that . . . it was necessary that I share that experience, having talked already, because somehow for me it would take something away from (the protagonist) . . . so I decided to leave it to (the director). If he thought it would be important to ask me fine, but I actually had eye contact with him. I deliberately sought eye contact with him, with the tears coming down to check in, in a sense, and he never did anything about it and I trusted him.
Shift out of Intense Personal Experience Back to Role as Audience Member

Audience members eventually emerged out of a deeply personal experience back to their role as an audience member. In other words, the experience of all-encompassing turbulent intense feelings either subsided naturally or were pushed out of awareness and they were once again in a more "normal" state of consciousness. During the validation interview, one audience member noted that returning to a "normal" state meant that he stayed in a heightened state of awareness, however the intensity of the feelings subsided.

The transition out of an intense, turbulent, all-encompassing experience was initiated for one person by the director signalling the imminent completion of the enactment:

That always happens when Mel comes and makes an intervention of some kind . . . "Well, we'll be leaving in a few minutes." . . . Closure, closure for David, closure for me. It always is when he comes in and does that "Is there one final thing you have to say?" And I say it in my mind . . . and then we moved on, and I moved on and we were onto how it was for David.

For others the transition was self-initiated through a decision:

And I believe that was my duty almost, my responsibility as a professional in training. And the more I learned about the process, the more I thought I had to be fully present so that's I think what helped me shift from "me, myself and I" to Brenda's enactment. It was an awareness of what I saw as my responsibility as an observer.
For still others feelings from their experience remained very strong the next day "Well I stayed till the end and was just aware of feeling ill, headachy, nauseous, flooded with emotion, overloaded."

The person who described the feelings just noted realized that she "would have to do it differently the next time because it had been too hard to do it that way." This meant for her that she would need to be more of a participant and less of an observer, allowing herself to experience her own process as well as witnessing the enactments: "I'll certainly go into it with a more participatory thing and I'll do it for me." One audience member felt that the shift out of his intense experience was marked by contact with the protagonist at the end of the enactment: "I moved through the crowd to let Bill know how much I had been impacted. Once that acknowledgement was made, I shifted back into my own place."

Making Meaning of the Experience

Perceived Need to Integrate Experience

Audience members needed to make meaning of their experience, think about it and integrate the shift that had occurred for them. "And then there is a residual effect and I begin to go back and think about the experience and rethink about how I felt and more integrating." "Like you can only take so much of that kind of intensity and then you need, I need to pull back and reflect and be more
introverted." Several audience members felt that this integration period was quite protracted:

I think it was a longer process than that Azima. Like I think it went on through the Christmas holidays, even though superficially I went back into my other role like with the family, and Christmas, I think that I was still processing a lot of that. I always do a big replay of all the psychodrama scenes . . .

Most audience members saw the integration phase as an on-going process "So I can't say that I've totally changed and this is who I am. I'm in the process of change. Like I haven't totally seen the fruits; the tree is still weathering some storms."

Several audience members noted the usefulness of the follow-up session (an evening meeting seven weeks after the workshop) in terms of the integration process: "It took the follow-up where I could feel comfortable about that, where we all got back together and discussed it as a group with a little bit of distance and a bit more processing."

**Sense of Emerging Personal Themes for Future Work**

One of the benefits of the integration process was the perception of personal themes for future work. Most audience members became aware of personal issues which require further attention. In other words, they became aware of, or remembered something they wished to work towards: "in terms of the on-going struggle for balance, I still need to do a lot more work in that", "Well, like a theme or a trait that I have is to get into my head because living in the world of emotions is too overwhelming. That's
an area of growth that I would identify for myself for the future."

Some audience member described the emergence of themes as a process which happened when they were integrating their experience after an enactment: "and then I had this sense of this theme that was sort of developing in me . . . it just began to kind of like bubble in me and be like a pressure on me kind of to do an enactment."; "Integration and themes, it was during the car ride home and in preparing for my interview with you."

Emerging themes arose for some audience members while they were observing the protagonist. In some cases this was through identification with the protagonist and recognizing that they have shared a common problem:

... he was going through this big thing about what it meant like to be a man, with a psychiatric label and relationship with all the significant others around him. And it was a thunder struck for me, "Oh my God, this is exactly it." I have been labelled this thing and I'm not any of that.

For others, themes for future work arose through observing the protagonist do something that they saw themselves as needing to do themselves. In other words they were learning by seeing a model, "there was also an awareness that she was teaching me how to grieve . . . it was awareness of the fact that I need to do this but I am not quite ready."

One audience member noted his appreciation in seeing male models; not so much in terms of learning what he needs
to do himself, but more just as an opportunity to see how other men deal with issues:

... watching other men ... gave me the opportunity to see how it works for them ... other men who were in the audience or doing enactments. That was interesting for me. That kind of changed me a little as well. That I didn't feel quite as isolated or so on my own.

One audience member noted that although audience member experience in other psychodrama workshops had resulted in a sense of themes requiring future work, the theme which emerged during this workshop was significant in itself and not connected to the notion of future work: "I think that was the overriding theme that I came away with from that psychodrama, is how closely we are connected. I felt very connected ... and impressed I think with the importance of collaborative learning as well as individual learning."

Several audience members noted that participating in the study had deepened their understanding, and for some, consolidated the sense of an emerging theme: "it was kind of neat to talk to you about it and get this, like I think I've taken it a bit deeper in terms of understanding the process." "that's a theme ... an awareness that I would attribute to psychodramas and maybe your identifying that, helping me identify what that is."

Experience of Fundamental Change

All audience members experienced a fundamental change in themselves. In other words, they left the workshop in some way a different person than when they came. They had
experienced a shift inside themselves. Because of the highly experiential quality of psychodrama, change was experienced in a multi-layered, multi-levelled way. To break this process down into its component parts somewhat loses a sense of the gestalt of the experience since it is certainly the case in this instance that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Nonetheless, for the purposes of description, it seems appropriate to name the categories in which change was perceived. Although these categories are being described individually, the experience of change often contained elements of all three categories. Audience members perceived change in a combination of ways including cognitive (new awarenesses or appreciation), affective (new or more profound experience of feelings), and "being level" or a changed sense of who they are as a person.

Having a different perspective was a shift perceived by several audience members. Different perspective denotes the experience of perceiving something differently than was previously the case. Sometimes this difference involved a deeper understanding: "although she's explained it to me many times, I've never seen it as clearly, or felt it as clearly"; "it brought me closer to the psychology of women."

Sometimes it was more like seeing something, or someone in a different way: "I saw my father differently . . . I don't know if I can put it into tangible words, it's almost
like an emotional quality." Another way that perspectives changed related to a sense of closure in relationship that had ended: "I haven't had an opportunity to disengage, to say good-bye, to do all those kinds of things. It was an opportunity at that time to do that."

For one audience member a different perspective meant a greater understanding about what is centrally important to her: "I did learn how important it was to be connected to other people".

Changes in perspective occurred in a combination of realms including their view of themselves, their view of others and in their universal view: "I have a renewed appreciation for who women are and what their potential is, and what my potential as a woman is as well."

Well the meaning that I made of it was, in my analysis of it, was, I think quite profound. That we are all, at once the abusers and the abused, and that we have a lot of work to do as a group to heal this. That we are all connected, there isn't any one group that is or isn't to blame. That is what meaning it had for me.

One audience member expressed concern about the endurance of the shift which had occurred for her:

I think perhaps the effects of these kinds of shifts can lessen as time goes on because it is not necessarily reinforced. You know, when anything happens on any kind of an intensive weekend and there is a shift, but then as time goes on you are still back in your old environment and so you are going to have your own reinforcements . . . probably I'll just seek those reinforceers in the environment that will reinforce those kinds of shifts just to balance off the other stuff.

Because the emotional experience for all audience members had been so intense, turbulent and all encompassing,
a major focus in describing the nature of their change was affective, or feeling based: "Well that's how it did touch me personally, is being connected as a person with that little group of people, . . . in that group experience of grief." Many audience members experienced an embracing of feelings which had been denied "I also smiled because I owned those tears and I had a right to them and I was so glad to rediscover them." Others felt feelings which they hadn't realized were there: "I felt my own grief of never having had babies . . . I hadn't ever acknowledged that and I am still processing that."

Since for most audience members, intensely emotional experience had been accompanied by feelings of embarrassment and vulnerability, an important shift for many had been to stay open to their feelings in spite of their embarrassment: "That was a very different experience. To be publicly sad and not shut down, not cut it off." "I just knew that it was healthy to sit there and not run away, but just to let it happen."

Some described the shift they had experienced as an encompassing "being level" shift: "like significantly changing my sense of who I am. Kind of exciting. It really is." Others felt themselves to be fundamentally different; however the experience was less intense. For example, some audience members felt themselves become more centred in their personal power, more self-confident, operating more
from a place of strength: "Confidence, not as much fear, feeling a lot more centred." Another saw herself as being less aloof: "a bit more open . . . probably interact more with people . . . not as quiet as I used to be . . . speaking up really."

Evidence of Change in Daily Life

Awareness of Changed Style of Interaction

All audience members were aware of changes in the way they interacted with various combinations of: themselves, significant others, friends and family, co-workers and people in the community. The major shift in interaction was described in at least one of the following: being more open, more authentic, and/or more self-accepting. More open denotes greater willingness to engage with others: "more open . . . probably interact more with people, not as quiet as I used to be . . . speaking up really", and more authentic denotes interacting in a way which is honest and congruent with inner experiences. For some this sense of authenticity was described as being more real and less concerned with public persona, or who they were "supposed to be"; "more accessing the role of David Golbraith rather than the prescribed roles, or the assigned roles, you know."

"Well I think I can allow myself to be a bit more real with men . . . so I've found myself being more honest with just the way I am."
Being more self-accepting denotes feeling more comfortable and less critical of oneself: "To sum it all up, . . . it is o.k. who I am . . ."; "The only thing I would add is I am feeling more comfortable about . . . my opinion . . . who I am . . . what I represent."

Audience members saw themselves as more authentic, better able to act in accordance with their feelings. For some this was because of a greater comfort with feelings in general: "How important it is for me to be true to myself, to give myself permission to be in touch with my feelings". Others expressed a greater comfort with a broader range of feelings:

I'm no longer afraid of anger as much as I used to be. . . I realized during the workshop that my fear of the anger of my father no longer has to be there, that didn't happen on a cognitive level, it happened on an emotional level, and on a level of unawareness.

One audience member who had been cut off from some of her feelings gained insight into the harmful effects of being cut-off: "walls hurt me even more than they do the people who are on the other side of the wall because I shut myself down . . ." Another audience member who had felt cut off from women was feeling a greater flow in his female relationships:

I think it's just that I feel accepted into women's lives now, you know. I can venture into your emotional psyche without fear of having a door slammed in my face . . . I have no right to try and understand women was the message I was getting before. It's like there's nothing I could ever do to significantly offer support or empathy to a woman, so why bother trying. "Why bother trying" is probably my own defense, you know. So
I think that message was erased emotionally and cognitively with that.

A greater comfort with feelings in general and/or a broader range of feelings translated itself into greater interpersonal expression. In other words, most audience members felt themselves to be more willing to personally experience and express interpersonally a broader range of feelings:

I know that since I went back to work there have been some difficult moments at work and I haven't put a mask on in groups. I've cried at work, I've told people when I'm feeling left out or when I'm feeling slightly paranoid about something that's going on. I've been able to talk about it and ask about it and feel that I've got the right to feel those feelings and ask for what I need around those feelings.

One of the ways in which audience members experienced a broader range of emotional expression was in their willingness to enter into interpersonal conflict or confrontation when needed. In other words several people described a greater willingness to address problematic issues with others; issues which previously would not have been addressed.

At a later date we went for a walk and I said "you said something to me, and this is what it was, and this is how I feel about what you said." She was quite stunned and shocked that I would be so confrontational, so direct.

A greater sense of agency or taking charge and being effective was perceived by some: "Just having more efficacy in my life", "Agency. Yeah, yeah, um, in all aspects of my life."
Psychodrama Progression

Sense of Evolution of Psychodrama Experiences

Although this theme is not as well developed in terms of common audience member experience, it has nonetheless been included because it is an area where no research appears to have been done and as such might provide an interesting starting point. It may well be that the lack of a common sense of psychodrama progression is more a reflection of the heterogeneity of the group in terms of psychodrama experience. This was the first experience for two people, and at least the third workshop for the rest.

During the validation interview one audience member noted that the word "progression" was problematic for her in as much as for her progression is in a dialectic relationship with regression, something she sees as integral to the psychodrama process. For her "evolution" fit better. However, the definition of the theme did fit for her and in as much as the word "progression" captured the flavour for audience members who had participated in more than one workshop, and for the principal researcher, it has been used here.

Psychodrama progression is meant to denote that the experience of being an audience member changed over time, becoming richer and deeper with experience. In other words, people experienced a deepening in their understanding of the therapeutic benefits of psychodrama in general, and being an
audience member in particular. Together with a deeper understanding of the psychodramatic process, audience members also noticed an increase in their own accessibility and participation in the process, starting initially as an observer, then limited auxiliary roles, more auxiliary roles, and protagonist experience. Increasing accessibility was both to others (i.e. being asked to be an auxiliary more often) and to oneself in terms of accessing and staying with strong feelings which are triggered by watching enactments.

All audience members who had participated in other workshops could unequivocally say that each experience was different. A sense of progression was clear for most: "It's been really a progression through the four or five that I've been at", "and I've been getting more deeply involved."

. . . my experience is that I can be more spontaneous. I can be more involved in what is happening. Whereas I tend to be reserved, reflective, analytical, right, so I can let go of some of that and be, use a different style if you like in psychodrama.

The one audience member who had been at several workshops who did not have a sense of progression felt the most involved in her first workshop where several friends and fellow-students were in attendance: "I probably was more personally involved in the first one and it was because I was asked to take part in more of the actions . . . than I was in either of the other two." Another audience member who was participating for the first time started the workshop by enacting his own psychodrama. "I just jumped
into it . . . I'm very much like that . . . To me it was almost like another class . . . These are all counselling students type thing and just go." It is not possible to say what, if any, progression, with regard to audience member participation would occur for him.

Several audience members felt a change with on-going experience from being primarily an observer to more fully a participant: "More spontaneous, more involved in what's going on, more attached to the dramas as opposed to being kind of on the periphery." One first time audience member realized that she would benefit more from being more of a participant and less of an observer and would engage in the process more fully the next time: "I won't go into the next one thinking I'm going to be an observer."

The sense of progression for one audience member who had participated in several psychodrama workshops another element besides the shift from observer to participant. He described an uncanny synchronicity to the way in which events unfolded following a psychodrama workshop:

I am no longer surprised by any of the synchronicty that goes on. It's just been, too many things have occurred. Like I just knew . . . there will be something that happens today, or in the next little while, or very soon, and it didn't take long - 2 hours later.

For him, progression also included a sense of maturation of themes. In other words, over a series of workshops (generally with 4 - 6 months between them) themes would emerge while being in the audience, a theme would be enacted
in a subsequent workshop, action would be taken in life based upon the psychodrama, repercussions to the action taken would occur, further themes would emerge and be worked through in subsequent workshops as an audience member, etc.

... when I started in the first I was a non-participant... (at the second, I was) becoming involved in the process (and became clear about emerging personal themes. This theme) just began to kind of like bubble in me and be like a pressure on me kind of to do an enactment . . . , having that emotional need to do something, act on it, let that emotional release go, which was the psychodrama, and then after coming back and using the psychodramas as a way of reflecting and embracing parts of it.

Another progression which may occur is a greater understanding of how to be an auxiliary and the benefit available in that role. Audience members with little psychodrama experience experienced a sense of confusion when describing their experience of being an auxiliary. "I didn't quite know how to be. I found it really hard to be her mother. And I am still trying to work out about how to be a person in psychodrama" The benefit from this role was unclear to the two audience members who were participating for the first time: "I was busy being an auxiliary and I didn't get much out of that except my own worries about whether I was doing it right or not." Audience members with greater experience felt more comfortable with the role and considered that learning does occur in examining the similarities and differences between them and the role they have been asked to play.
Additional Contributing Factors

Assessment of Other Factors Influencing the Experience of Change

Psychodrama was something which audience members experienced in a larger context - their daily lives. While it seems fair to attribute some major shifts to a personal psychodrama experience, it is important to acknowledge that audience members were aware of other contributing factors to their experience of significant change. Variables mentioned included specific attributes of the psychodrama environment as well as factors beyond the psychodrama.

One variable mentioned by several audience members was the atmosphere established by the psychodrama directors. For some this related to setting the scene in terms of content: "that norm was set by Penny because she talked about Freudian kinds of analysis and she made it o.k. to talk about differences between men and women." For others it was more a pervasive sense of safety: "when you have the kind of leadership with Penny and Mel, they make it safe, everybody is protected."

Another felt safe in knowing that she would not be called upon to self-disclose if she did not wish to: "I was really glad that Mel and Penny didn't explore that, they just let me cry." "Once I got the sense that they were going to leave me alone, it made it comfortable for me to stay there."
One audience member noted the sense of community which was an important aspect of the atmosphere for her: spiritual quality to the group: "spirituality . . . that's community for me, so that was part of, it was pretty all encompassing."

Therapy was another contributing factor mentioned by some audience members. For some this meant that they were already processing these issues with a therapist and this was another piece of their work: "because my individual therapy . . . was pretty intense, I attribute a lot of that to the work I did in therapy"

One audience member considered the fact that not doing personal therapy was perhaps a contributing factor in as much as this may have enhanced the therapeutic value of psychodrama: "I've never done any personal counselling, and I don't know if that's why I've had such a positive reaction to the psychodrama or not."

Some audience members felt that they were already, to some degree "in process" on their own with the issue that became pivotal in the psychodrama. The psychodrama experience was a catalyst which moved them a lot further along. One person was "in process" with a naturally occurring cycle:

. . . it may very well have been (underway), but the process may have taken a lot longer if I hadn't done the workshop. I would have gone through the grief cycle, but to be honest with you, I don't know if I would have reached that same flow . . .
Another was "in process" with changing a problematic family relationship - a different relationship than the one relevant to the psychodrama, but with some similar dynamics:

I attribute a lot of that to the work I did in therapy and I also attribute the fact that pretty close to that specific psychodrama situation had been a major shift with my mother . . . I had a practice run with my mom.

All audience members noted that their involvement in a graduate school experience in counselling contributed to their experience of change: "I think the only other factor is getting my degree", "That was an on-going thing. Through the clinic, the first psychodrama, the second psychodrama, the group counselling course and then this last psychodrama, and so it was a continuum."

Some audience members felt that their previous experience as a protagonist contributed to the change they experienced as an audience member, "so I would say it definitely did affect me . . . because the things that came up through my psychodrama . . . kept getting built upon."

Several audience members considered the respectful and accepting attitude towards men and women to be important in setting a tone conducive to change. One audience member noted that the change she experienced required that both men and women be present at the workshop:

I guess the point is that (it) would not have happened for me in a female, a women only group. It had to be a mixed group and it had to be one where the men were able to witness in that respectful way what was occurring for some of the women in the group (Note: brackets added to clarify meaning of the quote).
One audience member noted involvement in her spiritual life as a contributor to her experience of change: "Well I think certainly one of the things has been my involvement in my spiritual life at the church."

**Essential Structure**

Giorgio (1985) describes the final step in phenomenological research as "Synthesis of transformed meaning units into a consistent statement of the structure of (the experience being explored)" (p. 19). This step is the synthesis and integration of the insights imbedded in the transformed meaning units and includes all of the transformed meaning units. In other words, contained within the following essential structure, is the experience of significant change for all audience members in this study.

The starting place for all audience members into their significant experience was a sense of being fully present and engaged in the enactment. At some point they became aware of shifting from thinking to feeling which was initiated through various combinations of: empathy towards the experience of the protagonist, identification with some element of what they were seeing, an awareness of a lack or loss in their own life which was triggered by what they were watching; and/or the desire for something they were witnessing. The shift into a feeling realm was unconscious and for most, an instantaneous or sudden occurrence.
The feeling realm became very intense, turbulent for most, and to some degree all-encompassing and experiential, or occurring with a here and now quality with a loss of the outward gestalt of the situation. The tone of emotions ranged from primarily positive to primarily distressing and painful. The experience which accompanied these feelings was often more connected with the inward reality of the audience member than with the enactment which was occurring. In other words, although empathy and identification had been the entrance into audience members feelings, their inner experience took on a life of its own, with strong feelings associated with their own personal realities.

The experience of this "altered state" was brief for those who were successful in suppressing their experience and more prolonged for those who stayed with it until its natural conclusion. The experience often included a physical component, such as crying or sighing, a cognitive element and an emotional element although the emotional tone of the experience was the strongest component.

Audience members were caught off guard by the strength of their feelings and most experienced a sense of vulnerability and embarrassment, or at least self-consciousness with regard to their experience. Vulnerability was associated with feeling exposed and embarrassment was associated with either the inner experience of receiving unaccustomed to validation, or the
public show of private feelings, particularly when crying accompanied these feelings. Some felt a desire to tone down the intensity of the experience, although this was easier said than done. Audience members gave various reasons for wanting to control their experience including: concern about responsibility towards the protagonist; concern about the depth of feelings which might be experienced if they open the door.

The primary ways in which audience members attempted to, or successfully controlled their feelings was through various combinations of: self talk; physical movement; deciding to put feelings on hold until later, or a kind of meditative, letting go. The audience members who successfully suppressed their feelings experienced an unexpected re-emergence of powerful feelings either during the sharing phase of the enactment, or during the closure part of the whole workshop. Their feelings were not shared with the group.

Audience members eventually shifted out of the highly intense experience back to a more "normal" state of consciousness where their inward focus lessened and they rejoined the group. This shift happened in various ways; for some it was self-initiated with an active suppression of feelings, for others it was initiated by the director's bringing closure to the experience of the protagonist and for still others it was a process which happened on its own
as their inner experience came to its own natural closure. Although audience members had shifted out of a highly intense inner experience back to a more "normal" state, for some, a heightened emotional state continued for several days.

Audience members all felt a need to integrate their experience, and did so mainly through reflection on their own. Several felt this to be a protracted, on-going process. One of the outcomes of the integration part of the experience was a sense of personal themes requiring further attention. This sense of emerging themes happened for some while they witnessing an enactment. For some, themes emerged while they watched the protagonist do something which they recognized as something they needed to do. For others themes emerged as they gained an insight into their inner experience, either during the experience, later during reflection, or even while preparing or participating in the interview for this study.

All audience members experienced what they considered to be an important shift inside themselves. The nature of this shift included cognitive elements, affective elements, and for some, a sense of fundamental change on an existential level. Cognitive shifts included changed perspectives about themselves, others and the universe. Sometimes this was a deeper appreciation for something or someone, including
themselves and sometimes it seemed more like a new understanding.

In the affective realm, shifts included the re--embracing of feelings which had been denied as well as the experience of feelings that audience members had not known were there. For some a shift in feelings related to bringing closure to a relationship with someone who had died. Finally, a shift for many in the realm of the emotions involved staying open to feelings despite a sense of vulnerability and embarrassment.

Shifts on a more existential plane involved a sense of coming into their own, more fully becoming themselves. This was experienced profoundly for some, and more subtly for others. Evidence for the changes which had been initiated or advanced during the workshop could be seen in the daily lives of audience members. Changes were evident in the way audience members related to themselves; particularly in terms of greater self-acceptance. Inter-personally changes were noticed in relationships with significant others, friends, family, co-workers and/or people in the community. Audience members perceived themselves to be relating with others more openly, more authentically, and with a greater comfort in experiencing and expressing either feelings in general, or a broader range of feelings. Several audience members also felt more willing to enter into inter-personal
confrontation when needed and a greater sense of personal agency in general.

A sense of progression or evolution in their experiences with psychodrama was noted by some of the audience members who had been involved in more than one workshop; although one person who was participating for the first time "jumped right in with both feet" right from the beginning. The progression described by some included a shift from being an observer to being more fully a participant. Participating more fully meant being more spontaneous, or being more accessible, both intra and inter-personally. In other words people were increasingly able to stay with their own feelings and were invited more often to participate as auxiliaries. A growing appreciation for psychodrama in general was also part of this progression.

Audience members mentioned several factors which contributed to their experience of change. These included: the atmosphere established by the directors; on-going personal work, either with a therapist or on their own; participation in and/or completion of a graduate degree in counselling psychology; involvement in spiritual work and previous work as a protagonist.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the results of this study, highlighting findings which are particularly noteworthy and integrating the findings with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Implication for practice and possible research directions will also be identified.

Summary of Major Findings

The principle finding in this study relates to the intensity of the cathartic experience for the audience members who were interviewed. Although not all enactments were pivotal in instigating a cathartic experience for audience members, the experience, instigated through identification and empathy, was profound.

Although the notion of audience catharsis is not new, psychodrama theory has traditionally placed a greater emphasis upon the catharsis of protagonists. The results in this study suggest that catharsis for audience members may require more attention. Specifically, the integration of a deeply moving experience is seen as crucial for protagonists; perhaps a fuller integration of the deeply moving experience for audience members is also required.

Discussion of Major Findings
1. Nature of Audience Members Cathartic Experiences

This study examined the experience of significant change specific to psychodrama audience members and adds to
the body of knowledge by examining the process from the inside out -- from the perspective of audience members. Although change can occur without a cathartic experience, and a cathartic experience doesn't necessarily result in change, the majority of the experiences described by participants in this study were cathartic and as such, this section of the discussion revolves around the notion of catharsis.

Three issues arise in discussing audience members experience of catharsis: a) what is the nature of the experience? b) which model of catharsis is supported by the descriptions provided by the audience members in this study? and c) how does the cathartic experience of audience members in this study support or fail to support previous research?

Of particular interest in exploring the nature of audience member catharsis is the intensity of the experience. Feelings were highly intense and to some degree all-encompassing. Audience members who allowed themselves to stay with their experience remained in this heightened state for quite some time; generally from when the feelings were triggered until at least the end of the enactment.

The experience of audience members in this study cannot rightfully be called vicarious. The experience was not a passive one, but something which was highly active, although perhaps not visibly so. It was not just through identification with the experience of the protagonist and
feeling emotions similar to the ones they are witnessing that catharsis occurred. Identification was often an entrance into the personal experiential realm of the participants in this study; however the inward experience soon took on a life of its own. Some audience members were inwardly enacting their own psychodrama. It was as if they were walking in a parallel universe where their own experience was alive and in process and at the same time, they were sitting in a room with other people.

Blatner's (1985) description of catharsis comes closest to characterizing the experiences described by the audience members in this study. He does not envision the kind of boundaries between protagonist and audience member that Kellermann (1984) infers. In as much as Kellermann (1984) describes catharsis as an "actional release", we can infer that the audience, who are basically passive, are not experiencing a significant catharsis. Nor does Blatner's description semantically minimize the cathartic experience of audience member by describing it as secondary or vicarious. Although his article does not explicitly include audience members, it is descriptive of their experience.

Blatner's conceptualization differs from the others reviewed in the breadth of the experience and in the neutral way in which the emotional tone is described. Feelings which are welcomed home are not necessarily painful; they can be positive as well. For example, allowing oneself to
experience strength which has been unacknowledged as well as more painful emotions come under the umbrella of the catharsis of abreaction. Blatner's description involves the dynamics involved rather than the tone of feelings experienced. Elements of all four of Blatner's (1985) categories of catharsis were experienced by audience members in this study: catharsis of abreaction, integration, inclusion, and existential. The catharsis of abreaction was experienced by everyone -- the audience members in this study experienced highly intense emotions which had been previously repressed or suppressed. This finding is also consistent with Baum's (1990) study, and for some of the audience members in Tellier et al's (1963) study.

The strength of emotions experienced is perhaps the only way in which Davies (1987) view of catharsis is more descriptive of both the experience of audience members in this study as well as those described by Baum (1994). Davies describes the feelings as powerful, and often contradictory. Blatner, on the other hand, contends that catharsis is not necessarily intense. Although Blatner may be right, the audience members in this study all experienced what they considered to be highly intense feelings. In fact, one audience member considered his experience as an audience member to be more profoundly cathartic than his experience as a protagonist. This has been my experience as well.
Blatner's catharsis of integration also was experienced by all audience members in this study. In other words, audience members made meaning of their experiences and integrated their understanding into their psychic organization of the self. Baum also alluded to insights gathered from the experience by the audience participants in her study, although the nature of the insight is not explicit. Some of the audience members in Tellier et al's study also described their need to process and integrate their experience in personal therapy.

Blatner's catharsis of inclusion will be further discussed in the section entitled "Perceived Need to Integrate the Experience". Blatner's spiritual catharsis was strongly experienced by one of the audience members in this study.

A definition of catharsis which would integrate the results of this study with the ideas of previous psychodramaticians could be: Catharsis is the release of unconsciously restrained thoughts or feelings which comes about when a breakthrough occurs to the barriers maintaining psychic repression or suppression of some aspect of experience. This breakthrough is experienced as highly intense and all-encompassing and includes physical, emotional, cognitive and sometimes spiritual aspects. A psychic reordering occurs which may be enhanced through the conscious integration of the experience.
2. Other Therapeutic Benefits

Many elements of ego strengthening mentioned by Blatner and Blatner (1988a) were implicitly described by audience members of this study. Most of the fundamental concepts noted are applicable to audience members as well as protagonists, although the way in which the benefits occur would differ to some extent. For example, reality testing relates both to feedback received by the protagonist during the sharing phase and to seeing how others handle similar difficulties for audience members. In fact the notion of learning through seeing others was mentioned by several audience members in this study.

Although an evaluation of the global therapeutic benefits of psychodrama was beyond the scope of this study, support was found for many of the therapeutic benefits summarized by Bloch and Crouch (1985), Kellermann (1987a) and Yalom (1985). Specifically learning from interpersonal action, insight and catharsis as well as corrective emotional experience were found by the audience members in this study.

3. Perceived Need to Integrate the Experience

Another major finding related to the need of audience members in this study to integrate and make meaning of their experience. This, combined with the fact that most audience members felt a sense of vulnerability and embarrassment, or at least self-consciousness, resulted in the integration
process occurring primarily in private. A general sense by some that the focus should remain upon the protagonist also kept audience members from self-disclosure during the sharing phase. It was as if the sharing phase was viewed as a time to disclose how one had been affected by the enactment rather than self-disclose the personal issues which were triggered. In other words, the focus remained upon the protagonist, even though audience members were sharing their perceptions.

Although audience members in this study made meaning of and integrated their experience, the opportunity for the catharsis of inclusion which Blatner (1985) identified, cannot be fully realized in private. While a sense of belonging may be engendered from seeing that others share the same personal difficulties, it is through personally disclosing something which has vulnerable feelings associated with it and being accepted by the group despite this perceived vulnerability, that a fuller catharsis of inclusion can occur.

This in effect occurs for the protagonist. Through action, the protagonist portrays some problematic area of their life, has an opportunity to rework the problem and is acknowledged and supported by the audience, adding the catharsis of inclusion to their experience. Although the "action" occurs internally, and the reworking may not be as complete, the catharsis of inclusion could occur for
audience members who self-disclose an area of vulnerability and find that same support and acceptance from their "audience".

4. Gender Related Issues

Another interesting sub-theme which was addressed by three audience members in this study related to gender issues and the need for an atmosphere which is accepting of both men and women. Although this was not noted by all participants, those who discussed their feelings described a healing of the alienation which can occur when both men and women are respected and validated. This was not a major finding, however it does seem noteworthy, particularly in light of the vehemence with which it was discussed by those addressing the issue.

Also of interest, particularly in a social climate which is fighting towards greater equality for women, was the fact that the men in this study were more comfortable in remaining in their internal experience and the women generally felt a greater obligation to the group. Mirroring our larger social context, men were generally more comfortable than women in "taking up space in the universe." Within an accepting atmosphere which edifies both men and women, and with direction regarding the responsibilities of various roles, perhaps men and women will be able to equally receive the therapeutic benefit of psychodrama.
Integration with Previous Research

Several areas of convergence appear when comparing the results of this study with that of Susan Baum. Audience members in both studies experienced highly intense, all-encompassing feelings which culminated in insight. In other words, catharsis and insight resulted for the audience members in these studies. The idea of catharsis and insight is noted by Bloch and Crouch (1985), Kellermann, (1987a), and Yalom (1985). Baum's study describes the process of decision involved in becoming a protagonist and this study neither supported nor failed to support her finding in this regard. This was not an area of focus in this study.

The issue of trust and safety was something which was described as important by the audience members in this study as well as in Baum's study. In both studies, a lack of trust and safety was described by some of the audience members. The notion of group trust and safety speaks to the need for engendering a sense of inclusion as previously discussed.

Implications

Implications with regard to both psychodrama direction and audience experience in general are worthy of consideration. Implications which may be relevant to psychodrama directors include: a) the need for participants to understand psychodrama process including the nature of catharsis, and the expectations and responsibilities of
various psychodrama roles; b) the importance of an integration period for all group members so that both protagonists and audience members leave the experience "in tact"; and c) an awareness that psychodrama direction includes to some extent the direction of audience member experience.

An initial understanding of psychodramatic process including the responsibilities of various roles and the nature of catharsis would prepare psychodrama participants for the intense experience which might occur for them. Audience members in this study were caught off guard by the highly experiential and turbulent feelings which they experienced. Considering themselves to be students learning "about" psychodrama did not prepare the audience members in this study to feel comfortable with the intensely personal experience which was to ensue. A sense of shame and isolation may be minimized if participants know from the outset that they may be emotionally triggered in a powerful way and that further, part of the therapeutic benefit for audience members is in experiencing and integrating powerful feelings.

Clear guidelines about the expectations of the various psychodrama roles (audience member, protagonist, auxiliary and director) would be helpful, particularly for people who are new to the process. The therapeutic value of audience member participation can be enhanced through knowing that
audience members have limited responsibilities and are free to fully experience the enactment, including whatever personal experience is triggered. A clear description of the expectations of the various roles would perhaps have allowed the audience members in this study who were overly concerned about their responsibility to the protagonist to more fully enter into their own experiences.

The importance of both the warm up and the integration period was highlighted in reviewing themes which emerged for audience members in this study. The starting place for audience members into their significant experience was a sense of being fully present or engaged with the enactment. Engagement is facilitated by the warm-up process, and integration or meaning making, is facilitated in the sharing phase.

Literature about psychodrama notes the importance of the integration phase for all psychodrama participants. Audience members in this study needed to make meaning of a deeply intense experience and may have been able to take advantage of the sharing phase had they understood that this phase is for everyone's benefit and is not primarily for the protagonist. One could speculate about how to better facilitate audience member integration of their experience. Several options might be:

a) having a double step in for an audience member who was so overcome with emotion that they could not speak.
b) move into an enactment with the audience member becoming the protagonist.

c) do some process work with the audience member in a less action oriented fashion with the aim of having them leave with a sense of what they need to complete the experience which had been initiated.

The practice of having a follow-up group 6 weeks after the workshop, something which the directors of this particular group routinely do, is an excellent way to facilitate the integration process. In the first place it gives participants the idea that there is an integration process involved and secondly it gives people the information that they will not be alone in their process of integration and that support will be available.

It may be useful for directors to know that they may be directing the inner experience of audience members as well as the outer experience of protagonists and auxiliaries. For example two of the audience members in this study described their experience of taking cues as an audience member in terms of their inner experience from what the director was saying to the protagonist. This underscores the importance of taking time in bringing closure to the enactment since audience members may simultaneously be involved in their own inner closure.

Implications for those involved in various forms of theatre may also be quite far-reaching. Audience experience
can be both profound and invisible. Those involved with audiences would be well advised to be sensitive to the impact which may be occurring for audiences. Through identification, audience members may experience the triggering of very strong feelings. Aristotle saw the value of the vicarious purging of emotions for audiences. Adding an integration period to their experience could enhance the value of the experience further.

Some theatres are taking account of this: for example a recent production at Granville Island in Vancouver involving a controversial sexual harassment issue ended with an audience discussion following the performance. Although the integration process following a theatre production would likely be less therapeutic than the integration in psychodrama, nonetheless it could provide a valuable opportunity to make sense of impact of a performance.

Schools would also be well advised to take advantage of the greater learning which is possible through increasing the number of sensory modalities involved in a learning activity. For example learning about history through acting it out could provide a much larger impact than learning through listening, or even learning through listening and watching.

**Future Research**

This study took a step towards understanding the experience of significant change for audience members. The
principle finding that this experience is highly experiential and not vicarious needs to be further examined with other groups. The participants in this particular workshop were highly articulate, self-reflective and psychologically minded counselling professionals. In as much as the participants in psychodrama groups may be vastly different, the experience of change may also vary.

Another area of future research would be to more fully explore the similarities and differences in the cathartic experience for various psychodrama roles. What is the difference between the cathartic experience of an audience member and that of the protagonist? One could speculate that one difference is the perceived need to contain the experience. What this meant in this study, was that the experience took place in a powerful way, but on an inner rather than an outer level.

Another area of research which would add to the understanding of the therapeutic value of psychodrama would be an examination of the experience of auxiliaries and doubles. Fine (1979) notes that "the auxiliaries in the psychodrama are receiving therapy as well as the protagonist when they use their eyes and ears, voices and bodies, to attend to and recreate the fantasies and perceptions of the moment of the protagonist" (p. 433). Although catharsis may occur less readily for auxiliaries, other therapeutic benefits are undoubtedly occurring.
Summary

Empathy and identification are fundamental human qualities which act as the entrance way into the experiential realm of others. In psychodrama, a situation is set up whereby the usual division between actor and audience is diminished resulting in a deepening of empathy and identification. Group members are afforded the opportunity to experience the reality of others more profoundly which can in turn lead to a deeper experience of their own reality. Through the skilful application of psychodramatic techniques, informed by both theory and experience, profound transformation can occur over the period of a few days.

One of the primary ways through which transformation occurs is catharsis; an experience which is obvious for protagonists and less obvious, but no less profound for audience members. This study has explored this profound yet partially invisible process, adding to the understanding of the therapeutic benefits of psychodrama. Further research into the cathartic experience is recommended. Factors worthy of consideration in a further exploration of catharsis include: the interaction between catharsis and the personal framework of an individual; the similarities and differences between the cathartic experiences of various psychodramatic roles; the intensity of feelings associated with catharsis; the interaction between emotional content
associated with the experience and its intensity; and how the benefits of catharsis change with integration.

The profound experience which may occur for audiences has far-reaching implications both in the educational system and in traditional theatre.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol

Script: As you know, I am interested in exploring the experience of significant change for psychodrama audience members. By significant change, I mean that you experienced some sort of a shift inside yourself that you consider to be important. You might say that in some way you are leaving the workshop a little different than how you came in. I want to explore with you what happened. I have here a time line of events that occurred over the course of the workshop to help jog your memory if you need to look at it. I'd like you to take a few minutes to reflect back on your experience.

1. Tell me about your experience of change as if you were telling me a story that had a beginning middle and end. What led up to this shift, what happened during the experience and what happened afterwards.

   (After each description if needed)
   - What were you feeling?
   - What were you thinking?
   - What did that mean to you?
   - How did that affect you?
   - What was the significance?

2. What did you learn about yourself?

3. The learning that you spoke about, do you see evidence of that in your life now? If so, what is the evidence, how is your life different?

4. Are there other factors in your life that you think may have contributed to the change or shift that you described?

5. Is there anything you would like to add that would help me more fully understand your experience?

Additional Questions

If not already known, the following questions were also asked:

1. Which enactment(s) were triggering events for change?
2. Were you a protagonist in this psychodrama as well?
3. Were you an auxiliary ego? How many times?
4. How many psychodrama's have you been in?

5. How many times have you been a protagonist?

6. Have you noticed any sort of progression in your experience with psychodrama?
APPENDIX D
Definition of Terms

**Audience Member:** a member of the psychodrama group who does not play an active role in an enactment, e.g. auxiliary, double, etc.

**Auxiliary Egos** - individuals who are chosen by the protagonist to represent absentee persons from their private world. These individuals have traditionally been other participants, or trained therapists. (Greenberg, 1974).

**Catharsis:** The release of unconsciously restrained material which occurs when a breakthrough occurs to the barriers maintaining psychic repression or suppression of some aspect of experience. This breakthrough is experienced as highly intense and all-encompassing and includes physical, emotional, cognitive and sometimes spiritual components. A psychic reordering occurs which may be enhanced through the conscious integration of the experience.

**Director:** chief therapist, the producer of the psychodramatic event. The director is responsible for the way in which an enactment is carried out, as well as the facilitation of the subsequent whole group discussion. (Greenberg, 1974)

**Doubles** - individuals who are chosen by the director, protagonist or themselves to come forward and portray the protagonist, or an aspect of the protagonist. Several doubles may show a variety of aspects of the protagonist.

**Enactment:** the scene or scenes which are enacted as part of the therapeutic work for each individual protagonist. Generally is preceded by a warm-up and followed by an integration or sharing period.

**Encounter:** An exchange between two people where the whole being including the soul, of one person communicates with the whole being of the other. "Not by turning away from human persons do we meet God, but God meets us in all of our interpersonal relationships. In each Thou we address the eternal Thou" (Johnson, 1974).

**Follow-up:** An evening follow-up session for psychodrama participants which is held by the directors involved in this study 6-8 weeks after weekend workshops in order to further integrate the psychodrama experiences.

**Integration:** The phase of an enactment following the ending of the action where everyone has a chance to make meaning of their experience. This typically involves sharing by the protagonist and auxiliaries/doubles of their experience as well as the sharing by audience members of similar experiences from their own lives.

**Protagonist:** main character in an enactment, the person around whom the enactment revolves. (Greenberg, 1974).
Psychodrama: a method of psychotherapy in which clients are encouraged to continue and complete their actions through dramatization, role playing, and dramatic self-presentation. Both verbal and non-verbal communication are utilized. A number of scenes are enacted, depicting one or more combinations of: specific past memories which are in some way "unfinished"; inner dramas; fantasies; dreams; preparations for future risk-taking situations; or simply unrehearsed expressions of mental states in the here and now. These scenes approximate real-life situations or are externalizations of mental processes from within. "Roles" may be played by other group members or represented by inanimate objects. Many techniques are employed, such as role reversal, doubling, mirroring, concretizing, maximizing, and soliloquy. Usually, the phases of warm up, action, working-through, closure, and sharing can be identified. (Kellermann, 1987c).

Psychodramatic Situation: Bringing a scenario from the past or future into the present moment so that it is experienced as a current reality.

Psychodrama Workshop - A 3 day workshop for professional counsellors interested in developing their understanding and use of advanced group and psychodrama techniques in their professional work. Those who attended the workshop were professionals or students who learned about psychodrama by becoming actively involved in the warm-up, enactment, and integration phases of the various enactments.

Significant Experience of Change: an experience perceived by the audience member as pivotal in creating an inner shift. For the purposes of this study, this experience would have occurred while the participant was an audience member in a psychodrama enactment.

Spontaneity: A state of being open and flexible to the needs of the moment and willing and able to take appropriate action.

Warm-up: The phase of psychodrama prior to an enactment when the group and the protagonist are made ready to engage in an enactment. This can include developing group trust (cohesion and inclusion), choosing the topic for an enactment and setting the scene.