

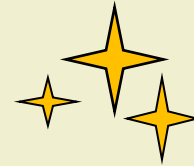
Echoes from XIII-th FEPTO Conference



“My sharing is not going to be a happy or grateful one, I am concerned about an ongoing process, I have noticed in Bulgarian psychodrama, and the same topic emerged during the 13th FEPTO conference. Namely, a disturbing answer of the question: towards what is psychodrama moving, what the changes are and how much are we ready to sacrifice in order to be seen, to have followers and to get “fresh blood” into our veins. On the first day, during the session “The tree of life” several groups were formed, I was in the group working on relations between core theory, new approaches, collaborations and possible ways of application of psychodrama. And here is what struck me the most – the idea risen in our group that we have to find a way to make psychodrama “sexy” for people and the readiness to do so... Is that new to you? Said in that exact way, it was new for me, and it kind of puzzled and angered me in the same time. And since then I have been thinking a lot about it. Actually, in the past probably two years, may be it is in motion in a much longer period, the same concept or attitude is evident in Bulgaria. Workshops and events have been organized with the aim to attract people outside the field, where psychodrama has been publically presented as “sexy”. I do have a problem with it, and it is not just in the word selected, it is in the idea behind, it is in the lack of responsibility. Psychodrama is a group therapy with own theory, not just an extremely powerful set of methods and techniques that can be used to impress. I believe that we, calling ourselves psychodramatists, and especially the psychodrama therapists, we have the responsibility to know and apply psychodrama with the idea to help our patients, clients, and trainees to become more self-aware, spontaneous, and creative in a way that a widest possible set of roles is reached. And we have the responsibility to know the power of psychodrama (knowing the theory) and always to be conscientious and think how our actions are going to affect those who have put their trust in us. In my opinion, there is a very thin line to cross, leading to a broad abyss, between use and misuse, spontaneity and impulsivity, appealing and “sexy”, and although we have to feel it, we have to reflect on it too. So, to come back to the conference: on the presentation of our small group work in the large group, Tzvetelina Iossifova and I, we both chose to play the role of the core theory, insisting on its importance. On the stage, I felt surrounded, everyone wanted a piece of me, without being really concerned what is happening with me. I felt frightened, and anxious, but I have been told to feel happy instead... I did not have the power to become angry, my voice diminished, and at the end I felt sad, nearly helpless, finding myself almost begging for sympathy and real concern from those who have taken from me, but not really gave anything back to me. What I am trying to say is - it is not OK to try to make psychodrama show more cleavage in order to get some new fans, because the users will just take and go, and we are here to really take care. So, please, do take care of psychodrama.

Svetlina Koleva, psychologist and psychodrama therapist, Bulgaria

Reflections from 13th FEPTO Conference



I am in my fourth year of Psychodrama training at Endohora Institute (Athens) and this is the second time I have attended a Psychodrama Conference. I found the topic, Tree of life and the workshops I participated in very interesting and educating. More specifically, I got the opportunity to see how dreams are enacted in a psychodrama session and witnessed the intensity and depth of emotions brought forward, not only from the protagonist but from the rest of the group as well. Also, the workshop on trauma stabilization for refugee families was very practical and educational. Through playing, I experienced how we can help develop resilience and build constructive relationships between refugee children and their parents. I come from a Greek island with a refugee camp and I strongly feel that such interventions can be very helpful for the refugees themselves and the community. The small group I attended gave me the opportunity to meet people from different countries and cultures on a more personal level. At first, I didn't like the fact that there was no designated leader, however, spontaneity kicked in and it turned out to be very productive, both personally and for the exploration of the main topic we worked on. I enjoyed the large groups, however, I would have liked for more warm up exercises. Overall, I enjoyed spending time with colleagues from different countries and to exchange ideas on matters of interest and our love for psychodrama. The hotel was very nice and the scenery was serene and inviting. The organization team was friendly, welcoming and helpful. Finally, I would have liked it if there were more theoretical presentations. Nonetheless, I left feeling inspired and I'm already looking forward to the next Conference.

Thank you!

Danae Roussou, student, Greece

