

Embracing the inner stage: unveiling the spiritual dimensions of one-to-one psychodrama

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Abstract This article, published in the Zeitschrift für Psychodrama und Soziometrie (ZPS), explores the integration of spirituality in one-to-one psychodrama, focusing on Moreno's concepts of Godhead, Tele, and Encounter. It highlights the role of the director in creating a safe space and guiding participants through spiritual exploration. Spirituality is portrayed as a personal quest for meaning, transcending the material realm. Moreno's framework emphasizes human interconnectedness and the metaphysical aspects of existence, promoting a deep understanding of our spiritual nature and purpose. The integration of spirituality in psychodrama includes rituals, symbolic representations, and transpersonal exploration, encouraging individuals to delve into the spiritual dimension and seek meaning beyond the visible.

Keywords One-to-one Psychodrama · Spirituality · Encounter · Tele · Godhead · Divinity

1 Introduction

After working with psychodrama for 30 years, both as a therapist and a trainer, I have always been fascinated by Moreno's philosophy. Over the years, it has become clearer to me how the concepts he uses are interconnected and meaningful. In this article, I will specifically shed light on the spiritual aspect of psychodrama. Reflecting on the human quest for spiritual understanding, Carl Jung observed, "Among all my patients in the second half of life... there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life." (Jung 1969, p. 264). This profound statement underscores the intrinsic human need for

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spirituality, a theme that resonates deeply with the essence of psychodrama as we explore herein. Moreno, in “The Theatre of Spontaneity”, talks about how a crucial aspect of human existence was thrown out with the bathwater when it was declared that God is dead.

“If the self of Man can expand in creativity and in power, and the whole history of Man seems to indicate this—then there must be some relation between the idea of the human self and the idea of the universal self or God.” (Moreno 1983, p. 8).

Much of his philosophy forming psychodrama is about restoring human contact with the creative force, God. Three central concepts in Moreno’s work are: Encounter, Tele, and Godhead. I have concluded that these are inseparable, and here I will demonstrate how they are interconnected for me. These concepts form what I will name ‘Moreno’s triadic metaphysical understanding of human existence’ and show how they are inevitable in order to access the autonomous healing centre that we all carry within us. According to Zerka Moreno, the intention of therapy should be to help the client tap into the autonomous healing centre (Giacomucci 2019) I use concepts from psychodrama theory, and I will briefly explain how I understand and use them. The work I am referring to here is done in one-to-one psychodrama format.

One-to-one psychodrama differs from traditional group psychodrama in that it involves only one participant working directly with a trained psychodrama director. This format offers a more intimate and individualized approach, allowing the participant to focus on their specific concerns and delve deeply into their personal experiences. This format should not be confused with ‘psychodrama a deux’ and ‘monodrama’. Psychodrama a deux was introduced by Moreno and involves the participation of an auxiliary ego (Moreno 1975a) In his time the objective position of the therapist, as found in psychoanalysis, was highly valued and Moreno himself is known to use a nurse as auxiliary to maintain this position. In monodrama, the protagonist plays all the roles himself, and there aren’t any auxiliary egos, though the director may repeat what the protagonist is saying in the different roles but as the director (Slettemark 2004). In the format of one-to-one psychodrama, the therapist uses themselves much more to create the encounter which is needed to create change. While all three approaches incorporate psychodramatic techniques, the main difference lies in the focus and dynamics of the therapeutic process. One-to-One Psychodrama primarily focuses on the individual client and the relation to the director. The relationship is central to the therapeutic process (Moreno 1946). This is very much in line with what is called ‘the relational turn’ in psychotherapy in general. The director creates a safe and supportive environment where the participant can explore their thoughts, feelings, and memories. The director takes on multiple roles, including facilitator, guide, and witness, in order to support the participant’s self-exploration and understanding. Like group psychodrama, one-to-one psychodrama uses role-playing and enactment as key therapeutic techniques. The participant is encouraged to take on different roles, including significant people from their lives, parts of themselves, or symbolic representations of their inner conflicts. Through the enactment of these roles, the participant explores emotions, examines different perspectives, and gains insight. Sometimes using objects, such as Lego figures, and using a table as the stage is more adequate. (Giacomucci 2019)

As in psychodrama, spontaneity and creativity remains the core of One-to-One psychodrama and emphasizes the spontaneous expression of thoughts, feelings, and actions. The participant is encouraged to tap into their creativity and seek to engage in authentic, uninhibited self-expression. This allows for a deeper exploration of unconscious processes, personal narratives, and unresolved issues. Spontaneity is seen as the essence of God that we all carry within us. God can only enter the stage through the encounter to create. Furthermore, the journey of healing facilitated by psychodrama resonates with the concepts of post-traumatic growth, where individuals find significant spiritual and personal development post-trauma, a process extensively explored by Tedeschi and Calhoun (Tedeschi and Calhoun 2004). This underscores the potential of psychodrama not only as a healing modality but also as a pathway to remarkable resilience and spiritual enrichment following adversities. After the work on stage, the director facilitates a reflective process where the participant can integrate their experiences and insights. This may involve discussing the meaning and emotions evoked during the session, identifying patterns or themes, and exploring how the insights gained can be applied to the client's daily life. Awareness of the body is crucial to realize how the protagonist perceives the world differently or what they need to anchor or leave in the therapy room. This phase helps the client internalize their learnings and supports their personal growth and transformation. (Giacomucci 2019).

2 Defining spirituality

A very brief definition of spirituality is looking at it as a concept that involves a sense of connection to something greater than oneself. It often includes a search for meaning in life, a pursuit of transcendence, and the development of a deeper understanding of oneself and the universe. Spiritual beliefs can encompass various perspectives, such as religious traditions, personal growth, and a connection to nature or the cosmos. It's a subjective and multifaceted aspect of human experience that goes beyond the material and tangible aspects of life. An endeavour that David R. Hawkins eloquently captures in his assertion, "Spirituality is not the renunciation of life; it is the art of living fully." (Hawkins 2006) This perspective underscores the essence of spirituality as an integral, vibrant part of human existence, seamlessly aligning with the psychodramatic pursuit of exploring and enhancing life's richness through Moreno's triadic system. The spiritual dimensions in psychodrama are reached through the encounter creating tele and igniting the godhead. Psychodrama is a spiritual therapeutic modality. Spirituality may manifest through various means. It can involve the use of religious or spiritual symbols, rituals, or practices within the psychodrama session. Participants may explore archetypal themes or engage in exercises that evoke a sense of the sacred. The focus is on connecting with the spiritual dimension of human experience and integrating it with psychological exploration. Ultimately, defining spirituality in psychodrama involves acknowledging the inherent human need for meaning, transcendence, and connection beyond the material and psychological realms. (Moreno 1983; Blatner 2000).

Spirituality has been further explored in psychodrama by authors such as Connie Miller, whose works significantly contribute to our understanding and application of spiritual principles within this therapeutic framework (Miller 2004).

3 Moreno's triadic metaphysical understanding of human existence: Encounter, Tele and the Godhead

"Am I only a corpse that will decay and turn into meaningless dust?
Or is this consciousness that I now feel extending into the cosmos the most real thing there is? In other words, am I nothing, or am I God?" (Moreno 1971)

Moreno's philosophical Triadic system of the Godhead, Tele, and Encounter are three major concepts that are interconnected and therefore cannot be separated from each other, other than for pedagogic purpose, to reach their fullest potential. These concepts form the philosophical foundation of psychodrama and sociometry. They can be looked at as the engine that makes our method efficient. Together they open the doors to other realms and to cosmos, the place in the universe where we find the interconnectedness of all things. Here we can explore concepts related to the divine or transcendent. This is where everything and nothing exists, the place that connects us all, where our ancestors live together with the coming generations. It is the place where the time between time and space between space exists and silence reveals to us the unheard and the unspoken.

Moreno believed we are all cosmic beings (Moreno 1975a) and thereby connected to each other carrying the divine within. We are divine, but not the divine/God. When he says 'I-God', he refers to the encounter that enables the possibility for God entering the space between us, to open the doors to cosmos (Moreno 1955, p. 33). The place of our origin. But we can only enter here together, through the encounter which is fundamental for all psychotherapy (Moreno 1975a). The advantage of the encounter's full potential can only be obtained through mutual respect and both yours and my knowledge must be engaged. Moreno says a true encounter is a reflection of a meeting with God. "If God would come into the world again he would not come into it as an individual, but as a group, as a collective (Moreno 1953, p. xix–xx preludes)." This really stresses the idea that we cannot be free nor spontaneous creative beings, without the other and as part of a group (Borge 2011, p. 61).

An encounter differs from a meeting. To enter the encounter an aspect of love is needed, as Moreno once described it. In the encounter we both can see me and you with my eyes and you and me with your eyes. Only then can we create the symmetrical relationship that is needed in tele. The encounter can therefore be seen as the preparation for tele, which is the result of our abilities to experience each other in the purest form, cleared from projections. Tele is the driving force enabling the godhead, meaning full spontaneity with a purpose of creation benefitting us all (Moreno 1946, 1975a; Giacomucci 2019).

Tele is for now a metaphysical concept, but through the interconnectedness of the encounter and the godhead, it helps us get a better understanding of the theoretical approaches made to explain the phenomenon. It becomes a heuristic phenomenon

still grounded in theory, and not misunderstood as it easily can be with words as empathy and sympathy.

To create the encounter, we need to see the other as significant. Only then can tele take place. A true encounter enables tele, and tele is what ignites the spark we are all born with, enabling us to leave the mere survival in a physical world. Here lies the surplus value of the encounter where $1 + 1 = 3$. Surplus representing the reflection of our meeting with God; the godhead within each one of us. Created by ourselves, given spontaneity and the freedom to co-create and change the script of our lives (Moreno 1983).

Moreno takes us to the metaphysics of living as humans, to a place where the mathematics change and our possibility to heal lies. Being divine we carry the concepts and qualities attributed to a higher power or an ultimate reality such as God. The divine contains wisdom, love, and guidance that normally is considered to be beyond human understanding. The capacity for tele was given by God on the 7th day of creation, as Moreno writes in the prelude to his autobiography:

“When God created the world, He started off by making every being like a machine. He made one machine push the other and the whole universe ran like a machine. That seemed to be smooth, safe, and comfortable. But then he thought it over. He smiled and put just an ounce of spontaneity into each of the machines and this has made for endless trouble ever since—and for endless enjoyment” (Moreno 1955, p. 9).

God did not make us Gods; He gave us a part of his substance. With spontaneity comes freedom, but also the free will and thus responsibility, making us all equipped to create our lives. With that followed the responsibility for each and every one of us to co-create the world and support each other. Again, we are all connected. When one suffers, we are all affected.

To achieve our fullest potential, create as much meaning as possible in our life we need to be in relation and strive for telic relationships. There are of course many levels of tele. God did not create this world black or white. In opposite, the creation is a beautiful diversity of the known and unknown. Tele can in a healthy telic relationship, be described best as a two-way compassion. For many years we have tried to explain tele as a two-way empathy. However, empathy does not require action while compassion is empathy and the willingness to move (action). So, moving from behaviour, which is acting in habitual patterns, into action, which is responding adequately to every new situation, is the potential of our method. To obtain tele we need action, to see—not observe, to listen—not hear, to experience without judgement—not analyse. This is the only way to create a symmetrical relation needed to enter the divine and activate the Godhead (Moreno 1946) that needs us both to take form. We are the carriers of the divine through the drop of spontaneity God gave us and it can only be activated by the group.

Psychodrama consists of these three components of the triadic system: Godhead, Tele, and Encounter. They are interconnected and inseparable. They form the basis for human existence and provide a framework for personal and collective growth. The Godhead represents the spiritual dimension and creation, Tele drives individuals towards purposeful actions, and Encounter facilitates meaningful connections

and understanding. (Moreno 1983; 1975a) In one-to-one psychodrama this is also the base of the relationship of the director and the client. Their working space to investigate, try out life and solutions, meaning living life in the present moment without judgement. By embracing the encounter between the director and the protagonist, they connect with the divine within themselves and gives the protagonist the possibility to pursue towards meaningful goals. The protagonist can strive to create their life that aligns with their deepest values and aspirations and. The triadic system emphasizes the importance of interconnectedness, authenticity, and purpose in leading a fulfilling and meaningful life. This reminds us that we are all born free. Freedom is not only the right to act, speak, and think as one wants. Freedom is the power to do so! It concerns concepts as free-will and autonomy. The birth-given right of self-determination. Freedom is not easy to execute, it involves deep personal conflicts and social considerations. But it cannot be taken from you.

Liberty can be taken away; we can't control it individually. To experience liberty is to lead a life with few oppressive restrictions or control imposed by authority. Less liberty restricts your life space, your right to choose behaviour in any given situation.

Sometimes freedom feels lost, caused by our own actions or by authorities suppressing us. This is often when we seek therapy. The encounter between director and protagonist can at its best ignite the divine within us reminding us that we are free. That trauma did not take away our freedom. It took away our liberty.

3.1 An example of how we can create an encounter in one-to-one psychodrama

There is no recipe to the right way of creating a true encounter between the director and the protagonist. Understanding Moreno's triadic system gives the director endless possibilities to prepare for an encounter. Since we are no longer robots but human beings with our free will, the director will respond differently to each protagonist by seeing them, not observing them in where they are and not where we think they should be. Still a few general suggestions can be made.

Experience yourself. Sit comfortably with your feet against the floor and become aware of your breath. Maybe you realise you are not breathing and need to move to relax and breathe better. Or you notice a place in your body where you feel your breath. You can put a hand there and feel it. Our breath carries our courage. Then maybe there is another place where you don't feel your breath. If you want you can put a hand here as well, not judging but supporting that place and maybe comforting it. Become aware of yourself.

How are you affected? When the protagonist feels ready, the director can initiate an invitation to an encounter. You can both just start to experience yourself and become aware of your body or thoughts or feelings of what happens to you when looking at the other. The director invites the protagonist to meet each other's eyes. Rest when needed and then seek the gaze again. Then the director may start by saying: "I see you see me" and the protagonist listens, not hears, and explores the awareness of possible movements in them, and when ready the protagonist say: "I see you see me". You can do this a few times.

Next, the director invites the protagonist to lift their arms and offer the palms of the hands to the other. Breathe and feel the hands. The director starts again by saying: “I feel you feel me”. Then you change a few times. Make a little pause before you both lower your arms and the director invite the protagonist to close their eyes with you if they feel comfortable doing so. Tell each other: I sense you sense me. And repeat that a few times. Notice your breath and notice your body, notice each other, and share the experience.

3.2 Protagonist experiences being in touch with the divine

Here are two short sharings from protagonists about their experiences after igniting the divine through the encounter. We can see the process of being in contact with full spontaneity, which can also be described as God, and thereby freedom. Freedom that gives the possibility to change the scripts of their lives.

Ariel is a 40-year-old woman who talks about the scene we worked on stage, where some healing took place, and the forces and energies she encountered and worked with during the time after:

“You have accompanied me to a place where I have only been alone until now, to the depths of the sea. It was a very painful, almost burning experience to be there. Even more painful was the fact that you were there with me. And yet, the fact that I was not alone made me believe that even this loneliest part of my soul can be shared with others. Thank you for understanding why my loneliness was more intensely burning in your presence. Yes, on the one hand, I agree, I was ashamed, but on the other hand, I experienced something that I think is quite common, and that’s why it may be important.

When I decided to let you enter the depths of the sea to my death, I opened a door that no one (or very few) had ever passed through. But it was not only you who could enter through this door; my pain, which was previously locked in the depths of the sea, could also be released through it.

I think there’s something universally important about that moment. If in a telic encounter we let the other touch a part of us that we hide from ourselves and the world, the touching of this part of us involves accepting the pain it carries. And in order to endure this, the presence of the other is very important, even if it causes shame. The risk here is very high (for me it was): depending on whether the other person is able to stay there in the telic encounter or not, the path can either lead to another, even greater loneliness, or to the integration of parts of me that have been hidden from me and carry pain. You stayed with me. In fact, you have been here through these letters also. I think this is at least as important as the happening of the telic meeting and godhead’s appearing.

Now the risk has passed, thanks to your multiple presences; I started in the direction of integration from the depths of the sea. With this, I also want to say that I would like to take back from you this very important role and responsibility that you took on there on stage. I will always be grateful to you for that”.

John is a 45-year-old man with only one question: Why did God leave me even if I loved him? Encountering God on stage was a tremendously powerful and courageous action. The pain of being left by God was released, and the healing energies started to move. These are John's own words describing how he felt during the process:

"The encounter space made it possible for me to become spontaneous in my drama with God. The first pivotal moment occurred when you, in the role of God, asked me what the obstacle was for him that prevented me from living a full life. That question precisely and crisply expressed my theme in a dense format and made me realize that you saw me deeply. At this point, the godhead process also began, but another check of the encounter and tele (being accepted and being seen) was to come. The decisive moment was after I expressed my anger towards God; you made an effort to make me stay with you. In your eyes, I realized that not just parts of me (my anger, my sadness, etc.) were seen, but my whole existential story with God, with life, and with being wounded. I would like to emphasize that "seeing" here doesn't refer to a perceptual process but the tele process where one soul sees the other in its reality. You asked me if I knew the person who should have been there and accepted that I only said 'Yes.' This was liberating for me because it connected the story to my early childhood but didn't reduce it to that. This was the third point of tele. Being seen (wholly) is the definite start of the godhead process, where I became fully involved in creating something new.

You helped me stand up while maintaining our connection. I felt somewhat mixed and reached out to God, creating unity from the three of us. This step was not without effort for me, as it involved forgiving God, overcoming the pain, and making a decision of will. I felt as if I were climbing upwards at that moment. The effects of reconciling with God arrived in the coming days with very positive feelings. From an outside perspective, it might have seemed that I enacted my anger and forgave God with the help of the strong connection with you. However, the density of the final moments was so high for me that a week later, it is still unfolding in me. In summary, during the encounter, an accepting space is built, tele is a joyful common flow, and the godhead comes in when the process reaches an untouched part of the soul, followed by a transformation-creation".

4 Inner creative powers

Inner creative powers refer to the innate abilities and energies within individuals that drive the process of creativity and innovation. These powers reside within the human mind, imagination, and spirit, and they play a crucial role in generating new ideas, solving problems, and bringing about transformative change. They are truly awakened through the encounter when being recognised as creative powers.

Imagination: Imagination is a powerful force that allows individuals to envision possibilities beyond what currently exists. It involves the ability to create mental

images, explore alternative scenarios, and think outside the box. Imagination fuels creativity by providing the foundation for innovative ideas and original thinking.

Intuition: Intuition is a deep, instinctive knowing that arises from within. It is often described as a gut feeling or a sense of inner guidance. Intuition bypasses logical reasoning and taps into a deeper level of understanding. It can lead to breakthrough insights and unconventional solutions that may not be immediately evident through rational analysis.

Curiosity: Curiosity is a fundamental human trait that drives exploration, discovery, and learning. It is the desire to seek knowledge, ask questions, and explore the unknown. Curiosity fuels creative thinking by fostering a sense of wonder, encouraging individuals to challenge assumptions, and promoting a thirst for new experiences and ideas.

Passion: Passion is a powerful inner force that ignites enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment. It is the deep emotional connection and intense interest in a particular subject or pursuit. Passion drives individuals to invest their time, energy, and resources into their creative endeavours, fuelling perseverance and resilience in the face of challenges.

Resilience: Resilience is the inner strength and ability to bounce back from setbacks, failures, and obstacles. It is the capacity to adapt, learn from experiences, and persevere in the face of adversity. Resilience is vital in the creative process as it enables individuals to overcome challenges, learn from mistakes, and continue to innovate and create despite setbacks.

Self-expression: Self-expression is the authentic communication of one's thoughts, emotions, and ideas. It involves the ability to express oneself creatively through various mediums such as art, music, writing, or any form of creative expression. Self-expression allows individuals to share their unique perspectives, experiences, and insights with the world, fostering connection and inspiring others.

Open-mindedness: Open-mindedness is the willingness to consider new ideas, perspectives, and possibilities. It involves setting aside preconceived notions and being receptive to different viewpoints. Open-mindedness allows individuals to embrace diverse influences, collaborate with others, and integrate various ideas and perspectives into their creative process.

These inner creative powers are not mutually exclusive but often work in synergy. When harnessed and cultivated, they can unleash the full potential of human creativity, leading to innovative solutions, artistic expressions, and transformative experiences. By nurturing and strengthening these inner forces, individuals can tap into their creative potential and make meaningful contributions to the world around them.

5 The role of the director in one-to-one psychodrama

“Quiero hacer contigo lo que la primavera hace con los cerezos”

“I want to do with you what spring does with the cherry trees.”

Pablo Neruda (1924, poem 14)

In the realm of one-to-one psychodrama, the role of the director takes on a profound significance. It is a journey of personal growth and transformation, guided by the therapeutic relationship. Pablo Neruda, in his poignant words, encapsulated this transformative desire when he wrote, “Quiero hacer contigo lo que la primavera hace con los cerezos”—“I want to do with you what spring does with the cherry trees.” (Neruda 1924) The emphasis in this quote on renewal, new beginnings, and the alignment with the natural process of change is reflecting spiritual themes of personal growth and transformation. It alludes to the spiritual dimensions inherent in the therapeutic relationship, where the therapist’s presence fosters a connection allowing the client’s inner world to flourish.

In one-to-one psychodrama, the director plays a crucial role in creating a meaningful encounter with the protagonist (Giacomucci 2019, p. 341). Unlike in group psychodrama, the director in one-to-one psychodrama utilizes their own presence and self-expression to facilitate change. The director’s active involvement and mirroring of the protagonist’s actions are essential in helping them understand how their world is reflected back to them. Through this encounter, the divine/spontaneous/healing forces can be accessed, and the director’s role is to keep that connection open by being engaged with the protagonist. It takes two individuals, the director and the protagonist, to ignite the transformative powers within each of them.

To achieve this, the director needs to reveal themselves during the therapeutic process. They must reflect on what is happening in the present moment, in the here and now, and share those reflections with the protagonist. By doing so, the director can provide a deeper understanding of the protagonist’s actions, wounds, and possibilities, as well as offer support. The effectiveness of therapy is not solely determined by the therapeutic modality employed (such as psychoanalysis, Jungian analysis, gestalt therapy, or psychodrama), but also by the authenticity and trustworthiness of the therapist. In a one-to-one setting, the therapist’s personal reflections and self-expression are crucial for building trust and creating a therapeutic relationship.

While the role of the therapist is a constructed one, it is important to infuse it with one’s authentic self to bring it to life. By revealing themselves as humans rather than merely showing themselves in the role as therapists, they can show compassion and empathy. This allows them to mirror the protagonist with love and provide a deeper understanding of what needs to be done and how to achieve it.

It is worth noting that therapy research shows that the method employed accounts for less than half of the therapeutic outcome, while the remaining is attributed to the therapist themselves (Lambert 1992). Therefore, in one-to-one psychodrama, in addition to the usual tasks, the director must offer more of themselves by revealing their inner experiences. This feedback helps the protagonist create the life they are longing to live, through the therapeutic relationship. Collaboration itself, between the director and the protagonist, in one-to-one psychodrama is a synergistic process that provides surplus value; $1 + 1$ equals 3. In addition to the extended involvement and self-expression, the director has the same responsibilities as in a general psychodrama group. Some techniques that might be more useful in one-to-one psychodrama are:

- **Physical Mirroring:** The director closely observes the protagonist's body language, gestures, and movements, and mirrors them to reflect their actions and emotions.
- **Verbal Mirroring:** The director echoes the protagonist's words, phrases, or key themes, using similar language and expressions to validate their experience and foster understanding.
- **Emotional Mirroring:** The director tunes into the protagonist's emotional state and mirrors their feelings, reflecting the intensity, tone, and quality of their emotions.
- **Reflective Listening:** The director actively listens to the protagonist's words, paraphrasing or summarizing their thoughts and feelings to demonstrate empathy and encourage further exploration.
- **Role Reversal:** Occasionally, the director may switch roles with the protagonist, embodying their actions, thoughts, and emotions more fully. This allows the protagonist to observe themselves from an external perspective.
- **Non-Verbal Mirroring:** In addition to physical mirroring, directors may use non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, eye contact, and body postures to mirror the protagonist, conveying understanding and attunement.
- **Imaginative Mirroring:** Directors can employ imagination and creativity to mirror the protagonist's inner world. They may ask them to visualize a scene or situation and participate in that visualization, gaining insight into their subjective experience and facilitating exploration and dialogue.

These techniques enable the director to establish a deeper connection with the protagonist, serving as a mirror that reflects their actions, emotions, and experiences. Through this mirroring process, the director helps the protagonist gain a heightened understanding of themselves, their wounds, and their potential for growth and change in the one-on-one psychodrama therapeutic process. However, most importantly, the director's authentic responses and sharing with the protagonist.

In this context, responding refers to the director's reaction or reply to the protagonist's statements, emotions, or behaviours. It involves providing thoughtful and empathetic feedback to the protagonist's expressions in a way that fosters a safe and supportive environment and facilitates a deeper exploration of the protagonist's thoughts and feelings. Sharing refers to the director's relevant insights or observations, contributing to the therapeutic dialogue.

6 Integrating spirituality in one-to-one psychodrama

Integrating spirituality in one-to-one psychodrama involves recognizing and incorporating the spiritual dimension of human experience into the therapeutic process. It acknowledges that individuals have a deep inner life and a sense of connection to something greater than themselves, which can be a source of healing, growth, and transformation.

In one-to-one psychodrama, the focus is on the individual's personal journey, and spirituality can play a significant role in this process. Here are some ways in which spirituality can be integrated into one-to-one psychodrama:

- *Exploration of Meaning and Purpose:* Psychodrama provides a platform for individuals to explore their sense of meaning and purpose in life. By integrating spirituality, the therapist can guide the client to delve into existential questions, such as the search for meaning, connection to something greater, and the role of spirituality in their life journey.
- *Connection to Inner Wisdom:* Spirituality often involves connecting with one's inner wisdom or intuition. In one-to-one psychodrama, the therapist can facilitate the exploration of the client's spiritual beliefs and practices, helping them access their inner guidance and higher consciousness. This can support the client in making decisions, finding clarity, and accessing their own inner resources.
- *Rituals and Symbols:* Rituals and symbols are powerful tools in spirituality. In one-to-one psychodrama, the therapist can incorporate rituals or symbolic actions that hold personal significance for the client. This can include using objects, visualization exercises, or guided meditations to deepen the client's connection to their spiritual beliefs and experiences.
- *Transpersonal Exploration:* Transpersonal psychology recognizes the spiritual dimensions of human experience. In one-to-one psychodrama, the therapist can create a safe and supportive space for clients to explore their transpersonal experiences, such as mystical or transcendent experiences, spiritual awakenings, or encounters with the divine. These experiences can be explored through role-playing, guided imagery, or dialogue with imagined or real spiritual figures.
- *Cultivating Mindfulness and Presence:* Spirituality often emphasizes being fully present in the here and now. In one-to-one psychodrama, the therapist can incorporate mindfulness practices to help the client cultivate presence, deepen their self-awareness, and connect with their spiritual essence. This can include grounding exercises, breathwork, or body-centred awareness techniques.

It's important to note that integrating spirituality in one-to-one psychodrama should always be done in a respectful and protagonist-centred manner. The therapist should create a safe and inclusive environment that allows individuals to explore their own spiritual beliefs and experiences without imposing any specific religious or spiritual framework. The emphasis is on supporting the protagonist's unique spiritual journey and using it as a resource for healing, growth, and self-discovery.

7 Conclusion

I have a profound appreciation for classical psychodrama, particularly the enchanting worlds of protagonists unveiled when we set the scene and bring their inner lives to action (Røine 1992). Moreno's ingenious methods to activate "Tele" in a group can connect us to meaning and purpose in life. In today's more individualized world with less time available for personal meetings, loneliness is classified as a public health problem, and people express spiritual longing. Simultaneously, I've observed that individuals don't seek group settings as they did 20 and 30 years ago. As a psychodrama therapist, I had to offer individual counselling. Psychodrama a deux

may seem a bit forced, monodrama sometimes feels kind of lonely, and the traditional director role did not fit the meeting of two.

In my master's thesis, I explored how, as a group leader, I facilitated encounters. Later, I came to think that qualities coinciding with my findings needed to be brought into individual therapy (Verdu 2012). Something new and fulfilling happened that inspired me to delve further into the force of the encounter, leading to the practice I presented here. I am of my time, influencing and being influenced. In the collective consciousness, I was part of the relational turn in psychotherapy and found that by bringing my true being into the therapeutic relation, the encounter happened, and "Tele" was available, opening the cosmos using Moreno's term.

One-to-One Psychodrama is a powerful method for delving into the spiritual aspects of oneself. The personalized approach allows the director and individual to collaboratively explore deep-seated issues, providing a structured yet flexible path for healing that bridges the psychological and spiritual realms. Embracing the 'inner stage' in this process opens the door to transformative power, reshaping personal narratives within sessions and rippling out into life, relationships, and one's worldview. Stepping into different roles and perspectives catalyses change, creating a deeper bond with the universal human experience, a realignment with the cosmic drama we all share.

However, the most important integration is the awareness of the power of the encounter and learning to recognize the energies of the divine in oneself and others that can heal.

"The existential encounter is, in its highest form of communication, more than a collection of roles. It goes beyond psychodrama. For this kind of encounter, there is no specific therapy available. For it, there is no therapy necessary. It is a form of therapy in itself" (Moreno 1975, p. 29).

Understanding how one's perception and senses change within oneself and understanding how to sense and see others with compassion. This is a lifelong process.

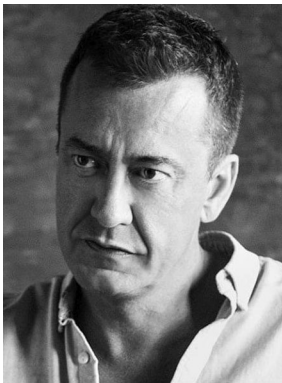
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