Rehearsal Outline Class #4

Some New Words from Forum Theatre Lingo: Real-to-Ideal, Core Conflict Image, Story Circle, making a “dramatic sandwich,” Past Image (regression, past moment), Future Image progression, future pathway), power analysis / Analytic Image, Story-Teller as writer-director.

Rehearsal Outline

Participants will take part in story circles to learn about other’s personal or workplace experiences related to colorectal and cervical cancer.

A) Activation / Sensory Retuning Games

B) Story Circles: discussion & questions; running the Circle: selecting the stories, clarification / deepening; story structure

C) Making the Dramatic Sandwich: creating / clarifying the Core Conflict Image, Animating the Image (sound-gesture-line-dialogue), creating Past & Future Images, Merging (Photo-Shopping the images together); discussion of process; a couple of “special moves” with image structures.

Rehearsal Sequence

Check-in: Pulling an object (or quality) out of the Magic Box: something that helps you serve the community effectively, or helps you personally stay grounded, calm and motivated while working as a CHW.


Activation Games: 1) Touch 3 Things (3 legs, two walls, 5 feet ...)

Activating the Story Circle: 1) Read/discuss Story Circle process material; 2) mention Lightning Round Story Circle alternative; 3) break into two groups and run Story Circle process (with questions / clarifications after story selection).

Story Circles encourage workshop participants to share experiences connected to the themes of the project: (1) educational, cultural and psychological barriers to use of available screening services for detection / diagnosis of colorectal and cervical cancer, and (2) personal /
community behaviors that increase cancer risk related to personal genomic and environmental factors. This methodology is part of Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed process, but was popularized in the United States by John O’Neal of the civil rights era (and later) Free Southern Theatre and more recent, Junebug Productions Company located in New Orleans, Louisiana. For more information on John O’Neal, his companies and his ways of working visit: http://academics.hamilton.edu/organizations/kirkland/oneal.html or a much larger article on his groundbreaking theatre for environmental justice project (“Drawing the Line at Place: The Environmental Justice Project” featured in the Community Arts Network e-journal at: http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2002/09/drawing_the_lin.php.


The following “rules” for Story Circles are excerpted from the “wagner.nyu.edu” article:

- Everyone sits in circles of no more than ten. The optimal group is six.
- Each participant receives an equal amount of time to tell her/his story. The amount of time allowed varies depending on the size of the group and the total amount of time available.
- The storytelling proceeds in order around the circle.
- If a participant does not have a story when it is his/her turn, the participant may pass. After the last person in the circle has told a story or passed, the participants who passed will have another opportunity to tell a story.
- Listening is more important than talking. Everyone should listen to the storyteller of the moment – not talk, ask questions, or even think about her/his own story. It is not necessary to think about what story to tell. Usually a story will emerge through the process. Trust the circle to bring you a story.
- If you have several stories in mind when it is your turn to tell, choose the story that comes from the deepest place that you feel safe telling.
- It is not necessary to like the story that others tell; however, it is important to respect the person’s right to tell it.

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• After everyone who wishes to tell a story has had an opportunity to do so, participants may engage in cross talk, ask questions, or comment on the stories of others.

• Silence is all right. Take your time. Do not rush to tell.

To these “rules” I would add the following:

• Allow 3 minutes (more or less) for each story.

• It works well if the time-keeper for the story telling and shifts is separate from the actual story-telling process. Timekeeper should apologize in advance to the group for the interruptions but make it clear that this allows the process to proceed smoothly without “eating up” too much rehearsal time. Story-tellers should get a heads up 30 seconds before their time is up. When they hear “heads-up,” Story-Tellers should wrap their story.

• At the end of the telling session, the group should vote for the stories they feel resonate most generally with the group’s experience. Generally, we choose two stories to turn into scenes so that we have two scenes to present to the audience. The audience will make the same decision, voting for the scene that resonates best as a Forum.

• Allow 2-3 questions per story after the selection process to urge the Story-Teller to offer more details or consider complications. This gives the stories more depth to work with during the scene-making process.

• Be sure to discuss the Core Conflict in the chosen stories so that all workshop participants are clear on which characters are the Protagonist and Antagonist, what each wants out the situation, and how an effective outcome was blocked. It is also good to identify Effective Allies in the scene that could help the Protagonist if they had more knowledge or more motivation.

• Remember that we’re looking for stories that could have had the desired outcome but, because of barriers, misconceptions, denial or other factors, did not. We call that lack of closure. We can modify stories to change the outcome (from positive to negative), but actual negative endings are often easiest to work with.

• Also remember that while Story-Tellers are the writer / director of scenes based on their
stories – they will configure each of the Core Conflict Images - the stories may change in the process of adapting them for drama. These stories are donated to the group in workshop, and again to the audience who interacts with our performances.

**Break:** 10 minutes

**Warm-up:** “Crazy Chicken”

**Building the Dramatic Sandwich:** 1) Story-Teller creates image of conflict central to story (Core Conflict Image); 2) Process Image: situation, characterizations, meanings and associations; 3) Animate Core Conflict Image (gesture-line-movement & dialogue); create the “bread”: past moment image (where & why from), future pathway (where& why to); 4) Perform Static Sandwich (past-core conflict-future image sequence) X2; 5) Animate Sandwich Image Sequence (same as #3) with dialogue; 6) discuss and add details.

**Special Moves:** 1) return to Core Conflict Image: run Analytic Image on Protagonist/Antagonist relationship; 2) run Analytic Image on Protagonist/Potential Ally(ies) relationship(s); 3) run analytic image on Antagonist/Potential Ally(ies) relationship(s); 4) return to Core Conflict Image: run Real to Ideal & 3 Wishes on Conflict.

**Circle:** Process rehearsal/research results. Put back into the Magic Box something that interferes with your success as a CHW, something you’d like to get rid of, change or otherwise be done with.

**Closing:** Writing on my Partners Back. (3 characters)