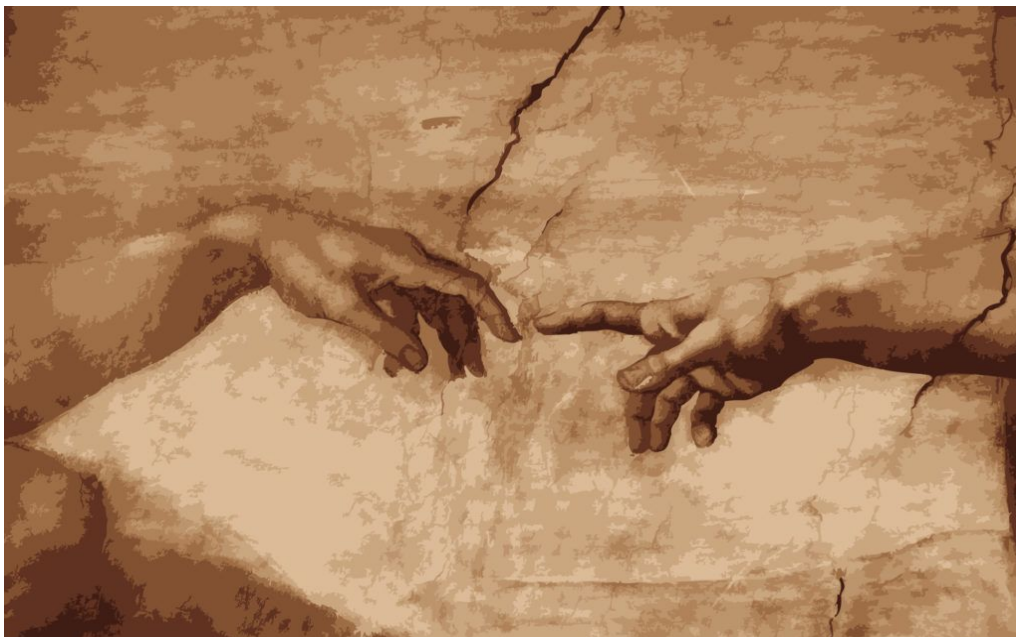




CHRISTCHURCH INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING IN PSYCHODRAMA

## Psychodramatic Couple Therapy Training Outline

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# Psychodramatic Couple Therapy Training

## About Psychodramatic Couple Therapy

The psychodramatic ethos of a stage, enactment and encounter can also be present in the couple therapy room. The psychodramatic couple therapist works with the warm up of the partners, respectfully beginning with where they are in the here and now. The couple will make meaning of their life and develop new ways of being with each other. For an introduction to psychodrama see <http://psychodrama.org.nz/about/>.

J.L. Moreno, the founder of sociometric methods such as psychodrama and sociodrama wrote about interpersonal relationship therapy:

*"... an active form of psychotherapy in which the personal and interpersonal problems ... are treated at the same time."*

Moreno, 1977:233.

*"Forms of treatment are necessary which are able to reach the interpersonal syndromes as deeply, if not more so, than it would a single person. Interpersonal therapy represents a special category; it might well be classified apart from individual and group psychotherapy"*

Moreno & Moreno, 1975:45.

Much of Moreno's Psychodrama Volume 1 is devoted to marriage therapy. Psychodrama has a theory of child development that is related to adult functioning. Central to psychodrama theory are the concepts of *spontaneity* and *tele* (*the relationship between people including love*). *Begegnung* - translated as encounter is the heart of psychodramatic couple therapy.

Moreno was one of the first marriage therapists, with a session recorded in 1937. In the last 30 years specialist modes of couple therapy have been developed. Many of them draw on psychodramatic roots. Couple therapy is commonly considered a field requiring specialist training.

Psychodrama is recognised as a form of psychotherapy training by PBANZ. Couple therapy is one of the items covered by the psychotherapist scope of practice.

## The Aim of the Course

Is for participants to

- Gain confidence and competence in working with couples in a relational paradigm.
- Discover the value of working with couples. Enjoy the challenges of couple therapy.
- Learn the fundamentals of couple therapy based on the large body of psychodrama theory and practice that has developed over almost a century.
- Be part of a group engaged in robust training and collaborative learning in couple therapy.

## Walter Logeman

Walter Logeman, collaborating with group of NZ trainers, will be the main trainer for this course. He is a Trainer, Educator and Practitioner (TEP) in the Christchurch Institute for Training in Psychodrama (CITP). He has conducted *Working with Couples* professional development workshops since 2009. Walter describes his motivation for presenting this course:

"In 2009 I wrote an article in the AANZPA Journal called *The Imago Affair*. I concluded with the intention: "... to explore how we can develop relationship therapy beyond what we know today. I think we can use the psychodrama process to expand and to enrich the method, to explore possibilities and to consciously learn and evolve." Since then, I have been teaching and practising couple therapy using psychodrama. It is a comprehensive and holistic way to teach couple therapy. It is time to offer this course.

"Couple therapy is a form of group work and the training embraces the same values and methods as the work with couples. We *produce encounter*. The relationship is a drama. Each partner is, in turn, is the protagonist and the auxiliary ego. We understand the process through role theory. We think in terms of warm up, action, sharing and spontaneity. The therapist is the director. The therapy room becomes the stage. Approaching a couple with the theory and practice of psychodrama as a guide is a delight. I'm enthusiastic to offer a course which trains psychodrama by focussing one application of the method. I am sure the course will be of value to new and experienced therapists and psychodramatists.

We live in a time of urgent warnings about the planet. I am reminded of J.L. Moreno's book, *Who shall Survive?* (1978) as I write this. He was dismayed that survival was approached by biological and technological means and not by social means. He developed new relational tools and they remain important for the survival of humankind. This vision motivates me to bring this course in couple therapy to your attention. My hope is you will be inspired and take up the call."

## Theory and Practice

### 1. Encounter

A central concept of the training is encounter. In 1914 Jacob Levy Moreno (1889–1974) the founder of psychodrama wrote in a poem called *Invitation to an Encounter*:

*“A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face...  
I will look at you with your eyes □  
and you will look at me with mine.”*

### 2. Experiential training

Couple therapy is taught in a practical, experiential way using the psychodrama structure of warm up, action and sharing.

### 3. Holistic assessment and practice

"Is it safe to work with this violent couple?" "He does not want to come to counselling." Skills for assessing what is safe and what is possible for couple work are developed using sociodrama. Couple therapy will aim to have a positive impact the whanau.

### 4. Well developed theory and practice

The course is based on theory and practice developed by J.L. Moreno. It has been developed in Aotearoa NZ for our current time. See AANZPA Journals: <https://aanzpa.org/journals/>

### 5. Supervised couple therapy practice

Participants will engage in supervised couple therapy practice.

### 6. Psychodrama training

No previous psychodrama training is required however the training hours count towards a qualification in Psychodrama.

## Description of the Course.

Training involves attending workshops, reading, writing, peer practice and supervision. Participants will attend a minimum of 12 days of workshops over two years. A Manual outlines how the psychodramatic method is used with couples.

## Workshops

Workshops involve teaching, demonstrations, enactments, supervised practice, writing and group interaction. The training will use psychodramatic structure and techniques for example: warm up, action and sharing. Psychodramatic methods including sociometry, sociodrama and role training will be used. In practice this means that the participants will develop new

responses to each other. We will warm up to each other, raise our enthusiasm, courage, gifts, and love for each other as we want to do with couples.

At least 12 days of training will be offered in 2019 and again in 2020. The training will be in 2, 3 or 4 day blocks. Workshops will be predominantly in Christchurch. Some workshops may be held in other places in New Zealand (depending on who enrolls).

Workshops are multilevel, suited to new as well as more experienced practitioners. The workshops will have one or two trainers. Participants will bring forward relevant content from their work related to the course programme. We will work together with central concerns.

### **Interview and Training Plan**

An initial interview is offered to assist in making a plan for training and supervision. Training is flexible and participants can attend workshops over two years to suit their development.

### **Fees**

The fee for 12 days (90 hours) of workshops is approximately \$2700 with an early bird discount, similar to other training offered by the CITP, details TBA. Residential workshops will incur an extra fee to cover food and accommodation. Supervision fees are additional to the workshop fee.

### **Enrolment**

Process:

1. Make a written application and submit a CV to the CITP
2. Have an interview with one of the trainers to discuss a training plan and criteria for enrolment
3. Submit a training plan indicating areas of development, a plan for workshop attendance and supervision.
4. Pay the course fee
5. Agree to the CITP's Training Agreement

Criteria:

The trainee will...

- work in a context where couple therapy is a suitable form of practice,
- be a member of a professional body that has a code of ethics and a complaints procedure,
- commit to completing the course in a maximum of two years.

A limited number of trainees will be accepted into training at any one time. If there is space, eligible people who are contemplating enrolment can attend one workshop before enrolling in the whole course.

## **Topics**

Topics will include:

- Assessing suitability for couple therapy:
  - Levels of risk
  - Do they want to be a couple? (If not "discernment therapy" may be appropriate.)
  - Considering the place of couple therapy in the context of the whanau.
  - Making appropriate onward referrals e.g. mediation, social work, parenting help.
- Producing encounter - face to face, eye to eye - using mirroring, role reversal and doubling.
- Conducting couple sessions - warm up, action, sharing.
- Engaging with couples in the early stages (often by phone, text or email).
- Working with a couple who are in "discernment".
- The concept of protagonist and auxiliary.
- Coaching and doubling by the therapist to avoid blaming, shaming and criticism.
- Techniques such as asides and concretisation.
- Assessing couple dynamics. Using role theory to describe the dance or pattern to assist the couple.
- The stages of therapy as a whole - early, middle, ending & evaluation.
- Approaches to affairs, addiction and violence.
- Psychodramatic enactments where a protagonist attends to the relationship with themselves or an absent other.
- Specific topics: parenting, finances, sex.
- Cultural factors in couple therapy.
- The relational paradigm (social and cultural atom, tele, *status nascendi*).
- When and how to see people individually as part of the couple therapy.

Participants can add topics relevant to their area of work, e.g. elderly or immigrant couples.

## **Certificate of Psychodramatic Couple Therapy**

Upon successful completion of the following requirements participants will receive a certificate from the CITP. These requirements are to be met within a two year period:

- Participation in a minimum of 12 days of workshops.
- Written assignments.

- Collaboration with other trainees to develop their ability in couple therapy (peer practice outside of the training workshops).
- A minimum of 6 (supervised) sessions with a couple and a letter from the supervisor stating the participant is able to practice psychodramatic couple therapy.
- Demonstration in a workshop of the ability to work with a couple and discuss the rationale for interventions.

## Resources

A Psychodramatic Couple Therapy Training Manual will be available on the website that includes

- Course material
- Handouts
- Reading list and links to useful material

## References

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Moreno, J.L. *Who Shall Survive?* First published in 1934 as: *Who Shall Survive: A New Approach to the Problem of Human Interrelations*. Then in 1953 as *Who Shall Survive? Foundations of Sociometry, Group Psychotherapy and Sociodrama*, which is also the title of the 1978 edition available free online here:

[http://www.americandeception.com/index.php?action=downloadpdf&photo=PDFsml\\_AD/W ho\\_Shall\\_Survive-J\\_L\\_Moreno-1978-879pgs-PSY.sml.pdf&id=290](http://www.americandeception.com/index.php?action=downloadpdf&photo=PDFsml_AD/W ho_Shall_Survive-J_L_Moreno-1978-879pgs-PSY.sml.pdf&id=290)