



GUIDELINES ON PSYCHODRAMA USE IN ADULT EDUCATION

Project: POTENS – Psychodrama on the Educational Stage

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	3
II. THEORETICAL BASES	5
III. CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS ON PSYCHODRAMA USE IN ADULT EDUCATION IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES	10
IV. PSYCHODRAMA IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS	13
1. General considerations	13
2. The pilot workshop programs in the project	16
3. Conclusions and recommendations based on workshop experiences and implementation endeavors	21
V. CONCLUSIONS	34
VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY	37

I. INTRODUCTION

The EU Grundtvig project called „POTENS - Psychodrama on the Educational Stage” is aimed at establishing a closer cooperation between psychodrama and adult education trainers with the purpose of improving the acquisition of key competences in lifelong learning, creative expression and social skills.

This pilot initiative is led by Teatr Grodzki (Poland) and involves a consortium of 5 partners from 4 countries: Teatr Grodzki and EST Lifelong Learning Centre from Poland, Societatea de Psihodramă J. L. Moreno (SPJLM) Romania, Cyprus Adult Education Association (CAEA) from Cyprus and Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação (SPI) from Portugal. SPJLM is responsible for the psychodrama expertise coordinating the training methodology and guidelines development for the psychodrama use in adult education.

The elaboration of the guidelines is rooted in the **cooperation of an international team** of experts. The draft version of the guidelines was tested in a series of pilot workshops organized to explore the usefulness of psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy techniques and approaches for groups of adult educators. The four national workshops were led by experienced psychodrama/ sociodrama/ dramatherapy group-leaders. These pilot workshops were running in 2009, completing 90 hours in each country and having totally 63 adult educators as participants experiencing and experimenting psychodrama/ sociodrama/ dramatherapy techniques and approaches. The team working on the guidelines drafting, desk research, pilot workshop program elaboration and implementation, workshop reports preparation was the following: adult education experts Maria Schejbal, Aleksander Schejbal and Piotr Kostuchowski, Anna Bielańska (psychodrama trainer) and Igor Hanuszkiewicz (psychodrama leader) from Poland, Roulla Demetriou (dramatherapist) and Klitos Symeonides (adult education expert) from Cyprus, psychodrama and sociodrama trainer José Luis Mesquita, adult education experts Ana Leal and Sara Brandaõ from Portugal, and the Romanian SPJLM-staff: psychodrama trainers and adult education experts Sorina Bumbuluț and Maria Roth, Júlia Szigeti (psychodrama assistant), psychodrama trainers and supervisors Horațiu Nil Albini and Éva Varró. The author based the guidelines on the experience in working with adult educators along Potens 90 hours workshops, the psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy reports of fellows in the Potens project, the comments of adult education experts involved in the project and on the implementation reports of adult educators who applied their newly gained competences in their

work with vulnerable adults.

The objectives of the POTENS project related to the guidelines of a methodology on applying psychodrama in adult education, especially in the education of vulnerable adults, were the following:

- To establish a platform of cooperation between the adult educators and psychodrama trainers.
- To work out a set of training techniques to support and improve teaching/learning processes, especially in the context of informal and non-formal learning.
- To train pilot groups of adult educators in the use of the developed methods; to refine the developed techniques on the basis of the participants' feedback. The participants were expected to use the acquired skills during the lifetime of the project and beyond it, in adult education workshops for vulnerable social groups.

The chapter entitled **Theoretical bases** aims to clarify relevant concepts for understanding the projects activity and results, defining and describing basic terms.

The third chapter summarizes the conclusions of the **research findings** of the four partner countries regarding the psychodrama use in adult education.

The fourth chapter of the present material contains the main guiding ideas related to the **psychodrama use in adult education**. It is divided in general considerations referring to the synergies between psychodrama and adult education, the description of the pilot workshop programs, conclusions and recommendations based on workshop experiences and implementation endeavors of the adult educators. It refers to successful and less successful examples taken from those experiences.

Final conclusions and bibliographic references close the material.

II. THEORETICAL BASES

This chapter aims to define and describe basic terms like psychodrama, sociodrama, dramatherapy, spontaneity, creativity, group, sociometry and role used along this project, and clarify how they are relevant for adult education.

Originating in J. L. Moreno's work, **psychodrama**, has a “broader meaning, acting as a metonymic key word for a greater field” which “encompasses aspects of role theory, the theory of creativity, and the methods of sociodrama, sociometry, improvisational drama, and their applications in and beyond psychotherapy, including in education, business, community building and so forth” (Blatner 2007, p. 7).

Peter Felix Kellermann (1992, 3rd impression 2000, p. 20) proposes the following comprehensive definition, speaking only of therapeutical psychodrama: “Psychodrama is a method of psychotherapy in which clients are encouraged to continue and complete their actions through dramatization, role playing, and dramatic self-presentation. Both verbal and non-verbal communications are utilized. A number of scenes are enacted, depicting, for example, memories of specific happenings in the past, unfinished situations, inner dramas, fantasies, dreams, preparations for future risk-taking situations, or unrehearsed expressions of mental states in the here and now. These scenes either approximate real-life situations or are externalisations of inner mental processes. If required, other roles may be taken by group members or inanimate objects. Many techniques are employed, such as role reversal, doubling, mirroring, concretizing, maximizing and soliloquy. Usually the phases of warm up, action, working through, closure and sharing can be identified.”

One of the two components of the notion, the term „drama” (meaning action) represents the winning card of psychodrama in many fields of application, among them the education. But action methods are not necessarily in the same time psychodramatic. The first constituent of the notion, the term „psycho” indicates the realm of the inner mental processes involved in any kind of human activity and especially in lifelong learning. Not every human activity deals consciously with this realm, and not every applied action method can be considered psychodrama. An action method becomes psychodrama to the extent it capitalizes the whole intrapsychic reality: relational aspects,

attitudes, emotions, cognition, private or collective roles etc. Even a non-therapeutic application of psychodrama is always embedded in the intra-psychic reality but it differs from the therapeutic one in the depth of its intervention in the personal life story. An educational contract has specific educational aims according to the subject matter to be taught. It does not allow the processing of personal private issues but it should be aware of the personal cognitive and emotional boundaries of the learners.

The starting points of the **educational** psychodrama are the personal and the professional boundaries of the two relational partners: those of the learner and educator. The project refers to a border area between therapy and adult education: the vulnerable adults' education. A vulnerable adult always needs special attention. In most of the cases the vulnerability makes him/her less available or sometimes less motivated to regular educational approaches. These special needs have to be taken into account in order to support and improve the learning processes of adults coming from vulnerable social groups.

Besides psychodrama, another modality used by Moreno in order to facilitate the exploration of roles is **sociodrama**. This is a group action method in which participants spontaneously act out agreed-upon social situations. While psychodrama focuses on private/individual components of roles, the focus of sociodrama is on the collective roles, on the aspects of roles we share in our groups with others. Sociodrama is a tool that helps people express their thoughts and feelings, solve problems and clarify their values mainly in action and in a shared experience. In a typical sociodrama session, a warm-up period takes place and participants choose the topic to explore. The roles are then assigned by the director and the drama arises from spontaneous interactions. At the end, there is a moment of sharing in which group members discuss, presenting new material for the sociodramatic clarifications. At this time, all participants can integrate action and reflection. Although both, psychodrama and sociodrama, deal with thoughts and feelings, there are three major differences: (1) sociodrama focuses on the way participants face collective problems, attending to shared aspects rather than individual role aspects; (2) sociodrama creates “for instance” situations, while psychodrama recreates real situations or scenes from the individual sphere; (3) sociodrama is primarily an educational method concerning the personal development and psychodrama is mostly a therapeutic one. (see Blatner 2000, Blatner & Cukier 2007, Wiener 1997)

Dramatherapy is the use of theatre techniques to facilitate personal growth and promote health. It

is used in a wide variety of settings, including hospitals, schools, mental health centres, prisons, and businesses. Being a form of expressive therapy, it exists in many forms and can be applicable to individuals, couples, families, and various groups (see: Malchiodi 2003). The tools used range from myths, movement, play, embodiment, drawing, voice and the exploration of roles. The group provides the subject matter while the training, knowledge and experience of the dramatherapist take the roles of backstage and production support. The dramatherapist does not have a fixed role per se but rather moves fluidly between the worlds of the unconscious and the conscious, between here and now, encouraging exploration and curiosity from the point of view of a director, messenger, trickster, audience, reviewer etc. In this metaphor the play is always an improvisation, not pre-scripted, but imagined here and now, in the moment of the action and of the response to the participant's/group's needs. Roles are actively explored thus broadening one's role repertoire, adding insight, and freedom from restrictive or dysfunctional sets of roles. It's not about *fixing the problem* but about using our imagination and creativity to open a dialogue with ourselves instead of pressing delete to get rid of a symptom or issue. It's not the dramatherapist that cures or tells the client what to do and how to live their life - the healing agent is the drama (Demetriou 2007).

Spontaneity and creativity are core concepts transversal in relation to psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy. According to Moreno, they cannot exist one without the other. Spontaneity is a process of becoming more and more open to the influences of deep intuition and imagination. It is an individual's readiness to give an adequate answer, a source of deep joy and remembrance of the most authentic aspects of the self. Spontaneity stands in opposition to reliance on what exists now. Spontaneity serves to keep creativity flowing, playful and alive, is a key to creativity. Moreno thought that creativity does not arise from contemplation and planning, but from the process of improvisation, in which physical activity (warm-up) evokes greater emotional and intellectual involvement, triggers a holistic interactive response. In this way creativity is a new and adequate answer to a new or old situation.

“Moreno proposed that spontaneity and creativity are primary drives and positive phenomena. He wanted to promote the use of impromptu techniques in group settings, believing that this would increase spontaneity and develop an anti-mechanical attitude towards our times.” (Blatner & Cukier 2007, p. 294). According to Krüger, the question is always to constitute creative processes in which the blockades are set free whether in therapy, education, supervision, organizational development, or in the theology, philosophy, politics and management; fostering and setting free the creativity is

the main objective of any kind of psychodramatic work. (For further definitions of spontaneity and creativity see Blatner 2000, Blatner & Cukier 2007, Krüger 1997, 2002, Schacht 2007).

Moreno was a pioneer in viewing the person as embedded in a social field, claiming that we develop and learn in a **group**. Our primary social network (**social atom** in Moreno's terms), the mother-child relationship slowly extends including various social groups; a group generates an uncommon power from its dynamics, the processes occurring within itself. Every group undergoes such processes. A learning group is a kind of a "mirror" in which every participant can look at themselves – both working as a protagonist and listening to others when sharing personal stories. Similarly, in the process of learning new skills groups can provide assistance and support its participants who are taking on new roles or are trying out new behaviors. **Sociometry** was also developed by Moreno and was described as theory and method for understanding the interpersonal relationships that exist between persons living in social groups. Through sociometric techniques one can explore people's attractions, repulsions, and feelings of neutrality. A primary assumption of sociometry is that individuals cannot be understood outside the context of the social and personal relationships in which they live. Another prominent characteristic of sociometry is the view that groups of individuals are dynamic rather than static. Relationships between members of a group vary from person to person and in time. An individual will relate differently with different persons in a group and will relate differently to the same person over a period of time (Blatner 2000, Bukowski & Cillessen, 1998).

The notion of **role** is also a key concept in Moreno's psychodrama. Roles exist dynamically by an individual; they are the actual forms which the self takes. A role functions in a given context and time, and is a reaction in a situation including other persons as well. It is created by previous experiences of the person and cultural patterns existing in a given community. Each role has this personal and cultural element. Each of us has various roles with their opposites, the so called anti-roles, often hidden. Roles can be observed, developed, trained – it always gives a chance to change them in agreement with our will. In opposition to spontaneity and creativity the roles have a "cultural conserve" aspect of customary schematic behaviours – like masks that we wear every day. Once created a valuable cultural conserve, for example a role, or a technique, "people tend to unthinkingly accept tradition as 'the way things are', and this habit of mind stifles creativity" (Blatner & Cukier 2007, p. 294). (About Moreno's term of cultural conserve see Schacht 2007,

Blatner 2000, Blatner & Cukier 2007). Moreno was deeply convinced that man can always develop, look for new forms of self-expression: new roles, or old roles performed in a new way, e.g. being in a role of a teacher one can grow into a teaching pattern, or one can seek various innovative ways to teach (see Bielanska 2009, Blatner 2000, Blatner & Cukier 2007, Karp, Holmes & Bradshaw Tavon 1998).

Though we clarified that psychodrama, sociodrama and dramatherapy are different approaches, but also acknowledged that they have their common roots as action methods and they all aim for spontaneity and creativity in different settings and areas of applications, for the goals of this project, the term psychodrama will be mostly used as an inclusive term for all three domains.

Moreno emphasizes many times the usefulness of psychodrama and sociometry in education, and he leaves the doors open to the creative applications of his methods in many domains of social life. As the adult educators from the four countries involved in the project revealed in their responses on the questionnaires elaborated in the first phase of the POTENS project (Szigeti 2008), the educational system they are working in is usually based on intellectual education and pays less attention to emotional/attitudinal education or to the personal development that should be involved in the learning process. Some of the respondents stated the educational system does not reflect the participants' real needs and/or knowledge, that can be very different from those addressed by the trainings. Most respondents emphasized the need to acquire new innovative and practical methods and games, motivating and engaging techniques, the need to develop self awareness and teaching/therapeutic skills, the need of regular professional supervision. This is why the pilot workshop activities were considered by participants as being very beneficial (as it appears in the final evaluation questionnaires and the implementation reports).

III. CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS ON PSYCHODRAMA USE IN ADULT EDUCATION IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES

Just like in countries with a long psychodrama tradition as USA, United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Brazil, New Zealand, Australia, the psychodrama has been recognized as a therapeutic approach in the countries involved in the POTENS project: Poland, Romania, Portugal and Cyprus too. It seems that the educational applications came later in all the countries: not too easily, sometimes with “trickle-down” or surrounded with criticism (Propper, 2003, Wittinger 2000) from both the therapists and the educators. As the research findings in the four countries involved in the POTENS project show, there is very little or no evidence that psychodrama is applied beyond the therapeutic field, and there is no evidence of systematic use of psychodrama in adult education generally and vulnerable adults' education especially.

Among these four countries Portugal has the longest tradition: psychodrama and sociodrama trainings were started about ten years earlier, so the professional society was born much earlier than in Romania and Poland, already in the eighties. Since then there have been educational applications of sociodrama.

Psychodrama had a similar history in Romania and Poland, starting in the nineties. Though Romania had a more extended psychodrama community, it has shown little evidence of applying psychodrama in the adult educational domain.

A single dramatherapist is active in Cyprus and there is no professional community there in this field . However, as Symeonides (2009) ascertains, educational drama has been used with adults in **Cyprus**, mainly in informal forms of education, such as the courses of Greek language for immigrants, with inmates and with addicts during the rehabilitation process. According to Symeonides (2009) official recordings for this application in adults do not exist either abroad, nor in Greece.

The **Portuguese** research findings (SPI 2009) show that the use of psychodrama and sociodrama techniques in adult education context in Portugal are still in a very early stage although the Portuguese Society of Psychodrama (SPP) has been doing a great job of promoting this cause. In fact, most of the texts produced about these topics in Portuguese are made by Brazilian authors/experts, which reveal clearly the difference in the use of these techniques in both countries. However, interest in psychodrama and sociodrama themes and their application in various fields is

increasing in Portugal. The SPI (2009) concludes that a lot has to be still done and stresses the important role of POTENS project in this direction.

The **Polish** research work has been done both by Grodzki Theatre and the EST Educational Centre. Their conclusions were similar. Among teachers and specialists of andragogy psychodrama is almost unknown (Bielskie Stowarzyszenie Artystyczne Teatr Grodzki 2009).

The EST research findings (2009) reveal the scarcity of published information in this respect. The initial survey on the actual knowledge and use of psychodramatic techniques by adult educators participating in the POTENS workshops in Poland has shown that the majority of the respondents were aware of role reversal and general role playing as used in psychodrama. The other psychodrama techniques were mentioned only sporadically, which suggests a rather limited knowledge of the actual practice of psychodrama on the part of adult educators in Poland. However, there is a psychodrama training offered by the Polish Institute of Psychodrama, recommended not only to therapists but also to other professions. There is another area of training where elements of psychodrama can be identified, including various courses for educators, where specific techniques are presented during workshops. Role-playing and experiential activities planned to foster personal or social growth are often included in such courses. Still it is very difficult to categorise the content and methodology of such courses as in most cases these are grassroot initiatives of individual trainers and there is no published information on the course programme. EST researchers state that they have not been able to identify a structured approach to psychodrama use in adult education in Poland based on a concrete syllabus, well defined objectives and an outline of training methodology. Thus the POTENS project comes as a new initiative in this respect.

The **Romanian** research points in the same direction. Szigeti (2009) found no evidence that psychodrama methods and the spirit of psychodrama are systematically used in adult education. Neither the methodology modules, nor the specialized literature revealed Romanian references on the use of psychodrama methods in education. Those who could apply psychodrama in adult education are the specialists qualified in psychodrama willing to use their knowledge gained during training with their trainees. In this respect it's noteworthy that every third person involved in psychodrama training has connections with the field of adult education, but we don't have any written evidence of whether (and if yes, how) the gained knowledge, attitudes and skills are used or not in the educational activity. The high number of specialists already trained in the field of

psychodrama show that there are resources that could be fruitfully employed in education in the future. SPJLM, one of the two Romanian psychodrama associations, committed itself for the near future to systematically collect data on the involvement of its members/trainees in adult education, and to follow up the effects of psychodrama methods, values and theoretical approach on professionals and their beneficiaries. The field of adult education in Romania is still in the making. Its efficiency is poorly rated (Szigeti, 2009), and can be interpreted as a consequence of the old methodologies that are still in use and its rather theoretical character.

On the other hand, the research found that adult educators are highly motivated in acquiring new competences and applying psychodrama methods. Just like in Poland, financial difficulties often exclude motivated candidates from attendance of psychodrama courses. Thus the effectiveness of the POTENS initiative that offered free training for adult educators is once more underlined.

At the same time all these research materials show that there is a need for innovative, motivating, engaging, practical methods among the adult educators in the countries involved in the project.

IV. PSYCHODRAMA IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS

This chapter contains the main guiding ideas related to the psychodrama use in adult education. In its first subdivision general considerations are presented that refer to the synergies between the two areas bridged in the project. Its second subdivision describes the workshop programs offering an overview on the pilot workshops led by psychodrama trainers for adult educators in the four countries involved in the project. The third subdivision offers the conclusions and recommendations based on workshop experiences and implementation endeavors of the adult educators, along with positive and less positive examples taken from those experiences.

1. General considerations representing guiding lines in the synergy between psychodrama and adult education

1.1.

The education aims for transformation of knowledge, of attitudes and of skills. Psychodrama offers an **adequate approach and useful tools especially for changing attitudes and developing skills in different domains of education**, but also for the application of the theoretical knowledge. The domain of attitude change includes the learners' emotions, values, beliefs, biases, role expectations that influence the learning atmosphere and the learners' relationship to the educator and education, to the learning process and the learning environment. This is the main domain in which the psychodrama can set the stage for creative contributions, addressing both the learners' and the educators' emotions and beliefs, offering possibilities to clarify roles, expectations, values, beliefs and biases. The skills are the abilities to put specific acquired knowledge into practice. The knowledge domain refers both to the pure theoretical knowledge and to its application. Psychodrama means action, that is doing in practice what the person knows or even doesn't know, or simply experiencing in practice what the person is able to do and what kind of effects some actions might have. Addressing the domain of the attitudes and the interpersonal skills, psychodrama can offer first of all an excellent approach and a beneficial means for undergraduate and graduate teacher trainings, lifelong learning activities, meaning also supervision for educational work and staff.

One of the problems raised by Blatner (2002) regarding the most wide-spread technique related to the Morenian tradition, role playing, “comes from the common tendency to assume that

interpersonal skills are easier than technical skills – though in fact they are even more difficult – and so people tend to think they can engage in directing role playing before they've really achieved a level of bare competence (much less mastery). (...) Sometimes teachers fail to appreciate the complexity of a skill they're learning, and it's important to emphasize that directing role playing is about as complex as learning how to deliver a baby". The ability to educate and teach is first of all an interpersonal skill, and this is where psychodrama can largely contribute, since it is essentially a way to develop interpersonal skills, to deepen the professional self-knowledge and to better understand the learners' needs.

1.2.

Changing attitudes and developing skills requires an **accommodative type of learning**. We agree with Adam Blatner's point of view regarding the common needs of all students involved in education, related to what the well-known psychologist and epistemologist Piaget called assimilation and accommodation in the learning process. "Unfortunately, so much of education is oriented to the kinds of learning that can be more easily tested, which is assimilative, memorization-type learning. Yet what the world really needs is people who have skills, and skills go beyond mere knowledge of facts. Skills, though, require a more complex performance-oriented testing which requires more teacher attention, covers more subtle variables. And skills reflect an accommodative type of learning. (...) These skills cannot be learned by reading any number of books, although a little didactic material can be helpful in creating an intellectual framework for the accommodative learning. Rather, the kinds of skills needed for flexible, creative, rational thinking must be exercised, practised, and learned in a process of interaction, risk-taking, self-expression, feedback, encouragement, and, in short, a process which is closer to learning to swim than learning the capital cities of the various states" (Blatner, 2002). Psychodrama offers valuable approaches to re-establish the **equilibrium of assimilative and accommodative learning modes** with its large possibilities to foster accommodative learning through its active methods developing spontaneity and creativity.

1.3.

The learning atmosphere created by psychodrama is another basic resource of psychodrama in favour of education, especially in vulnerable adults' education. Being a **group method**, psychodrama can produce a **proper learning environment** through creating group cohesion, atmosphere of confidence and safety, in which the learner can effectively handle her/his anxieties

related to the learning situation, teacher/educator or group members. Much of the problems reported by the adult educators they are confronting with in their work (e.g. drop outs, lack of motivation) can be handled more efficiently if more attention is paid to the development of group cohesion and creation of an adequate learning environment. Adults coming from vulnerable social groups generally could be more sensitive to the manner their attitude and anxieties related to the learning are handled. Usually too short time is devoted to creation of group cohesion and security issues. Many times classes are not treated like a group going through different phases from birth to coming to an end, but rather like a mass without taking into account basic group dynamic phenomena. The capacity to handle group dynamic phenomena requires a wider and deeper training, especially for such major themes of group dynamics like conflict resolution and handling of resistances.

1.4.

Psychodrama techniques used in education are laying on the foundation of the manner psychodrama leader/adult educator understands the application of psychodramatic tools. This depends on:

- the way psychodrama leaders/adult educators perceive their **professional role** boundaries, attributions and responsibilities (professional self-knowledge)
- the professional **relationships** (the encounter, than the contracts) between different role partners involved in the educational process
- how the clients'/**learners' roles**, needs, motivations and other characteristics really are and how the adult educators understand them
- the **objectives** of the psychodramatic intervention in the specific educational (and organizational) setting, according to the specific educational contract etc.

During their graduate studies, the educators are prepared to plan their classes and the learning/teaching process. In designing the classes/sessions and the learning/teaching process that resorts to psychodrama use in adult educational settings the following aspects are considered to be important: themes to be taught, the long-term and the short-term objectives of the courses, the motivational states of the participants; and the relationship issues or role clarification issues contained in these themes (Serafin, 2004).

1.5.

All psychodrama techniques are suitable to contribute to the goals set in Potens project, but the

success of psychodrama use in education **depends on the grounding of the educator's competencies by a comprehensive psychodrama training**. The pilot workshop leaders, trained as psychodrama experts, exploited a very large array of psychodrama applications. They even used protagonist plays in supervision work. By contrast, the participants of pilot workshops, who were mostly at their first steps in psychodrama, as expected, explored mainly the use of warm up and sociometric exercises, some collective games and sub-group role-playing activities, as well as several self expression modalities, like body movement and the use of symbolic objects. Warm-up exercises or ice-breaker activities were used by the adult educators in order to motivate their learners, to allow them to know each other and to develop the learning environment.

2. The pilot workshop programs in the project

2.1. General description

The **common aims** of the four pilot workshops were the followings:

- To enhance the level of spontaneity and creativity of the adult educators in their professional roles.
- To make the adult educators aware that their professional role is to catalyse learning and development; to recognize the value of relationship, and become aware that the effectiveness as adult educator depends on the quality of the relationship he/she establishes (empathic instead of hierarchic). To enable the adult educators to work on the relationship-level too, and not only on the subject-matter-level of the instruction.
- To enable the adult educators to be attentive to the needs and habits of the special groups and individuals they work with, in order to keep them in training, to support and improve the learning processes, and the formation of social skills.
- To enable the participants to observe and, in some extent, to work with group dynamic phenomena like (lack of) safety and cohesion, resistance and conflicts that occur in their groups of vulnerable adults.
- To enable the participants to use the experienced psychodrama procedures and techniques in an adequate and responsible way in order to empower their future students from marginalized groups to gain an insight into their own potential and develop social and personal competences. The „adequate way of using a technique” means being sensitive to the impacts of a technique, and to be aware of the why, when and how to use a specific

technique or procedure.

Basically, the workshops pursued the following phases:

- introduction activities in which participants and leaders introduced themselves as professionals, discussed the project and workshop aims; group cohesion was built, and basic concepts of psychodrama were discussed.
- experiencing psychodrama tools, and
- supervision of participants who used the newly acquired psychodramatic competences in their everyday work with vulnerable adults.

Thus the pilot workshop programs comprised elements of **professional self knowledge, learning skills and methods and supervision.**

On the basis of the above presented common framework of theoretical bases and objectives, each partner elaborated its own workshop program according to the specificity of the professional background of the leaders and the requirements of the specific approach they applied (psychodrama, sociodrama or dramatherapy). The syllabuses worked as general outlines and guiding ideas always adjusted and individualized, without being detailed at the beginning of the courses. The work was based on the everyday professional experience of the participants, and examples were used from this experience. The fact that adult educators work with different professional qualifications and training needs, in many kinds of settings, with a large variety of social/professional groups was taken into account. When programs were planned, the needs and difficulties confronted by adult educators in their practice – as reported in the surveys in the first phase of the POTENS project (synthesized by Szigeti 2008) – were also taken into account. The syllabuses were designed to allow leaders flexibility in adapting to the needs of participants and to their capacity to assimilate and accommodate to psychodrama ways of expression.

Besides the commonalities, pilot workshops in the four countries involved in the project had different structures, settings and designs. They also had different emphasis along the training modules. Reports were written by all partners, on all modules, allowing the exchange of experience and the reflection on the opportunities for future applications in adult education. The short descriptions of the programs can be useful for those who look for possible models to design their own syllabus for training psychodrama to adult educators.

2.2.

The **Polish** workshop program was based on psychodramatic approach and was elaborated by Igor

Hanuszkiewicz (the leader of the workshop) and Anna Bielańska (supervisor of the pilot workshop activity). 17 participants attended the course which took place between January and December 2009. It consisted of 104 hours (an introductory session of 8 hours and 6 two day sessions of 16 hours). The second days of the two day sessions contained mostly supervision activities of the techniques implemented by the participants.

The most important areas of the workshop program:

- Introducing the participants, the trainer, the project and the psychodrama phenomenon to the adult educator participants. Presenting basic concepts of Morenian psychodrama. Presenting arguments for and against the use of psychodrama in adult education.
- Presenting and experiencing effective psychodrama tools in professional activities of adult educators. Personal development, knowledge development, development of skills in education.

Communication skills and understanding of group processes.

- warm-up; kinds of warming-up, function
- sociometry
- the role theory of Moreno, Schindler's model
- the group and the group process, group dynamic
- social atom – functions and use
- group games - goals, functions and role in the group dynamic and the process
- role playing as an effective tool in professional activities of adult educators
- practical exercises on transformation of didactic issues into scenes
- Supervision of using chosen psychodrama techniques and methods by participants in their own groups.

2.3.

The **Romanian** program of the pilot workshops was also based on psychodramatic approach, and was elaborated by Éva Varró, Sorina Bumbuluț and Maria Roth. 17 participants attended the course of 90 hours between May and November 2009. It consisted of three phases, divided in five sessions: 2 two day sessions of 15 hours each and 3 three day sessions of 20 hours each.

The main areas of work:

- Introduction to the Potens group work, and discussion on psychodrama's potential contribution to adult education:
 - presentations, contract and other framework questions regarding the pilot workshops

- dealing with the professional role of adult educator, building awareness of his/her own strengths and limits, clarifying professional role boundaries
- dealing with education as an occupation, with its structural/institutional commitments, the needs and limitations of the participants regarding attitudes, expectations and prejudices against their work, against their beneficiaries, against the psychodrama etc.
- working on the empathic and relational abilities of the participants related to the needs of the specific vulnerable groups/persons the participants work with
- dealing with the trainer-trainee contract.
- Understanding and exercising psychodrama:
 - presentation and experiencing of specific psychodramatic techniques: sociometry, warm-up exercises, role-play, role taking, role reversal, doubling, sharing, role feedback etc
 - working on group dynamic phenomena (resistances, conflicts)
 - experimenting techniques and procedures taking examples from the participants' everyday professional life, considering the specific structure in which the adult educators work, and the specific context of provenance of the final beneficiaries/vulnerable groups
- Supervising the first steps of the trainees in their own work with the new psychodramatic acuirements. Closing and farewell.

Three **handout materials** offered theoretical support to some major thematic areas (adult education, roles in action and interaction in groups):

- The adult in the learning/educational process
- The role concept; the use in psychodrama and in adult education
- The group. Interactions in the groups

2.4.

The course program in **Cyprus** was planned by Roulla Demetriou on the basis of the Sesame Approach developed by the Sesame Institute in London where the workshop trainer qualified as dramatherapist. The syllabus was drafted as a set of objectives which should be approached to introduce the students to drama therapy. The actual content of each of the stages emerged during the course. The whole course of 90 hours consisted of 5 two-day meetings between March and December 2009 and had 13 adult educator participants. The whole course was designed in four stages without assigning a fixed number of hours to each of the modules:

- Development of spontaneity through games and activities:

- introducing drama exercises and drama games
- encouraging expressiveness, playfulness, creativity, spontaneity, humour
- introducing drama and movement as collective, collaborative art forms
- developing trust in the group
- Improvisation within the dramatic context:
 - to enhance the ability to respond in the moment and spontaneously create enacted narratives
 - to foster imagination through developing and working with different imaginary environments
 - to teach participants how to embody the ideas initiated by images of places
 - to offer the opportunity to transfer these skills and experiences to real lives
- Acting a role:
 - to explore different social, cultural and gender roles
 - to experiment with different roles and images of self
 - to experience new ways of relating with others through a different role
 - to explore opposites within the role
 - to offer a depth of investigation into personal qualities through role development
- Reflection:
 - to provide space for contemplation and reflection on the experience
 - to offer the chance for a discussion about the impact of the experience
 - to link the experience to the adult education context
 - to envisage ways of implementing the experience in work with adult students

2.5.

The **Portuguese** workshop program was based on sociodramatic approach, and elaborated by José Luis Mesquita. 16 participants attended the 90 hours course between March and December 2009.

The whole course contained 9 sessions divided in three levels:

- Forming the working team with the purpose of defining the role of the adult educator and assessing their intervention needs
 - introduction to the project and contract of the participation
 - working the group cohesion in order to form the team work
 - different communication ways and skills

- searching for a definition of the professional role of the adult educator
- the adult educator and the institutions
- assessment of adult educators needs
- Definition, learning and living dramatic techniques, according to the sociodramatic model and with the objective of finding new answers for the adult educators needs
 - dramatic techniques and adult education - from definition to implementation
 - the stages of sociodrama: a structure for action
 - the sociodramatic model as a hypothesis of working the needs of the training group
 - experiencing dramatic techniques that might be adopt by adult educators
- How to plan and orient training session in adult education scope, adopting the dramatic techniques: role-playing of standard situations proposed by the adult educators
 - how to plan a session based on dramatic techniques
 - shared orientation of sessions
 - presentation of supervised sessions
 - evaluation and course closure.

3. Conclusions and recommendations based on the workshop experiences and implementation endeavours

We are presenting in the following the conclusions along with recommendations of the expert team of POTENS project, based on the pilot workshop experiences and the implementation endeavors and reports (61 reports gathered) of the participants.

The big rate of attendance of pilot workshop sessions, the enthusiasm and active participation of the adult educators, the big number of implementation reports gathered, and the content of these reports enable us to draw up positive conclusions. The training hours (90) for adult educators allowed each participant to take a step forward on his/her professional route as adult educator according to each ones starting level. The overwhelming majority of the participants didn't have any training in psychodrama – they got acquainted with psychodrama methods, took some (first or further) steps in their professional self-knowledge as adult educators, they got more skilled in using various action methods in order to motivate their beneficiaries. The project didn't promise full psychodrama training (see full training requirements in chapter V.), so the participants didn't acquire the whole

psychodrama thesaurus nor did they become completely secure in using psychodrama methods in adults' education. They might use in the future what they've acquired during the training in accordance with their graduate training and to the extent they might understand these exercises not as fixed templates or scenarios but as tools to allow the expression of their own and their students' spontaneity and creativity. This goal for adult educators to become facilitators of learning can be further transmitted to students, who also create learning in the sense Moreno conceived all human beings as creators having own potentialities. The common goal of **enhancing spontaneity and creativity** in both the training of adult educators and in the adult educators' work with vulnerable adults was associated with the purpose to **enhance awareness of own strengths and limits** in adult educators working with vulnerable adults. One of the permanent efforts of the pilot workshop activities was to enhance this kind of awareness in the participants instead of simply showing techniques thought as magic formula to foster creativity.

Warming up is a key phase in any form of learning and training, not only in psychodrama. The same statement is valid whether the warm up is meant as the first phase of a single session/class or as the first phase of the group formation (about the group formation phases see Stanford & Roark 1974, Tuckman). Much of the problems raised by the adult educator participants regarding their students' low motivation level were caused by insufficient warming-up by their adult educators. The warm up exercises in the first phase of a class are intended to raise the level of energy and to target the awareness of individual resistances as defense mechanisms. The pilot workshops offered a wide range of warm up techniques and procedures and the most frequent implementation efforts were made on the warm-up techniques. All feedback sources (final evaluation feedbacks of trainers and participants, implementation reports) reported the same conclusion: most participants became more able to create an atmosphere of confidence and safety for their learners in order to more effectively handle their learners' anxieties related to the learning situation. But the question if the warm up techniques “are well integrated with the whole class or are just a loose collection of exercises or tricks” (EST 2009, p.5) depends above all not on describing and analysing concrete warm up scenarios which worked in practice of other professionals. The use of proper warm up techniques depends strongly on the group leaders’/adult educators’ competences in handling group dynamic processes, on recognizing the moments when a beginning or a passive group needs simply a warm up or some context clarifications some context clarifications or a conflict managing intervention. As

we wrote earlier, most of the techniques have been used as a warm-up exercise or an ice-breaker activity, even the group games and other techniques which could have other applications too. The project Handbook written by Maria Schejbal presents a whole list of applied warm up exercises in the workshops.

We will use here an example of a **warm-up** phase with a much enjoyed warm-up exercise practised in one of the **Romanian workshop sessions** and often mentioned in the participants' implementing reports: "The king and the servants".

It was applied during the 4th session when the group asked to work with the theme of resistance and had a low level of energy after a lunch break. In order to raise the level of energy the leader asked the participants to find a place in the room, express their emotions by movement and by gestures; than he invited members to show the opposite feeling and feel what is best them (for example feeling tired or feeling energetic; feeling connected, as opposed to feeling isolated); than show their level of energy: high, medium, low. Those participants who had a high level of energy were invited to do a gesture to help others overcome their feeling of low energy. After a debriefing in pairs, the participants played the game: 2 servants clean potatoes in front of the king. They mock the king, but hide their gestures. If one is observed, they change place with the king.

After experiencing the exercise the leader and the group clarified the effects of exercises.

A selection of the comments of the leader and the participants after the exercise: "The involvement of others increased my own level of energy". "It was exciting to outwit the king." "I liked to play with the king being the servant." "It helped accepting the other side". "Icebreakers are needed to deal with resistances". "Even when the group is motivated, like this group, the energy of the group is not constant, and the leader has to take these differences into account".

This exercise allows participants to express their opposition to the leader. It is easier to express the negative feeling in such a playful way, it can be even joyful. It is useful in groups who respect their leaders too much, where members do not dare to oppose the leaders or even to express the own fatigue or negative mood unrelated to the leader, trying their best to get the approval of the leader.

Participants have to be aware that this exercise does not function in cases of strong resistances related to the leader-learner relationship like lack of respect toward the partner role, or when the group do not want to cooperate due to various other reasons. These cases need deeper exploration.

Generally every warm up exercise can cause resistance in adults with many anxieties. This is why it is important to carefully plan the exercises to be applied, always with a pedagogical aim and not for amusement/ entertainment of group members, and according to the profile of the group.

The exercise was mentioned in the next session as being already implemented and appears in the implementation reports too (3 adult educators named it specifically, but much of the reports did not specified the names of the warm up exercises transferred).

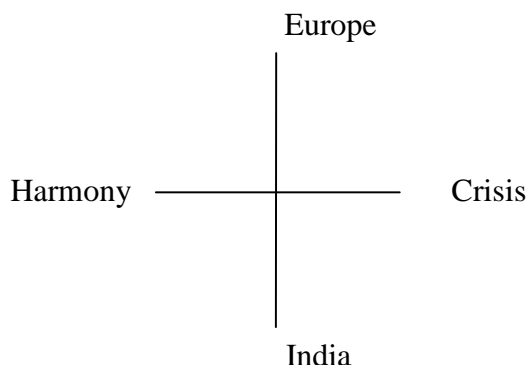
We have a similar stand in relation to the wealth of **sociometric procedures** used in psychodrama practice. The pilot workshop participants co-created the warm up and the sociometric exercises together with the psychodrama workshop leaders, thus experiencing first-hand, from inside, from the active learner's perspective how a specific exercise works, instead of simply observing and analysing the exercises from outside. The adult educators' steps in using sociometric exercises they experienced themselves in the pilot groups had been extensively discussed and analysed in the course of the pilot workshops.

The sociometry with “**mapping**” was used several times along the pilot sessions, and also in the everyday practise of the adult educators in their implementing endeavours. An example is given here from the **Polish experience**, where this technique was employed several times during classes: specifying participant’s place of residence as it really is, with its relations to the residence of other participants; and in symbolic way, when a given space was used symbolically. Various points on the scene were understood to represent particular emotions, values and knowledge.

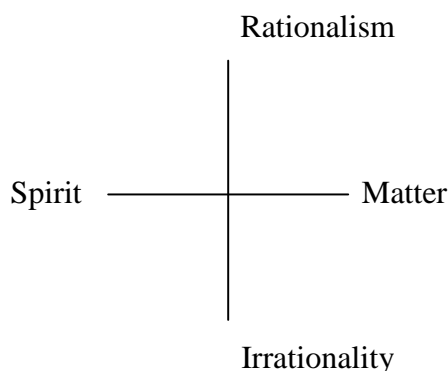
Such map allowed translating abstraction into a specific image. This technique is both a warm-up technique and is a means of conveying personal information. It entails interaction between participants. They obtain information concerning themselves, in the context of the material presented by the trainer.

One of the Polish participants used the map technique in the following fashion during the classes.

He prepared a lecture on Husserl, in which he used the scene to portray the dimensions of:



And another map:



This exercise allowed the participants to experience and see what is more appealing to them, how these values are viewed by others, who is in experiencing and thinking alike and who differs from them. This was the basis and introduction to portraying Husserl's propositions:

Thesis 1 European nations are ill, Europe itself undergoes a crisis.

Thesis 2 The crisis is actually brought about by methodological immaturity of liberal arts. The core of the problem lies in philosophy (...) the world of physics is born in the conscious of a physicist. Dualism – the world is comprised of matter and spirit (...).

Thesis 3 (...) European culture is utterly different from other cultures. Its originality stems from the ancient Greece and began with the creation of philosophy.

Thesis 4 "I am sure that the European crisis is rooted in stray rationalism."

Thesis 5 "There are only two ways to get out of the crisis of European way of life: the decline of Europe caused by the alienation from its own rational sense of life, falling into hostility toward the spirit and barbarity, or, the rebirth of Europe through

the spirit of philosophy and the heroism of reason ultimately defeating naturalism.

The use of this technique enabled a complicated philosophical text to be presented in an engaging and group-activating way.

Several persons from the Polish training group used the map technique in their work with success. Among various techniques rated by the Polish participants in regard to their usefulness in the work of an educator and trainer the map was given the most points. The above description of the technique and its usefulness is based on Anna Bielańska's presentation of successful and less successful Polish practices.

A specific warm up or sociometric scenario which works in a specific setting not necessarily works in another setting; it can cause the blockage instead of warming up and creating group cohesion, or it can disturb the in-group relations instead of making them more transparent and easier to handle.

This was described by an enthusiastic Romanian participant, who tried to make sociometric exercises with people moving in invalid chairs in a rather small room. The learners showed resistance first of all because of the small place that was available. Moving has undoubtedly other meanings in the life of learners using invalid chairs, and these meanings should be taken into account when planning dynamic exercises. The presented examples are underlining the importance of awareness regarding the effects/risks of implementation of the chosen techniques. Since most of the techniques – certainly the mappings – are really dynamic, the trainer has to assure all needed resources, first of all wide rooms, and support materials like fabrics, paper, etc. He/she has to select the techniques to be applied according to the profile of the group increasing the chances that people will react positively to the techniques.

Regarding **group dynamic phenomena** the frames of our project allowed to sensitize the participants of the pilot workshops to observe and better deal with some group dynamic phenomena occurred in their groups of vulnerable adults. The sitting arrangement in the circle, the use of the whole room, the physical conditions, the psychological and emotional climate - all are important factors for success in teaching. According to the common conclusion of the psychodrama experts leading the pilot workshops, participation in the group is a value in itself. It is the factor which cannot be described as a separate technique. This is not a simple question of some techniques or scenarios to be used, but in a first approach it depends on the safety and reliability of the relations established in the learning group, the cohesive force of the group atmosphere and the leaders'/adult

educators' ability to create and foster such kind of relations in the learners' group. The leaders of the pilot groups dealt with the resistance and the conflict in order to sensitize the participants to these phenomena. First, at the extent these themes occurred among the participants in the process of the pilot group, dealing with them and getting out from own resistances/conflict situations through psychodrama procedures offered the participants self experience as learners involved in group phenomena. Secondly, the leaders dealt with the resistance and conflict themes when the participants brought up such themes from their own practice with groups of adult learners. A significant part of the psychodrama supervision work has been done on such themes brought up by the participants themselves. The Romanian workshop participants presented several times conflicting work situations asking for supervision. Maria Schejbal presents in the project Handbook examples of the supervision work from Polish and Romanian workshops in which the participants worked on clarifying intra-psychic, interpersonal and group dynamic aspects of the conflict situations experiencing different roles involved in the specific conflict.

Since the main strength of the sociodrama and the dramatherapy approaches is their focus on intra-group relations, cooperation of group members, we will describe at this point two exercises from the workshops in Portugal and Cyprus, the first related to the initial, the second one to the end phase of group processes.

After an initial contact test at the 1st session in the **Portuguese workshop**, the **sculpture** technique was used in the following way:

The trainer asked to each pair to create a statue that represents their first contact they had. Then, asked to each "statue" to join together with another statue to which it identified with. Additionally, asked again that each joined statue (with 4 elements) join together with another statue to which they feel close. So, each new statue was constituted by 8 elements. At this point, the trainer asked to these 8 elements to build/create a new statue and give it a name. Two statues were created: Flow and Involvement. Once these statues created, the trainer asked trainees to try and combine the 2 different statues into a single one. After several attempts, the conclusions were that in order to achieve, in a group, both Flow and Involvement, it is not required all the elements to be physically linked, but only that all elements feel themselves in harmony towards the other elements, independently of the position that assumed in group.

The example of the sculpture technique was selected by Ana Leal and Sara Brandaõ. In the opinion of the Portuguese adult educators this activity presents a high value for the context of behavioral

training, in which the relation of “I”, the others and the “We” is approached. To achieve its potential, it needs a large space, since restricted spaces could limit the creativity and the expressiveness of the trainees during the statues building process. Additionally, because it is a technique more focused on expressing relation, it would not be easy to adopt by the trainers/educators working with people in technical domains, such as engineering or finances.

As rated in their evaluations, this technique has been valued by workshop participants in their professional life and has been used to promote cohesion of the group or to help express the group feelings towards a given situation. In some cases, trainers felt some resistance from the trainees to join the exercise by adopting a rigid attitude (in the perspective of the trainer due to the limited understanding of the objective of the exercise), but with a supplementary stimulation the resistant participants also concluded the activity.

The following example **from Cyprus** illustrates a proper way to close and revue the whole group process, successfully applied in the pilot session and also implemented by an adult educator working in a Centre for adult addicts.

Description of the **path** technique:

The trainer invited the group to a symbolic journey through the workshop program with the goal to reveal and reflect on the whole process of the group work, especially on its key experiences. Participants first recalled the activities with closed eyes, then shared their reflections. Their task was also to imagine, and to show using gestures and movement the process they went through along the course work, in the form of a path with a specific shape (climbing stairs, a straight line, conquering mountainous slopes, a labyrinth).

The second phase of the process reconstruction required the participants to work together, laying out a path, using multi-coloured scarves, and the entire space of the room. They had to agree on one version of the image, accepted by everyone. On the floor a road with many turns came together. The next task was to mark the boundaries between the different sessions, and identify each workshop using any object in the room. The trainer encouraged the group to seek creative signs and symbols to best express the meaning and atmosphere of each session. When the image is formed, the trainer asked the participants to individually and silently walk on the path, turning their thoughts at each stage to those situations and experiences which held meaning for them. Then, in small groups, they prepared short impromptu presentations illustrating each of the sessions on the path. Through movement,

sound, and words they presented some specific event, especially representative of each given module, in order to reproduce the atmosphere and reflect on their emotions. Presented activities were discussed. Some exercises were briefly repeated, so those absent during the earlier classes could understand.

Creating live sculptures as the final activity of this workshop is a symbolic illustration of the ongoing psychodramatic nature of the group process. Participants shaped themselves in ways which reflected their feelings. The trainer briefly summarised the whole exercise, then each participant expressed in one word what they felt at that moment, thereby closing the symbolic journey.

According to the participants' and experts' views, the path technique is a very good way to repeat the experience and knowledge which the group has gained during the implementation of the educational program or workshop. It may also be a form of testing practice skills - giving participants a chance to present selected exercises and tasks in their own ways. This was also a good exercise for training skills like cooperation, compromise, and communication. The activity has a multi-layered structure allowing for in-depth analysis of the individual steps in the process of working together and strengthening understanding. Another variation of this exercise is to build the individual path of each participant. With such an exercise there are many different variations for the same or similar educational experience. Each focuses on what is best remembered, and repeating the main themes helps to consolidate the acquired knowledge.

The implementation of psychodrama in the educational activities of a Centre for alcohol, drugs and gambling addicts has followed similar steps. The adult educator and the group encouraged each participant in his journey of reflection and realisations, asking helpful questions and sharing their own experiences. The path technique proved to be very useful for building motivation to heal and live without dependencies, and learning a systematic approach to self-help. It gives confidence and helps people with low self-esteem to believe in themselves. The group was enthusiastically involved in activities, which brought forward a lot of emotion. The centre plans to incorporate this technique into its standard programme. The above presentation of the technique used in Cypriot workshop is based on Maria Schejbal's description.

Role play in small groups on specific improvised professional scenarios was successfully used many times in the national workshops. Specific psychodrama techniques as the **doubling** (being able to act as a double of the vulnerable adult) and the **role reversal** (acting in the role

of vulnerable adult, but also in those of his/her relatives, colleagues, and other relevant roles in the adult education) were very often used by the workshop leaders. The adult educators declared themselves more able to create confidence and safety for their learners, as well as to handle more effectively the learners' anxieties in learning situations, after experiencing role plays on professional situations, role reversals with their learners (vulnerable adults) and after being doubled in their own roles by the workshop leaders or the other pilot group members. The doubling and the role reversal were used not only as tools in supervision but included also in the practice repertoire of participants, in their adult educator roles. The workshop activities provided many examples of dissolving inner- and relationship tensions after using the role reversal with the beneficiary and/or the doubling of the adult educator by another adult educator in the pilot group. Adult educator Justyna Kostuchowska comments on the effects of using role play and on its possible application forms in the following way:

It is 'a useful mean to learn more about our inner selves. It also gives us the possibility to reflect on our jobs. The technique can be also used by educators during sessions with people. Role-playing reveals deep mental structures; therefore it is a useful diagnostic tool for both the instructor and the participants. The subject of the role-play determines the issues that will be involved. In case of a role-play introduced to pupils, we can choose the topic "My usual day" and the role-play performed by the pupils should provide us with the following information: how much material the students have to learn, what is their attitude towards learning, what problem they have with learning, how they respond to work and overwork. When educating people working with families and people in need (social welfare employees) the following topic can be introduced "Create a picture of a family in difficult living situation and act it out on stage". Social welfare workers sometimes feel an aversion to people in need, they think that such people get everything for free as there is always someone to think and care about them. The actors put themselves in other people's shoes. In this way they "experience" other people's live and understand the situation better. The technique can be used in many areas. The only limit I can see is the type of knowledge we want to pass. If we want to present some structured information, there are other better ways to do it. But when knowledge is linked to **my** experience, when it is put into practice in **my** actions, and when **my** emotions and thoughts are involved, the role-play technique will be fruitful.' (quotation taken from the 2nd Polish workshop session's report)

Spontaneity and creativity are considered to be cornerstones and basic principles in any form of psychodrama intervention, both during the training of adult educators and in the adult educators' work with vulnerable adults. It is obvious, that not any technique and procedure used by the psychodrama experts leading the pilot groups to enhance the spontaneity and creativity in the pilot groups are supposed to be used by the adult educator participants in the groups they work with, first of all because of the differences in the leaders'/participants' level of being trained. Besides a procedure meant to enhance creativity in a setting can cause a blockage instead of enhancing spontaneity and creativity in other settings or in the hands of another trainer who works in other kind of professional relationship with his/her trainees, even in the case of seemingly most simple exercises (like draw your professional social atom).

This is why the participants were not encouraged to apply protagonist plays or social atom technique although they benefited from such experiences and discussed about such techniques along the workshops. Protagonist work and professional social atom technique were used with educational and supervision purposes, maintaining professional limits, and not as intervention in the personal life of the participants. Any form of work which touched upon deeper personal issues (inner conflicts, losses, dissatisfactions), or work that deepened sociometric issues of relations within the group encountered natural resistances due to the non-therapeutic contract which was held in respect. When a leader ventures on this kind of ground, he/she abandons the educational contract in an irresponsible manner, especially in the case of vulnerable learners. Without having completed the full psychodrama training, an adult educator should not engage in this type of work. As Anna Bielańska commented on a Polish group session, “when getting acquainted with the social atom method, a tension arose in the group involving participants employed at one workplace; a conflict between them got unveiled during an exercise. The situation gave rise to strong emotions and was difficult to solve, remaining at a rather superficial level of the portrayal of the relation, or its structure, in the workplace. Although the participants positively evaluated the usefulness of the social atom technique in their work, I think, that such a technique, similarly to other sociometric techniques, engages a deep interpersonal level of relations, which is more adequate in therapeutic situations, rather than in education.” An unsuitable therapeutical purpose in application regardless of the educational context oversteps the principles of safety, confidentiality, and respect for learner representing thus an example of major risk in applications.

Among the exercises less applied by adult educators – though with extensive exploration potential

of the professional role – we could mention the **Mask technique** from the **Portuguese** workshop, described by Ana Leal and Sara Brandaõ.

It consisted in the production of a mask for the role of the adult educator. The elements of the group seated around a table full of different materials to the execution of the task, including cardboards, magazines, markers, scissors, glue, etc. The members with the finished mask were taken photos. When all the members had their masks done, the trainer proposed the group to walk around the room, interacting mask with mask, looking, greeting, asking some questions. Following, the group stayed in a circle and one by one, each of the members answered the same question looking to the photo project in a wall: “How do you feel with the mask?” Then, one by one, each member took a seat in the “Chair of the adult educator role” and with the mask on the face explained its meaning, leaving some space for possible questions or comments.

In the end, each member removed the mask and answered to question: “How do you feel without the mask?”

All the masks were put on the floor and the group seat around. Then the trainer proposed to each member to choose, sequentially, one mask different from the one created by him/herself. During this task, all the members selected a mask and used it to represent their emotions along with some sounds (vocal or instrument) and intermediary objects (from the scenario).

The concept of mask was discussed, clarifying that, in the setting of the game performed; it didn't represent the separation of the Self from the adult educator role, but only and object that represents the Self in the role of the adult educator.

Adult educators Ana Leal and Sara Brandaõ state that being very didactic and creative, this exercise can be implemented in diverse contexts and different themes that explore the concept of **role taking**. It is important to note that the use of different material in the creation process can be of benefit to groups that have been for a long time far-away from educational settings. The use of plastic arts as an instrument can smooth the progress of personal expression. Considering that the technique implies the construction and exposition of a mask to the group, it could be more productive in settings where the group has already become cohesive and has assured a trusting and accepting space, allowing the (professional) self-knowledge. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that this is a technique that demands for a lot of material (papers, scissors, glue, etc) for the masks and hasn't been considered yet by workshop participants in their professional practice.

Finally some short general recommendations on using the psychodrama techniques in adult educational settings, pointed out by the Portuguese adult educators:

- The use of psychodrama techniques should relay on a pedagogical purpose and never for entertaining the training group. Participants need to feel the usefulness of the exercise and be able to associate it to the main topic of the course.
- Assess the level of proximity techniques required and the level of confidence between participants. When the group is recently formed and its cohesion hasn't been tested yet, some techniques can be less successful due to some resistance from the participants.
- Make sure you know all steps meant for implementing the techniques in order to be able to deal with surprises that might arise during the implementation (doubts from participants, resistance, etc.).

V. CONCLUSIONS

According to the participants' and trainers' final conclusions, and also mentioned in the implementation reports the most valued effect of the psychodrama use in adult education was the interpersonal development of the group members that promoted personal growth, self-appraisal, spontaneity and creativity. The common space in psychodrama, the stage, the action, the role playing and other components have proved to be useful and fruitful in education by opening inner space. The learning process became more attractive, the trainees became more interested and motivated to interact in this process, both in the pilot workshops and the activities led by workshop participants in their current work with vulnerable adults. Concerning the personal needs of workshop participants it has to be emphasized that a significant number of participants came to the workshops with acute self-knowledge needs, others with unclear professional role boundaries needing professional self-development. Others came with strong supervision needs, due to unclear organizational framework of their work, to unclear roles they fulfilled, to unclear contracts/role expectations with their beneficiaries. These acute and strong needs had outlined the opportunities for experimenting specific themes on the psychodrama scene and represent possible areas of psychodrama applications in the area of lifelong learning activities for adult educators.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the work done in the frames of the POTENS project are the groups of vulnerable adults educated by the training participants. The main emphasis of the present guidelines was on equipping the adult educators with psychodrama procedures and techniques in order to support disadvantaged adults to acquire key competences like creative expression, learning to learn and social skills. By enhancing teaching and learning capacities of the adult educators, offering training sessions, supervision and professional support for implementation efforts, the project contributed indirectly to empowering adults from marginalized social contexts to gain an insight into their own potential and develop social and personal competences in order to put them in a stronger position in the society and the labour market.

We would like to close with ascertaining that there is an increasing awareness of the benefits of cooperative learning and of role-playing simulations as educational or training techniques in a wide range of learning situations, in many countries. It is not to imagine that all the people applying role-

play simulations or some forms of sociometry in educational or training settings fulfilled or should fulfil complete training in psychodrama. We must admit that in some way people/adult educators do what they need to improve their activity and that life naturally creates what people need to have. We agree with Blatner (2002) saying that role playing has been widely used because it is “a natural vehicle for learning. Role playing is simply a less technologically elaborated form of simulation. What astronauts do in their practice for missions; what pilots do in learning to navigate in flight simulators; what thousands of soldiers do in the course of military exercises – it's all role playing. Teaching salespersons to deal with customers, teaching doctors to interview patients, teaching teachers to deal with difficult situations, all these require some measure of actual practice and feedback. Role playing, then, is nothing more than rehearsal. Musicians and football players, actors and firemen, all need to practice their skills. This is because complex operations cannot include all variables in a single lecture or even a thick book. Issues of adapting general principles to one's own set of abilities, temperament, and background; working out the inevitable "bugs" any complex system generates; and preparing for unforeseen eventualities – all are frequent goals of this kind of role playing.”

The expert team of the project was aware of the fact that applying psychodrama is not merely a question of technique, it is a way of being in relations, and as Marcia Karp (1998) expresses, “a way of practicing living without being punished for making mistakes; that is to say, practicing growing up while you are doing it”. Applying psychodrama methods is not a procedure to be followed (through assimilative learning), it is a way of acting in a responsible, creative, unique and authentic way in individual and group relationships. The techniques are comparable to cultural conserves that might be used in both creative as well as in unproductive, even destructive ways. With Blatner's (2002) words: “Role playing is a technology for intensifying and accelerating learning; it is like electric power tools in relation to carpentry (...) And, like power tools, they can be dangerous. But even the old-fashioned types of saws and hammers could do damage if one doesn't know or remember to apply the principles of safety”.

Without a systematic psychodrama training the difficulties of applying any psychodrama technique are becoming risks which can cause blockades, resistances or even damages in the educational process through opening an intimate inner space which is especially frail in case of the trainees belonging to vulnerable social groups. It is generally accepted that applying psychodrama methods requires at least a basic training in psychodrama, in order to be able to handle with care and discretion the impact of the techniques on the group members (Karp, 1998) and to avoid flattening

the creative potential of psychodrama (Wittinger, 2000). Psychodrama trainings are meant to increase the responsibility, creativity and authenticity and to diminish the possibility of unproductive or destructive applications. A complete psychodrama training requires much more than the 90 hours of training offered in this project. Recognized psychodrama trainings begin with self knowledge, ending with professional self-knowledge and skill development in working with psychodrama techniques in groups or individuals, under supervision. Psychodrama trainings are offered by psychodrama training organizations working on the basis of internationally recognized criteria. According to the present European standards the mastery of psychodrama requires a minimum of 4 years of training, of about 880 hours, within which at least 200 hours of self knowledge, 200 hours of training of conducting inside an advanced training group, 80 hours of supervision, etc. (See: [www.fepto.eu/we/en/Minimal Training Standards](http://www.fepto.eu/we/en/Minimal_Training_Standards), further the British Association of Dramatherapists site: www.badth.org.uk. The J. L. Moreno Psychodrama Society, which assumed in the Potens Project the leadership of developing the present guidelines on methodology, as well as the Portuguese Psychodrama Society and the Polish Institute of Psychodrama, the partner psychodrama organizations involved in the project, are members of Federation of European Psychodrama Training Organisations, and are functioning in accordance with its standards.) Educational applications not necessarily require full psychodrama training in the forms attended mainly by therapists. It is worth to work out special training programs for adult educators and educators generally. The Potens projects experience underlines the opportunity and usefulness of such training programs.

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