



**The Similarities and Differences  
Between  
Classical Psychodrama and The Therapeutic Spiral Model™**

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Classical Psychodrama was born from the dreams and visions of J.L. and Zerka Moreno in the early to mid 1900's (Moreno, 1921/1941, Moreno, 1953, Moreno & Moreno, 1969) and profoundly changed the way psychotherapy was done in the world. While Freud and Jung brought talk therapy in to being, the Moreno's brought action to the stage and created what today is the blossoming field of experiential psychotherapy (Greenberg, In Press).

Zerka continues to write prolifically at the age of 92 (Moreno, In Press a, b; Moreno, 2002, Moreno, Blomqvist, & Rutzel, 2000). She has truly brought psychodrama into the new age of experiential therapy as a valued and evidence based model of treatment. I have been blessed to have spent many hours with her discussing psychodrama in the past 9 years as she lives in my hometown of Charlottesville, Virginia. As a true mentor, she fully supports my work on creating the Therapeutic Spiral Model™ (personal communication).

The Therapeutic Spiral Model™ (Hudgins, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2007a, b, 2008, In Press) is firmly based in classical psychodrama and has integrated the latest knowledge in clinical psychological and neurobiology around trauma theory and attachment related to Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). By doing so, TSM, as it is commonly called, places an unusual emphasis on safety and containment both for the protagonist working on trauma repair and for group members who are fully involved during the dramatic process at all times. One of the most important learnings from neurobiology is not to overwhelm the brain with intense emotions or uncontrolled regression. It is to this goal, all of the TSM clinical action structures are dedicated.

As I gathered the chapters for the upcoming book *Stories from the Frontlines: Community Applications of The Therapeutic Spiral Model Around the World™* (In Press). Springfield IL: Thomas C. Hardy, it became clear to me what is most important in TSM as each author returned again and again to certain clinical action structures. These commonalities are listed below and will be demonstrated at Sunday's workshop.

It is very exciting to see how far TSM has affected the practice of psychodrama around the world, and how it has also gone beyond the cultural confines of psychodrama itself to reach populations that often only clinical psychology can reach. This book also shows the process of co-creativity, showing too how these authors and many other psychodrama practitioners and trainers have influenced TSM as it has influenced them.

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## Similarities Between Classical Psychodrama and The Therapeutic Spiral Model™

- Hollander Curve of Warm-up—Action and Sharing
- Canon of Creativity—Warm-up of Spontaneity leads to Creativity
- Spontaneity as Healing Agent of Change
- Belief in the Godhead and a Spiritual Foundation for Change
  
- Basic Psychodrama Interventions
  - Soliloquy
  - Aside
  - Empty Chair
  - Doubling
  - Role Training
  - Role Reversal
  
- Zerka's Therapeutic Principles
  - The Stage
  - The Director
  - The Protagonist
  - The Auxiliary Egos
  - The Group

### TSM's Clinical Additions to Classical Psychodrama For Safety & Containment with Trauma

- Classical psychodrama is set in the interpersonal world. TSM dramas are set in the intrapsychic world. Classical psychodrama focuses on interpersonal relationships. TSM concretizes the internalized representations of traumatized relationships in the brain. In TSM, the scene is set in the brain. **It is the brain in action.**
  
  - **Prescriptive Roles** are enacted to embody spontaneity during Scene 1. Through the 7 prescriptive roles, TSM gives an operational definition to spontaneity that can be used for clinical directing and research. To create safety first, TSM dramas do not go directly to trauma scenes until spontaneity is concretized on the stage.
    - Observing ego
    - Strengths
      - Personal
      - Interpersonal
      - Transpersonal
- Containment
- Body Double (Developed by Burden & Ciotola, 2003)
- Containing Double
- This intervention is by far the most frequently used TSM intervention that has been imported into other practices around the world in individual, couples, family and group therapy beyond the use of psychodrama. It is an intervention that focuses on balancing the left brain of words with the right brain

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of sensation, images and emotions to provide a truly balanced and integrated neurobiological experience of experiential therapy for full developmental trauma repair. It has been successfully researched in a number of settings.

Manager of Defenses

- **Six Safety Structures (Cox, 2001)**
  - OE cards—provides a cognitive container
  - Circle of Safety---creates a stage and a physical container
  - Spectragrams---assessment of present group
  - Hands on Shoulders—forms connections among group members
  - Circle Similarities—provides narrative labeling of trauma experiences
  - Creative Arts Project---provides a container for unconscious material—developed by Toscani (1996).

#### **Use of a Clinical Action Trauma Team**

- Team Leader/Director
- Assistant Leader
- Trained Auxiliary Ego

The use of a clinical action trauma team actually returns to Moreno's original model of "emergent psychodrama" and his use of trained auxiliary egos at Beacon Hospital in NY in the early years of psychodrama in the USA. He always believed that trained auxiliary egos were integral to the success of classical psychodrama when working with psychotic inpatients and very useful when working with outpatients and open sessions. TSM returns to this original tradition.

#### **There is no audience in TSM Dramas**

Everyone is involved in a TSM drama. Because of the use of a clinical action trauma team, everyone in the room is eventually integrated into the drama through the use of projective identification. This is a complex psychological concept that is a core foundation of TSM clinical directing and is taught in our advanced Level 2 course.

Please see our website at [www.therapeuticspiral.org](http://www.therapeuticspiral.org) and the seminal book on TSM, *Experiential Treatment of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: The Therapeutic Spiral Model (2002)* for further information. You can also reach me at [DrKateTSI@mac.com](mailto:DrKateTSI@mac.com) or on Facebook under Kate Hudgins.

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