**AGPA Connect 2023 Presenter Information**

**Course Code:** C3

**Course Title:** PSYCHODRAMA: THE MAGIC OF GROWTH AND CHANGE

**Course Times:** 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM & 2:30 – 5:00 PM

**Course Dates:** Friday, March 10

**Instructors:** Shelley Firestone

Guy Taylor

**Course Description:** This largely experiential course showcases the use of psychodrama through warm-up exercises, followed by a complete psychodrama, while teaching theory and technique invaluable for the individual, couple, family, and group psychotherapist, and for anyone working towards self-improvement. Psychodrama is perhaps the most powerful and effective modality in our therapeutic repertoire. The participants of this course will have the opportunity to experience the magic of growth and change, while gaining training and expertise in basic psychodrama action techniques.

**Learning Objectives**

The attendee will be able to:‎

1. ‎ Define psychodrama and appreciate the power and effectiveness of psychodrama action ‎techniques.‎
2. ‎Distinguish between the use of the therapy session for a report of events vs. creating experiences ‎that take place in the “here and now” during the session.‎
3. ‎Explain Interviewing, Soliloquy, Doubling, Role Taking and Role Reversal.‎
4. ‎Use one psychodrama technique as a therapeutic intervention in individual, couple, family or group ‎psychotherapy to access emotion or to facilitate conflict resolution.‎
5. ‎Use one sociometric or psychodrama technique for building connection and cohesion in families, ‎couples and groups.‎

**Significant Articles:**

1. Blatner, A. (2000). Foundations of Psychodrama: History, theory and practice, 4th Ed. New York: ‎Springer Publishing Company.‎
2. Carnabucci, K. (2014). Show and tell psychodrama. Self-published by Author.‎
3. Dayton, T. (2014). Emotional and developmental repair through psychodrama. The Journal of ‎Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy 62(1), 9-27.‎
4. Firestone, S. & Taylor, G (in press). Psychodrama and Sociometry Online: A model for psychodrama ‎workshops.The Journal of Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy (64).‎
5. Wysong, W.H. (2017). The psychodrama companion, Vol 1 & 2. Colorado Springs, CO: William H. ‎Wysong.‎

**Agenda:**

I. INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHODRAMA (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) (Didactic)

A. Psychodrama Concepts (10 MIN) (Firestone):

1. What are participants seeking from this Course

2. Introduction to Psychodrama, and Expressive Therapy Groups; these facilitate the expression of thoughts, feelings, and experience --which may be difficult or impossible to convey through spoken words alone-- using action and creative experience. In contrast to a verbal exploration of a situation that occurs outside the therapy sessions, these groups focus on creating (or recreating) experiences within the sessions.

3. Shifts in emphasis from traditional psychotherapy:

a) from verbal to ACTION:

b) from cognitive to experiential;

c) from reporting there and then to being in the here and now.

4. Invitation into the “magical” world of experience, where connections are experientially created and explored, personal truth emerges, and growth and change facilitated.

B. Neurobiology of Psychodrama (Taylor) and Developmental Theory (15 MIN) (Firestone):

C. Sociometry and Confidentiality (5 MIN) (Firestone): Learning best happens experientially. This part of the didactic presentation addresses the importance of safety and confidentiality as we move into experiential exercises. The Facilitators also state that all exercises are voluntary, while suggesting that usually one gets more from participating than merely observing.

II. PAIR AND SHARE WARM-UP (35 MIN) (Experiential) (1, 2, 4, 5) (Firestone and Taylor, taking turns) The participants are directed to pair up and share with their partner about themselves according to various facilitator-generated topics: what is one STRENGTH you bring to experiential work; what is one FEAR you have about participating in this way; what is one thing that can help you with this fear, who is one person who brings out the best in you; who is one person who brings out the worst in you, what is one thing about yourself that creates distance in one of your relationships? What is one time when you felt marginalized, excluded or scapegoated in a group? What is one time when you participated in scapegoating or marginalizing someone else? Group members not only become aware of the issue and but they are alerted to be particularly sensitive to people who have had these experiences. These are techniques for building safety and cohesion within the group and awareness of the issues involved, while warming up the participants to the broader topic of interpersonal connection. [On zoom, we are likely to make modifications to fit the zoom format. For example, the experience becomes more fun as we play the ZOOM GAME: Each person says, “My name is Susie and one strength I bring to this work is….(compassion, humor, skills, etc) and the second person says their name and repeats the strength mentioned already shared and adds one, and the third person says their name and repeats all the strengths already shared, etc. and adds one of their own, until everyone has joined. Then we move into “Hi Low Sociogram”: imagine a line from the top of your zoom screen to the bottom, reflect on where you are on various leader-generated criteria, and when the leader counts to three, place your hand where you believe you are.’ Then we go around and share our why we placed our hand where we did. We can use a number of criteria: “I am comfortable with zoom/I feel disconnected on zoom” and ”I have lots of experience in psychodrama/I have no experience, this is my first rodeo!” Group members are directed to reflect on what they want to know about the others, and each of them is invited to lead a round. This exercise is extremely bonding, because group members learn about each other from the honesty and transparency. The criteria of “I know very well what it is to be discriminated against for race, religion, sexual orientation, sexual identity, or anything else” and the bottom “I’ve never had the experience of being discriminated against” increases the awareness of these issues and also alerts the group to be particularly sensitive to people who have had these experiences.]

III. THE EMPTY CHAIR EXERCISES (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) (Experiential, Role Play, and Demonstration)(Firestone and Taylor, taking turns)

A. IMAGINE (10 MIN): Participants are asked to think of someone who delights them or upsets them, perhaps someone who has been more distant than they would like, and imagine the person in an empty chair, and to talk to the person. [On zoom, the facilitators hold up a chair to the camera lens, and invite the participants to imagine that person in the empty chair.]

B. ROLE PLAY AND DOUBLING (20 MIN): Participants are asked to role play the other person they are imaging, and talk from that role about the participant and tell the group the story of what happened. The Facilitators introduce doubling, and perhaps soliloquy, interviewing, mirroring, amplification, and concretizing when useful, not only to demonstrate the techniques but also to guide the process, helping the Protagonist access and modulate his or her emotion, and explore interactions from multiple perspectives.

C. AUXILIARY ROLE PLAY (20 MIN): Sometimes the Protagonist is directed to ask someone from group to play one of these roles, and introduces the technique of role reversal. The conversation that ensures is a powerful experience for the Protagonist and also for many or all of the participants. Emotion is accessed and insights emerge, as the participants experience being in the role of "the Other" and seeing the process from an entirely new perspective. Empathy for both oneself and the Other emerges, and rifts are often healed, even without the other person actually being in the room. (All these techniques can be used in traditional individual psychotherapy, couple and family work, and process group psychotherapy.)

D. THE FORMATIVE EXPERIENCE (20 MIN): If the Protagonist role reverses again, back to himself or herself, the Facilitator(s) may ask the Protagonist about another relationship when this part of themselves emerged. The Facilitator(s) may ask the protagonist about a situation when this part of themselves (e.g. arrogance, bossiness, entitlement, etc.) was learned, and who taught it to them.

IV SHARING (35 MIN) (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)(Experiential, Discussion)(Taylor and Firestone): The participants are directed to de-role if they played one or more roles, and to each share at least one thing that resonated for them from someone else's work. This allows the participants to release the emotion built up during the experience of watching the work of others, and for those who risked a deep level of vulnerability to feel seen, heard and joined. Sharing deepens the cohesion of the group as the members disconnect from their individual roles and reconnect with each other, and everyone integrates multiple aspects of the psychodrama experiences, while recognizing the universality of our struggles.

V. CLOSING (10 MIN) (1,2, 5)(Experiential)(Firestone): We are likely to ask each person to name their feeling, as we close for the morning.

VI. MORENO STORIES (10 MIN) (1, 5) (Didactic)(Firestone): We will tell the short story of the emergence of psychodrama from its roots in early group work with prostitutes in Vienna, Improvisational and Community Theatre, and it’s place in the history of psychotherapy in the generation after Sigmund Freud. Jacob L. Moreno, the father of psychodrama, wrote “A truly therapeutic procedure will have no less an objective than all of mankind.” He was dedicated to the belief that every human being has the inner potential to be God (called “the Godhead”) and every human being should be honored. He was a social activist, in 1915 advocating for sex workers and later advocating for refugees and inmates in Sing Sing Correctional Facility, and from his experiences he developed his understanding of group therapy and how every participant is a therapeutic agent for the others. With deep concern for those marginalized, he offered the Law of Sociometric Effect, which notes that the richer get richer and the poor get poorer in his seminal work, Who Shall Survive. One hundred years ago, he developed sociometry, the study of the invisible structures of relationships creating division in group life, and sociatry, the use of sociometry to heal not only individuals but also our groups, communities and societies. Psychodramatists say: “Without sociometry there is no psychodrama.” The facilitators will offer this history and philosophy as the background for our Institute, and will include attention to safety, trust and group cohesion throughout the Institute because these are always basic components for holding the vulnerability of the participants in psychodramatic work.

VII. COMPLETE PSYCHODRAMA ENACTMENT (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) (Experiential, Role Play, Demonstration, Didactic) (Firestone):

A. WARM UP PAIR AND SHARE (10 MIN) (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

1. The group is invited to reflect on one thing they have brought with them this afternoon, perhaps one thing that is or has been upsetting to them

2. The group is directed to choose a partner, and to tell their partner one reason why they chose them

3. The group members are directed to each share a short story of what they have brought with them to the session

4. The listener offers a double (a statement that deepens the truth of the Protagonist), and then shares their own story

B. PROTAGONIST SELECTION (25 MIN) (Experiential) (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) (Firestone)

1. The group is invited to form a circle.

2. Invitation to the group to imagine what they would work on if they were going to work as a Protagonist in a complete psychodrama

3. Share with the group, each in turn, what each member would work on.

4. Those who are willing to be a Protagonist take a step into the circle, and restate their issue

5. Directive for each participant to choose the person whose issue most resonates with them

6. Share “I made my choice because…” C. AUDIENCE INSTRUCTION, CONTRACT AND SCENE I PSYCHODRAMA ENACTMENT (20 MIN) (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) (Experiential, Role Play, Demonstration, Didactic) (Taylor): The participants are directed to take the role as Audience members, in order to support the psychodrama and define the boundary between the evolving psychodrama and reality. The Protagonist talks with the Facilitator (called “Walk and Talk”), and states the goal of the drama; a contract is made for the work. The protagonist is guided to set up a scene demonstrating the problem, and chooses audience members to play key roles in the drama as Auxiliaries.

D. SCENE II PSYCHODRAMA ENACTMENT (55 MIN) (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) (Experiential, Role Play, Demonstration, Didactic) (Taylor): The Protagonist is guided to play out a new scene exploring the back-story for the problem, such as a formative incident, possibly traumatic, that taught the protagonist a coping mechanism that is no longer useful. Generally a conversation ensues between the Protagonist and a perpetrator of the incident, played by an Auxiliary. Sometimes another Auxiliary plays the role of the Protagonist, and, if so, the two Auxiliaries can replay the scene while the Protagonist watches, and the Protagonist has the opportunity to confront the perpetrator The event can be replayed with a healthier outcome. Sometimes the Protagonist realizes another incident or other people also contributed to the problem, and it may be useful to enact other scenes. Feelings are accessed, expressed, and released or integrated, rendering the coping mechanisms that created the problem in Scene I now unnecessary.

E. SCENE III PSYCHODRAMA ENACTMENT (15 MIN) (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)(Experiential, Role Play, Demonstration, Didactic)(Taylor): The drama returns to Scene I and replays the original problem, but the protagonist now has the clarity and freedom necessary to create a solution to the original problem, play out the scene differently, and experience resolution. The original contract has been fulfilled.

VII. PSYCHODRAMATIC SHARING (30 MIN) (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)(Experiential, Discussion, Didactic, Demonstration)(Taylor): The participants are directed to de-role if they plasswyed a role,, and all group members are now asked to share experiences from their own lives that resonate with at least one piece of the psychodrama enactment. This allows the Protagonists to feel joined after risking a deep level of vulnerability, and for everyone to release the emotion built up during rhe unfolding drama.. Sharing fosters cohesion in the group as members disconnect from the role play and reconnect with the other group members, and everyone integrates aspects of the psychodrama experience, while recognizing the universality of our struggles. Generally some participants are loaded up with feelings, and do well to have a brief role play during the sharing with a brother or mother, etc., whom he or she imagines to be present in an empty chair. If there are questions, they are addressed at the end of the Psychodrama Sharing.

VIII. CLOSING (15 MIN) A. COUNTING TO TEN (1, 2, 5) (Experiential)(Firestone) The group makes a circle and counts to ten with random participants counting according to their individual timing. When two people say the same number at the same time, the group goes back to zero and begins again. Within a few tries, impulsive contributors slow down and shy participants speak up. The counting goes smoothly, and participants feel they have learned how to give up the pathologic edges of their individuality and become part of a cohesive, harmonious group.

A. PSYCHODRAMA CIRCLE & CONFIDENTIALITY WELL (1, 2, 5) (Experiential, Discussion)(Firestone): The group makes a psychodrama circle by putting their left hand into the circle and taking the thumb of the person behind them into their left hand. They are reminded to leave the confidential material in the middle of the circle, and directed to symbolically put their memories into the well in the middle of the circle (“What we say here, let it stay here”). They are asked to go around and each say one thing they will take away from the workshop. This exercise helps with the cognitive integration of the experience, as group members review the high points of the workshop, and group members hear something from someone else that they may have missed; further, the exercise creates a powerful closing ritual, further enhancing the cohesion of the group by creating a visual to close the workshop.

B. Questions, comments, and evaluations (5)(Discussion)(Firestone and Taylor)

**Assessment Questions:**

Question 1 (include possible answers)

1. Surplus reality refers to: A. the experience of an imagined time, place, or scene as if it were here and now. B. the extra group members who could not be in the drama. C. the extra time necessary when the psychodrama runs into overtime. D. the extra money from multiple members paying in the same group session. E. all of the above.

Correct Answer 1

A. the experience of an imagined time, place, or scene as if it were here and now.

Question 2 (include possible answers)

2. A double in psychodrama might: A. use their tele to experience what the protagonist is feeling. B. help ground the protagonist by offering empathy and clarity. C. offer the protagonist language for their experience.. D. help the protagonist explore a blind spot. E. all of the above

Correct Answer 2

E. all of the above

Question 3 (include possible answers)

3. In role reversal: A. a stubborn husband can develop empathy for his or her wife, and a parent can identify with his or her child. B. we become the psychological role of the Other. C. we have the opportunity to see our situation from a new perspective. D. a protagonist may get an objective perspective by taking the role of an inanimate object in the scene. E. all of the above.

Correct Answer 3

E. all of the above

Question 4 (include possible answers)

4. The empty chair technique can be used for: A. helping a group member practice talking with an adversary, perhaps someone who is dead, or someone who isn’t actually in the room. B. helping the group member isolate and explore parts of themselves, by addressing that particular part of themselves in an empty chair. C. engaging a “difficult” patient. D. helping a hostile or angry patient experience become an ally by venting to the role of the therapist in an empty chair, and then role reversing to play the role of the therapist. E. all of the above

Correct Answer 4

E. all of the above

Question 5 (include possible answers)

5. The auxiliary role offers the opportunity for a group member to: A. practice spontaneity and creativity. B. differentiate his or her unresolved transferences from the experience of the protagonist. C. work with some aspect of the protagonist’s experience. D. get training in playing a new or unfamiliar role. E. all of the above.

Correct Answer 5

E. all of the above

Question 6 (include possible answers)

6.The members of the audience in a psychodrama support the work of the protagonist: A. by being present and encouraging to the protagonist. B. by serving as auxiliaries when requested. C. enhancing the work by resonating from their own experience (similar to the function of a greek chorus). D. by defining the boundary between the surplus reality on the stage and the reality of the rest of the world. E. all of the above.

Correct Answer 6

E. all of the above

Question 7 (include possible answers)

7. Sharing after the psychodrama enactment: A. allows auxiliaries to de-role from the drama and return to reality. B. helps the protagonist rejoin the group. C. helps clarify for the group members that as human beings, we all have the same basic struggles. D. helps everyone in the group integrate their experience of the drama. E. all of the above.

Correct Answer 7

E. all of the above

Question 8 (include possible answers)

8. Moreno created the following techniques: A. Psychodrama, as a way to explore the myriad aspects of an encounter B. Role theory, role play and role reversal C. Sociogram, a chart of the likes, dislikes and neutralities among group members D. Sociometry, as a way to measure the feelings between group members (likes, dislikes, and neutralities) E. all of the above

Correct Answer 8

E. all of the above

Question 9 (include possible answers)

9. Moreno coined the following terms: A. group psychotherapy B. psychodrama C. surplus reality D. sociometry E. all of the above

Correct Answer 9

E. all of the above

Question 10 (include possible answers)

10. The "Father" of Psychodrama was A. Sigmund Freud B. Jacob L. Moreno C. Fritz Pearls D. Virginia Satir E. Aristotle

Correct Answer 10

B. Jacob L. Moreno