

## **Synopsis of Day 4, April 27, 2008, morning session Subgroup 1: Working on our personal and collective history of war and trauma using theatre as a channel of expression**

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### Goal

- Experience and explore the 3 roles (aggressor, victim, witness)
- Parallel worlds and archetypal experiences ( not only personal, you can experience it and at the same time is bigger than you, it relates to all human experience)
- Experience the depth of each role, the essence of the role.
- Art and creativity, the magic of theatre

We started with a little physical warm up for people to move and loosen their bodies. We also did a vocal warm up so people could use their voices

### ➤ **We worked with 3 roles**

One with more power, rank and privilege

One with less power, rank and privilege

The role of the witness, who may be present or may be a ghost.

We were working with a context of the one with more power using it against the ones with less power who were unable to defend themselves adequately. The seminar would give an opportunity to inhabit in a theatrical way the energies of these roles and to create a theatrical vocabulary, with movement, sound and word for the different roles

Introducing the idea that all the roles are in each of us, we asked people first to remember a time when they had power and they were using it against someone with less power.

Remembering the scene, they represented the energy of the one with more power first with movement, adding a sound and then adding a word or phrase.

Then they remembered a time when they felt they were in a situation with less power and someone was oppressing them or was using the power they had against them in an unjust way. Again they expressed the role with movement, sound and language.

We repeated the same for the role of the witness asking them to remember a time when they were witnessing a scene where someone was using his or her power against someone with less power who was unable to defend himself and to inhabit theatrically the role with movement, sound and vocabulary.

The use of movement sound and language by the whole group in each role created a very emotional and intense atmosphere.

➤ **We continued with an improvisation exercise using walking**

We gave the following instructions:

First just walk, pedestrian everyday walking

Walk and notice yourself in the space walking

Then notice yourself in relationship to the others

Now either walk or stand still

And now either walk alone, follow someone else or stand still

Now either walking alone, following someone else or standing still, use the sound and movement of one of the roles. Others can join you in your sound and movement

This exercise created different patterns in the room that were changing along with the different instructions. The atmosphere was altered in a pleasant way, one moment people almost got rough with each other but we avoided that because the instruction was to walk without touching. At this moment we reminded the group of the instruction they stopped and continued.

People were forming different islands in the room that were representing the energies of the 3 roles in sound and movement while others continue walking. People were changing spontaneously, following themselves and occupying the different roles.

Continuing with the walking the group formed two big groups, one was singing, the other was representing the oppressor's energy making sounds and movements and using language.

Some other smaller islands of people were sitting or standing in different areas of the room, making sounds and movements.

That came to a natural end and people came closer in the middle of the room, people were standing and one by one saying a word representing a feeling and the other were listening.

### **Group Process**

After the break we had a large group process  
We sorted and we decided to work on personal trauma. During the group process we worked using movement and sound to represent the different sides.

One person started to talk about the experiences of being raped. When she represented the experience with sound and movement she went into a powerful movement and sound. People joined in from different places in the room, using sound and movement that expressed their own experiences.

A man came forward to represent the role of the rapist, and an interaction started between the two with content, sounds, and movement. When the woman started to talk and say that she was not going to allow this to happen again, and was showing her strength and power, another woman came forward and started to cry and scream very loud saying, 'what if you are a child and you don't have this strength and you are not able to defend yourself?'

The role of the rapist was standing in front of her and was saying, 'Keep going this is what I want to hear... this is the scream I like to hear, this is the feeling I like to see', At the same time he was very theatrical with the tone of his voice and his gestures.

The witness role was there, trying to protect the child, some others were trying to interact with the role of the rapist, some were walking indifferently.

At one point the first woman who had taken the role of being raped came forward and grasped the person in the role of rapist very strongly in the stomach and chest area and started to push him away asking him 'what do you feel here, what is your own feeling?' They stayed there for some time until the rapist role came out with a cry of 'mama....mama...' but quickly came back to his role...

People were speaking to him rationally and the more they were speaking to him, the more his feelings were going away.

Another woman came forward and spoke about a moment when she felt overpowered by him. The relationship between the two was resolved when both acknowledged the moments where they overpowered one another.

### **Inner work: sentience**

After the group process we asked people to do an inner work exercise. We asked them to find a moment in the group process that was the strongest for them and we led them into an inner work to find the essence of the role that was the strongest for them.

After the session we stayed to talk, and this was an opportunity to complete the process with some individuals.